

Inter- and Intra-Agency Intelligence Liaison During ‘the Troubles’

Dr Samantha Newbery

University of Salford

S.L.Newbery@salford.ac.uk

ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9084-0729

Abstract

Intelligence is crucial to success in counter-terrorism, and successful intelligence work involves effective liaison between and within all the organisations involved. Scholars rarely address intelligence in counter-terrorism other than through case studies, while studies of intelligence in counter-insurgency and studies of international intelligence liaison emphasise the value of intelligence liaison with little attention to how it works in practice. This article substantially expands existing knowledge and understanding by focusing on intelligence coordination within Northern Ireland in the 1990s. It draws on heretofore unexploited, yet voluminous, original material. It analyses the contribution that computerisation made to inter-agency liaison, the contribution the Northern Ireland Prison Service made to intelligence work, the role played by intra- and inter-agency structures and the valuable work that the right individuals in the right posts can do. This article thereby provides a broader and deeper understanding of the challenges faced by state agencies and how some of these were overcome to facilitate inter- and intra-agency intelligence liaison in Northern Ireland in the 1990s. It therefore contributes to emerging theory that seeks to explain intelligence.

Keywords: Intelligence; Counter-Terrorism; Liaison; Coordination; ‘The Troubles’.

Introduction

As described by a former Secretary of the UK's inter-agency Joint Intelligence Committee, intelligence's main purpose is 'to make its government's actions better than it would be without it.'¹ Organisations that conducted intelligence work in Northern Ireland during the 1990s engaged in extensive liaison with each other in pursuit of this goal, activity that ranged from sharing intelligence they had collected to the joint running of informers. Intelligence has been described as 'the primary weapon in the struggle against terrorism' as 'without intelligence one cannot focus security resources or pre-empt terrorist actions'.² Yet there is a distinct gap in the literature on, and therefore in understanding of, domestic intelligence liaison both in terms of this case study and this type of liaison more generally. Publications stemming from the interdisciplinary academic discipline of intelligence studies that do address liaison predominantly focus on international liaison between a US organisation such as the CIA and a UK organisation such as the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or 'MI6') for example. As acknowledged in official reports reflecting on recent terrorist attacks, however, domestic liaison involving cooperation between two UK organisations such as the police and the Security Service (MI5) takes place routinely and there is a definite need for this kind of liaison to be effective and efficient in order to support counter-terrorism. Despite the necessity for intelligence in counter-terrorism work, the terrorism studies literature says little about this subject other than through case studies such as those provided by 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland. Counter-insurgency literature goes further in that it argues intelligence liaison is important, including domestic liaison between the police and the armed forces, but rarely does it detail the mechanics of this relationship. This article addresses these gaps by detailing how intelligence liaison within Northern Ireland was established and maintained. As will be demonstrated, the relevant existing literature tends to focus on the reasons for liaison rather than the mechanics of how it is run. This contribution to the understanding of

intelligence liaison in general terms and in the context of 1990s Northern Ireland lends the article its significance.

That context was extremely complex, involving a multitude of actors, attacks, political developments and more. The 1990s is most commonly associated with the peace process and the corresponding 1998 Good Friday Agreement, though, as John Coakley and Jennifer Todd have pointed out, '[c]entral to reaching peace and settlement ... was a set of British-Irish intergovernmental discussions and negotiations, dating from the beginning of the 1980s.'³ Nor were negotiations new in the 1980s, as the previous decade saw secret talks take place between the British government and loyalist paramilitaries, and the British government and the IRA, for instance.⁴ The level of violence fluctuated during this period and varied across Northern Ireland. In addition to the Good Friday Agreement particularly noteworthy episodes include the IRA's 1994 ceasefire that went on to be broken in 1996 and re-instated in 1997. In Brice Dickson's words, by 1998 the level of violence had 'greatly diminished'.⁵ Analysis has, and should, also focus on the varied work of the armed forces, police, intelligence agencies, and on the individuals who worked for these organisations. Although necessarily an incomplete summary of the parallel and interconnected features of this decade, this outline draws attention to the challenges faced by researchers in assessing the causes and effects of particular developments.

Intra-agency liaison is a term used herein to refer to instances or practices in which constituent parts of one organisation work together. Inter-agency liaison, on the other hand, refers to cooperation between organisations. In this and other case studies intra-agency liaison was made difficult by tension between intelligence-gathering and the collection of evidence. This difference in task was represented structurally as the Royal Ulster

Constabulary (RUC) had both a Special Branch and Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Special Branch was there

to collect, process and assess information about subversive groups, organisations and individuals from all available sources, and to disseminate security intelligence to those who needed to know it and were authorised to receive it.⁶

By contrast, CID's role was to investigate ordinary and terrorist crimes,⁷ including to carry out investigations on the basis of intelligence it received.⁸ These differing purposes, along with differences in organisational cultures, created obstacles to liaison that can be overcome, at least in part, by strong relationships between individuals as is argued below. The British Army, originally deployed to Northern Ireland in support of the civil power in August 1969, and staying until 2007, was heavily involved in intelligence work. This article details for the first time how a shared computer system helped them work with Special Branch. In Northern Ireland, the Security Service was primarily responsible for providing 'strategic advice to Ministers on threats from paramilitary organisations.'⁹ It will be shown that they were aided in this function by an internal structure that facilitated efficient coordination.

These kinds of state organisations are commonly referred to by practitioners and scholars as comprising the 'intelligence community'. But this article will highlight that the Northern Ireland Prison Service's role in this community demonstrates that prisons can and should be routinely involved with intelligence, whether to collect intelligence in prisons and to share it, or to receive and use relevant intelligence from other organisations. This is a topic that is currently neglected in the literature in intelligence studies and even in terrorism studies.

Emphasis will also be placed on the influence that individuals can play in intelligence liaison, firstly through the creation of appropriate posts and secondly by appointing the best people to these positions, thereby further contributing to understanding of how liaison takes place.

Current Understanding

Although the purpose of intelligence can be broadly agreed upon, there is a lack of consensus regarding how ‘intelligence’ should be defined.¹⁰ In this article the term refers to information that is collected, analysed and – ideally – disseminated and used by state organisations and state employees in pursuit of security. Non-state organisations such as terrorist groups also collect and use intelligence, though this receives much less scholarly attention and is not the subject of this article.

There is, as yet, no unifying theory of intelligence.¹¹ Scholars continue to engage in discussions about the purpose and most suitable form of such a theory, with David Kahn arguing that a theory of intelligence should ‘offer explanations or predictions that can be seen to be true or untrue’,¹² and Peter Gill differentiating between theories of intelligence and theories for intelligence.¹³ Advances are being made towards establishing which existing theories can be applied. Adam Svendsen has focused specifically on intelligence liaison, noting that it is under-theorised, and finding that there are

several different bodies of already pre-existing theories, as well as different approaches that can be adopted towards the study of intelligence-related phenomena, [and which] appear to contain significant analytical potential for evaluating intelligence co-operation.¹⁴

In a similar vein, this article makes reference to organisational theory as a useful tool for explaining elements of how domestic intelligence liaison works. Jennifer Sims proposes a framework ‘for analysing and comparing the costs and benefits’ of international intelligence liaison relationships, fitting in with the intelligence liaison literature that tends to focus on

why it happens rather than how it works. What is most similar in content to the findings of this article are Svendsen's seven 'analytical distinctions' that he persuasively argues are 'helpful when evaluating intelligence liaison'.¹⁵ It will be demonstrated that many of these distinctions can, and should, be used to analyse domestic intelligence liaison in this article's case study, and that there are additional distinctions highlighted by this case that can further help to explain intelligence liaison practices.

When more than one organisation collects intelligence in a particular geographical area such as Northern Ireland with a shared purpose of improving security, a level of coordination between them is desirable. For instance, as the late Keith Jeffery, official historian of SIS, wrote in 1987 the police and the military are almost always both involved in intelligence work for counter-insurgency.¹⁶ Further, the Security Service were often involved in British counter-insurgencies connected with the end of empire.¹⁷ Liaison is therefore desirable as it reduces the likelihood of gaps in the intelligence effort, as explained in the US Army's 2006 Counterinsurgency Field Manual.¹⁸

A 2009 report by the Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC), the UK's intelligence oversight body, articulates the value of domestic intelligence liaison for counter-terrorism. For instance, they observe how Executive Liaison Groups enable the Security Service 'to share safely secret, sensitive and, often, raw intelligence with the police, on the basis of which decisions can be made about how best to gather evidence and prosecute suspects in the courts';¹⁹ they outline Operation CREVICE, the joint Security Service-police investigation into a bomb plot aimed at the UK, in which thirty addresses were searched and 34,000 manhours of surveillance contributed to the arrests of eight people, five of whom were later convicted of conspiracy to cause explosions;²⁰ and that the

regionalisation of MI5, together with the formation of regional police Counter-Terrorism Units, has been one of the most important changes arising from the lessons of 7/7 [the attacks in London on 7 July 2005]. It has brought considerable improvements to joint investigations and intelligence and information sharing.²¹

In 2018 it was noted that '[c]ooperation between the police and the security and intelligence agencies is exceptionally good by international standards.'²² This quote is from the current version of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, and echoes the observation that 'the strong partnership between police and the Security Service is widely envied around the world.'²³ This latter quote is from David Anderson Q.C., the former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation,²⁴ in his assessment of nine Counter-Terrorism Policing and Security Service reviews into the handling of intelligence before each of the 2017 terrorist attacks in the UK.²⁵ As will be demonstrated by the example from 'the troubles' used in this article, prisons can also play a role in intelligence and therefore in intelligence liaison, as can the private sector such as companies that sell ingredients that may be used to manufacture explosives.

Anderson also observed that there was room for improvement in sharing data between the police and the Security Service,²⁶ a sentiment the ISC echoed the following year when it wrote that the 2017 attacks 'revealed that there were still problems around the sharing of MI5 information with CTP [Counter-Terrorism Policing], and the involvement of CTP in MI5 decision making.'²⁷ The current version of CONTEST notes the need to share information more effectively both domestically and with international partners.²⁸ Analyses of liaison that fall within the discipline of intelligence studies often address the pros and cons of international liaison.²⁹ Sir Stephen Lander, Director General of the Security Service from 1996-2002, observed that there can be competition over who gets to act on a particular piece

of intelligence.³⁰ This observation is applicable to domestic intelligence liaison. There are, therefore, challenges to establishing and maintaining effective cooperation in intelligence. The value of having intelligence liaison makes this a subject worth striving to understand. There are ways in which current understanding of international intelligence liaison can be applied to domestic and intra-agency liaison, but there is a gap in understanding with respect to how liaison can be set up and maintained that this article goes some way towards filling.

Previous contributions to understanding the ‘how’ of intelligence liaison have been made by scholars using organisational theory, also known as organisation theory, for instance in explaining the role of organisations’ cultures in their ability to work together.³¹ That culture plays a role is supported by the intelligence studies literature that discusses its role in the level of cooperation.³² In a chapter on organisation theory and intelligence, Glenn P. Hastedt and B. Douglas Skelley highlight that the classical school of organisation theory addresses the role of authority, structure and process in achieving efficiency and effectiveness, all features that can and should be part of analyses of intelligence liaison.³³

In analysing relations between subordinate and dominant states James Igoe Walsh provides just one example of insight derived from international intelligence liaison that may be applicable to domestic scenarios. Indeed, comments have been made about how police primacy over the army in Northern Ireland, adopted in 1976, influenced cooperation between these organisations.³⁴ As will be seen below, cooperation was affected by whether the emphasis was placed on prevention through intelligence or on prosecution. It is worth remembering that intelligence liaison has long been challenging, as illustrated by the way that limited communication between the US’s army and navy contributed to the Japanese navy’s ability to launch a surprise attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941.³⁵

Studies of intelligence during ‘the troubles’ often focus on methods of collecting intelligence, such as the use of interrogation in the early 1970s,³⁶ or take the form of memoirs by past informers.³⁷ The impact of intelligence on the IRA’s strategy has been addressed in very recent years,³⁸ and Tony Craig’s analysis of the complex relationship between the UK government on one hand and the army and Special Branch on the other with regards to intelligence provides a much-needed contribution to the literature on coordination.³⁹ Structures and coordination have also been addressed in connection with the use of informers. As Jon Moran explains,

From 1976 security operations were placed under the control of the RUC. This was a catalyst for reorganizing Special Branch and its later dominance in the handling of informants.⁴⁰

David A. Charters, who has published widely on subjects including counter-terrorism, counter-insurgency and intelligence, noted that by the 1980s,

Special Branch had taken the lead in recruiting and running agents in the province. In spite of problems, such as running the same agents without telling each other and different views on the purpose of their intelligence operations, the army and the Branch were working more closely together and with MI5⁴¹

In the case of one informer in particular – ‘Observer B’ – Charters found that the Security Service and the army worked well together, challenging the conventional wisdom about their relationship in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s,⁴² and highlighting the variety of experiences of liaison. One of many scholars to note that intelligence coordination during ‘the troubles’ was poor at first is Rory Finegan of the Irish Defence Forces.⁴³ As others have observed, this low standard had ‘real operational costs’,⁴⁴ and posed ‘a huge challenge to the Army’.⁴⁵ ‘Parallel intelligence efforts in separate organizations’, observes Brian A. Jackson,

‘generated inefficiency.’⁴⁶ Things were improved, he continues, through structures such as the Tasking and Coordination Groups which, Finegan explains, brought together ‘the tactical activities of various organisations involved in the intelligence fight.’⁴⁷ Structures, both intra- and inter-agency, duly feature prominently in the rest of this article.

Understanding of intelligence liaison can be deepened further when types of intelligence are taken into account. Types of intelligence are identified in Jeffery’s 1987 article on intelligence and British counter-insurgencies and Panagiotis Dimitrakis’ 2008 article on intelligence and the British counter-insurgency in Cyprus (1955-9). These types are distinguished on the basis of subject-matter and the method of collection. Jeffery talks firstly of background or strategic intelligence collected often by the police, the Security Service and civil servants specialising in political affairs from open sources, while Dimitrakis observes that strategic or operational intelligence addresses the strategy of a guerrilla organisation such as that collected ‘through the use of multiple sources like espionage, guerrilla propaganda and political gestures, interrogations of arrested members, and leader profiling.’ What Jeffery names operational or tactical intelligence is immediate and specific, and often collected by agents, informers and interrogations. Dimitrakis argues that this intelligence addresses topics such as arrangements to hide the guerrilla leader.⁴⁸ Jeffery also argues there is a third type: criminal intelligence,⁴⁹ which is described as ‘evidence’ elsewhere in this article. The differentiation between strategic and tactical intelligence will be shown to have influenced the mechanisms of intelligence sharing in Northern Ireland during the 1990s.

This article’s study of intelligence relationships is made possible by public inquiries concerning the 1999 murder of Lurgan solicitor Rosemary Nelson and the 1997 murder of Billy Wright, leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force. Both inquiries considered questions

about the role of intelligence in these murders, including whether informers had provided warning of the threats to Nelson and Wright.⁵⁰ As has been argued elsewhere, inquiries such as these collect and publish large quantities of information that would otherwise be difficult for researchers to access, including transcripts of the cross-examination of witnesses working in Special Branch, the army and the Security Service at the time.⁵¹ Amongst this material are insights into how domestic intelligence liaison operated in the 1990s. As Daniel Byman has argued,

perhaps no element of counterterrorism is as important as intelligence liaison: the sharing of information, the conduct of joint operations, the provision of mutual support, and other forms of cooperation among intelligence agencies of different countries.⁵²

Although this statement refers to international liaison, it is just as applicable to domestic liaison during ‘the troubles’.

Intelligence Liaison in Northern Ireland During the 1990s

Computers for intra- and inter-agency sharing

Technology has long played a role in the collection of intelligence, from phone-tapping, to tracking devices, to observation posts and watchtowers. It can also be used in the analysis of intelligence, in disseminating it to those who ought to read it, and in intelligence liaison.

Technology is certainly not the answer to everything, as Frederick P. Hitz and Brian J. Weiss highlight in their article on intelligence sharing between the CIA and FBI in the run up to the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001.⁵³ But it was a feature of how intelligence sharing functioned in Northern Ireland in the 1990s and in the previous two decades.

Computerisation of data was under consideration as early as 1972. The army proposed at that time that its 60,000 Personality Cards containing information on suspects including their names, marital status, height, car registration number, and type of faction or organisation they belonged to be computerised to allow for the sorting of data more quickly and with less clerical effort.⁵⁴ The driver here, therefore, was efficiency. Although coming much earlier than the post-2014 concerns about privacy and bulk collection of communications data prompted by Edward Snowden's disclosures about the US and the UK's practices, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) believed at this time that the use of computers to record information about people was politically sensitive.⁵⁵ None the less, by the early 1980s there was an Army Intelligence Computer known as 3702 that allowed 'simple' searches on 'personalities, houses/place and vehicles etc' and 'complex' searches.⁵⁶ In use by the 1980s was Vengeful, an army database 'mainly to do with vehicles', which 'contained sightings by military personnel and could include information gathered at [Vehicle Check Points], from operations and from casual sightings.'⁵⁷ In 1997 Vengeful became linked with Glutton, a network of automatic number plate recognition cameras in Northern Ireland and England.⁵⁸

Encouraged by a desire to help the MoD and RUC to share intelligence efficiently another computer database was designed and installed. CAISTER's introduction was announced in May 1992.⁵⁹ It had been installed in Special Branch offices by the end of November 1995 and was renamed MACER four years later.⁶⁰ Its key characteristic was its three 'data storage areas': only the RUC had access to one, only the MoD had access to another, while the third was accessible by both organisations.⁶¹ A Special Branch witness to the Billy Wright Inquiry confirmed that MACER was present in his office outside Long Kesh army camp and was used by both himself and the military personnel stationed there.⁶² It may be likely that users

of this and other systems provided feedback to their superiors on the systems' effectiveness in the hope that this could lead to improvements.

Material held on this database consisted predominantly of two types of document: Secret Intelligence Reports (SIRs)⁶³ and Secret Intelligence Dissemination Documents (SIDDs).⁶⁴ SIRs were for Special Branch use only.⁶⁵ If intelligence was to be shared with the Security Service or the army, it would be turned into SIDDs by being put 'through a process of evaluation as to whether it required sanitisation or not.'⁶⁶ Assigning a particular access level to them made SIDDs accessible to the army through the database.⁶⁷ A key point emerging from this discussion is the reminder that secrecy remains important, even between organisations working for the same overall goal in the same geographical area. Protecting sources was of the utmost importance.

This shared system, developed jointly by the RUC and MoD, removed some of the practical challenges that come with giving another agency access to one's own computerised data. It also demonstrates that there was an understanding by 1992 that computerisation could improve the sharing of information. Disappointingly for those interested in understanding further the reasons for these developments, no record exists as to 'precisely how and when decisions about computerisation were taken'.⁶⁸

A parallel, separate, computer database was exclusive to Special Branch. Adopted earlier – in 1990 – and running until 2003 it was called Police Related Intelligence Systems Management (PRISM).⁶⁹ It replaced a paper-based system at RUC Headquarters for recording and disseminating intelligence gathered by Special Branch. This central Registry in Headquarters had been established in 1970 and was a replica of the Security Service's

Registry.⁷⁰ PRISM was ‘a live intelligence repository ... for operational and tactical intelligence’.⁷¹ MACER, on the other hand, ‘was a tool for research and analysis ... used by those with an interest in strategic intelligence’.⁷²

PRISM allowed intelligence to be shared between the RUC’s three geographical and organisational Regions and its Headquarters using the ‘share command’, which triggered the printing of five copies of the document at a designated printer in Headquarters and once ‘shared’ it was viewable on screen by the intended recipient or others with appropriate privileges.⁷³

An evaluation of PRISM as a mechanism for sharing intelligence internally within Special Branch was provided by an individual given the codename B629 by The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry. This witness served as Head of Special Branch South East and Deputy Head of the South Region from 1990 to approximately 1994, then as Head of Special Branch in the South Region until leaving the Branch in 2001.⁷⁴ Although there was a period of overlap between the old system and the computerised one that ‘probably caused some ... problems’, once it was electronic there was a ‘call-up system’, eliminating the earlier difficulty that ‘sometimes intelligence got lost in the system because you couldn’t remember everything.’⁷⁵

Had PRISM and the shared database been compatible with one another, intelligence sharing would have been more efficient. As they were not compatible, they were not networked.⁷⁶ This led to a duplication of effort as clerical staff typed material into both systems separately.⁷⁷ In turn, this created the risks that information could have been left off one of the systems and that the duplication of effort slowed down the process of making this intelligence available to its consumers.⁷⁸ Sir Gerry Warner’s 1997 review that aimed to improve the quality and strategic analysis of intelligence in Northern Ireland noted that ‘it was not unusual

for there to be as long as a month between an agent debrief and the inputting of the information onto CAISTER.’⁷⁹ Such delays, duplication of effort and the risk of intelligence falling through the cracks is not due to computerisation itself but to factors such as whether systems are designed to be compatible and how personnel input material. Indeed, the situation is made even more complex when taking into account that the less secure a system appears, the less likely it is that personnel will use it, damaging the organisation’s work.⁸⁰

Computerisation can make intelligence practices more efficient and focusing on the way technology is used is a valuable approach to analysing how liaison functions. When there is compatibility between systems it can either make it even more efficient by facilitating or speeding up liaison, or it can endanger intelligence work by reducing the security of the material entered into the system either in reality or in the perceptions of the personnel tasked with using it.

The Northern Ireland Prison Service

The place of prisons in the intelligence community has been under-reported in considerations of intelligence for counter-terrorism. In his foreword to CONTEST the then Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, emphasised the importance of a joined-up approach involving the police, intelligence agencies, private and public sectors, civil society, international partners and the public in making counter-terrorism as successful as possible.⁸¹ Roles played by prisons in counter-terrorism include that those in England and Wales are subject to the legal duty to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’,⁸² through to serving as places of incarceration for convicted persons. The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) collected intelligence and shared it with Special Branch, the army and the Security

Service. This was achieved through internal and inter-agency structures as well as Prison Liaison Officers.

There is evidence that intelligence was shared with prisons. The main type they received from Special Branch concerned ‘threats to either staff or prisoners.’⁸³ A former Head of the Prison Information Unit (PIU) recounted how ‘on one occasion we received information ... that a visitor would be attempting to smuggle a puppy in. It turned out to be quite true.’⁸⁴

Both the army and Special Branch appointed Prison Liaison Officers. Although the principal purpose of these officers was, in the words of a role-holder, ‘the collection and dissemination of intelligence in relation to prisoners and their visitors’,⁸⁵ the flow of intelligence was predominantly out of the prison rather than in to it. Indeed, the same Prison Liaison Officer told the Billy Wright Inquiry that he was personally chosen for the role at HMP Maze on a full-time basis in 1997 in order to get intelligence flowing out of the prison and into Special Branch.⁸⁶ The point that he was personally chosen is significant: although the creation of such roles is important, so is the appointment of people with the right personalities and experience. In the words of former RUC officer Bill Duff, ‘far too often little or no thought is given to the appointment of Liaison Officers. Often it is just a case of whoever is available at the time’, while their ability to generate trust ‘can make or break any relationship.’⁸⁷

On a practical level, some intelligence went into prisons on an ‘action sheet’ which recorded ‘sanitised intelligence for dissemination’ or it went in by word of mouth.⁸⁸ The latter method may have been preferred for more urgent intelligence. There is a mixed picture concerning how much intelligence went in to prisons, with the Head of the PIU in the mid-1990s confirming they never received information from the Special Branch Prison Liaison Officer stationed at HMP Maze,⁸⁹ while the Army Liaison Officer at the same prison would have

provided 'information about activity around the prison perimeter, such as suspicious vehicles'.⁹⁰ None the less, there is a consensus that more information flowed out of prisons than into them.

Prisons recorded specific incidents 'such as a fight between prisoners or someone caught with contraband' on Incident Communication Reports (ICRs), and other pieces of information that 'might be of interest' on Security Information Reports (not to be confused with Special Branch's SIRs).⁹¹ Intelligence was received and analysed by NIPS' Security Intelligence Centres (SICs).⁹² These were part of each prison's Security Department from which '[a]ll security operations relating to the prison in general and to individual prisoners are managed'.⁹³ A particular Special Branch Liaison Officer who gave evidence to the Billy Wright Inquiry recalled visiting the prison's SIC 'every two to three days' to collect information such as what tattoos a prisoner had and what cars visitors arrived in, in response to taskings provided by various parts of Special Branch across Northern Ireland.⁹⁴ He had free access to the material in the SIC and sometimes borrowed tapes of telephone calls to and from prisoners.⁹⁵

In addition to the Prison Liaison Officer roles established to facilitate the sharing of intelligence, there were also structures to support this, specifically one internal Unit and one inter-agency Group. Standing for Prison Intelligence Unit or Prison Information Unit, the PIU was established around 1983 and continued to operate until at least the end of 1998.⁹⁶ Internal to NIPS, its purpose was to collate and assess intelligence from within the prisons.⁹⁷ Each week the ICRs and SIRs on which information was recorded were printed and handed to a visiting member of the PIU. The interesting ones were taken back to the PIU and typed into their computer database.⁹⁸ This information was used to produce Monthly Intelligence

Assessment Reports (MIARs) in which pieces of intelligence from various sources were processed, assessed for reliability and combined into what is known as ‘all-source analysis’. The MIARs were a means through which intelligence was disseminated to other organisations outside of NIPS.⁹⁹ A member of PIU staff described the Unit as being ‘set up to formalise the information sharing system and to provide a paper trail to ensure and prove that information had been properly distributed.’¹⁰⁰

An inter-agency structure designed to support the sharing of information collected by NIPS was the Prison Liaison Group (PLG). According to its terms of reference,

The purpose of the committee is to exchange, assess and evaluate intelligence and information from penal establishments, the Security Forces and other sources on terrorist and paramilitary activities relating to prison issues; and to recommend and coordinate any action that may be required.¹⁰¹

It might be remarked that inter-agency structures, even when the stated purpose of creating the structure is to improve liaison, may also be driven by existing strong relations between the agencies concerned. The PLG included representatives from PIU and elsewhere within NIPS, as well as representatives from Special Branch, the army and the Security Service.¹⁰² They held monthly meetings at which the monthly intelligence reports were discussed,¹⁰³ though the army and Security Service attended these meetings infrequently.¹⁰⁴ The way intelligence was shared differed depending on whether it was strategic or more urgent. MIARs, by virtue of being monthly, focused on strategic intelligence,¹⁰⁵ whereas any intelligence that had ‘urgent operational implications’ would have been acted on before the monthly MIAR was ready.¹⁰⁶ The MIARs and PLG succeeded in disseminating information from prisons to other agencies.¹⁰⁷ However, although the PLG existed to facilitate the exchange of intelligence collected from all organisations represented on the Group, just as

was the case with the Prison Liaison Officers, '[t]he majority of information flowed in one direction, from the prison to other agencies and hardly ever the other way around.'¹⁰⁸

Security Service and Special Branch structures

Both the Security Service and Special Branch had internal structures that served similar yet distinct purposes. The Security Service had a group that brought together intelligence from various sources. This Assessments Group, or 'AsGp', was the hub of the Security Service's work in Northern Ireland.¹⁰⁹ To quote the Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, the Group

provided a wide range of strategic intelligence reports and assessments for government readership and policy makers outside the intelligence community. It acted as a focus for strategic intelligence and ensured that the Northern Ireland intelligence community produced shared and agreed assessments for government.¹¹⁰

It was comprised of a small team of analysts, divided into a unit concerned with intelligence on Republican organisations and a unit concerned with intelligence on Loyalists.¹¹¹ The audience for its outputs included the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, 'Ministers and officials in the NIO [Northern Ireland Office], 10 Downing Street, the Cabinet Office, and recipients further afield, for example in the government's embassies in Dublin and Washington.'¹¹² There are similarities here with the Joint Intelligence Committee that draws together intelligence from numerous UK organisations into all-source analysis and distributes it to the highest levels of government.¹¹³

The Assessments Group's main written outputs were Northern Ireland Intelligence Reports (NIIRs).¹¹⁴ These took a variety of formats, with the Security Service's former Director and Coordinator of Intelligence (DCI), a member of the Group and a former Head of the Assessments Group variously testifying to the Billy Wright Inquiry that some were monthly

reports,¹¹⁵ that others reported a specific piece of intelligence (these were rarely seen by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland),¹¹⁶ and that some looked forward and some looked back.¹¹⁷ The Assessments Group took intelligence and ‘added context to it, comment potentially and an assessment as well.’¹¹⁸ The distribution for each NIIR was determined by the Assessments Group.¹¹⁹

The DCI was the most senior Security Service officer in Northern Ireland and was therefore one of three principal security advisors to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland alongside the RUC’s Chief Constable and the army’s General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland.¹²⁰ The Head of the Assessments Group deputised for the DCI when required.¹²¹ Amongst other duties including ‘delivering high-level policy direction and advice relating to intelligence activity in Northern Ireland’, the DCI provided the Assessments Group’s reports to government.¹²² One of the ways the DCI pursued better inter-agency liaison was by posting a representative to RUC Headquarters and another to Army Headquarters.¹²³ This is remarkably similar to the Director of Intelligence Northern Ireland post, which in the early 1970s served ‘to co-ordinate the intelligence gathering efforts of the various elements of the security forces operating in Northern Ireland at the time’ alongside similar responsibilities.¹²⁴ As well as appointing people with suitable personalities and experience to these prominent roles, it is desirable that they are able to exhibit leadership to the maximum degree permitted by the circumstances, a point made by former Intelligence and Security Coordinator Sir David Omand.¹²⁵

Intelligence from the RUC and the army was fed into the Group, though intelligence from the army mainly came via the RUC.¹²⁶ Points of liaison between the army and RUC included that the former’s weekly intelligence summaries were shared with the police.¹²⁷ Although the

Assessments Group were ‘to some extent’ able to ask Special Branch to seek further intelligence, understandably this process was ‘quite delicate’.¹²⁸ Given that only the Security Service was focused primarily on gaining strategic intelligence, the strategic intelligence considered by the Assessments Group mostly originated with the Security Service itself.¹²⁹

That the Security Service’s role in Northern Ireland was strategic is demonstrated by the observation that in recruiting and handling informers (‘agents’ in their terminology) they sought information ‘such as the plans and intentions of the leadership of paramilitary organisations’.¹³⁰ Willie Carlin recalls how during his time as an informer within Sinn Féin in the early 1980s his military handlers were interested in receiving rather different types of intelligence from the political intelligence sought by the Security Service.¹³¹ This in itself is a matter of coordination, as in inter-agency intelligence liaison the question of coverage arises and should, ideally, be managed.¹³² It may be a better use of resources for each organisation to seek different types of intelligence, though there will always be a risk of overlap or duplication. When the Security Service accidentally collected tactical intelligence as a by-product of their work, it was – testified a former Security Service employee – passed to the RUC.¹³³ As long as there is coordination, straying into one another’s territory in terms of types of intelligence collected is not necessarily a problem, and having intelligence on one person, for instance, from multiple sources can be an advantage.

A Security Service officer seconded to Special Branch’s Intelligence Management Group (IMG) explained:

RUC officers traditionally approached the intelligence with an eye to responding tactically to the intelligence, which is what they were there for and what they did very

well. But the strategic aspect was something which wouldn't have been foremost in their minds.¹³⁴

In contrast to the Security Service's more limited role in Northern Ireland, Special Branch's coverage was broad. This was reflected in its structure. They divided Northern Ireland into three regions – Belfast, North and South – as did the army.¹³⁵ The Branch's Regions dealt mainly with tactical intelligence and its Headquarters with strategic intelligence.¹³⁶ This was reflected in the way the Security Service passed intelligence to Special Branch, with intelligence relating to tactical activity going to the Region as well as to the unit known as E3, and 'something which went to build a broader intelligence picture' going to Headquarters.¹³⁷ This division of labour set out roles and responsibilities in order to support effective intra-agency coordination.

The creation of Special Branch's IMG was one of the changes brought in as a result of the 1997 Warner Report.¹³⁸ Sir Gerald Warner's review responded to what a former Head of the Assessments Group described as 'a feeling, both politically and amongst the intelligence agencies, that [not predicting the 1996 collapse of the IRA's ceasefire] ... had been an intelligence failure.'¹³⁹ The term intelligence failure appears often in intelligence studies literature and refers to times when there is a 'lack of adequate warning of significant events like the ... 11 September 2001 attacks.'¹⁴⁰ Much of this literature goes on to identify ways in which such failures occur and to suggest ways of reducing the chances of further failures occurring. For instance, Richard Betts observed in 1978 that failure is 'political and psychological more often than organisational' and is inevitable, while Peter Gill and Mark Phythian observe that intelligence failure is 'not necessarily mono-causal' and 'can be a consequence of *structures* as much as *processes*'.¹⁴¹ The particular intelligence failure that led to Warner's review was the absence of intelligence providing forewarning of the

imminent breakdown of the IRA's ceasefire, a ceasefire that had begun in 1994 and was broken by 'the Docklands bomb' on 9 February 1996 in London's Canary Wharf.¹⁴² It would not be the last time a review responded to such a failure, as the US's establishment of the 9/11 Commission to investigate those attacks on US soil demonstrates.

The Warner Report also led to Security Service officers being seconded to Special Branch Headquarters. These were not liaison officers tasked with taking Special Branch intelligence to the Security Service. Instead, their role was more focused on training, which can be a feature of intelligence cooperation as acknowledged by Lander.¹⁴³ Although Warner's recommendation that they be seconded to the Regions as well as to Headquarters was not implemented and the secondments to Headquarters did not last long as it was difficult to find willing recruits for these two-year positions,¹⁴⁴ some success was achieved towards addressing the observation that

the RUC were not perhaps as good as they should have been at extracting relevant political and strategic intelligence from the material they had, and their efforts in that respect needed to be strengthened.¹⁴⁵

The secondments led to an improved flow of intelligence, but, as a former Head of the Assessments Group noted,

the real impact was in the quality of the reports that were then issuing and the nature of the assessment that the RUC was then capable, with this added capability, of putting on a report.¹⁴⁶

The creation of these roles and the apparent effectiveness of the role holders again emphasises the value that secondments and similar liaison roles can have to intelligence coordination.

Once IMG had been created, the personnel seconded from the Security Service found themselves within IMG.¹⁴⁷ The Group's purpose was to bring 'together a number of the units within a department to get them to focus specifically on the production and dissemination of timely intelligence coming from RUC sources.'¹⁴⁸ It was comprised of two existing departments known as E3 and E9, and aimed to oversee and direct their work.¹⁴⁹ E9 was based at Headquarters and was set up to 'study the strategic roles of terrorist organisations operating in Northern Ireland.'¹⁵⁰ The unit known as E3

comprised a Registry, the Republican and Loyalist Desks, respectively E3A and E3B, and another section, E3C, which was responsible for the filing and storage of material held by E3 and the collation of intelligence reports for threat assessments.¹⁵¹

With the creation of IMG, E3 and E9 became the responsibility of the Head of IMG,¹⁵² and at first it had around 100 employees.¹⁵³

The Group was the centre of Special Branch's intelligence work, serving as the central clearing house for intelligence by collating, assessing, analysing and digesting intelligence, disseminating it appropriately, and advising on what further intelligence should be sought.¹⁵⁴ It was not, therefore, so much as a committee with representatives from different parts of one or more organisations, but a structure that incorporated and contained whole sections with the aim of making Special Branch more effective. It differed from the Security Service's Assessments Group in that while that organisation received intelligence from multiple organisations, although primarily from the Security Service itself, the IMG's purpose was more focused on improving internal coordination within Special Branch. IMG's goal was to produce reports for a wider audience, just as was the case for the Assessments Group.

IMG influenced how intelligence was shared within and beyond Special Branch. Firstly, intelligence produced within the IMG was passed to a wider audience in written Intelligence Management Group Intelligence Reports known as IMAGIRs.¹⁵⁵ An IMAGIR usually contained a number of strands of source reporting rather than being based on intelligence from one source. If it drew on only one strand of intelligence, this point was usually noted in a comment in the IMAGIR.¹⁵⁶ These reports went to the Northern Ireland Office, to senior personnel from the armed forces and the Security Service, and to politicians.¹⁵⁷ Secondly, there was a Head of IMG, responsible for liaising with others on an individual basis. This post was originally held by Chris Albiston, a detective chief superintendent,¹⁵⁸ until he was replaced in May 1998 by an individual known to the Rosemary Nelson Inquiry as B597 and the Billy Wright Inquiry as Witness DG.¹⁵⁹ The Head of IMG liaised with the Chief Constable and the Head of Special Branch by providing a daily report,¹⁶⁰ and liaised with Regional Heads of Special Branch.¹⁶¹ Externally they liaised with other agencies representing Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland and, as required, deputised for the Deputy Head of Special Branch,¹⁶² supporting the argument that structures and roles should feature in analyses of intelligence liaison.

Intra-agency coordination in the RUC

Additional challenges for coordination have been, and continue to be, posed by the need for criminal evidence – referred to as criminal intelligence by Jeffery – as well as intelligence.

As observed in the context of international counter-terrorism efforts,

since in most jurisdictions terrorism is defined as a crime as well as a national security threat, the hunting and gathering of intelligence should also serve to support law enforcement authorities in bringing terrorists to justice.¹⁶³

The picture is a complex one, as illustrated further by the observation that the FBI and CIA have ‘very different purposes for the same information’, with the CIA preferring to keep a suspect under surveillance while the FBI prefer to arrest them.¹⁶⁴ This particular challenge was also observable within the RUC. For instance, CID’s Senior Investigating Officer assigned to the investigation into the murder of Patrick Finucane, a solicitor killed in his home in Belfast in February 1989, has since claimed he was hampered in this role by not being told of the existence of an army informer and a Special Branch informer who possessed relevant information.¹⁶⁵ In his 2010 memoir that aims to ‘throw some light on the professionalism and fairness of the CID’ he states that ‘[d]uring the investigation, I did not have a single contact from Special Branch offering me information or help of any kind.’¹⁶⁶

Simpson’s memoir and another by former CID officer Johnston Brown articulate tension between CID and Special Branch, arguing, for instance, that the latter went too far in protecting informers from prosecution for suspected criminal activity.¹⁶⁷ This is a worthwhile reminder that cooperation did not always work out as envisaged and that differing organisational cultures and purposes cannot only create obstacles to overcome when establishing and maintaining inter-agency cooperation but intra-agency cooperation too. As Brown explained, ‘[w]e as investigators were concerned only with the facts and the collection of evidence. ... The Special Branch, on the other hand, was concerned only with the gathering of intelligence’.¹⁶⁸ The distinction between CID work and Special Branch work should not be overstated, however, as intelligence could be converted into evidence and there was a crossover between the work of these two parts of the RUC with respect to some individuals.¹⁶⁹

Brown and Simpson's memoirs provide insight into how liaison between CID and Special Branch was successful on occasion. Both write of instances in the early 1990s when this liaison took place on a one-to-one basis. Brown tells of a time when a particular contact in Special Branch helped him gain the Branch's cooperation for an operation that went on to see members of the Loyalist terrorist group the Ulster Volunteer Force arrested on their way to attempt a murder,¹⁷⁰ while Simpson recounts meeting his Special Branch counterpart daily during his time as a Detective Superintendent and Deputy Head of Belfast Regional CID.¹⁷¹ Again, the value of having the right people in place is emphasised.

Conclusion

This article's attention to intelligence liaison taking place within the UK during 'the troubles' highlights how a division between tactical and strategic intelligence influenced the creation and functioning of structures within Special Branch as well as whether intelligence was shared in writing or in person. The positive effect that creating roles such as Prison Liaison Officers, as long as these roles are given sufficient powers and are given to suitable personnel, is also evident. It has drawn attention to the valuable role that prisons played in the intelligence community at this time. This deserves to be the subject of further research with respect to this case study and others, as should the impact and challenges posed by computerisation, questions of compatibility between computer systems and associated challenges posed by the need for secrecy. Much of this is missing from the existing literature on intelligence liaison and, even more so, in the literature on intelligence in counter-terrorism contexts.

The empirical evidence available on this case study allows many of Svendsen's seven analytical distinctions for intelligence liaison to be employed. These comprise of the forms intelligence can take (including whether it is raw intelligence or all-source analysis), what it is needed for (strategic or tactical purposes, for example), how access occurs (such as whether it is ad hoc or regularised), and where intelligence exchange takes place (for example, at headquarters level or in the field).¹⁷² Computerisation of databases can be considered to be an element of how access occurs, and can be driven by a need to improve intelligence liaison and other concerns for efficiency. Secrecy, specifically the need to protect the sources of valuable intelligence from identification and exposure, permeates decisions made about whether, when and how to share intelligence and should therefore be incorporated into a framework for analysing intelligence liaison. Organisations should also feature, as their unique combinations of organisational culture, aims and skills influence how they can and will work with others. Similarly, the existence of particular leadership posts, consideration of which individuals hold these posts, and of secondments that allow someone from one organisation to be temporarily embedded within another, all influence whether, how and when intelligence liaison occurs and should therefore be a part of analysis when the available data allows it. This article argues that these categories have explanatory power and therefore contribute to ongoing efforts by academics to build a theory of intelligence.

Focusing on the specifics of how intelligence is moved around within an organisation and between organisations expands understanding of the practice of intelligence liaison as well as understanding of intelligence during 'the troubles'. This research has shown that there was what might be described as a fairly large number of mechanisms in use simultaneously, such as the Assessments Group, the IMG, liaison posts and secondments. Yet these mechanisms appear to have functioned fairly effectively, despite contrasting and competing aims

concerning the collection and use of information. The empirical approach adopted in this article promotes discussion about the extent to which previous observations about international intelligence liaison can be applied to domestic inter-agency liaison and to intra-agency liaison. Further, the article's findings regarding how intelligence liaison was established and maintained in Northern Ireland during the 1990s are relevant to the ongoing 'fierce' academic debate about the 'impact of the British intelligence war on the Provisional IRA'.¹⁷³ Provided that access to relevant information permits it, future research might build on this article to address the extent to which developments in intelligence liaison affected the impact of intelligence on security during this period. Finally, the article demonstrates that domestic inter-agency and intra-agency cooperation, and the mechanics of how liaison is achieved, can be researched effectively.

Notes

¹ Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War*, 382.

² Kirk-Smith and Dingley, "Countering terrorism in Northern Ireland", 551.

³ Coakley and Todd, "Breaking patterns of conflict in Northern Ireland", 2.

⁴ Craig, "Laneside, then left a bit?".

⁵ Dickson, "Counter-insurgency and human rights in Northern Ireland", 488.

⁶ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 76.

⁷ Witness P160 (RUC CID), transcript, Day 39, 23 June 2008, Rosemary Nelson Inquiry (RNI), 4; Samuel Kincaid (CID), transcript, Day 144, 24 Mar. 2009, Billy Wright Inquiry (BWI), 99.

⁸ Ian Monteith (RUC CID), transcript, Day 89, 10 Dec. 2008, RNI, 16.

⁹ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 105.

¹⁰ Lomas and Murphy, *Intelligence and Espionage*, 3-7.

¹¹ Hillebrand and Hughes, "The quest for a theory of intelligence", 1.

¹² Kahn, "An historical theory of intelligence", 4.

¹³ Gill, "Theories of intelligence", 212.

¹⁴ Svendsen, "Connecting intelligence and theory", 727. See also Gill and Phythian, *Intelligence in an Insecure World*, 33-52.

¹⁵ Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror*, 41-2.

¹⁶ Jeffrey, "Intelligence and counter-insurgency operations", 119.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ US Army and Marine Corps, Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3-24, 132.

¹⁹ Intelligence and Security Committee, *Could 7/7 Have Been Prevented?*, 8.

²⁰ Ibid., 9.

²¹ Ibid., 53.

²² HM Government, CONTEST, 21.

²³ Anderson, *Attacks in London and Manchester March-June 2017*, 42.

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- ²⁴ Ibid., 37.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 24.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 42.
- ²⁷ Intelligence and Security Committee, *The 2017 Attacks*, 2-3.
- ²⁸ HM Government, *CONTEST*, 27-8.
- ²⁹ See Sims, “Foreign Intelligence Liaison”; Lefebvre, “The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation”; Lander, “International Intelligence Cooperation”.
- ³⁰ Lander, “International Intelligence Cooperation”, 493.
- ³¹ Whelan, “Security Networks and Occupational Culture”; Whelan and Dupont, “Taking Stock of Networks Across the Security Field”.
- ³² Lefebvre, “The Difficulties and Dilemmas of International Intelligence Cooperation”.
- ³³ Hastedt and Skelley, “Intelligence in a turbulent world”, 115.
- ³⁴ Bamford, “The Role and Effectiveness of Intelligence in Northern Ireland”.
- ³⁵ Bar-Joseph and Levy, “Conscious Action and Intelligence Failure”, 468.
- ³⁶ Newbery, *Interrogation, Intelligence and Security*, 62-131.
- ³⁷ For example, Carlin, *Thatcher’s Spy*.
- ³⁸ Leahy, *The Intelligence War Against the IRA*.
- ³⁹ Craig, “You will be Responsible to the GOC”.
- ⁴⁰ Moran, “Evaluating Special Branch and the Use of Informant Intelligence in Northern Ireland”, 5.
- ⁴¹ Charters, “Counterinsurgency Intelligence”.
- ⁴² Charters, “Have a Go”.
- ⁴³ Finegan, “Shadowboxing in the Dark”. Others include Bamford, “The Role and Effectiveness of Intelligence in Northern Ireland” and Jeffrey, “Intelligence and Counter-Insurgency Operations”.
- ⁴⁴ Jackson, “Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a ‘Long War’”, 76.
- ⁴⁵ Edwards, “Misapplying Lessons Learned?”, 307.
- ⁴⁶ Jackson, “Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a ‘Long War’”, 76.
- ⁴⁷ Finegan, “Shadowboxing in the Dark”, 505.
- ⁴⁸ Jeffrey, “Intelligence and Counter-Insurgency Operations”, 141-3; Dimitrakis, “British Intelligence and the Cyprus Insurgency”, 390.
- ⁴⁹ Jeffrey, “Intelligence and Counter-Insurgency Operations”, 141-3.
- ⁵⁰ Opening submission by Mr Philips (Counsel to the Inquiry), transcript, Day 1, 15 Apr. 2008, RNI, 77-9; The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 14.
- ⁵¹ Newbery, “Official Inquiries and their Sources of Evidence”.
- ⁵² Byman, “US Counterterrorism Intelligence Cooperation”, 145.
- ⁵³ Hitz and Weiss, “Helping the CIA and FBI Connect the Dots”, 27.
- ⁵⁴ D.J. Trevelyan (Home Office), 4 Sept. 1972, CJ 4/827, The National Archives (TNA); C.J. Henn (MoD) to J. Halliday (Home Office), 25 Jan. 1972, CJ 4/827, TNA.
- ⁵⁵ C.J. Henn to J. Halliday, 25 Jan. 1972, CJ 4/827, TNA.
- ⁵⁶ Officer Y, Witness Statement KY1, no date, The Bloody Sunday Inquiry (BSI), 5-6.
- ⁵⁷ Witness A643 (Army intelligence), transcript, Day 96, 7 Jan. 2009, RNI, 115; The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 186.
- ⁵⁸ Geraghty, *The Irish War*, 159-60.
- ⁵⁹ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 143.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Witness FA (SB Prison Liaison Officer), transcript, Day 98, 8 Oct. 2008, BWI, 6-8.
- ⁶³ Witness DB (RUC SB), transcript, Day 28, 4 Feb. 2008, BWI, 63.
- ⁶⁴ Opening submissions by Mr Phillips, transcript, Day 40, 24 June 2008, RNI, 24.
- ⁶⁵ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 142-5.
- ⁶⁶ Witness FG (E3A, TCG), transcript, Day 42, 4 Mar. 2008, BWI, 20.
- ⁶⁷ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 143.
- ⁶⁸ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 77.
- ⁶⁹ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 142.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., 140.
- ⁷¹ Ibid., 144.
- ⁷² Ibid.
- ⁷³ Ibid., 143.
- ⁷⁴ B629 (RUC SB), transcript, Day 114, 25 Feb. 2009, RNI, 99.
- ⁷⁵ B629, transcript, Day 114, 25 Feb. 2009, RNI, 126, 131.
- ⁷⁶ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 78.

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- ⁷⁷ Warner Review, 1997, as referred to in The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 144. The Police Service of Northern Ireland will not release their copy of the Warner Review under the Freedom of Information Act, letter to author, 8 Jan. 2018.
- ⁷⁸ Warner Review, 1997, 144.
- ⁷⁹ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 79; Warner Review, 1997, as referred to in The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 144.
- ⁸⁰ Dr Bill Duff (former RUC officer), interview, 8 Sept. 2020.
- ⁸¹ Foreword by Sajid Javid (Home Secretary), CONTEST, 5.
- ⁸² Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Chapter 1, 26.1, and Schedule 6.
- ⁸³ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 74.
- ⁸⁴ Witness ZD (Head of Prison Intelligence Unit), transcript, Day 29, 5 Feb. 2008, BWI, 35.
- ⁸⁵ Witness FA, transcript, Day 98, 8 Oct. 2008, BWI, 12.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 110-12.
- ⁸⁷ Dr Bill Duff (former RUC officer), interview, 8 Sept. 2020.
- ⁸⁸ Witness FA, transcript, Day 98, 8 Oct. 2008, BWI, 43-4.
- ⁸⁹ Witness ZD, transcript, Day 29, 5 Feb. 2008, BWI.
- ⁹⁰ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 256.
- ⁹¹ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 71-2.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, 246.
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁴ Witness FA, transcript, Day 98, 8 Oct. 2008, BWI, 15, 17, 47.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.
- ⁹⁶ Witness ZD, transcript, Day 30, 6 Feb. 2008, BWI, 65.
- ⁹⁷ Seamus McNeill (civil service, attached to NIPS), transcript, Day 33, 18 Feb. 2008, BWI, 147-8.
- ⁹⁸ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 72.
- ⁹⁹ Witness D (NIPS Operations and Management Division), transcript, Day 21, 26 June 2007, BWI, 53; and Witness D, transcript, Day 20, 25 June 2007, BWI, 134; Witness ZD, transcript, Day 30, 6 Feb. 2008, BWI, 53.
- ¹⁰⁰ Witness D, transcript, Day 20, 25 June 2007, BWI, 123.
- ¹⁰¹ Annex B, Terms of reference for the Prisons Liaison Group, attached to ‘The handling of intelligence bearing on prisons’ issues: Joint Report: Under Secretary [redacted (a member of the Security Service)] Staff / Under Secretary Prisons’, unsigned, undated, cover letter by Sir James Hennessy, 15 Nov. 1983, evidence submitted to The Billy Wright Inquiry.
- ¹⁰² Witness D, transcript, Day 21, 26 June 2007, BWI, 8; and The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 74.
- ¹⁰³ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 71.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.
- ¹⁰⁵ Witness D, transcript, Day 21, 26 June 2007, BWI, 53; and Witness D, transcript, Day 20, 25 June 2007, BWI, 134.
- ¹⁰⁶ Witness ZD, transcript, Day 30, 6 Feb. 2008, BWI, 64.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 63.
- ¹⁰⁸ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 74.
- ¹⁰⁹ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 163.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹¹ *Ibid.*; The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 106-7.
- ¹¹² The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 107.
- ¹¹³ See Cormac, *Confronting the Colonies* and Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee*.
- ¹¹⁴ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 107.
- ¹¹⁵ Witness HAG (Head of Assessments Group, Security Service), transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 4; Witness DCI (Director and Coordinator of Intelligence), transcript, Day 47, 12 Mar. 2008, BWI, 81; Witness DO3 (Security Service), transcript, Day 99, 9 Oct. 2008, BWI, 45.
- ¹¹⁶ Witness DCI, transcript, Day 47, 12 Mar. 2008, BWI, 81; and Witness DO1 (Assessments Group), transcript, Day 24, 28 Jan. 2008, BWI, 5.
- ¹¹⁷ Witness HAG, transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 4.
- ¹¹⁸ Witness AH (Security Service), transcript, Day 41, 3 Mar. 2008, BWI, 7.
- ¹¹⁹ Witness DO3, transcript, Day 99, 9 Oct. 2008, BWI, 30-1.
- ¹²⁰ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 162.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 165.
- ¹²² The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 105.
- ¹²³ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 106.
- ¹²⁴ David, Witness Statement KD2, 17 Feb. 2000, BSI, 1.

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- ¹²⁵ Omand, *Securing the State*, 304.
- ¹²⁶ Witness HAG, transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 2.
- ¹²⁷ Witness A566 (Army intelligence officer), Witness Statement, RNI, 2.
- ¹²⁸ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 165.
- ¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 170, 164.
- ¹³⁰ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 104.
- ¹³¹ Carlin, *Thatcher's Spy*, 88.
- ¹³² Rudner, "Hunters and Gatherers", 195-6.
- ¹³³ Witness DCI2 (Security Service), transcript, Day 104, 21 Oct. 2008, BWI, 38.
- ¹³⁴ Quoted in The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 164.
- ¹³⁵ Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 137; Witness EA (Intelligence Corps), transcript, Day 111, 10 Nov. 2008, BWI, 13-14.
- ¹³⁶ Witness FG, transcript, Day 42, 4 Mar. 2008, BWI, 8.
- ¹³⁷ Witness AH, transcript, Day 41, 3 Mar. 2008, BWI, 51-2.
- ¹³⁸ Chris Albiston (Head of IMG), transcript, Day 76, 13 Nov. 2008, RNI, 18.
- ¹³⁹ Witness HAG, transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 6.
- ¹⁴⁰ Gentry, "Intelligence Failure Reframed", 247.
- ¹⁴¹ Betts, "Analysis, War and Decision", 61; Gill and Phythian, *Intelligence in an Insecure World*, 143, original emphasis.
- ¹⁴² Witness HAG, transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 14; Taylor, *Provos*, 352.
- ¹⁴³ Lander, "International Intelligence Cooperation", 492.
- ¹⁴⁴ Witness HAG, transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 84; B597 (Head of IMG), transcript, Day 79, 25 November 2008, RNI, 9.
- ¹⁴⁵ Witness HAG, transcript, Day 26, 30 Jan. 2008, BWI, 84.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 84.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.
- ¹⁴⁹ The Billy Wright Inquiry Report, 79.
- ¹⁵⁰ B567 (SB), transcript, Day 112, 23 Feb. 2009, RNI, 3.
- ¹⁵¹ The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry Report, 277.
- ¹⁵² Organograms, ID10-0001 and ID10-0002, evidence to The Billy Wright Inquiry.
- ¹⁵³ B597 (Head of IMG), transcript, Day 79, 25 Nov. 2008, RNI, 9-10.
- ¹⁵⁴ Chris Albiston, transcript, Day 140, 18 Mar. 2009, BWI, 145.
- ¹⁵⁵ Witness FG, transcript, Day 42, 4 Mar. 2008, BWI, 91.
- ¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*
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- ¹⁶⁰ Chris Albiston, transcript, Day 76, 13 Nov. 2008, RNI, 67; Chris Albiston, transcript, Day 140, 18 Mar. 2009, BWI, 157.
- ¹⁶¹ Review of Special Branch: Report of the Working Group on Progress in Implementation, annex, quoted in Chris Albiston, transcript, Day 141, 19 Mar. 2009, BWI, 60-2.
- ¹⁶² *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶³ Rudner, "Hunters and Gatherers", 194.
- ¹⁶⁴ Hitz and Weiss, "Helping the CIA and FBI Connect the Dots", 5.
- ¹⁶⁵ Cory Collusion Inquiry Report: Patrick Finucane, 15.
- ¹⁶⁶ Simpson, *Duplicity and Deception*, 23, 35.
- ¹⁶⁷ Simpson, *Duplicity and Deception*; Brown, *Into the Dark*.
- ¹⁶⁸ Brown, *Into the Dark*, 154.
- ¹⁶⁹ Monteith, transcript, Day 89, 10 Dec. 2008, RNI, 16, 26; Witness B511 (RUC CID then SB), transcript, Day 80, 26 Nov. 2008, RNI, 6.
- ¹⁷⁰ Brown, *Into the Dark*, 292-6.
- ¹⁷¹ Simpson, *Duplicity and Deception*, 8, 24. For further consideration of coordination within the police see Sheptycki, "The Police Intelligence Division-of-Labour".
- ¹⁷² Svendsen, *Intelligence Cooperation and the War on Terror*, 41-2.
- ¹⁷³ Leahy, *The Intelligence War Against the IRA*, 2.

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