

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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Border Incidents

1. The British authorities have, since early 1975, forwarded weekly reports of border incidents under the heading "Terrorist incidents originating in the Republic". There were 17 weeks in 1975 in which no incident was reported. For the remaining weeks 82 incidents were reported. A further 38 incidents were notified to the Gardaí by the RUC. Of these 120 reported incidents the Gardaí confirmed that 10 had definite Southern connections. They denied that 38 others had any connection and had insufficient information about the remainder to come to a definite conclusion. The equivalent figures for 1976⁺ are:- 9 weeks without incidents, 23 incidents reported, 4 confirmed by the Gardaí and 9 denied by them. The unwillingness of the Gardaí to come to any definite conclusion about a significant proportion of incidents stems from a lack of information in their regard, which lack could in part, at least, be remedied by better and speedier communications between the Gardaí and the RUC.

2. Beside those figures must be placed the total number of incidents in Northern Ireland in this period. Of the 3,887 incidents (shooting, bombing, malicious fires and armed robberies) reported in 1975 just over 3% were alleged to be border incidents with Southern connections; likewise of the 1,170 incidents noted for the first quarter of 1976, 1.5% were allegedly of Southern origin or with Southern connections. Even if we accepted the British Embassy and RUC reports in toto, therefore, it can be argued that border incidents play a minor role in the overall picture of violence in Northern Ireland.

⁺ 4 months