

Policy File

Responsibilities of Special Branch
Metropolitan Police.

The Detective Branch of the Metropolitan Police Force, formed at Scotland Yard in 1842, became in 1878 the Criminal Investigation Department. The present sub-divisions of the C.I.D. include a number of Branches. The Special Branch, which is one of these, dates from 1883, when it was formed as the Special Irish Branch to combat the Fenian bomb outrages (1883-85). The present responsibility of the Special Branch is the protection of state personages and the prevention of crimes directed against the state. The Special Branch operates:-

- (a) within the Metropolitan Police area; and
- (b) beyond that area at certain designated sea and air ports.

2. The present Deputy Commander, Special Branch, is responsible to the Assistant Commissioner (Crime) for the following detailed responsibilities, carried out by sub-divisions of the Special Branch known as Squads:-

"A" Squad: Protection and Port Control.

"R" Squad: Discipline, Internal Security, Positive Vetting, Vetting for Government Departments, Research, Lectures and Training, and Threats to V.I.Ps.

"D" Squad: Naturalisations; and Visa Applications from I.C. citizens.

"E" Squad: Fascism, anti-Fascism, Nuclear Disarmament, Trotskyism and Irish Extremists.

"C" Squad: Communism, and miscellaneous British groups and individuals not covered by other squads.

/"E" Squad

[REDACTED]

"E" Squad: Aliens, Commonwealth and Colonial communities, and racial or "colour" problems.

3. Security Service liaison with Special Branch Metropolitan Police is not normally an [REDACTED] responsibility. Day to day liaison is initiated direct by officers of those Security Service Sections which need information about persons and organisations known or suspected to be involved in subversive or similar activity in the Metropolitan Police area.

[REDACTED]

4. Examples of other liaison between the Security Service and the Special Branch Metropolitan Police are:-

- (a) Security Service officers are given a Training Section course which includes a visit to Special Branch to see the Information Room, Records, Intelligence and Fingerprints, and listen to talks from officers in charge of "B", "C" and "E" Squads about their work, and to discuss it in relation to their own.
- (b) Special Branch pass on to the Security Service information obtained from the uniformed police about would-be asylum seekers and defectors who surface at police stations in the Metropolitan area.
- (c) Special Branch officers at sea and air ports provide the Security Service with a continuous service of information about arrivals and

/departures

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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departures of security suspects.

- (d) The Security Service, in the course of its [REDACTED] operations [REDACTED], against targets whose activities are prejudicial to the security of the State, sometimes obtains, as a by-product, information about major crimes in the Metropolitan area. This is made available to Special Branch to be passed on (under certain safeguards) to the C.I.D.

[REDACTED]

21 March 1967.

[REDACTED]