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Title: Extract from minutes of second meeting of the Inter-departmental National Security Group on 1 April 1976 reporting the circulation of a note by Assistant Commissioner Edmund Garvey, An Garda Síochána, setting out the capacity for and an estimate of the effect of large scale arrests of subversives in Border Areas

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Extract from 2nd meeting of
Inter Dept National Security Group
1/20/74

3. A note was circulated to the meeting by Mr. Garvey setting out replies to the query at paragraph 3 of the minutes of the first meeting and there was discussion in elaboration of this document. In conjunction with this item the query at paragraph 2(d) was also discussed. Col. Dempsey undertook to prepare a note in regard to the Army support operation arising out of the material circulated by Mr. Garvey.

Handed around by A/Comm. Garvey
at meeting of Group today
1/4

Memorandum.

Inter-Departmental National Security Group.

In accordance with the directive of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Security to the Inter-Departmental National Security Group, I am instructed by the Commissioner to furnish an assessment of our capacity for and an estimate of the effect of large scale arrests in Border Areas.

(1) Since the operation, and the measures to be taken in conjunction therewith (guarding of prisoners, interrogation, security of the building - not always suitable - to which prisoners would be conveyed, and so on) would necessitate a considerable deployment of Garda manpower, as well as a substantial utilization of accommodation, it is believed that the upper limit of the number of suspects which could be dealt with in this way is approximately one hundred and fifteen (115).

Class in
A.G. Office - will cost
care A.G. 5
convert
strain in judiciary
no accommodation
for 2nd court

(2) The employment of "major swoop" techniques might be expected to yield the following results:-

- (a) Seventy to eighty persons would be detained.
- (b) The number against whom charges might be preferred would, of course, depend on the evidence available from searches and interrogation, in addition to the proportion the Chief Superintendent would certify under Section 3(2) of the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act, 1972; but it may well be that forty to fifty (40/50) persons would be charged altogether.
- (c) The remainder would be released after 48 hours.

Patience
between 100

A.G. not alone
in membership

(3) As of now, there are at large in the Border area:-

- (a) Seventy-four (74) persons whom Divisional Officers are prepared to certify under Section 3(2) of the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act, 1972. Many of these would not be available for arrest on the same day.
- (b) Thirty-three (33) persons who have been charged with membership.
- (c) Thirteen (13) persons who have been ^{convicted} charged with membership.
- (d) There are approximately one hundred (100) persons from Northern Ireland permanently or temporarily resident in Border areas and whose association with the IRA is being pursued with the RUC at the moment.

71 cases
51 convicted
Spending

32 in
in (a)

(4) (a) It is thought that public reaction to such an exercise would be favourable, and particularly so in areas other than Border Districts, always provided that charges were preferred in due course.
(b) Immediate public reaction to the killing of a member of the security forces would probably be strong; perhaps the more positively so if the victim were a Garda, and thus a member of an unarmed body. However, I am of the opinion that such reaction would be short-lived, and would have little or no bearing on long-term attitudes towards subversive elements.

A quantification which is very relevant to a consideration of large scale arrests has to do with the case-disposal output of the Special Court. Under the pressures to which

with the directive of the Select Sub-Committee it is at present subject, this Court does not appear to be disposing of cases as quickly as might be deemed desirable. In instances where bail is granted, some cases are on the books for two years or more. Hence any increase in the work load would necessitate the establishment forthwith of a second Court.

I would not recommend that action be initiated against the Official IRA, who have been inactive for some time.

... substantial utilization of ... the upper limit of the number of suspects ... in this way is approximately one hundred and fifteen (115).

- (1) The employment of ... is expected to yield the following results:
 - (a) seventy to eighty persons would be arrested.
 - (b) The number against whom charges might be preferred would, of course, depend on the evidence available from searches and interrogation, in addition to the properties the Chief Superintendent would certify under Section 1(2) of the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act, 1972; but it may well be that some 50 to 60 persons would be charged with membership. The remainder would be released after 48 hours.
- (2) As at now, there are at large in the Border area:
 - (a) Seventy-four (74) persons who are "wanted" persons and prepared to commit serious acts of the Offences Against the State (Amendment) Act, 1972. Many of these would not be available for arrest on the same day.
 - (b) Thirty-three (33) persons who have been charged with membership.
 - (c) thirteen (13) persons who have been charged with membership.
 - (d) There are approximately one hundred (100) persons from Northern Ireland presumably or possibly resident in Border areas and whose names are on the list of the IRA in being charged with the IRA in the area.
- (3) (a) It is thought that public reaction to such an operation would be favourable, and particularly so in areas other than Border Districts, where previous operations were preferred in the course of the operation.
 - (b) Doubtless public reaction to the taking of a number of the territory forces would probably be mixed, perhaps the more positive as if the victims were a child, and that a number of the territory forces would be recruited, and would have little or no training in long-range operations towards a ...

A ... which is very relevant to a ... of ... with the ... of the ... the process to which