

6th DEPTJOINT APPRECIATION BY THE GOC AND DIRECTOR OF  
OPERATIONS AND THE INSPECTOR GENERAL ~~ARMY~~ ROYAL  
ULSTER CONSTABULARY - DECEMBER 1969AIM

1. To examine the time-scale and the phases required for Northern Ireland to return to normality when the Army will return to its customary tasks and roles, it being understood that its common law duties to aid the civil power, if required to do so, will remain.

REVIEW OF 1969

2. The unsettled political situation in the North of Ireland grew steadily worse during the first <sup>seven</sup> ~~six~~ months of 1969. The problems that arose proved beyond the powers of the 3,000 strong police force, and it became necessary to deploy the Army to assist in keeping the peace and maintaining law and order. At one stage it was found necessary to have 3,000 police, 3,000 Ulster Special Constabulary and 8,000 soldiers deployed on this task. At the request of the Northern Ireland Government the GOC Northern Ireland became the Director of Operations, with the Ulster Special Constabulary under operational control and the Royal Ulster

Constabulary under control as far as Internal Security duties were concerned.

3. The security situation has been relatively quiet since the night of 11/12 October. Contributory factors to this are:

- a. Revulsion among Protestants at the scale and consequence of the riots.
- b. The arrest and conviction of a number of troublemakers.
- c. The deterrent value of the firmness of the military reaction - both the measures taken against the rioters and the strength of the military forces subsequently deployed in order to maintain control.

4. There remains nevertheless an undercurrent of bitterness and antagonism. This erupts occasionally in acts of violence and intimidation. It is more frequently expressed in small sectarian demonstrations, where the sense of angry frustration is underlined by the presence of the security forces deployed to ensure that violence does not develop.

5. Conclusion. Military action, including the use of firearms has proved necessary in the past, and cannot be

excluded as a future possibility while the current level of threat exists. A force of 3,000 policemen, although they were heavily armed and had the use of water cannon, batons and shields, and finally tear smoke, have proved inadequate to deal with this level of threat.

*(So what - there are more than 3000 soldiers)*

THE THREAT

General

*Can this be measured in more quantitative terms? People likely to riot. Or what comes?*

6. It is evident that sectarian divisions in the cities and in the country are sharper than ever and will take a considerable time to break down. The Protestants fear that the progressive Unionist Government may surrender towards the demands of the Civil Rights movement, and there is a fierce resentment, even among people who would formerly be classified as moderates, against Roman Catholic agitators and the Eire Government which is seen as their champion. Furthermore, there is animosity towards the British Government and the Army, regarded as the instruments of the changes which are in prospect.

*Effect of ...*

*Shall ... Only ... Plan ...*

7. On the Catholic side the policy of the moderates is to wait and see how proposed reforms are being implemented and

there is a realisation that at this juncture further violence would harm their cause. But there are militant voices for more positive action. The capacity of the hard-liners amongst the Republicans, IRA and People's Democracy to cause trouble if they think there is any easing of pressure on the authorities should not be underestimated.

8. Conclusions

a. Violence could break out again and could spread very rapidly throughout the country. This could happen very quickly if the police force or the security force were to be seen to be thin on the ground.

b. Too rapid a run-down of security forces could encourage would-be troublemakers to start offensive action again.

Protestant Extremists

10. It is still not certain to what extent Protestant Extremists are organised and controlled. However, it can be assumed that they are in possession of a considerable quantity of illegal arms.

11. There is no doubt that the Protestant extremists would move to over-throw the present Government, as they did the

last Prime Minister, by all means including acts of sabotage,  
if they thought the Constitution was in doubt or the Catholic  
population was gaining too much control.

*last an  
extremist  
activity  
to support  
a  
Constitution!*

X

12. Conclusion. The Protestant extremists have both the  
capability and the will to attempt widespread acts of  
sabotage and violence as a means of overstressing the  
Security Forces and bringing down the Government.

IRA/People's Democracy/Republicans

13. They are infiltrating into the Citizens Defence  
Committees and trying to gain control. The IRA in the  
recent past has kept comparatively quiet as far as militant  
action is concerned because of the strength of the 'B'  
Specials and because the police have been armed.

X  
IRA  
Refugee  
...?

14. Conclusion. There is a possibility, because the  
police are now unarmed and the Ulster Special Constabulary  
are to be disbanded, and the UDR arms are to be kept in  
armouries, that more militant action can be expected from  
this quarter.

But it  
will be  
less  
justified.  
Is this right?

Flashpoint .....

Flashpoint Areas

15. The general area of the Peace Line and Unity Flats in Belfast, and of Bogside and the Creggan Estate in Londonderry, are flashpoint areas where the joint RUC/military policing is at present limited and is dependent on a strong military backing. There is a progressive operation to enable the police to resume full patrolling on their own.

16. Because of promises made by the Home Secretary to the Catholics in these areas that they would be adequately protected, the Catholic population, and especially the Citizens Defence Committee, will react very quickly if they feel that there is not adequate protection. It would be a severe setback if the barricades went up again.

17. Conclusion. Until the police are firmly established in these flashpoint areas, and there is evidence that their authority is accepted and the people have confidence in them, there must be a military presence near at hand.

Threat to Key Points

18. There will continue to be a threat to Key Points from both Protestant Extremists and the IRA who, for one reason

/or .....

or another, will wish to disrupt the normal life of the community for their own political ends. At present about 450 members of the Ulster Special Constabulary guard Key Points every night, a task which could not be carried out by the military without a reinforcement of the order of two additional battalions. The USC also have the task of setting up emergency road-blocks to check road traffic following any sabotage or major security incident.

*not without  
superior*

19. Conclusion. The Ulster Special Constabulary should continue to be deployed on Key Points until 1 April 1970 and that on that date the Ulster Defence Regiment should be of sufficient strength to take over these duties and any requirement for road-checks.

The Threat from Arms Smuggling

20. It is believed that arms are smuggled both across the border and at landings on the coast-line. Joint military and RUC surveillance, with the assistance of the USC, is a necessary deterrent to the arms-running threat.

/Conclusion ...

21. Conclusion. Both the RUC and the Ulster Defence Regiment <sup>will</sup> have a contribution to make to deterring and preventing arms-smuggling while this threat remains.

SECURITY FORCES

Military

22. Firm military action, including the use of firearms, has provided the basis of the present grip on the security situation. While the current threat continues, any development which could be regarded as a weakening of this grip could provoke a reaction from either side.

23. Conclusion. There is little margin for a withdrawal of military strength without a compensating strengthening of other security forces.

USC/Ulster Defence Regiment

24. The USC volunteers, with a force of 8,000, have satisfactorily met the demands of Key Point guards, with the assistance of military and RUC mobile patrols. For road-block operations their value has been limited by restrictions on their use without RUC or military supervision. The Ulster Defence Regiment, who will take over these two roles of the USC, will also depend on voluntary recruiting and will

number not more than 6,000. It is at present difficult to judge how soon after the disbandment of the USC the Ulster Defence Regiment will provide a fully effective substitute.

25. Conclusion. It is possible that for a period after the formation of the Ulster Defence Regiment a heavier load than at present will fall on the other security forces.

RUC

26. The RUC is now engaged in reorganising itself on the United Kingdom police principles which are non-aggressive and non-retaliatory. The RUC will not carry firearms nor possess any para-military capability, nor is it the intention to equip the Special Patrol Group with any riot control equipment. Even with the use of para-military methods the RUC numbers have proved to be inadequate in the past and however gallantly they have acted during the past year, they have always been outnumbered. It will at least need the capability to concentrate impressive numbers to meet particular threats without a consequent serious weakening elsewhere. The problem of increasing numbers is one of administrative difficulties and it appears that unless there

*Is this a new relationship? Shillingham?*

*2  
Hunt / 16  
in conflict*

*No mention of mutual aid*

Sec X  
Shillington  
+ Lynch

is some crash action programme, with additional instructors and additional accommodation, they will not be able to increase their strength by much more than 350 to 400 a year with wastages. As it takes just over five policemen to carry out one policeman's task <sup>over a 24 hour period,</sup> when you take into account leave, sickness and off-duty, even an increase of 1,000 would only produce just over 200 extra beats but it would produce 1,000 men for disturbances if leave and off-duty were stopped temporarily.

X  
27. As it is likely that disturbances will continue and every so-called traditional parade causes offence to one side or the other, an adequate riot control capability must be readily available unless the military are to be invariably called in at the first indication of a threat. It would be wrong for the Army, once it has given up its present role, to be called out as the routine reaction to parades and disturbances. Parades and disturbances are quite different in Northern Ireland to those in England. In England it is generally one side against the Police; in Northern Ireland it is two sides against each other and two sides against the Police.

28. Conclusion. It is considered that at least 1,000 extra police would be required to enable the RUC to carry out their new role and to be able to deal with disturbances without having to call in the Army and unless some crash action is taken it would take up to three years to get these 1,000 men.

CONCLUSIONS

29. a. The threat of violence breaking out and spreading remains, and any weakening in security forces could encourage this. Both Protestant and Catholic extremist organisations could resort to widespread militant action.
- b. The security forces' capability to guard Key Points must be maintained. This will depend, after 1 April, on the successful formation of the UDR.
- c. For certain areas in Londonderry and Belfast, because of the promises made by the Home Secretary for adequate protection to Catholic areas, soldiers must remain on the streets until the police have sufficient strength to take over.

/d. ....

d. The police will not be able to take over entirely until they have built up their strength and have produced a strong riot control agency.

Shillington  
X  
Loyal

e. The time-scale at which soldiers can be relieved of their duty will depend on police reinforcements.

Miss  
Shillington  
Loyal

30. The return of the Army to its customary tasks and roles depends primarily therefore on the speed with which the RUC can be so strengthened and reorganised as to take back those security tasks which the Army now performs outside its normal role and duties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

31. a. That the Police force be increased by at least 1,000 and a crash action programme be started as soon as possible as it would not be acceptable for this to happen over a period of three years.

Shillington  
General point

Michael O'Neil  
RUCR

b. That the Police should have a mobile riot control force fully equipped with all the latest riot control weapons in reserve.

Good question

?  
NOT  
CS,  
Surveys!

c. That every effort be taken to re-establish the Police in all areas of the Province so that normal police work can take place as soon as possible.

X Phase 4  
Can RUC be completely  
restored?  
Some areas?  
How to  
be achieved?

/d. That

d. That a calculated risk be taken to remove the soldiers from the streets progressively in the following phases and time-scale:

Phase I. As at present, reducing gradually but firmly the current strengths in the tactical bases in the streets, maintaining Observation Posts and patrolling, and reinforcing again for weekends or other occasions as necessary.

Phase II. Troops withdrawn from the streets but an element always at hand in platoon and company bases and available for immediate support of the police. Mar 70

Phase III. Troops withdrawn from platoon and company bases to barrack areas but with troops in barrack areas in reserve on short standby notice, and patrolling only as occasion required.

mid-Apr 70

Phase IV. Normality and a situation in which the police are in a position to deal with the normal demonstrations and parades that one can expect in Northern Ireland in the future, but a

continuing military standby would enable  
military assistance to be given without a  
formal request from the Northern Ireland  
Government to the British Government for aid  
to the civil power. This might have to  
continue until the police force are up to  
their full new establishments (twelve months  
or longer).