

[REDACTED]

The Security Service and Special Branch

1968  
Mr. Waddell held a meeting in the Home Office on 13th November 1967 with representatives of the Security Service and the Metropolitan police to consider whether there was any duplication in the work of the Security Service and of Special Branch of the Metropolitan police. The following were present:-

Mr. Waddell	)	
Mr. Stotesbury	)	Home Office
Mr. James	)	
[REDACTED]	)	
[REDACTED]	)	Security Service
Mr. Brodie	)	
Mr. Ferguson-Smith	)	Special Branch.

2. Mr. Waddell explained that the Home Secretary had asked that an informal review should be made - although there was no suggestion of unnecessary duplication of areas in which overlap might be found. He suggested that they might pursue this under these main heads -

- (a) Subversive activities
- (b) Surveillance
- (c) Commonwealth immigrants
- (d) Protection duties
- (e) Positive vetting
- (f) Duties connected with the Official Secrets Acts.

Subversive activities

3. It was noted that whilst the responsibility of the police service was to maintain law and order, the Security Service had a responsibility for protection of the State against subversion. The Security Service, however, provided a good deal of intelligence to the police to assist them in their role and vice versa. Both bodies were often interested in the same target but the Security Service sought to assess the long-term as well as the short term threat and were therefore particularly interested in the policy and membership of subversive organisations; the immediate police interest was in discovering what action, such as a demonstration, was being planned. The interests of the two bodies led them to

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would be found in much of the rest of the work of both organisations.

4. In the past Special Branch and Security Service had not made a point of sharing information about the identities of their agents in the subversive field, but discussions had been initiated between the two organisations to co-ordinate the coverage provided. In dealing with informants, Special Branch were ready, if necessary, to exploit an informant to the utmost in the short term whereas the Security Service

[REDACTED]

SyS approach discussed

[REDACTED]

5. Special Branch had a country-wide responsibility for the I.R.A., as well as links with the police forces in Ireland. The responsibility of the Security Service was confined to producing assessments on the I.R.A. threat for the Joint Intelligence Committee, as required. The main responsibility lay with Special Branch for historical reasons and although the arrangement did not correspond with the orthodox division of responsibility between the Security Service and the police forces regarding other extremist nationalist organisations, like the [REDACTED], it was best left unchanged.

#### Surveillance duties

6. If these were required for the maintenance of law and order, Special Branch would be responsible. The Security Service undertakes its own surveillance in connection with its investigation of espionage and subversion.

#### Commonwealth immigrants

7. Special Branch were currently giving special attention to "Black Power" activities. The Security Service were also keeping a close watch on subversive activities among immigrant groups and organisations concerned with race relations.

#### Protection duties

8. The Royal Family were protected by officers of the uniformed branch of the Metropolitan police. The Prime Minister and certain other senior Ministers were given personal protection by officers of Special Branch, who also undertook the protection of heads of state and like persons visiting this country. The Security Service provided Special Branch with any relevant intelligence which came their way to supplement information gathered from the Branch's own sources in

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Positive vetting

9. The Security Service acted as general advisers to Departments and the public services; Special Branch dealt with any case sent to them for reference to police records.

Official Secrets Acts

10. Special Branch acted as the executive of the Security Service in proceedings initiated under these Acts.

General

11. Other points raised were -

- (a) The Security Service studied the activities of subversive organisations in the industrial field. They kept in close consultation with the Ministry of Labour.
- (b) The Security Service proposed to extend their quarterly surveys to cover the whole subversive field and copies of reports on these surveys would be sent to all police forces in England and Wales and Scotland. This should enable issue of the Home Office Bulletin to be terminated in the new year, subject to further consultations with the chief constable associations.
- (c) The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis intended to accept a proposal by the Security Service that an officer from Special Branch should be seconded to the Security Service for a minimum period of six months to obtain a first hand knowledge of its work and methods.

12. Mr. Waddell expressed his appreciation of the helpful exchange of views which had taken place and he undertook to see that they were reported to the Home Secretary.

January, 1968.

Home Office,  
S.W.1.