

MEMORANDUM

COMMANDER RODGER

1. The Special Demonstration Squad (SDS) currently comprises one Detective Chief Inspector, three Inspectors, three Sergeants and ten Constables, numerically one more - a supervisory officer - than at the last review. The improved rank structure is the result of recent promotions of certain members of the Squad.

2. Since the SDS was formed in 1968 to deal with the particular problem of violent anti-American demonstrations, its broad area of responsibility - the penetration of extremist groups to the left of the Communist Party - has changed little. The names of the target organisations may have altered but their aims have not; nor has their propensity for seizing on any topical issue from tenants' disputes to industrial strikes, which they feel they can translate to their own advantage.

3. In recent months the Squad has had to concentrate more of its officers into the Irish field, inevitably with some loss of cover in other areas, but has still managed to obtain advance intelligence of all major demonstrations (and most of the minor ones) within its sphere of operations.

4. Coverage

Organisations currently penetrated by the SDS are:-

Sinn Fein (Provisionals)

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Anti-Internment League

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Irish or pro-
Irish organis-
ation.



International Socialists)
 International Marxist Group) Trotskyists
 Workers Revolutionary Party)
 (formerly Socialist Labour League)

[7] [REDACTED])
 Claimants Union) Anarchist -
 [8] [REDACTED]) alternative
 [8A] [REDACTED]) society groups.
 [9] [REDACTED])

Indo-China Solidarity Committee)
 [9A] [REDACTED]) Maoists
 [9B] [REDACTED])

Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART)

5. Other groups penetrated, albeit to a lesser degree include:-

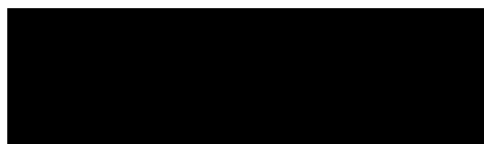
Irish Civil Rights Association

[9D] [REDACTED]
 [9E] [REDACTED]
 [9F] [REDACTED]
 [9G] [REDACTED]

Croydon Libertarians

6. Product and distribution

Statistically, in items of intelligence gained and numbers of meetings and demonstrations covered, the Squad produced slightly less in 1973 than it did the previous year - due almost entirely to an exceptional number of changes in personnel (see later). The quality of its information, however, appeared to be unaffected, whether factual - reporting meetings and demonstrations and identifying participants, or speculative - estimating the likely support for such events and, increasingly, indicating areas or individuals meriting close surveillance by other specialist sections of the Branch.



7. The distribution of information obtained by the SDS through Special Branch to 'A' Department, the CID and the Security Service was dealt with at length in the last report and requires no elaboration.

8. The Security Service, in addition to their usual expressions of admiration for the work of the Squad, are currently giving practical assistance in an SDS inspired operation aimed at obtaining intelligence of [REDACTED]. If the operation is successful it might, inter alia, indicate a potential for a more aggressive approach to intelligence gathering in some controlled circumstances.

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9. Several officers earned praise during the year for the standards they set in covering extremist conferences in London and the provinces. The main object of SDS officers accompanying their groups when they leave the MPD is to obtain intelligence of extremists' plans which may affect London, plus the opportunity it gives for identifying provincial militants who are likely to come to the Metropolis. It also adds to the officers' credibility as dedicated revolutionaries and enables them to penetrate their groups to a much greater depth.

10. Review

The Special Branch annual report which covers the motivations and public activities of the whole spectrum of extremism, including those organisations not yet considered to be justifiable targets for the SDS - eg the Communist Party and right wing extremist groups - reduces the need for too detailed a review of the public order scene in 1973.

11. Suffice it to say that, by modern standards, the year was not remarkable for the size, frequency or violence of public demonstrations in London, and intelligence of all those organised or significantly supported by the groups covered by the SDS was obtained in good time for effective police counter-measures to be taken.

12. For most of the year Ireland, once again was the primary focus of attention for extremists in this country. Paradoxically, the various series of bombings in London and elsewhere appeared to numb the Irish groups into temporary inactivity. They recovered, however, as soon as they had some "moral" cause to espouse, eg the trials and treatment of persons arrested for causing the explosions, and several moderately-sized marches and demonstrations were held. The courts in Winchester and St Albans were given somewhat nervous attention by the extremists, perhaps because of police precautions, and the various prisons in London were subjected to publicity seeking picketings, exhibitions of forced-feeding and the like, none of which caught police unawares or threatened the maintenance of order.

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The Trotskyists made their usual contribution to most of the noteworthy demonstrations whether the protest concerned Ireland, Chile, the treatment of Jews in Russia, student grants or industrial strikes. The fact that they appeared to instigate less may be explainable by their current preoccupation with re-organisation.

13. The International Socialists and the Workers Revolutionary Party are going all-out with their recruitment campaigns aimed at improving their positions in the trades unions; the real progress they are making does not bode well for future industrial harmony. The International Marxist Group, whilst just as appreciative of the opportunities the economic crisis offers for furthering the revolution, seemed too debilitated with internal feuds to do much more than point the way for the 'workers offensive' in their organ 'Red Weekly'.

14. Two attempts by the Trotskyist groups during the year to unite in common cause against 'police repression' - a number of them had received unwelcome attention following the initial bomb outrages - foundered on their inability to submerge factional differences.

15. The recent detente between China and the United States has removed from the Maoists most of their former excuses for violent protest and driven them into a period of introspection.

16. The anarchists, historically the instigators of urban guerilla warfare, have done little of note since the Angry Brigade was decimated except talk and occasionally participate in Claimants Union and tenants' disputes. There are signs, however, that the Irish bombings are making them feel declassé and there is the possibility that some of them might try to justify their existence by engaging in violent action. Should they do so, it is to be hoped that the SDS officers already entrenched amongst them will get advance information of their plans.

17. Personnel

Of the twelve 'field' officers, five left the Squad during the year for either personal or operational reasons - which reduced the average length of service on the SDS by current officers to two years - and their replacements are in various stages of assimilation. Arrangements had also to be made for three 'field' officers and one supervisory officer to attend police courses, creating gaps in coverage which, fortunately, did not prove crucial. The flexibility of the Squad is now such that it is often possible for one experienced officer to cover, temporarily at least, the absence of a colleague.

18. The unfortunate appearance in the extremist field of a

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member of the public necessitated the immediate withdrawal of two women detective constables

19. The loss of knowledge and expertise when a long-serving officer is permanently withdrawn is serious but unavoidable, if the stringent demands of security and the officers best interests are to be served.

20. Security

The avoidance in nearly six years existence of the irretrievable exposure of any SDS officer could induce complacency and constant vigilance is needed to ensure that rigorous standards of security are maintained.

21. It is acknowledged that the triple facets of an officer's private life, career and employment with the extremists make absolute security impossible, but an effective compromise can be reached.

22. The risks of headquarters accommodation (see later), the visits of officers to New Scotland Yard and the use of information obtained by the SDS when it has had only limited circulation, have all been indicated in previous reports, as have the steps which have been taken to minimise them. These are matters which are, to some degree, controllable by supervisory officers.

23. There is a great weight of responsibility, however, on individual officers to maintain their own 'cover', and their susceptibility or otherwise to extremist examination is usually in direct proportion to the time the officers spend in and on their political backgrounds, cover addresses and employments. Fortunately, the extremists interest is rarely prolonged and can usually be anticipated, so that the periods when an officer is required to 'live the life' full time - to the detriment of his family - are comparatively short.

24. The manner by which the officers can be recompensed for these times and also those when operational requirements dictate that they spend protracted periods with the extremists is an administrative problem.

25. Accommodation

The detached, anonymous, headquarters premises, providing secure facilities for briefing, communication, preparation of reports and exchange of information, remains of supreme importance to the functioning of the Squad.

26. To avoid the risk of attracting unwelcome attention to the premises by too great a number of officers using them, Home Office gave authority last year for a second HQ flat to be obtained. This was done and should meet the Squad's needs for the immediate future.

27. The officers individual "cover" addresses are an integral part of their assumed identities. They are changed periodically for security and also, as the officers develop and achieve greater flexibility, for tactical reasons to give broader coverage of the extremist field.

28. Transport

The changed method of supplying transport for the SDS from hiring a few nondescript cars to purchasing older vehicles for the exclusive use of each field officer - registered, taxed and insured in his cover identity - has proved both efficacious and secure. The mobility it gives undoubtedly contributed to the Squad's ability to maintain the breadth of its coverage with occasionally reduced resources and more than compensates for the extra administrative burden entailed in the purchase, sale and maintenance of the vehicles.

29. A separate report, incorporating a cost-effective analysis of SDS transport, will be submitted on secret file No TR/19/1968/1.

30. Finance

Statements of account are attached. Of the £6,500 Home Office allocation for 1973/74, approximately £1,700 remains as at mid-February. Present monthly expenditure is running at £530 so that a surplus of about £900 can be anticipated. This has been achieved principally because it was not possible to obtain a second headquarters flat until half-way through the year; the absence from the field of an unusually high number of officers for the variety of reasons mentioned earlier also reduced the demand for rents.

31. It would be unwise to anticipate that such circumstances will be repeated, however, and whilst the same budget of £6,500 should meet SDS expenses for 1974/75 it makes no allowance for

any significant rises in renting, heating or lighting property which may occur.

32. Future Activity

The inherent time-lag between identifying a potentially threatening group and penetrating it has tended to become longer and more difficult on account of a greater awareness in the extremist field to preserve internal security. The facility for sensing trouble has enabled the SDS by and large to keep ahead of the militants and ensure that their public attempts to foment disorder have been effectively frustrated.

33. Ireland of course takes priority, not because there is too much likelihood of Irish nationals or their supporters in this country taking to the streets in violent protest, (although it might occur to the IRA that an infusion of violence into normally innocuous demonstrations would be an effective supplement to their bombing campaigns) but because a continuance or escalation of the bombings could produce a so-called right wing reaction similar to that now being experienced in Belfast. Militant Protestants and their sympathisers ought not to pose insurmountable problems for SDS type penetration but it would take time.

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34. The economic crisis and industrial unrest offer all left wing extremist groups clear opportunities for causing trouble as most of them are well aware. The Trotskyists, Marxists, Maoists, Anarchists have learned from the Communist Party the value of having a high percentage of trade unionists in their membership both for the excuse it gives them for participating in industrial disputes and the possibility of influencing trades union policy.

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35. The apparent success that such groups, especially the larger Trotskyist organisations, have recently had in recruiting suggests that even greater militancy in strikes and demonstrations can be expected.

36. Students, preoccupied with their attempts to get improved grants for themselves have posed less of a threat to public order than in recent years but one can not rely on their standing aloof

for much longer. Their participation in large numbers in demonstrations is usually marked by uninhibited behaviour which it is not always easy for police to control. As their campuses are traditionally sacrosanct the SDS must rely on the tendency of the most politically extreme students in London to belong to extra mural groups which bring them within the aegis of the Squad and the possibilities of advanced warning of their intentions.

37. The possibility of Britain's membership of the Common Market being the issue which united the multifarious factions of the left and even attracted large-scale moderate support, as mooted in the last report, has not yet been realised, but opposition seems to be growing and could yet become cogent.

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Chief Inspector

S.B.
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STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNT 1973/74

1973 BUDGET	£6,500	TO:	RENT	£3,998.18
			ELECTRICITY AND GAS	£ 123.99
			TELEPHONE	£ 118.65
			INCIDENTALS	£ 434.40 $\frac{1}{2}$
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				£4,675.22 $\frac{1}{2}$
			1972/73 DEBIT	£ 86.38 $\frac{1}{2}$
			BALANCE IN CASH	£ 188.39
			BALANCE UNDRAWN	£1,550.00
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				£6,500.00
				<hr/>
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	£6,500.00			
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		<u>RENT</u>	<u>ELECTRICITY & GAS</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>	<u>INCIDENTALS</u>
1973	APRIL	£357.10	£51.43	-	-
	MAY	£378.00	-	-	-
	JUNE	£329.11	£20.12	£8.36	£1.45
	JULY	£335.00	£4.27	-	£1.50
	AUGUST	£329.75	-	£62.43	£10.43
	SEPTEMBER	£336.21	£12.88	-	-
	OCTOBER	£448.66	£7.59	£31.40	£257.80
	NOVEMBER	£445.27	£14.67	-	£43.93
	DECEMBER	£467.43	£6.06	-	£112.99
1974	JANUARY	£292.91	£6.97	£16.46	£5.92
	FEBRUARY (to 14th)	£278.74	-	-	£0.38½
		£3,998.18	£123.99	£118.65	£434.40½

GRAND TOTAL	£4,675.22½
BALANCE IN CASH	£188.39
BALANCE (UNDRAWN)	£1,550.00
1972/73 DEBIT	£86.38½
	£6,500.00