C O N F I D E N T I A L

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FROM: J McKERVILL
Security Policy and Operations Division
31 May 1991
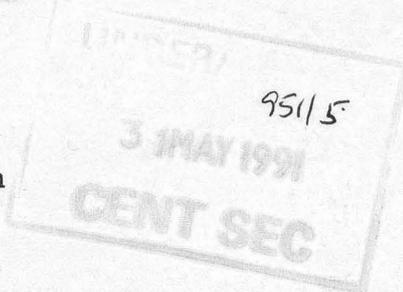
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SECRASP : 6 JUNE 1991 AT 1600 HOURS ON VCR

I attach the agenda for Thursday's first meeting of the SECRASP Group.

(signed, P Bell)

J McKERVILL
SH 2296

PS   **Copy of Mr Loughran's minute to follow by messengers to those copy recipients who have not already received it.**

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SEC SP : 6 JUNE 1991 (1ST MEETING)   SECRASP (1) (91)

AGENDA

1. Terms of Reference

2. The General Interface of Policies ('Scene setting' paper attached)

3. Geographical Areas of Concern:

    (a) Belfast

         (i)   West Belfast
         (ii) City Centre

    (b) Cookstown/East Tyrone

    (c) South Armagh

    (d) Fermanagh

4. Community Relations Aspects of Security Policy

    (i)   Briefing of Security Forces
    (ii) Peacelines

5. Setting Performance Targets (Mr Loughran's minute of 15 May attached)

6. Ministerial Visits

7. Any other business

SECRASP (1) (91)

**THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS ASPECTS OF SECURITY
POLICY - THE INTERFACE OF POLICIES**

1.   Introduction - Aims of Paper

This paper is intended to set the scene for the Committee's
work. Accordingly it seeks to identify:

-    some fundamental problems in ensuring that the development
     and implementation of Government's policies in both the
     security and the social, economic and community relations
     areas tend to complement and reinforce each other;

-    approaches to particular matters likely to be of special
     interest to the Committee (whether in terms of
     geographical areas, or otherwise); and how Central
     Government might help to resolve them.

It concludes with remarks on some ways in which the Committee's
work might be taken forward.

2.   The Policy Framework

The Government is committed to the defeat of terrorism, from
whichever section of the community it comes, by the even-handed
energetic enforcement of the criminal law. That policy has now
been set out, in some detail, in the Statement of Security
Policy published in November 1990. At the heart of that policy
lies an understanding that, while effective security policies
and operations will remain an essential condition of sapping
the terrorists' will to continue the struggle, political,
social and economic policies are also an integral part of
reinforcing the effect of those policies and operations. It

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is, therefore, essential for Government to ensure that the
security and non-security elements of Government policy support
each other in ways that not merely contribute to the defeat of
terrorism, but also to the Government's wider aims in Northern
Ireland. It is to help achieve this objective more effectively
that SECRASP has been established.

3. <u>Implications of a co-ordinated approach</u>

Such an objective has important implications for the:

- evolution of security policy, and in particular the
  planning and execution of security force operations;

- formulation of social, economic and community relations
  policies and their implementation; and

- machinery of government.

These are dealt with in turn below.

4. However attractive our security policies may be on paper, the
Government recognises that, to be fully effective, the actions
of the <u>police and Armed Forces</u> against terrorism in Northern
Ireland require the support of all sides of the Community and
must also be <u>seen</u> to applied even-handedly and with
sensitivity. The actions of the security forces must,
therefore, create and maintain confidence in their integrity
and professionalism, as well as in their operational
effectiveness. This cannot be fully achieved without their
understanding and being sensitive to, first, the concerns of
the community at all levels; and, second, the totality of
government policies as they impact on security problems. Now
is a good time to make further progress towards achieving
this. Our security policy is clear - and, in the form of the
Statement, has been widely distributed amongst the security
forces; the legal framework in which they will act to defeat

terrorism will be settled shortly for the next five years when
our current EP Bill becomes law; and, finally, there have been
internal changes within the security forces recently whose
effect will be to ensure the better command, co-ordination and
control of both police and Army operations at all levels
throughout Northern Ireland. The time is, therefore,
propitious to ensure the security forces are also better aware
of the objectives of the social and economic policies of the
Government and how these can assist their own efforts to defeat
terrorism in their areas of operation.

5. It is no less important that <u>civil government</u> (in this context,
    chiefly the NI Departments) is fully aware of the security
    problems of Northern Ireland, and the work of the security
    forces in formulating its own policies. This must not only
    achieve the best results in social or economic terms; but also
    take account of the nature and extent of social problems in
    those deprived areas from which paramilitaries of all hues
    derive sustenance. This awareness of the security dimension of
    social and economic problems (which includes paramilitary
    economic crime as well as more obvious terrorist activity) must
    inform the implementation, as well as the formulation of such
    policies.

6. The starting point in all this is recognition that Northern
    Ireland is a deeply divided community; that from those
    divisions flow the violence, the political instability, and the
    negative image (both internally and externally) - all of which
    carry heavy penalties in human and economic terms. It is in
    predominantly Nationalist areas of the Province, but also in
    divided rural and urban areas with raw sectarian interfaces (eg
    North Belfast or Co Tyrone), that it remains most difficult to
    achieve both sets of objectives. It is, however, precisely in
    these areas and communities that Northern Ireland's most
    significant terrorist organisation, the Provisional IRA, has
    its roots. It is, therefore, most important that the totality
    of Government's objectives should be achieved if terrorism is
    to be increasingly marginalised, and support for it, active or
    passive, progressively reduced.

7.   But the problems are not confined to such areas. There are, most obviously, problems of the negative "image" conveyed in city and town centres by security force operations. Here it will remain essential to strive for the right balance between the requirements of the security forces in protecting life and property, and the social, environmental and economic disruption this may cause.

8.   As to machinery, there is already a range of liaison arrangements at various levels, formal and informal, between the community, local branches of Central Government, and the security forces. The Government has also a range of policies designed to promote economic and social regeneration and community relations. These are aimed both at the whole community and at targetted groups and areas (such as the Belfast, Londonderry, Rural Areas). Such arrangements, whether at local or central levels or in terms of ensuring properly co-ordinated policies, vary in their effectiveness. It helps, however, that the intimacy of Northern Ireland society, and administration, reinforces formal systems by a wide range of less formal contacts. However, before SECRASP, there has been no central (nor local) machinery within Government designed specifically to ensure that security and non-security policies of Government are brought to bear, systematically, in the consideration of particular problems, both generally and in specific areas. There also still appears a weakness in systems for ensuring either that 'grass roots concerns' are systematically brought to the attention of the security forces or civil government generally - or that those of the security forces and perhaps civil government are known to leaders of local communities. In some areas (eg Londonderry) the picture seems better than in others. As a result, the Government's security policies, and security force operations, may be less than fully effective in building confidence, isolating paramilitaries, and, more generally, helping create conditions propitious to political development. At the same time, the Government's socio economic policies may be less effective, both in their own terms and in helping end terrorism.

9. But <u>attitudinal changes</u>, whether in Civil Government or the
    security forces also seem required to prevent their considering
    a policy or measure (whether a policy operation, or the
    location of a factory, or a training scheme) from too
    restricted a point of view, but instead broadening of their
    vision seems necessary to include an understanding that their
    particular responsibility is a part of a "mosaic" of policies,
    forming a pattern. Such a change seems likely to include
    habits of wider consultation.

10. <u>Improving the relationship between the Security Forces and the
    Community</u>

    There is no single, easy or simple way of making further
    progress in developing more constructive relationships between
    the community, the security forces and civil government whether
    at the local or central levels. Nor, so long as the present
    terrorist campaign continues, can one ensure that security
    force operations cause no inconvenience to local communities or
    individuals. Such inconvenience, as the Statement of Security
    Policy recognises, is part of the price the community must pay
    for the defeat of terrorism; equally clearly that price must be
    kept to the minimum. There are, moreover, sections of the
    population in Northern Ireland, as elsewhere in the United
    Kingdom, where hostility to the police and the established
    institutions of the state is an intense and deeply ingrained
    element of local sub-cultures. It is not, therefore, to be
    expected that relations between the security forces (including
    the Army who may add an extra dimension of difficulty) and the
    community will ever be entirely harmonious or trouble free
    whatever machinery may be in place. On the other hand, the
    police (and Armed Forces) alone will never bring terrorism to
    an end, and a final cessation of political violence will also
    require a wider community rejection of violence. This, in
    itself, requires the community to believe that there are real
    prospects of removing community inequalities, and of improving
    economic prospects and prosperity. Hence the dividend, in
    political as well as security terms, from increasing the

support of the community for the forces of law and order is high. It carries also the corollary that, whatever more can be done on the part of civil government to help achieve this should be assiduously pursued as a deliberate and explicitly recognised aim of policy throughout central Government in Northern Ireland.

11. Experience suggests that progress can continue to be made, so far as the security forces are concerned, by a steady increase in the professionalism of both the police, and the Armed Forces acting in their support. The concept of professionalism, in this context, means that an integral part of the duties of all members of the police and Armed Forces must be the development of an understanding of good relations with, and sensitivity to the community; and that this should be accepted as an essential part of their primary task of defeating terrorism and upholding the rule of law. Such work goes far beyond specialists in 'community relations' work, important though their work will remain; it involves the attitudes and actions of all members of the security forces.

12. In the case of lower ranks, in their day to day contact with individual members of the public, this will continue to require unfailing courtesy and restraint - even in the face of intense provocation; the inflicting of the minimum inconvenience on the public during operations; and, when things have gone wrong, ensuring there are effective follow-up systems.

13. At more senior levels, it will continue to require the instilling of this ethos into more junior ranks and ensuring that appropriate systems exist to give it full operational effect. It will also require the systematic and committed development of sensitivity to local community concerns in the planning, execution and follow-up of operations - above all, perhaps, of those which are fully justified in terms of protecting life or property, but which will nevertheless disconcert substantial groups in a particular locality (road closures near police stations provide relevant recent examples). But it will also involve cultivating as close a

relationship as possible with community leaders especially those who are key opinion formers, and with local agencies of government operating in their areas of responsibility. Once again, however, and just as important as the openness of the security forces to the wider concerns of local community and the other but related endeavours of Government, will remain the acceptance by civil government at all levels of its part in the establishment of a prosperous, just and peaceful society in Northern Ireland, including its role in combatting security-related problems.

14. <u>The Contribution of SECRASP</u>

As a long term goal, the Government might work for the establishment of systems that ensure the co-ordination of non-security and security policies, both in terms of formulation and implementation, at all levels from Ministerial down to small, rural communities. It may, however, be preferable in the short term for SECRASP to examine the scope for achieving better co-ordination of our various policies. Thus, in the case of the <u>'problem' geographical areas</u> in item (3) of the agenda, the Committee might, for example, examine the fundamental security problems in their wider socio economic context; review the approach of the security forces along with the policies of civil government targetted at those areas; identify what scope there may be - subject to the over-riding priority of protecting life and having regard to the operational independence of the Chief Constable - for adjusting or seeking to influence policies and practices in ways best calculated to ensure mutual support. What has been happening in Londonderry, where the various arms of Government, including the security forces, and the local community appear to work well together, provides an excellent example of what can be achieved, and also the possibility of lessons to be applied elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

15. SECRASP can also address the kind of <u>specific problems</u>, not confined to a particular geographical area, where security imperatives do not always point in the same direction as community relations, economic social or environmental considerations (which may themselves also conflict). Peacelines, already on the agenda, provide one example; PVCPs might provide another. In some cases, SECRASP is likely to conclude that these and other measures, (eg road closures outside security force bases in response to intelligence or some existing peacelines) are a regrettable necessity, but that more could - and should - be done in terms of explaining the need for such unpalatable measures to the local (or sometimes wider) community. SECRASP might try to identify problems for further examination.

16. Finally, SECRASP might also like to consider ways in which it could influence the <u>improvement of security force performance</u>. <u>First</u>, perhaps by reinforcing the efforts of senior police and Army commanders to develop a policy of more pro-active community relationships; awareness of community concerns; and a knowledge of wider government policies within their respective forces. And, <u>second</u>, by considering ways in which civil government <u>generally</u> might also become more exposed to those security factors that have a bearing on their policies and their implementation. Ways of achieving this could include:

(a) ensuring that there is systematic <u>briefing</u> of RUC officers at divisional and sub-divisional levels (and in the corresponding Army TAORs) on the community relations, social and economic policies being pursued issues and the more important developments in these areas;

(b) helping to <u>improve liaison</u> with the local community and with civil government;

(c) providing <u>secure and discrete</u> <u>facilities</u> whereby the security forces could meet and be briefed on the activities of community workers etc who might be compromised if seen to be collaborating publicly with them. (It is particularly important that 'front line' civil servants, eg Action Team Leaders in West Belfast, those working on the Rural Initiative in South Armagh, social security officers and agricultural inspectors are neither put personally at risk nor their 'credibility' undermined with local communities);

(d) considering whether, and if so what changes need be made in <u>central government machinery</u> to ensure that security concerns were fully represented in the formulation of socio economic policies;

(e) intensifying efforts to widen the role of the <u>Civil Representatives</u> by encouraging them to build contact with local community leaders, community groups, and local representatives of central departments. Ways of further developing this resource might be considered.

17. SECRASP needs also to have the capacity to address issues of current concern where Government's security and other policies inter-react.

18. <u>The Way Forward</u>

At its first meeting, SECRASP will not have the time to discuss issues of substance in any detail. It may wish to <u>reflect</u>, in general terms, <u>on the fundamental issues set out in paragraphs (3 - 13) above</u>; and, second, to <u>identify, for more detailed study, the problems in the areas sketched in paragraphs (14 - 16)</u> (and items (3 and 4) of the Agenda). However, only so much can be achieved <u>within</u> Government (or by SECRASP); one must also avoid commissioning nugatory papers. For example, SECRASP may identify many of the problems; studies can be commissioned; and officials may be instructed to set up new machinery within

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Government, and, systematically and as a matter of standard practice, to take account of both security and non-security considerations in the formulation of policies, and their application. At some point, however, the Security Forces themselves must be engaged if the approaches sketched above are to pay their full dividends. Moreover, to be fully successful, any new initiatives will require personal commitment and strong central direction on the part of Ministers, senior police (and Army) commanders, and of NI Departmental Permanent Secretaries and senior officials.

19. However, the Chief Constable is not susceptible to direction by the Secretary of State on operational matters (and the GOC operates only in his support). Hence, once SECRASP has a clearer idea of the areas in which it wishes to make progress, it will be necessary to engage in dialogue with the Chief Constable (and the GOC) on the best way of taking matters forward if the Committee is to be more than a forum for the exchange of views, within Government, and a commissioner of papers.

20. SECRASP may conclude that a useful next step might be the commissioning of a draft Work Programme, under the supervision of DUS(B), for the Committee, including proposals for engaging the commitment of senior security force commanders, with a view to a further meeting in the Summer.

SECURITY POLICY AND OPERATIONS DIVISION

MAY 1991

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