

# **Dermot Nally Papers**

**UCDA P254/72**



SECRET

P254/72  
ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT  
(Department of Justice)  
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH  
(Dublin)

Frank,  
Attached in the document I  
agreed with Chilcutt, I've given a copy  
to S. L. Higgins also today. My Minister  
saw the document yesterday evening & agreed that  
I could circulate it to Sean & yourself.

I understand that Chilcutt showed it  
to Sir H. Mayhew & Sir John Wheeler.

T. D.  $\frac{2}{12}$   
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P.S. There is some briefing material  
attached to the document.

T. D.  $\frac{2}{12}$

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CROSS-BORDER SECURITY CO-OPERATION

Report to Prime Minister and Taoiseach from the Northern Ireland  
Office/Department of Justice Top Level Group ('Chilcot/Dalton Group')

Introduction

1. Following a summit in December 1991, a top-level working group co-chaired by the Permanent Under Secretary of the Northern Ireland Office and the Secretary of the Department of Justice was set up to review cross-border security co-operation and to take forward work on some specific issues. The Group has met on a number of occasions to pursue this remit.
2. At the meeting between the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach on 16 June, 1993, the Group was tasked to prepare for the December summit, a review of security co-operation and the principal subjects currently under discussion. This paper provides that review.

Security Co-operation

3. The main channels for discussion of security co-operation issues are shown in the Annex. The current level of operational co-operation is very satisfactory. There is now daily exchange of security information between the Garda Siochana and the RUC, and the security forces on both sides of the border co-operate frequently in co-ordinated operations. Both sides are committed to maintaining and, where possible, enhancing co-operation.
4. The main security co-operation issues currently under discussion (in the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), the PUS/Dalton Group, and elsewhere) are as follows:



- (i) Police structures to counter terrorism. Papers have been exchanged between both sides and a sub-group, comprising the two Permanent Secretaries and senior officers from the two police forces, is considering whether any further adjustment of existing structures (North or South) could increase effectiveness.
- (ii) Border Flight Safety Zones. There have been discussions on this issue at official, Ministerial and IGC level. Agreement has not been reached. Further work therefore continues, and progress will be reported to the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach at the next summit.
- (iii) Radio communications on the Border. In accordance with the principle of "police primacy", cross-border radio communications between the security forces are transmitted between the RUC and the Garda Siochana. While the system is working satisfactorily (both operationally and technically), the British side considers that the system could be improved by extending it to enable British Army patrols (where unaccompanied) to have direct radio communication with the Garda Siochana in **emergency** situations, to guard against a possible communications deficit which in some circumstances might have serious consequences. For various reasons, including operational considerations on the Irish side, agreement has not been reached on this proposal. The Irish side considers that emergency situations are best dealt with at an operational level in a manner which is both practical and appropriate to the circumstances. It has been **agreed** that where either side considers that the circumstances of a particular incident require a review of the current communications arrangements, a review will be undertaken without delay.

- (iv) Joint Automatic Fingerprint Recognition (AFR). AFR systems permit the much more rapid identification of fingerprints in both terrorist and criminal cases (the expert is offered a narrow range of likely suspects whose fingerprints resemble the marks, and can therefore make a final identification without the need for a lengthy manual search of the records). The Metropolitan Police anti-terrorist section and the RUC have now acquired compatible systems (Printrak) and exchanged terrorist print collections on disc. The Garda Síochána hope to have an AFR system in place in about 12 months. Their AFR selection process will consider the case for compatibility with the RUC/Metropolitan Police systems, including its relevance to the question of efficiency in tracing the movements of terrorists. They will also examine the legal/technical aspects of facilitating a sharing of information with those systems. The British side hopes that it will be possible to achieve compatibility, since it is their present view that this could help importantly in tracing terrorists who move between the Republic, Northern Ireland and Great Britain.
- (v) Joint weapons and explosives database. A joint RUC/Garda weapons and explosives database would enable information on terrorist munitions and weapons (currently exchanged manually) to be pooled and computerised. This would considerably improve the accessibility of weapons and explosives information to both Forces, with consequent operational benefits. Work on implementing a joint computer database is being accelerated by the two Forces at the request of the Chilcot/Dalton Group.



- (vi) Police exchange visits. The Chief Constable and the Commissioner are developing a programme of RUC/Garda reciprocal visits, e.g. to see installations, receive presentations and discuss procedures and priorities in the other Force.
- (vii) Extradition. The Irish side has indicated that it will introduce amending extradition legislation in the Oireachtas before Christmas. The British side has had briefing on this legislation through Working Group II of the Anglo-Irish Conference.
- (viii) Home-Made Explosives (HME). Research continues on possible ways to inhibit terrorist production of HME on both sides of the border from widely available calcium ammonium nitrate (CAN) fertilizer. The ultimate aim is to replace CAN fertilizer with an acceptable alternative. Current research is focussed on urea, which is a cheaper alternative to CAN but which is agronomically less effective. If a cost effective additive could be found or a new compound devised to improve the performance of urea, the way would be open for both sides to examine the scope for phasing out or tightly controlling the availability of CAN.

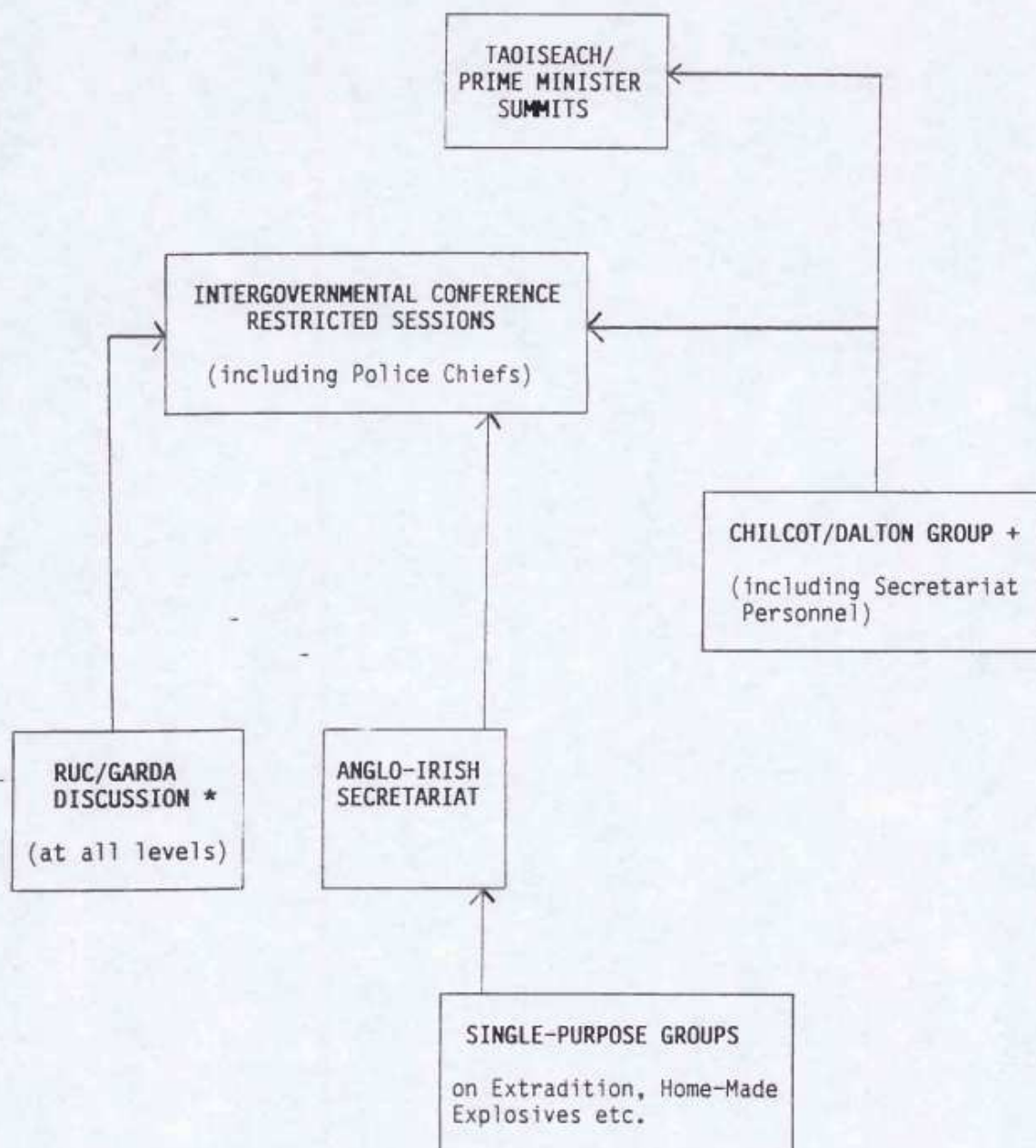
Northern Ireland Office

Department of Justice

29 November 1993

SECRET

ANNEX



\* Apart from discussion on security co-operation matters and consequent input (through Police Chiefs) to Conference business, there is also on-going discussion/co-operation on the operational side.

+ The Chilcot/Dalton Group currently has one sub-group (on police structures) and may if appropriate establish others.

Report to the Taoiseach and Prime Minister from the  
Northern Ireland Office/Department of Justice  
Top Level Group (Chilcot/Dalton Group)

1. At the meeting between the Taoiseach and Prime Minister on 16 June, 1993 the 'Chilcot/Dalton' Group was tasked to prepare a review of security co-operation issues for the December meeting. The Group's report provides that review.
2. It is not anticipated that there will be detailed discussion at the meeting on the issues covered in the report but the following material is provided on certain of the issues involved in case the Prime Minister should raise one or more of them.



### Border Flight Safety Zones

1. This is a British proposal seeking blanket clearance for British Army helicopters to overfly this jurisdiction when landing at or taking-off from each of 18 security bases close to the border. The British have sought this concession to (i) maximise flight safety by ensuring that their helicopters would always land and take-off into the wind and (ii) minimise (in their view) the risk of terrorist attack.
2. The proposal has been strongly opposed by the Irish side at the Anglo-Irish Conferences in July and November, 1993. The Irish side have resisted the proposal for the following reasons:-
  - the advice of the Garda Siochana and the military authorities is that what is proposed would greatly increase rather than reduce the risk of injury or death to British Army personnel through terrorist attack. Terrorists would be more determined than ever to bring a helicopter down particularly if the opportunity were to arise of doing so on the Southern side of the border;
  - there would be concerns about the prospect of loss of life in the event of an attack on a British Army helicopter while over this jurisdiction i.e. in the event of an exchange of fire. At the Anglo-Irish Conference on 3 November, the Secretary of State, while saying that instructions could be given to helicopter crews not to return fire, conceded that it would not be possible to guarantee that a helicopter crew would not return fire in the event of their being attacked while in Southern airspace.
  - in spite of the British view to the contrary it would be incumbent on us to provide ground protection to British helicopters overflying Southern airspace and this would necessitate large-scale diversion of Garda and Irish Army manpower from other pressing anti-terrorist duties;
  - blanket clearance to overfly this jurisdiction would be seen by the Irish public as an unprecedented and totally unacceptable erosion of sovereignty. The scale of overflights envisaged - possibly up to 540 per month, including overflights of towns such as Lifford, Blacklion, Swanlinbar and Ballyconnell - would lead inevitably to huge resentment particularly among the communities

along the border. This in turn would damage the effectiveness of security forces in the South, most importantly in the area of intelligence-gathering.

- the proposal would bring the existence of other carefully negotiated arrangements for overflights (IED procedure, Operation Reporter) into the area of public debate and thereby jeopardise their continuation (the number of overflights per year under these arrangements is very small and there is prior notification). (The British side now say that there might be scope to adjust the arrangements to reduce the inconvenience caused to Irish citizens i.e. by avoiding built-up areas like Lifford. This admission would seem to undermine the whole basis of their proposal).



### Radio Communications on the Border

1. The British have proposed an extension of the present secure radio system between the Gardai and the RUC to allow British Army/Garda communications in emergency situations. The proposal has not been agreed.
2. The Irish side's reasons for resisting this proposal are:
  - direct British Army/Garda radio communications would breach the principle of police primacy which is a fundamental principle in this jurisdiction - the Garda Siochana are the civil power with primary responsibility for internal security matters and cross border communication must be with the civil power on the Northern side ie. the RUC;
  - the Irish side must view with disfavour any proposal which would facilitate and support a system of "unaccompanied" British Army patrolling; any communications problem - we do not accept that there is one - could be solved by ensuring that all BA patrols are accompanied by the RUC;
  - the professional experience of the Garda Siochana is that it is imperative that radio communications be channelled through pre-determined command centres to ensure an appropriate and measured response to security incidents. The existing system of radio communication between the Garda Siochana and the RUC is well established. The entry of another line of communications, intended to trigger a security response, could not only give rise to confusion but reduce the effectiveness of the present arrangements.
3. In the course of 'Chilcot/Dalton' discussions, the British side accepted the Irish view that emergency situations are best dealt with at an operational level in a manner which is both practical and appropriate to circumstances.



### Automatic Fingerprint Recognition

1. The Garda AFR selection process will select the AFR system which is best suited to meeting Garda needs. There are two principal contenders, MORPHO and PRINTRAK. The question of compatibility with the RUC and Metropolitan police systems (both PRINTRAK) will be considered as part of the Garda selection process but will not be a determining factor in their choice of system. The sharing of information on terrorist fingerprints may not, in any event, depend on compatibility.

### Home-Made Explosives

1. There have been two recent meetings of the Northern Ireland Office/Department of Justice HME Group. Field trials of an adapted urea fertilizer are planned for next summer. If these are successful, consideration may have to be given to phasing out or tightly controlling CAN fertilizer (which is used for bomb-making).
2. This would be a major step which would require very careful consideration of the implications for Irish agriculture and the fertilizer industry. A British proposal to appoint consultants for a joint study of the implications of a change to an adapted urea fertilizer for the Irish Fertilizer Industry is currently under consideration. A similar study will be necessary on the agronomic implications.