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ORIGINAL

SUBVERSION IN THE UDR

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OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

1. This paper is not an attempt to present an exhaustive study of the state of subversion in the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR): given the limited state of our knowledge in this field, and the lack of relevant intelligence, such a task would not be possible at the present time. The paper will examine the evidence and intelligence available to us. In well documented areas limited judgments will be made, and with due cognisance of the dangers involved, an attempt will be made to extrapolate from this position, in order to draw conclusions relevant to the UDR as a whole. One of the objectives the paper may well achieve is to point up how limited our knowledge is in this field.
2. The basic sources for the paper have been:
 - a. Questionnaires put to HQ-UDR, G-SD, and 12 Int and Sy Coy
 - b. An examination of 12 Int and Sy Coy records of UDR personnel, and reports on arms losses
 - c. An examination of the details of subversive traces on UDR personnel held by G Int/Sy - HQNI
 - d. Discussion with GSO 1 Int/Sy (HQNI) following his visits to UDR battalions
 - e. Intelligence reports.

HISTORICAL AND BACKGROUND

3. The UDR came into being on 1 April 1970. It was formed following the recommendations of the Hunt Report (in 1969) that the Ulster Special Constabulary ('B' Specials), who were 100% Protestant, should be disbanded, and a new locally recruited, non-denominational, part time force, under the GOC Northern Ireland, be set up. In fact the percentage of Catholic members has continually declined since the formation of the regiment,

and currently stands at just under 45 (see Annex A).

4. The UDR is organized into 11 Battalions and 59 companies: there are two battalions in Belfast and the remainder cover county or sub-county areas. Seven of the 11 Battalions are commanded by Regular Commanding Officers. In addition the Training Majors, Quartermaster, Regimental Sergeant Majors, Chief Clerks, and Signaller NCOs are also Regulars. There are a number of 'Conrate' (full time UDR) posts in each unit, including Adjutants, Permanent Staff Instructors, Security Guards, etc. Many of the officer and senior rank Conrates are ex-Regulars. The remainder are part-timers. Their main tasks are guarding key points, patrolling, and surveillance, and manning Vehicle Check Points. They do not operate in the 'hard' areas of Belfast, and are not permitted to become involved in crowd confrontations anywhere. Men are armed with self-loading rifles, or sub-machine guns. The current strength of the Regiment is 7910.

WHY IS THERE INTEREST IN SUBVERSION IN THE UDR

5. Since the first days of the UDR the dangers of raising a local force from the two communities, at a time of intercommunal strife, has been clearly recognised, and each applicant has been subjected to a security vetting process. However, following the impetus given to the recruiting of Protestant para-military and extremist groups by the imposition of direct rule (the UDA in particular was estimated to have a strength of 4,000 - 6,000 members in Belfast plus 15,000 supporters by September 1972) the problem of divided loyalties amongst UDR recruits became more marked. Joint membership of the UDA (which had objectives incompatible with those of the UDR) and the UDR became widespread, and at the same time the rate of UDR weapons losses greatly increased.

Subsequently a number of UDR

members with traces in other subversive organisations have come to note.

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DEFINITIONS

6. For the purposes of this paper subversion may be considered to include:

- a. strong support for, or membership of, organisations whose aims are incompatible with those of the UDR
- b. Attempts by UDR members to use their UDR knowledge, skills, or equipment to further the aims of such organisations.

SECURITY OF PERSONNEL

7. The current policy on the discharge from the UDR of men who are involved with the UDA or similar organisations was established in late 1972 and is quoted in full at Annex B. In the period November 1972 to 25 July 1973, 73 men have been discharged for this reason, the cases of 35 men have been placed on the 'Link' procedure (a system of regular review where a possible subversive trace is suspected) and a further 20 men have resigned. The majority of these cases have occurred in 9 UDR (Co. Antrim), which includes Carrickfergus, Larne, and Ballymena, and 10 UDR (Belfast). During the past 9 months approximately 3% of the current strength of 9 UDR, and approximately 4% of the current strength of 10 UDR have been discharged or have resigned as a result of subversive traces coming to light (statistical details are at Annex C). Most of the possible subversive traces are contained in intelligence material. The discovery of members of para-military or extremist organisations in the UDR is not, and has not been, a major intelligence target. In many reports where the orbit of a particular subversive group is listed, it is mentioned 'en passant' that a man is a member of the UDR, and it seems unlikely that our intelligence coverage of this area is in any way comprehensive. Examples of some of the more interesting traces that have come up, and of incidents in which UDR

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soldiers have been involved are at Annex D.

8. In the absence of intelligence it is often extremely difficult for a UDR commanding officer to discover whether his soldiers are involved in subversive or para-military activity. In many areas company headquarters are isolated, and the soldiers and NCOs are not well known to battalion headquarters staff: in such circumstances it would not be difficult to maintain contacts with or joint membership of a subversive group, and remain undiscovered. Indeed, in many areas where officers and men have known each other all their lives through church or social or Orange Order activities, membership of a Protestant para-military group might not be considered at all unusual or worth reporting to higher authority. At least some UDR battalion commanders appear to be concerned at this problem. Some members of the UDR, who also belong to subversive groups, undoubtedly lead 'double lives', and even with the aid of intelligence it is occasionally difficult to persuade a CO that one of his men is a risk. Indicative, but not typical, is the case of a member of 1 UDR, apparently a good citizen (the Deputy Chairman of a District Council) who had the following traces:

- a. Subject was CO of Ballymena UDA
- b. Subject had obtained ammunition for the UDA
- c. Subject was suspected of illegal arms dealings, and of acquiring an SLR and an SHG in Scotland, and of selling them to the UDA.

He was however described by his CO as 'a model soldier'.

9. There is some evidence that on occasion members of subversive or extremist groups have deliberately attempted to join their local UDR group 'on masse'. On 24 March 1973 applications to join 11 UDR were received from six men in Portadown, all of whom had UVF traces. Information had already been received however that an attempt of this type was in hand; in any case

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all the men were known to the agencies involved in processing the applications, and there was no chance of their being accepted. The motives of the UVP were probably to obtain weapons training, and perhaps to place its members in a position where they had access to arms and ammunition. There have been other reports in the past of UDA and Orange Volunteer leaders encouraging their members to join UDR, but it has been by no means clear that their motives were subversive. It would be surprising if similar attempts to infiltrate the UDR had not been made by other subversive groups, but we have no knowledge of this or of their degree of success. In the last three months however, 29 of the 99 rejected applicants for the UDR were turned down because of the existence of subversive traces on them.

10. Despite the improvements in the vetting of applicants, it seems quite unlikely that the security vetting system, or subsequent intelligence material can reveal all the members of subversive groups who have applied to join the UDR. It seems likely that a significant proportion (perhaps 5% - in some areas as high as 15%) of UDR soldiers will also be members of the UDA, Vanguard Service Corps, Orange Volunteers or UVP. Subversion will not occur in every case, but there will be a passing on of information and training methods in many cases, and a few subversives may conspire to 'leak' arms and ammunition to Protestant extremist groups. The presence within the UDR of members of extremist groups does however contain within it the danger that at some future stage, if EGC's actions were perceived to be unfavourable to 'loyalist' interests, these men could act as a source of information, training and weapons for their fellows, and might even work within the UDR to make it unreliable.

LOSS OF ARMS AND ABDUCTION

11. Since the beginning of the current campaign the best single source of

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weapons (and the only significant source of modern weapons) for Protestant extremist groups has been the UDR. The details of UDR arms losses for 1972/3 are set out below:

a. 1972

	<u>LOST/STOLEN AT ARMOURY OR ON DUTY</u>	<u>LOST/STOLEN AT HOME OR ON WAY TO WORK</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
<u>SLR</u>	102 - 62 were recovered shortly after the Lurgan arms theft.	38	140 - 62 of these were recovered shortly after the Lurgan arms theft
<u>SMG</u>	24 - 8 were recovered shortly after the Lurgan arms theft	4	28 - 8 were recovered shortly after the Lurgan arms theft
<u>PISTOL</u>	7	15	22
<u>TOTAL</u>	133 (- 70 of these were recovered shortly after the Lurgan arms theft)	57	190 (- 70 of these were recovered shortly after the Lurgan arms theft.)

By comparison Regular Army weapons losses in Northern Ireland in 1972 were 6 SLRs, 1 SMG, and 9 pistols.

b. 1973 to end July

	<u>LOST/STOLEN AT ARMOURY OR ON DUTY</u>	<u>LOST/STOLEN AT HOME OR ON WAY TO WORK</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
<u>SLR</u>	10	3	13
<u>SMG</u>	1	1	2
<u>PISTOL</u>	6	7	13
<u>TOTAL</u>	17	11	28

By comparison Regular Army weapons losses in Northern Ireland in the same period were 2 SLRs, nil SMGs, and 6 pistols.

12. We believe that the vast majority of weapons stolen from the UDR during this period are in the hands of Protestant extremists. In the case of the

weapons stolen from UDR armories and from the UDR guard detachments dispersed at a polling station (7 March 1972) and a key point (7 Nov 72) in Belfast there is a substantial body of intelligence to support this view. The question of whether there was collusion by UDR members in these thefts is a difficult one. In no case is there proof positive of collusion; but in every case there is considerable suspicion, which in some instances is strong enough to lead to a judgement that an element of collusion was present.

a. The arms raid on the HQ of 10 UDR at Lislea Drive (14 Oct 72)

14 self-loading rifles and a quantity of ammunition were stolen from this location, when armed men 'overpowered' the Camp Guard. The raid was well organized and was carried out by persons who had prior knowledge of the unit layout, and details of guard arrangements. It subsequently transpired that the guard commander on the night of the raid had nine previous convictions for deception and had spent a period in jail. He had been arrested in September 1972 for riotous behaviour outside Tennant Street RUC station following the shooting of two men by security forces in the Shankill, and the arrest of a UDA leader. He had one UDA trace and three separate reliable reports subsequently indicated that he was a member of the UVF. The initial security report into the incident concluded that it was probably carried out with 'inside help' and that it was possible that 'one or more members of the guard had prior knowledge of the intended raid, and actively assisted in its prosecution'.

b. The arms raid on the UDR/TAVR centre at Lurgan on 23 Oct 72

At about 0420 on the morning of 23 October 1972 members of 'C' Coy 11 UDR, and B5 Sqn, 40(Ulster) Sig. Regt. TAVR on guard at the Kings Park

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Camp in Lurgan were 'overpowered' by a number of armed men, and 85 SLRs and 21 SMGs were stolen. It is apparent that the raiders found rather more weapons in the armoury than they had bargained for and within a matter of hours 63 SLRs and 8 SMGs had been recovered close to an abandoned Land Rover. Of the 22 SLRs and 13 SMGs that were not recovered, 16 and 11 respectively were the property of the UDR, the rest of the TAVR. One of the concluding paragraphs in the Provost Company (R&P) investigations of the incident read as follows:

"It is quite apparent that the offenders knew exactly what time to carry out the raid. Had they arrived earlier they may have been surprised by returning patrols and had they arrived later they may have been intercepted by the Tandragee Power Station guard returning from duty. The very fact that all the guard weapons had been centralised and there was only one man on the main gate, a contravention of unit guard orders, was conducive to the whole operation. The possibility of collusion is therefore highly probable." (Whether by UDR or TAVR is not clear).

c. The theft of UDR weapons from Claudy RUC station (30 Oct 72)

During the night of 30 October 1972, the unmanned RUC station at Claudy (Co. Londonderry) was broken into and four UDR SMGs (minus breech blocks) were stolen. The circumstances of the raid indicated that the raiders knew both the layout of the building and the presence of the weapons. The Security section report on the incident was unable to discount the possibility of collusion by a member of the UDR or the RUC.

d. The possibility of UDR collusion in arms raids by Protestant extremist groups exist in at least two further cases. 3 SLRs and a quantity of ammunition were taken from the UDR guard at a polling station in East Belfast by 6 - 9 armed men on 7 March 1973. Five months earlier

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14 SLRs plus ammunition had been taken from a UDR key point guard by about 8 men (themselves armed with self loading rifles). It may be of interest that shortly before the polling station incident, two men had strolled past the sentry and told him that they would return in a couple of hours 'to steal your guns'.

13. Thus in a series of four arms raids 121 SLRs and 21 SMGs have been taken from armed UDR/TAVR defensive guards by well briefed gangs who knew what they were doing, without a shot being fired in anger, or any significant attempt made to resist. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that members of the UDR were party to these incidents.

14. The circumstances in which some weapons have been stolen from UDR soldiers at home or on the way to work has also aroused suspicion and it is likely that a number of these raids or hold-ups were carried out with the foreknowledge of the subject.

15. Intelligence reports have indicated that there is some leakage of UDR ammunition to groups such as the UDA and UVF. It is almost impossible to estimate the quantities involved. Similarly there have been a number of reports of UDR soldiers giving weapons training to UDA, UVF and OV extremists: the scale of this training is not known.

16. The rate of weapons loss has decreased during 1973: while in some part this may be due to improved security it is more likely that the reduced credibility of Protestant extremist groups in the eyes of the majority community, has made the subversion of UDR members more difficult. During the current year the most successful Protestant extremist arms raids have taken place at the Department of Industrial and Forensic Science, and at firearms dealers in Belfast, Newtownards and Armagh, rather

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than on UDR locations.

17. On the evidence available to us it is not possible to judge the extent to which extremist groups have deliberately attempted to infiltrate their members into the UDR in order to make possible the acquisition of weapons. In some cases and particularly the raid on the HQ of 10 UDR, it seems to have occurred.

18. There can be little doubt that subversion in the UDR has added significantly to the weapons and ammunition stocks of Protestant extremist groups. In many cases ex-UDR weapons are the only automatic and semi-automatic weapons in their possession. Neither the British Army, nor the minority community has yet experienced the full force of these weapons, for many are in store. Several have however been used and there is strong evidence that they have been in the hands of the most violent of the criminal sectarian groups in the Protestant community. One of the Sterling SIGs stolen from the Lurgan UDR/TAVR Centre (para 12b refers) was recovered in the Shankill on 21 July 1973 in the possession of three men, two of whom were known members of the Shankill UFF/UVP group: they had just robbed a bar. Research at the Data Reference Centre has subsequently indicated that this weapon has been used in at least 12 terrorist outrages, including the murder of a Catholic, and seven other attempted murders (details are at Annex E).

19. It is a statement of the obvious that circumstances may well arise in which all the weapons stolen from the UDR may well be used, perhaps against the British Army. They would form a most significant part of the armoury of the Protestant extremists.

LOSS OF DOCUMENTS

20. There is no substantial evidence that accountable documents in the possession of the UDR have been passed or leaked to subversive or extremist

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groups. There is some cause for concern on the question of personal identity (ID) cards. In one of the UDR battalions recently, 103 ID cards were not returned by soldiers who had left the service over a three-month period. Clearly, in not every case could the motive be subversive, but this lax control of ID cards in one unit made possible the exploitation of the situation by well informed subversive groups.

CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH SUBVERSION MIGHT AFFECT THE UDR (OR ELEMENTS OF IT)
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21. The ability of the UDR to carry out its duties has been compromised on only a very few occasions to date by the activities of disloyal or subversive soldiers (some of the incidents are quoted in paragraphs 12 (a) (b) (d)). It does not require great mental agility however to conceive of circumstances in which subversion in the UDR might become a much greater problem, or in which elements of the regiment might become unreliable. The circumstances prevailing at the time of its formation have made this a clear possibility, and the restrictions placed upon its activities are a recognition of this. There are two possible situations in which elements of the UDR might well cease to be reliable.

- a. Should the Assembly fail and future Westminster plans also meet with no success, it is possible that the future leader of a "Loyalist" political party might well declare a "UDI" for Ulster in an attempt to return power to "Loyalist" hands. In these circumstances the loyalty of UDR members to ESB would be sorely tried, particularly if required to play any part in military activity against "Loyalist" groups.
- b. If at any time it became a feature of ESB policy (perhaps under a Labour Government) to encourage early and substantial progress towards the setting up of a powerful Council of Ireland, or towards the achievement of a United Ireland, the reliability of elements of the UDR would be brought into serious question. If the latter policy objective were to be undertaken by ESB it is conceivable that a large number of UDR soldiers would desert taking their weapons with them.

See H4 D57
at E63

22. If the deterioration in the situation was gradual 'leakage' and 'leakages' of arms and ammunition might well occur at an earlier stage than outright unreliability. The small number of subversives within the UDR would act as a focus for this. The battalions most likely to encounter early difficulties would be those responsible for Belfast, Co. Antrim and Co. Londonderry: Carrickfergus, Larne, Monkstown and Coleraine might well be difficult areas.

THE THREAT FROM REPUBLICAN ELEMENTS

23. The threat of subversion in the UDR from Republican extremists has decreased as the number of serving Catholics has decreased: the percentage of Catholics in the Regiment is currently under 4%. There have been isolated incidents where Catholic UDR soldiers have 'lost' weapons in suspicious circumstances, but neither the number of weapons nor the threat is thought to be great.

CONCLUSIONS

24. The danger of subversion in the UDR, by comparison with other British Army Regiments, is enormously heightened -

- a. By the circumstances in which it was set up
- b. By the communities from which it recruits
- c. By the task it is expected to fulfil
- d. And by the political circumstances that have prevailed in the first three years of its existence.

It goes without saying that the first loyalties of many of its members are to a concept of Ulster rather than to HMG, and that where a perceived conflict in these loyalties occurs, HMG will come off second best. So far this division of loyalties has not been seriously tested, but already disquieting evidence of subversion is available.

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25. We know comparatively little from an intelligence point of view, of subversion in the UDR. Often what intelligence there is, is of a 'post facto' character. But despite our limited sources and the limited evidence available to us a fair number of UDR soldiers have been discovered to hold positions in the UDA/UWS/LDV. A number have been involved in overt terrorist acts. It is most unlikely that our intelligence coverage presents anything like the whole picture of infiltration of the UDR by the UDA and other groups, and there is no immediate prospect of it doing so. UDR Bn Commanders are not always well informed concerning the reliability of elements of their command. It is likely that there remain within the UDR significant numbers of men (perhaps 5 - 15%) who are, or have been, members of Protestant extremist organisations.

26. Subversion in the UDR has almost certainly led to arms losses to Protestant extremist groups on a significant scale. The rate of loss has however decreased in 1973. Subversion in the UDR may well have been responsible for materially adding to the reservoir of military skills amongst Protestant extremists, and it is likely that there remain in the regiment men who would be willing to engage in further arms raids should it be thought necessary. In most cases our intelligence on stolen arms has been limited to ascertaining blame after the event.

27. Except in limited circumstances subversion in the UDR has not compromised its ability to carry out its duties. There are however a number of predictable political circumstances in which the regiment might not only suffer a much higher level of subversion than at present, but in which elements of it might cease to be reliable.

28. There is no substantial threat of subversion from Republican extremists.

29. The evidence and intelligence available to us on subversion in the UDR is limited, and there are large gaps in our coverage. Improvements in intelligence would certainly help weed out subversive and troublesome

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men. But by the nature of its being, and the circumstances in which it operates, the regiment is wide open to subversion and potential subversion. Any effort to remove men who in foreseeable political circumstances might well operate against the interests of the UDR could well result in a very small regiment indeed.

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A LIST OF TERRORIST CRIMES
IN WHICH ONE OF THE SMG - MACHINES
WAS FIRED IN THE LIRGAN UDR/TANK
CENTRE AREA DURING 23 OCTOBER 1972,
HAS SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN USED.

The examination (by the DFC) of test cases fired from the SMG recovered from three men, two of whom were known UDR/UDF, following an armed robbery and attempted murder at 192 Shankill Rd on 21 July 1973, has revealed that the same weapon has been used in the following incidents.

1. 3/2/73 - find of fired case in car C1J 7010 at junction Crumlin Rd/Century St.
2. 3/2/73 - Kidnapping of R.W. Stewart. Fired cases found in car 5848 WZ. Bally-gomartin Rd.
3. 20/3/73 - The attempted murder of three youths, who were fired at from a passing car, on Brookvale Avenue.
4. 9/5/73 - The attempted murder of Mrs E Armstrong, Tobergill St. Fired cases found at scene and in car AIA 7339.
5. 14/5/73 - The attempted murder of Francis McCourt, Church Rd, Whiteabbey. Fired cases found at scene.
6. 31/5/73 - The murder of Thomas Curry, and the attempted murder of others in in Muldoon's Bar, Tomb St. Fired cases found at scene.
7. 9/6/73 - Find of fired cases at Carnan St. (0450 hrs). No report of shooting incident.
8. 9/6/73 - Attempted murder of Frank Haddock in Pacific Avenue/Atlantic Avenue. Fired cases found at scene.
9. 10/6/73 - Attempted murder of Messrs, Thompson, Cochrane, McGowan, and O'Neill, on the Antrim Rd, who were fired at from a passing car. Fired cases were handed to police.
10. 11/6/73 - Attempted murder of members of the Security Forces, Shankill Rd.
11. 9/6/73 - Attempted murder of J J Hawthorne, on Shankill Rd.

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