



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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SECURITY

- Q. As far as unionists are concerned, the Anglo-Irish Agreement has only helped to increase the level of violence since 1985.
- A. It is of course regrettable that the campaign of violence persists, but I do not accept that this is because of the Agreement, which in my view has been an important force for peace and stability. Both Governments have carried out their commitment under the Agreement to intensify cross-border security co-operation which is kept under continuing review to ensure that maximum effectiveness is maintained.
- Fatalities within 10 miles of the border have declined steadily as a proportion of overall fatalities in recent years from about 40% in 1986 to 17% in 1991. The seven border area fatalities so far this year (including the three bodies found in S. Armagh on 1 July) represent 14% of the total of 49 for Northern Ireland as a whole.
- A feature of the violence since 1985 has been the marked increase in killings by Loyalist paramilitaries. From 1978 to 1985 the average annual number of fatalities for which Loyalists were responsible was 9. Since 1986 to the end of 1991 that annual average had more than doubled to 22. In contrast, the annual average of killings by Republican paramilitaries has declined from 56 in the years 1980-85 to 51 for the years 1986 to 1991. Moreover, for only the second year since the troubles began, Loyalist paramilitaries have exceeded the IRA in killings so far this year. (Loyalists: 21, IRA: 19)

●n looking at the subject of paramilitary violence during any period of course it is necessary not only to look at the fatality statistics but also at the police success record - particularly at the police record in frustrating paramilitary plans. In recent years the record in this regard has been quite impressive. There is no doubt that the excellent security cooperation arrangements built up through the Anglo-Irish Conference mechanism has contributed significantly to the frustration of paramilitary plans - the paramilitaries have provided ample demonstration of their abhorrence of the cooperation which exists between the police forces North and South of the Border.

- It is also generally recognised that the smuggling of a large amount of weapons to the loyalist paramilitaries in 1988 has been very significant cause of the sustained level of violence from that quarter.

Q. In the twelve months before the Agreement was signed in November, 1985, there were 40 murders. In the twelve months ending in November 1991, six years after the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed, there were 82 murders - double the rate of killing in 1984-85. In the light of those figures how can you say that the Agreement has improved security in Northern Ireland?

- A. It is of course regrettable that the violence has continued but I do not accept the implication that the Agreement has been a contributory factor in the violence since 1985. In my view the Agreement has been an increasingly important force for peace and stability as well as providing a valuable framework for enhanced security co-operation between the Garda and the RUC.

If you look at the figures in the overall context of the past 20 years it will be seen that the level of violence in the years since 1985 has remained relatively stable when compared with the levels of the 1970s and the early 1980s.

A feature of the period since 1985 is the marked decline in the proportion of terrorist killings by republican groups from 89% in 1984-85 to 56% in 1991, and 45% so far in 1992. The loyalist proportion has shown a corresponding increase from 11% in 1984-85 to 44% in 1991 and 55% so far in 1992. (The illegal importation into Northern Ireland of a large amount of weapons by loyalist

terrorists (UFF, UVF, and Ulster Resistance) in 1988 was undoubtedly the most potent factor in this increase.)

It is also worth noting that fatalities in areas within 10 miles of the border have declined since 1985 from 40% of all fatalities in 1985 to 17% in 1991 and 9% so far this year.

There has been an undoubted improvement in the general public order situation since the Agreement was signed - one indicator of this is the fact that only about 300 plastic bullets were discharged by the security forces in 1991 compared with almost 30,000 in 1981.

- Q. The level of violence in 1984 and in 1985 was the lowest since the start of the Troubles, but once the Agreement was signed, the level of violence escalated again.
- A. It is true that the level of violence dipped in 1984 and in 1985, but looked at in the overall context of the past 20 years, the level of violence since the signing of the Agreement is still considerably down on terrorist activity in the 1970s and early 1980s.
- [- The former Secretary of State, Mr. Brooke, speaking in the Commons some time ago on this question said that: "it may be that insufficient attention is paid to the coincidence of the Anglo-Irish Agreement with the upsurge in the supply of Libyan arms which made a very considerable difference to the armaments of the IRA."]
- While Republican violence has tended to decline in recent years, there has been a marked upsurge in Loyalist violence. The illegal importation of a large amount of

weaponry by the Loyalist paramilitaries in 1988 has also been a significant factor in the sustained level of violence.

- There has undoubtedly been a sustained improvement in the general public order situation since the Agreement. A useful indicator of the level of public disorder is the number of plastic bullets discharged. These have declined dramatically since 1981 when 29,600 were fired causing seven deaths, to the current level of about 2-300 per annum.

BORDER SECURITY

Q. It appears to most unionists, and particularly to the Protestant community along the border, that you have done very little to prevent your territory being used as a safe haven by the IRA from which it can launch attacks on the northern security forces?

A. The Government and the Garda authorities are fully conscious of the vulnerable position of Protestant communities along the border and I can assure you that we remain committed to ensuring their security.

- The notion of a "safe haven" is a complete myth. It ignores the many and varied successes - not to mention sacrifices - of the security forces in the South against terrorism. It also ignores the Irish Government's commitment of resources combat terrorism and the on-going commitment to improving security co-operation under the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

- The majority of the violent acts committed within Northern Ireland have no connection whatsoever with the South. Over 50% of all fatalities since the start of the Troubles have occurred in the Belfast area alone.

- It was recently stated in the House of Commons that 98% of all people convicted of crimes of violence in Northern Ireland are residents of Northern Ireland.

- Fatalities within 10 miles of the border (including the urban areas of Derry, Strabane, Armagh and Newry) have declined steadily as a proportion of overall fatalities in recent years from about 40% in 1986 to 17% in 1991.

The seven border area fatalities so far this year represent 14% of the total of 49 for Northern Ireland as a whole.

- Legal cooperation to ensure that fugitive offenders in either jurisdiction are made amenable to justice is one feature of our response to the campaign of violence. The procedures are there whereby persons sought for such offenses can be tried in our jurisdiction or extradited, provided sufficient evidence to warrant the initiation of such proceedings exists.

Q. How has cross-border security co-operation been enhanced by the Anglo-Irish Agreement?

- A. The Agreement has provided a new framework for reviewing and developing cooperation between the police forces on both sides of the border in response to the changing nature of the terrorist threat. Security cooperation is discussed at every meeting of the Inter-Governmental Conference and it is acknowledged by both sides at the Conference that the current climate of security cooperation is very good. For example, speaking in a Radio Ulster Interview on 20 October, 1991, the Chief Constable of the RUC said:

"Relations with the Gardai are at an all-time high. There is probably the best relationship we ever had. The relationship between my border Chief Superintendents and the Garda Commissioner's Chief Superintendents is first class as are my relations with him."

Speaking last week in Edinburgh, Minister Mates is reported to have said that he noted the "huge and growing assistance from Dublin" on cross-border co-operation. He continued "if there is one consequence of the Anglo-Irish Agreement that actually can be measured it is the fact that it buttresses security co-operation; it has saved lives".

Important examples of the new level of security co-operation are:

- regular updating of a joint threat assessment on paramilitary organisations;
- programmes of Garda/RUC meetings at various levels on a regular basis to supplement daily Garda/RUC contact;
- coordinated operations in border areas such as the recent anti-racketeering operations as a result of which prosecutions are likely to be taken;
- regular, day in day out heavy Garda/Army cover in border areas for RUC/British Army personnel engaged in patrol duties and in major on-going checkpoint refurbishment works;
- improvements to secure radio, telephone and fax communications between the Garda and RUC at local and HQ level.
- Garda strength has been increased in Border Divisions, and has more than doubled since 1970;
- Border Superintendents have been appointed in each Border Division;

- two additional special surveillance units for border areas have been created;
- large numbers of Gardai have been deployed, with continuing success, on countrywide searches for arms, ammunition, and explosives.

The effectiveness of these achievements has been acknowledged by the British Government and the security forces on the ground.

CLOSED BORDER ROADS AND PVCPS.

- Q. You say you are conscious of the position of Protestant communities on the border. Why then do you oppose the use of permanent vehicle checkpoints and closed border roads which are of immense reassurance to those communities?
- A. We are not opposed to appropriate security measures where those are considered necessary.
- Many people, however, including a former senior and experienced officer of the British Army (Brigadier Peter Morton, writing in the Sunday Times of 3 May 1992), now acknowledge that the security value of PVCPS is limited: they are easily avoided and they also present the paramilitaries with targets for proxy-bomb attacks. In some cases they cause anxiety rather than reassurance to the local communities who fear being caught up in one of the IRA attacks which these installations have attracted.
 - It is also doubtful in many cases whether closed border roads have been effective in preventing terrorist activity. What is clear is that some closed roads are causing immense difficulties for Catholic and Protestant communities along the border and this is why I have been pressing for the re-opening of a limited number subject to compensatory security measures such as increased mobile patrolling.
 - In our view, mobile patrolling and snap checkpoints (which have an element of surprise) are a much better use of resources than PVCPS.

- I think it is worth pointing out that two PVCs were removed from Co. Fermanagh in 1991 without any apparent detriment to security.

[If the matter arises in a direct question, it could be said that we maintain 5 Garda/Army PVCs on our side of the Border.]

THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO SECURITY

- Q. What would you say to unionists who feel that the commitment of your Government and the Garda Siochana to border security is lacking?
- A. Eleven members of the Garda Siochana, have given their lives in combatting terrorism. They continue to face the threat of violence from the IRA. Since 1970 a total of 108 persons have been killed within our jurisdiction as a result of subversive incidents.
- We have spent in the region of £2.5 billion on additional security arising out of the Northern Ireland situation, including £199 million in 1991. On a per capita basis we spend more than four times what the British taxpayer has to pay on security for Northern Ireland.
 - Garda manpower in the Border Divisions has been greatly increased from 775 in 1970 to the present level of 1719. The cutbacks on public service numbers do not affect numbers in the Garda Siochana - a competition to recruit 1,000 new Gardai is currently in progress.
 - Two additional special surveillance units have been created for border areas and a Border Superintendent appointed in each of the four Border Divisions.
 - The Defence Forces' commitment to border security accounts for approx 35% of the annual Department of Defence Vote. The cost of maintaining the British Army in the North accounts for only 1% of the British Defence budget.

- We have built new army barracks in the border area and three Infantry Battalions, a Cavalry Squadron, and other supporting elements are permanently located close to the Border at a total of ten different military posts.

- During 1991 military parties in the Border area were sent on about 11,000 patrols, established 12,000 checkpoints and assisted in carrying out over 220 searches.

- The Gardai pursue and prosecute subversives vigorously: since 1972, 2,080 persons have been charged before the Special Criminal Court, and, of these, 1,527 (73%) have been convicted.

- Of the current subversive prison population (76), 40% (29) are from Northern Ireland.

SEIZURES OF ARMS, AMMUNITION AND EXPLOSIVES

Q. Do you accept that most recent supplies to the IRA have been imported from the South?

A. The Gardai make every effort to recover illegally held arms, ammunition and explosives. They have had considerable success in this regard and I can assure you that The Garda authorities, like the RUC in relation to weaponry smuggled into Northern Ireland by loyalist paramilitaries, are determined to make every effort to recover the outstanding weaponry before it can be used to inflict further loss of life.

Q. What success have the Garda had in recovering the weapons and explosives stored in your jurisdiction by the IRA?

A. Since January of this year, in a number of major seizures in the Cork-Kerry Limerick area and in Co. Donegal, the Gardai have seized over 240 firearms, 65,000 rounds of ammunition, and 5,240 lbs. of explosives.

- Since January 1985 the Gardai have recovered more ammunition and nearly as many firearms as the RUC. Including the recent major seizures in Limerick, Cork and Donegal, the Gardai have seized 1,750 firearms, 333,000 rounds of ammunition and 16,500 lbs. of explosives. This compares with over 1,800 firearms, 250,000 rounds of ammunition and over 37,000 lbs. of explosives seized by the RUC between January 1985 and August 1991, the most recent date for which we have figures.

Q. What about the weapons provided by Libya?

A. While a significant proportion of the pre-Eksund munitions supplied by Libya to the IRA has been seized by the Gardai, the RUC, and the British police, a considerable amount undoubtedly remains in the hands of the IRA. I can assure you that the Garda authorities, like the RUC and the police in Britain, are determined to make every effort to recover the outstanding weaponry before it can be used to inflict further loss of life.

- Likewise I am sure that the RUC are continuing to make every effort to recover the weaponry smuggled into Northern Ireland in 1988 by loyalist paramilitaries, who now equal the IRA in murders committed so far this year.

Q. Why do you not take a tougher stance against Libya the IRA's main suppliers?

A. The Government have supported and implemented all measures taken by the UN and EC as a result of Libya's support for terrorism.

The Libyan authorities are fully aware of the Government's condemnation of any assistance to groups engaged in terrorism, including the IRA, and of the vital importance of recovering weapons and explosives which have previously been provided to the IRA.

Representatives of the Libyan Government recently gave the British authorities certain information about the assistance which Libya has provided to the IRA. These developments are being monitored closely, and the Government will continue to pursue the matter as

appropriate and to take any further action as circumstances require.

Q. Why do you continue to trade with Libya?

A. Following the Eksund affair in 1987, the Government curtailed trade links with Libya. Our trade with Libya has shown a steady downturn. Total trade has fallen from about £75m in 1983 to £29.6 million in 1990. For the first half of 1991, the provisional figures for Irish exports stood at £6 million, with imports at nil.

Until the recently imposed UN sanctions, Britain and other EC member States had not restricted or suspended economic ties with Libya. In 1990, the UK exported US \$532 million worth of goods to Libya and imported US\$ 173 million worth of goods from Libya.

Q. Would the Irish Government support a demand that Libya make financial reparations to the people of Northern Ireland?

A. This raises questions of international law which would require detailed study by both Governments. However, we take the view that collective action by the international community is the most effective and appropriate method of pursuing this matter.

Q. What about support for the IRA from Irish Americans and NORAID?

A. The vast majority of the Irish American community do not support violence and the Government, through its representatives in the U.S., have made every effort to

ensure that the Irish American community is fully aware of the nature and activities of the IRA and the immense damage and suffering which any support for terrorism can lead to. The Government will continue to promote positive American support for Northern Ireland, such as the International Fund for Ireland which has undoubtedly provided great benefits to both communities in Northern Ireland.

The financial assistance given by NORAID is thought to be relatively minor, and has declined since the peak support it received around the time of the hunger strikes. According to returns made to the US authorities by NORAID since 1985, the amounts remitted to An Cumann Cabhrach each year amount to, on average, \$140,000 per annum between 1985 and 1989.

I think you will agree that the U. S. authorities have been very effective in stemming the flow of weapons to the IRA. (just as the Canadian authorities have taken firm action to prevent gun running to loyalist terrorists).

Q. Can anything be done to prevent the IRA manufacturing huge fertiliser based bombs in the Republic?

A. It is not correct to imply that this type of bomb-making takes place exclusively in our jurisdiction - it is regularly discovered by the RUC within Northern Ireland.

The use of agricultural fertiliser to produce home-made explosives has received our fullest attention. The matter has been carefully examined by experts on both sides of the border and if a feasible and effective means of neutralising the explosive potential of this material could be devised, I am sure that it would be immediately applied North and South.

Q. What action have you taken to deprive the IRA of funds, including the £3 million pounds which it recently stole from a bank in Co. Waterford?

A. The robbery to which you refer is of course under continuing investigation by the Gardai.

In 1985 we passed legislation to enable us to seize the funds of subversive organisations and approx. £2 million pounds were confiscated under that legislation.

We have also co-operated with the RUC in a recent anti-racketeering operation from which prosecutions may follow.

Our customs authorities co-operate closely with their Northern colleagues in the prevention of petrol smuggling and other illegal activities from which the paramilitaries may benefit financially.

ALLEGED GARDIA AND ARMY COLLUSION WITH THE IRA

Q. What about the members of the Garda and your Army who have been in collusion with the IRA?

A. In February of this year a member of the Garda was convicted under the Official Secrets Act of passing information to the IRA and was sentenced to five years imprisonment. This was clearly an isolated case, but it was dealt with promptly and with the full rigour of the law.

- There have also been one or two instances in recent times when security information has found its way into the hands of the IRA:

- In April, 1991, following the murder of Ian Sproule, the IRA, for its own propaganda purposes, produced a confidential Garda document (Fogra Tora) which contained Mr. Sproule's details. The incident was fully investigated and the Garda authorities have since implemented a series of revised procedures for the printing, handling, distribution and security of these type of documents.

- In August 1991, a serving soldier was arrested and questioned by the Gardai about the leaking of low level information of a transient character on certain military operations. The soldier in question was dismissed from the Army in September, 1991.

[If raised: Investigation of recent allegations against a civilian employee at Garda HQ found no breach of security.]

- The action taken by the authorities in all these case clearly illustrates the serious view taken of these matters.

- These were isolated cases and they cannot be said to constitute any kind of pattern of collusion. Cases of collusion between elements of the Northern Ireland security forces and loyalist paramilitaries have occurred

with far greater frequency in Northern Ireland, to the point where many people in the nationalist community believe that such collusion is endemic.

- Arising out of the Stevens Inquiry, over sixty individuals have been charged with collusion-related offenses. These include sixteen members of the UDR who have been convicted of offenses ranging from possession of information likely to be of use to terrorists to active participation in the murder of Loughlin Maginn.

- It also includes the case of Brian Nelson, whose notorious activities have been well described in the media in recent months.