

3. British Intelligence in Ireland, 1914–1921

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I

THE purpose of this chapter is to discuss the organisation and performance of British intelligence in Ireland from the outbreak of the First World War to the cessation of hostilities between the authorities in Ireland and the Irish separatists. This seven-year period is best divided into three phases, from 1914 to the Easter rebellion in 1916, from the rebellion to the end of the war in 1918, and from then onwards to the Irish treaty in 1921. These phases are quite distinct, but in each can be seen the same problems of obtaining, organising and evaluating intelligence which characterised the British effort to maintain order and political control in Ireland.

Prior to the war, intelligence was provided principally by the two Irish police forces, the DMP (Dublin Metropolitan Police) and the RIC (Royal Irish Constabulary). These had long experience of dealing with unrest in Ireland, and elaborate if old-fashioned procedures had been developed over the years to report to Dublin Castle information and assessment of all occurrences of a political or subversive nature. The DMP's detective unit, the G division, contained a number of officers who specialised in political work; the RIC, responsible for all of Ireland outside Dublin City, had few detectives as such, but in each county certain men were assigned to concentrate on political matters, and their reports were forwarded to the RIC Special Crime Branch in Dublin Castle. This small office was staffed by a county inspector, a district inspector and a few clerks; its function was to keep in touch with political crime throughout the country and to furnish an overall assessment of the state of affairs for

the use of the Irish executive. As well as reports from around the country, it received information from RIC officers based in Glasgow, Liverpool, Holyhead and the United States, and in addition it served as a liaison office with the DMP, whose headquarters were located close by. There was continuous consultation between the two forces on political matters, and cooperation seems to have been complete. There were, however, certain differences in the kind of material which they provided: the DMP's detectives (of whom less than a dozen were concerned with political matters) concentrated on shadowing suspects, attending political meetings and keeping premises under observation, whereas the RIC, a force developed specifically in response to political and agrarian crime, were better able to find out what was going on in each area and to detect changes in the political climate. Unionist politicians frequently complained that the Irish police had been deprived of funds for 'secret service' work since the advent of Liberal rule in 1906, but in fact the Irish authorities were kept reasonably well informed of the state of the country and of the various separatist organisations which were active. However, the onset of war brought with it the new danger and complication of German espionage and intrigue in Ireland, as well as problems of maritime security with which the civil authorities were not equipped to deal. Consequently a number of steps were taken in 1914 to counter the wartime threats.

On the outbreak of hostilities, an RIC officer, Inspector Ivon Price, was appointed intelligence officer to the army's Irish Command with the rank of major.¹ As such he saw all the relevant information supplied by the two Irish police forces, and he also dealt with Colonel Kell of MI5 at the War Office in London. In addition to this, he received 'material obtained from the Postal and Cable Censors, the Admiralty, Ministry of Munitions, Chief Constables, and other sources' in Ireland, Britain and abroad.² Although military intelligence officers were appointed in each of the three military districts in Ireland, their reports were of little consequence.³ As Kell put it in 1916, 'the County Inspectors are the people who can give full and reliable information regarding their own districts': it was they, and Major Price, who counted.⁴ The Admiralty maintained a separate intelligence network in the Irish ports under the direction of W. V. Harrel, a former assistant commissioner of the DMP.⁵ It reported to the admiral commanding at Queenstown, the principal naval base, and its activities were limited to 'Admiralty matters' and touched on

more general questions only in relation to the loyalty of dockyard employees.⁶ What evidence there is suggests that it had virtually no contact with naval intelligence in London. This was of considerable significance, as the Admiralty's naval intelligence division dominated the British intelligence community during the war, and its chief, Captain Reginald Hall, wielded a great deal of power. He did not wield it wisely where Ireland was concerned.

II

The civil authorities and the naval and military forces in Ireland were faced with a number of tasks once war broke out. The navy's principal concern was to protect British shipping in the seas around Ireland, and in particular to detect and destroy enemy submarines.⁷ The army was obliged to help the civil powers to maintain order if required, but saw its primary wartime job as the recruitment and training of men for military service. In so far as it took a direct interest in security policy, the army pressed for action against separatist agitators on the grounds that they affected recruitment rather than because they represented a serious threat to British rule.⁸ The police forces and the Irish administration which they served had somewhat more complex problems to deal with.

The Ulster crisis had posed a dilemma which neither the authorities in Ireland nor the cabinet in London had been able to resolve, and in consequence a large number of arms had been imported into Ireland without hindrance from the government. Although the loyalty of Ulster and of the great majority of the National Volunteers was not in doubt, it was inevitable that some arms would come into the possession of extremists, and that they might be tempted to use them. Furthermore, it was plain that Germany would do what she could to stir up trouble in Ireland, whether by political agitation through Irish American organisations, or by direct military aid to Irish separatists. The Irish authorities had long experience of the machinations of Irish American secret societies, but they had none at all of intrigue and subversion by a foreign power.

Shortly after war was declared, all enemy aliens of military age known to the Irish authorities were arrested, an obvious precaution justified by the circumstances of the time.⁹ The police were instructed

to watch out for signs of German naval activity around the coast, especially the landing of arms, and to keep all foreigners under observation. Similar steps were taken in Britain, but in neither case were leading Unionists satisfied with what was done. Scare stories abounded, and Walter Long, who had a great deal of influence in Irish affairs, complained in November that 'as to invasion and spies, nothing can in my judgement be worse than the position of affairs' prevailing in the United Kingdom.¹⁰ In December a *Morning Post* journalist visited Ireland, and prepared a secret report which stated that there were 'many spies of German nationality in the north and west of Ireland prior to the outbreak of war. Not all of these have left the country or been interned', and 'more drastic measures' than the police were willing to apply were 'urgently called for'. There was 'very strong presumptive evidence that the money remitted from America' to separatist organisations 'is really German money', while 'mysterious strangers have been seen on several occasions, particularly during the month of October, on the shores of Sligo Bay'. It was 'believed that mines were conveyed on board trawlers which subsequently proceeded north. The mines were said to have been packed in sections, placed inside boxes . . . [and] the sections . . . screwed together and the mines thus made ready to be launched. These may have been the mines which caused a disaster off the northern coast of Ireland at the end of October.'¹¹ A more precise tale reached Captain Hall of naval intelligence in December: a 'confidential source' informed him that in April 1914 Sir Roger Casement had, while motoring in Connemara with a German visitor, lost an overcoat containing secret correspondence. It transpired that the 'confidential source' was the Unionist MP Sir John Lonsdale, who had got the story from the driver of Casement's car, and that the coat full of documents was nothing more than a fiction invented by an RIC man to trick the driver into disclosing what places Casement had visited.¹²

Despite the vagueness and evident unreliability of such reports, Captain Hall appeared to heed them rather than the more prosaic account of affairs provided by the Irish authorities, who month after month found no trace of German intrigue in Ireland. There were two reasons for Hall's attitude: firstly, he had an outstanding and unimpeachable source of information on German plans for Ireland, as his staff had broken the telegraphic code in which messages were passed between the German Foreign Office and its embassy in Washington; secondly, he had no time for the conciliatory – or

dilatory – approach taken by the Irish administration under the Liberals, and he was prepared to by-pass them altogether. A striking instance of this in the first year of the war was the cruise of the yacht *Sayonara* in the autumn of 1914, an episode of which he was unaccountably proud.¹³ Alarmed by the talk of German submarines gaining shelter along the west coast of Ireland, and aware that Casement was seeking German aid for a rebellion and might attempt to return to Ireland, Hall and Basil Thomson of Scotland Yard hit upon the idea of sending the *Sayonara* to investigate. An American yacht, it was crewed by three Royal Navy officers with American accents, and by fifty ratings who had been taught the rudiments of American slang. It was hoped that, by adopting an anti-British attitude, the men of the *Sayonara* might gain the confidence of disloyal Irishmen and thus learn where submarines were hiding and even perhaps discover when Casement was expected to arrive. Neither the Irish authorities nor the admiral commanding at Queenstown were informed of the yacht's mission, and they had reported nothing which would have justified it. The expedition aroused the suspicions of the regular naval patrols, and spent some time under arrest. This may have substantiated its authenticity for the separatists it sought to hoodwink, but it uncovered nothing at all of substance. Its most tangible effect was to add to the scare stories which had prompted its dispatch – the Marquess of Sligo, always on the look out for subversion, dashed over from his home in County Mayo to tell Hall of the sinister craft.¹⁴ Casement remained a prime target of British intelligence, and Hall was able to keep a fairly close track of his movements by intercepting German communications.¹⁵

The Irish authorities went about their business in a less exotic manner, using their traditional methods of observation of suspects and collection of information. These had worked adequately in the past, but the political circumstances of the war made it difficult to act against troublemakers even when they had been clearly identified.¹⁶ The Irish Volunteers, the Citizen Army and the IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood) were correctly regarded as the most dangerous organisations, but the police failed to infiltrate them. This was a marked change from earlier times: it was, perhaps, due partly to the efficiency of the separatists, but was at least as much because of police slackness. The public statements made in the wake of the 1916 rebellion that the police had few 'friends' in these bodies were deceptive, in that early in 1916 the DMP did get quite detailed

information from two sources, 'Chalk' and 'Granite', which prompted one official to comment that 'we seem at last to be getting *some* information'.¹⁷ However, as events were to prove, this was too late in the day. After the rebellion Basil Thomson reported that the RIC had a total of only £400 a year with which to pay informants, but the permanent head of the Irish administration said that 'there was no difficulty' about funds for such purposes.¹⁸ On balance, it appears that it was a lack of initiative, rather than a shortage of cash, which hampered the RIC and the DMP in their investigation of separatist organisations. Furthermore, criticism of their failures must be qualified by the reflection that the plans of the inner circle of conspirators who initiated the Easter rebellion were unknown not only to the authorities but to the chief of staff of the Irish Volunteers, Eoin MacNeill.¹⁹

The outbreak of the rising on Easter Monday 1916 came as a complete surprise to the Irish authorities, who had assumed that the events of the previous days had made any attempt at insurrection unlikely. As already mentioned, the DMP in March had belatedly secured information which indicated that some action was being contemplated. On 17 April news reached Dublin Castle that a ship carrying arms for a rebellion had left Germany for Ireland some days previously, and that these would be landed on the south-west coast. This information came in a letter to the army commander, General Friend, from General Stafford, the officer commanding in Cork. Stafford had apparently learnt this 'not officially, but casually', in a conversation with the admiral commanding at Queenstown, Admiral Bayly.²⁰ Bayly had received this information from Hall's Naval Intelligence Division, which did not attempt to warn the Irish authorities formally either through him or through Major Price. This 'very extraordinary fact' was touched on briefly by the commission of inquiry into the rebellion, but no conclusions were drawn from it.²¹ It is now clear that Hall was anxious above all to avoid disclosing his source, decrypted German messages; in so doing he jeopardised the security of Ireland, although Bayly's remarks to Stafford were obviously intended to alert Dublin Castle.²² In this they succeeded: on 21 April the German arms ship *Aud* was captured by the navy off the coast of Kerry, while an RIC patrol detained one of three men who had been landed from a German submarine in Tralee Bay. It was only the next day, Easter Saturday, that this prisoner was identified as Roger Casement. He was immediately sent to London for interroga-

tion, and the Irish authorities therefore had no chance to question him closely. On Easter Sunday he arrived in London, where Hall refused his request that news of his arrest be published in Ireland together with his appeal that no rising be attempted.²³ Given Hall's outlook and general behaviour, it is quite possible that he intended the rebellion to take place, knowing that it would be crushed and that the government would be obliged to follow a policy of repression in its wake. In fact, the military council of the IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood) already knew of Casement's arrest, though not that he had come to Ireland specifically to stop the rising taking place, and they were firmly committed to action.²⁴ Eoin MacNeill, the Volunteers' chief of staff, was not, and when he learnt of the capture of the arms ship he issued an order cancelling the manoeuvres and parades which had been arranged as cover for a mobilisation and uprising.²⁵ This, together with the arrest of Casement, convinced the Irish authorities that the immediate crisis was over.²⁶ On Easter Monday Sir Mathew Nathan and Major Price were actually discussing plans for the arrest of the leaders of the conspiracy when Dublin Castle was attacked, the shooting of a DMP man at the gate being the first intimation they received that a rebellion was in progress.²⁷ General Friend, who had left Ireland on Good Friday after learning of the capture of the *Aud*, later expressed the bewilderment of the Irish authorities in speaking of 'this unexpected rising which took place without any warning, so far as I could see it was quite unforeseen by anyone'.²⁸

The commission of inquiry set up to enquire into the causes of the rebellion laid the blame squarely on the political head of the Irish administration, the chief secretary Augustine Birrell.²⁹ In so doing they concluded that the outbreak was the consequence not of a lack of intelligence but of political resolve: both Irish police forces were specifically exempted from any criticism. No allusion was made in their report to the dilatory manner in which the Irish authorities were warned of the *Aud*'s mission, although one member of the commission commented on it during the proceedings.³⁰ That this omission was not dictated simply by security considerations is shown by the faith which both the British government and the Irish authorities continued to repose in Hall and Basil Thomson.³¹ In September Thomson reported on the organisation of intelligence in Ireland. He found 'overlapping, lack of co-ordination, and unnecessary expense', pointing out that

Intelligence in Ireland is obtained by no less than five public bodies, viz:— The Admiralty, War Office (M15), Irish Command, Royal Irish Constabulary, and Dublin Metropolitan Police, and in America by the Home Office, War Office, Foreign Office and Royal Irish Constabulary, and . . . although all the material reports may reach the Irish Executive, there is certainly a danger that from lack of co-ordination the Irish Government may be the last Department to receive information of grave moment to the peace of Ireland.

He was particularly critical of the provision of information from America, where 'there is much overlapping', but he made no mention of naval intelligence, which was by far the most important agency where Ireland was concerned. He recommended some changes in the organisation of the Crimes Special Office of the RIC, called for 'a judicious expenditure of money for information' as 'it is always cheaper and more effective to reward very liberally one person in a prominent position than a number of persons who are on the fringe of a movement', and advocated the creation of a covert intelligence service, staffed by RIC men who 'would ostensibly be working in the Crimes Special Office', which would take over the political work of the DMP after Home Rule had been granted.³² Few of these measures were in fact adopted, although two years later Thomson told Lord French that they were 'now the working system' in Ireland. The idea of a secret RIC unit based in Dublin was resurrected late in 1919, and something on those lines was eventually established in the summer of 1920.³³

Thomson's observations were reasonable in themselves, but they obscured the fact that the greatest weakness of the organisation of intelligence in Ireland lay not in the multiplicity of agencies involved — after all, the RIC, the DMP and the military were closely linked through Major Price, who also had direct access to the permanent head of the Irish administration — but in the unwillingness of intelligence chiefs in London either to share vital information with the Irish authorities or to accept what they said about the state of the country. As will be seen, Hall in particular was determined to act as he saw fit, even to the extent of apparent distortion of evidence to force Dublin Castle into repressive action against the separatist movement.

III

The defeat of the rebellion was followed by the arrest and deportation of over 1800 suspected activists from throughout the country. This was successful in that almost all the leading separatists were detained. However, politically it proved very unpopular, and the government soon began to release those detained without trial. This was done in a characteristically haphazard fashion, so that dangerous men were freed along with harmless ones. The police and military in Ireland protested at this, believing it an encouragement to disloyalty, but they were confident that no serious disorder could occur.³⁴ That confidence was tested in September, when the War Office sent to the army commander in Ireland information 'which may be accepted as coming from the highest source and [is] in every respect reliable'.³⁵ This was that two members of the 'Control Committee' of Sinn Fein had escaped detection and were organising another rising, that ample funds were available to them, and that arms had already been smuggled into the country.³⁶ This report caused great alarm in the Irish administration, but Major Price wrote that 'I cannot consider this information reliable': although popular sentiment had swung in Sinn Fein's favour since the Easter rebellion, the separatists were completely disorganised and most of the leaders were in jail. There was no evidence that arms had been smuggled in, and the bulk of the money sent to Ireland from America had undoubtedly been used for legitimate purposes, while 'the number of troops in Ireland renders all hope of a rising vain, unless there was a German invasion in force'.³⁷ Events proved him right, and the War Office subsequently passed on a correction of the original information which qualified it considerably.³⁸

The warning to Dublin Castle was based on documents seized by the American authorities in the office of a Clan na Gael organiser in San Francisco, and on decrypts of telegrams by naval intelligence in which Bernstorff, the German ambassador in Washington, told Berlin of his dealings with Clan na Gael, the most important Irish-American society. These messages were eventually published by the British government in 1921, along with other evidence 'proving the intrigue between Sinn Fein and Germany'; what they in fact disclosed was that Clan na Gael's 'Revolutionary Directorate' had virtually no contact with active separatists in Ireland, and little idea of conditions in the country.³⁹ They were pressing for a German commitment to

send arms and men to support another rising, whereas in Ireland no such action was contemplated. Hall faced a genuine dilemma in his handling of information since the secrecy of his sources was his paramount consideration, and this frequently made it difficult to give the Irish authorities sufficient material to allow them to evaluate the dangers for themselves. Nevertheless, it is quite clear that he made use of the inviolability of his sources to foist upon Dublin Castle alarming information which they could not test and upon which they were obliged to act. This happened again in February 1917, when a warning was received from London that an arms landing was imminent. That warning was based partly on further decrypts of German telegrams, from which it appeared that Clan na Gael was again seeking the dispatch of troops and arms; there was no indication that anyone in Ireland knew of the plans, but this was not made clear to the Irish authorities.⁴⁰ As a result they were forced to deport a number of prominent Sinn Feiners, against whom no charge could be proved, and the political consequences were unfortunate.⁴¹

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Germany were broken off in February 1917. This deprived Hall of his principal source of information. However, his influence was unimpaired, since the provenance of his material was secret. Thus anything he said concerning Ireland continued to be treated with the utmost respect although most of it was in fact based on the flimsiest of evidence and the stories of spy-conscious Unionists. In the summer of 1917 an informant within the Irish administration began sending reports to London, using the editor of a Belfast newspaper and St Loe Strachey of the *Spectator* as intermediaries. Referred to in Strachey's correspondence only as 'Z', his reports made up in colour what they lacked in accuracy: the Germans had landed machine guns and other arms on the west coast, Sinn Fein was preparing another rebellion, and 'communications between the Sinn Feiners and Germany are kept up largely through Maynooth and the Vatican'.⁴² Strachey passed on this material to Basil Thomson, who in turn gave it to Hall, and who also 'transmitted his information on occasion to Mr Duke', the Chief Secretary for Ireland. 'This was really unavoidable'.⁴³ Thus the political head of the Irish administration was in the extraordinary position of hearing from an authoritative source alarming stories which in fact derived from the gossiping and fantasies of one of his own subordinates. It is plain from the reports of the Irish police forces, the military and the navy that there was no substance in these

tales – it was not as though ‘Z’ was communicating material which had been suppressed within the administration for political reasons. ‘Z’ was ultimately ‘blown to pieces’ through an indiscretion, but two of his colleagues, ‘JK’ and ‘Lt Col Retd’, continued the work.⁴⁴ They had nothing of any importance to report, merely relaying as fact the wild rumours of the day. Such talk greatly increased the difficulties of the Irish administration: Walter Long believed it implicitly and demanded action accordingly, while its endorsement by Hall and Thomson in London gave it a spurious authenticity which was impossible to challenge.⁴⁵

In the White Paper on links between Germany and Sinn Fein which appeared in 1921, the government stated that communications between the two, interrupted by America’s entry into the war, ‘were again opened up in June 1917’. No evidence of this was offered, but telegrams from the German embassy in Madrid of August and September 1917 were quoted which discussed the possibility of sending arms to Ireland from South America, and asked whether ‘warehouses, etc., on Argentine soil’ might be attacked by an exiled Sinn Feiner.⁴⁶ These inconclusive trivia were the best proof that Hall’s cryptanalysts could provide of continued contact between Sinn Fein and Germany; it is likely therefore that the White Paper’s further claims – that in the autumn of 1917 ‘communications were taking place . . . by means of U-boats off the West Coast of Ireland and German propaganda leaflets and pamphlets were thus disseminated in Ireland’, that by 1918 ‘arms and ammunition were being landed’ from submarines, and that Sinn Feiners were sending ‘messages in code’ to offshore U-boats – were based largely on the stories of rumourmongers such as ‘Z’ and ‘JK’.⁴⁷ They certainly did not tally with the reports furnished by the organisation which knew Ireland best, the RIC.

Despite the shock of the 1916 rebellion, the Irish police forces plodded along as they had done for years. They failed to penetrate the higher councils of Sinn Fein or of the Irish Volunteers, but they at least provided realistic assessments of political feeling and of the state of the country upon which the administration could rely. The trends they discerned were not encouraging: separatist sentiment had grown since the rising, and, while there was no immediate danger of another insurrection, the country was increasingly disaffected. From time to time Sinn Fein appeared to be on the wane, but overall it was a growing threat to the established order.⁴⁸ Military intelligence officers

reached broadly the same conclusions.⁴⁹ Neither they, the navy nor the police found much sign of German activity in Ireland, or of the submarine landings so often reported in London.⁵⁰ Because of this, the sudden discovery in April 1918 of the ‘German plot’ came all the more as a shock to the Irish authorities.

The ‘German plot’ is the most notable illustration of the apparent manipulation of intelligence by Hall and his cronies in order to prod the Irish authorities into action against Sinn Fein. Following the German military offensive in March 1918, the cabinet took a sudden decision to apply conscription to Ireland, a step they had hitherto avoided because of its probable political consequences.⁵¹ It had precisely the result feared: nationalist Ireland united in opposition to the measure, Sinn Fein gained immensely, and in the end the government were forced to back down. In the midst of the political turmoil which followed the cabinet’s decision, the RIC, acting on a warning from naval intelligence, on 12 April arrested a man on the coast of County Clare. This was Corporal Joseph Dowling, who as a prisoner of war in Germany had joined Casement’s Irish brigade.⁵² Under interrogation in London, he admitted that he had been brought from Germany by U-boat to make contact with Sinn Fein leaders in order ‘to ascertain the true state of affairs’ in Ireland and to settle details for a landing of ‘arms, artillery, machine guns and German troops’.⁵³ He was to spend a fortnight in Ireland before making his way back to Germany – according to one account he would summon a U-boat by waving his handkerchief from the shore.⁵⁴ Dowling was demonstrably ignorant of Irish affairs – he had planned to get in touch with John Dillon and John Redmond, neither of whom supported Sinn Fein and the latter of whom was dead – and it is hard to believe that the Germans reposed much faith in him.⁵⁵ Initially his arrest and confessions found a varied reaction amongst the authorities: Major Price and the police were seriously alarmed, whereas Lord French, who was about to become viceroy, wrote on 21 April that ‘I didn’t believe a word’ of Dowling’s claims that the Germans were about to land arms and men.⁵⁶ French was confirmed in this by conversations with Admiral Bayly and Mr Harrel, the head of the Admiralty’s Irish intelligence network. Harrel said that ‘it might be possible but gave very good reasons why it is not in the least probable’ that the Germans would risk any submarines ‘in order to land arms which in all probability would never be used for the purpose for which they were intended. He does not think that much

has been done in this way & I am inclined to agree with him'.⁵⁷ Yet within two weeks, French accepted the lord lieutenantcy 'on the understanding that I was to go to Ireland for the purpose of *restoring order* and combating German intrigues'.⁵⁸ To understand this change of attitude, the events of April 1918 must be examined in some detail.

The capture of Dowling was followed four days later by the discovery of two men named Cotter, one of them said to be a brother-in-law of de Valera, early in the morning 'in a sailing boat' in Dublin Bay. It was surmised that they were attempting to make contact with an enemy submarine previously reported in the area, 'and calculations as to wind and tide make it possible that they even did so'.⁵⁹ This seems most unlikely.⁶⁰ Their arrest, together with Dowling's capture and various rumours of arms landings, convinced Price that Hall was correct in believing that 'it is more than probable' that the Germans were about to send arms and troops, 'even though on quite a small scale'.⁶¹ The inspector general of the RIC thought the situation warranted the arrest of 'the Sinn Fein leaders without delay'.⁶² Additional information received early in May increased the anxiety of Irish officials: there were further rumours of impending arms landings, and the Admiralty on 3 May passed on a report received from Copenhagen that 'on the evening of April 26th, seven closed Railway Cars were put into pier at Cuxhaven alongside two large submarines. After dark their contents which were supposed to be rifles and machine guns with munitions' were loaded on board the submarines. 'From various rumours received it is considered that they are destined for Ireland'.⁶³ The Irish authorities had no means of evaluating such reports – they were dependent on Hall, especially as their own knowledge of the state of feeling in Ireland for once tallied with what he maintained. The decision to impose conscription had produced more uproar and unrest in Ireland than any German-inspired agitation could have hoped to achieve.

For most ministers, the condition of Ireland, however grave, was only one of many urgent problems to be faced, as Germany seemed on the verge of victory in France. On 2 May Walter Long complained that his cabinet colleagues had not 'properly realised the dangerous state of things in Ireland – especially the prevalence of German intrigue'.⁶⁴ In fact this worked to his advantage, since he was allowed to proceed unhindered on the government's behalf with the elaborate arrangements which culminated in the unmasking of the 'German plot', despite the doubts which his own party leader had already

expressed: 'we have nothing I am told which would be proof in a Court of Law. Midleton thought the Irish Office had proof but Duke tells me they have nothing except what comes from Hall and which I am told is not proof'.⁶⁵ Long had the full support of the Irish authorities and of the new lord lieutenant Lord French in preparing for action against Sinn Fein, but the principal advisers upon whom both he and they depended were Hall and Thomson.⁶⁶ The course agreed was that on the night of 17–18 May the police would arrest a large number of Sinn Fein activists, and that Lord French would then issue a proclamation declaring that the government had uncovered evidence of a Sinn Fein–German conspiracy.⁶⁷ Although some ministers expressed reservations about the plan – Smuts warned that 'there was a danger of discrediting the government if they made a great deal of pro-German activities in Ireland, and then found out that the evidence was not very considerable or convincing' – the cabinet on 10 May endorsed Long's scheme as part of a new policy of firmness towards Ireland in the wake of the conscription débâcle.⁶⁸ This they were soon to regret.

The wave of arrests went remarkably well. Lord French commented that 'the seizures . . . were entirely unexpected', without however drawing the inference that this was because the people seized were innocent of the charges made against them.⁶⁹ Ironically, one of the few to escape arrest was Michael Collins, who was tipped off by a DMP detective. He had received a message from the Germans promising support for another rising, but thought such an idea impractical though he did want weapons to be sent.⁷⁰ It rapidly became clear that the government could produce no real evidence of a plot, certainly nothing to substantiate the existence of any conspiracy between those detained and Germany. Long had hoped to do this by arranging for publication in the United States of what material there was, as this would disguise the fact that it came from Hall's cryptanalysts. But the Americans refused either to publish the documents themselves or to give 'public sanction to their publication in England'. Initially Long made little of this reverse, but he came to see it as significant.⁷¹ In this he was probably mistaken, as the information available was so inadequate: on 21 May the cabinet secretary found Lloyd George

rather low about the Irish proclamation issued last Saturday, to the effect that a plot had been discovered between the Sinn Feiners and

the Germans. There has since been an outcry for the . . . evidence, and Walter Long and the Irish Executive (who forced the Cabinet to approve the proclamation by putting a pistol to their head) have only produced evidence of the most flimsy and ancient description. So the Government are put in a hole, as I expected they would be.⁷²

When Hall appeared before the cabinet a day later, ministers were scathing about his material, which 'provided ample evidence of German designs, but not of Sinn Fein complicity', especially 'having regard to the very strong statement that had been published to the effect that we had evidence of a German plot', and the chief secretary for Ireland complained of 'the circuitous system of communication of information' between the naval authorities and Dublin Castle.⁷³ A few days afterwards the outgoing army commander in Ireland remarked that 'there were no proofs of the German Sinn Fein plot', and implied that he had been removed for saying so.⁷⁴ Most nationalists saw the arrests as a form of retribution for the country's opposition to conscription, as no conspiracy was ever proved and as none of those detained were tried for dealing with the enemy.⁷⁵ This was slightly simplistic: the Irish authorities were certainly convinced that a plot was afoot.⁷⁶ So too was Long. Whether Hall believed this is an open question: if his admirers are to be trusted, he was never wrong.⁷⁷ If so, then he deliberately misled politicians and officials over the supposed conspiracy.

Two days after the arrests French wrote that 'I have roused up the Detective Dept. with a view to getting at more of these intrigues. I know there *are* more'.⁷⁹ Over the next two years he was frequently to complain of the inadequacy of the police forces, but not until the end of 1919 did he or anyone else do much about it. Neither the RIC nor the DMP showed any inclination to change their ways: this was partly because of inertia, since they expected that the end of the war would bring with it Home Rule and an inevitable reconstitution of the two forces. Besides this, the chiefs of the two forces had little time for new methods of collecting intelligence. In July they both complained that a new agency, referred to only as 'Q', was 'really useless; that all the information Major Price had, was derived from them as distinct from Q'. It was agreed that the advice of MI5 should be sought 'as to the best means of improving Q'.⁸⁰ What exactly 'Q' was is unclear: it may have been the covert organisation suggested by Basil Thomson, but it seems more likely that it was a branch of military intelligence, since it

was the responsibility of the commander in chief.⁸¹ Towards the end of 1918 the inspector general of the RIC indicated that he had a valuable informant within Sinn Fein, but one who appears to have provided political rather than military – or criminal – intelligence.⁸²

Ireland was quiet throughout the remaining months of the war. A succession of labour disputes in the summer and autumn caused some anxiety, although the RIC concluded that the interests of unionised workers and of middle-class supporters of Sinn Fein were incompatible and would prevent an effective alliance between socialists and separatists. There was no sign of further German activity, but Walter Long was nevertheless disturbed by the growth of labour unrest throughout the British Isles, seeing in it 'the hand of Germany . . . all this is due to German intrigue and German money'. What was needed was a reorganised intelligence service to 'cope with the Bolshevik, Syndicalist and the German spy. I am satisfied that these three are still actively pursuing their infernal practices'.⁸³ Even after Germany's collapse he continued to fret about the dangers of Bolshevism in Ireland, and early in 1919 he dispatched an agent to Belfast, where 'a Soviet had been established'. The agent 'finally formed the opinion that a display of force was the only method of ending this Soviet threat', and the subsequent appearance of troops on the streets 'did the trick!'.⁸⁴ In fact, as events were to show, the threat to British rule in Ireland was based entirely on nationalism. It was one with which the Irish authorities proved unable to deal, though the failure was less theirs than the government's whom they served.

IV

The end of the war brought no relief for the Irish administration. The election of December 1918 saw a clear victory for Sinn Fein, which won 73 of the 105 Irish seats. Neither the cabinet in London nor Lord French in Ireland were prepared to adjust their policy in the light of this. Sinn Fein they continued to regard as a temporary phenomenon which would quickly lose support in the face of firm government. The sporadic attacks on police which began on 21 January 1919 with the shooting of two constables in Tipperary only confirmed them in this belief. Their view did not go unchallenged within the administration: General Byrne of the RIC argued that Sinn Fein had become a

majority party and could no longer be treated simply as an armed conspiracy by a handful of fanatics. In the course of 1919 he became increasingly estranged from the dominant clique in Dublin Castle, until in December he was finally disposed of by being sent on indefinite leave.⁸⁵ As head of the RIC he was well aware of the state of feeling in the country, and he argued that the only policy that offered any hope of success was to separate the politicians from the physical force section, the Irish Volunteers or IRA (Irish Republican Army) as they became known. Such a policy required considerable concessions from the government, and these were not forthcoming. Instead Sinn Fein was treated as a hostile and subversive organisation indistinguishable from the IRA. This further alienated public opinion and made it all the harder for the police to get to grips with political crime. Although raids for arms and documents occasionally brought results, Lord French's policy of firm government was ineffective and it served only to strengthen the extremists within the separatist movement.⁸⁶ It also led to divisions within the administration, which made effective reorganisation of the police forces difficult to achieve.

In the early months of 1919 concern grew about the capacity of the police to deal with political crime, but as usual little was done. In January Major Price returned to ordinary RIC work, and no successor emerged to replace him as co-ordinator and effective director of intelligence in Ireland.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the army were anxious to reduce their commitments in Ireland as elsewhere, while Harrel's Admiralty network had been wound up after the Armistice.⁸⁸ While the Crown forces were being cut, the IRA was increasing its activities. In 1918 and 1919 its director of intelligence, Michael Collins, secured the services of four men in RIC headquarters and in the DMP. These were able to provide a great deal of information on police operations, and they also disclosed the identities of informers and undercover agents who then became targets for 'the Squad', a group of gunmen working under Collins' orders.⁸⁹

Discussion within the administration of how to improve intelligence in the face of increased violence was complicated by the dispute about policy: General Byrne came in for fierce criticism about the 'state of affairs' in the RIC, whereas no complaints were made about the DMP.⁹⁰ This made little sense: although the RIC's capacity to collect intelligence was impaired by its increasing isolation from the community, it remained a formidable and competent force which could provide reliable information on the state of the country. The

DMP, by contrast, became almost a neutral body: of the ten or so detectives engaged on political work, five had been killed or wounded by the end of the year, and the chief commissioner was reduced to petitioning London to find a safe job in Britain for his best detective before he too was shot.⁹¹ In December Lord French and his closest advisers decided to take action. Having concluded that almost no one in Dublin Castle could be trusted, they set up a secret committee to 'place matters in Dublin and the country on a proper footing'.⁹² It consisted of the chief commissioner of the DMP, the acting inspector general of the RIC, the assistant under secretary Sir John Taylor, and Alan Bell, a resident magistrate and former RIC officer with many years' experience of political crime.⁹³ Their report 'has not been typed as the matter is of too confidential a nature to allow out of the hands of the Committee'.⁹⁴ They found that 'an organised conspiracy of murder, outrage and intimidation has existed for some time past with the object of . . . rendering useless the Police Forces'. While 'the ramifications extend all over the country, Dublin City is the storm centre and the mainspring of it all'. It was 'absolutely essential that all the resources of Government should be used in the Metropolis to break down and destroy' the IRA, which 'contemplates further murders during the winter months'. The DMP could no longer rely on 'even loyal and respectable people' for information, which must in future

come from the inside. This might be speedily obtained if an accredited agent, already closely connected with the organisation in America were to come to this country and ingratiate himself with the extreme section here and learn their plans. Such a person should not be known to any member of the Police Forces in Ireland. He ought to be able to give . . . information which would lead to the capture of intending assassins and the breaking up of the criminal organisation. It might also be possible to find men skilled in trades who could be sent to Dublin, being engaged for a regular salary, to ply their trade, join their appropriate Union and mix with the artisans who would be their fellow workers. Such men should be capable of gaining valuable information.

The report said also that 'at present the Sinn Feiners know all the detectives in the "G" Division, but the "G" Division have not the same intimate knowledge of them. This is a great handicap.' It

recommended the appointment of an additional assistant commissioner who would 'devote his full time' to G Division's political work, and suggested

sending to Dublin a dozen members of the RIC, young active men of courage and determination, good shots and preferably men accustomed to city life. These men should be lodged in pairs in various localities in the City. Their presence should not be made known to either the DMP or the RIC. Having made themselves acquainted with the members of the 'G' Division as regards their appearance they might very occasionally follow at a distance behind them so as to be ready to take action should anything occur . . . We are inclined to think that the shooting of a few would-be assassins would have an excellent effect. Up to the present they have escaped with impunity. We think that this should be tried as soon as possible.

The selection of men to become secret agents 'from the lists of candidates before they join the RIC and become policemen' was also suggested.⁹⁵

This report was notable in several respects. It acknowledged what had long been apparent: it was the DMP, not the RIC, which was in most danger of collapse. Secondly, it illustrated the fear of betrayal which pervaded the administration: General Byrne was only the first of a number of senior policemen to fall under suspicion.⁹⁶ Furthermore, some of its recommendations were acted upon. Within a fortnight a 'very able' RIC officer from Belfast, Inspector Redmond, was made assistant commissioner of the DMP to 'take care of political crime'.⁹⁷ It appears also that some covert agents were put to work under the direction of Alan Bell, who reported that 'in the course of their moving about my men have picked up a good deal of useful information which leads to raids'.⁹⁸ In addition, some months later the authorities did organise an undercover squad of RIC men in Dublin – the army already had their own plain clothes men operating in the city – which became known to its enemies as the 'Murder Gang'. Their task was not the protection of DMP detectives, who had by then ceased to matter, but the capture or elimination of wanted IRA men. Finally, the idea of infiltrating trade unions was evidently not forgotten: in July 1921 Collins warned a union leader that 'Dublin Castle is selecting men from the Military there to go . . .

anywhere there is a Trade Union . . . supplied with faked union badges and forged instructions . . . in order to find out the class of men attending meetings and anything else that would matter in their eyes. . . . Their intention to do this is beyond doubt.'⁹⁹

The steps taken in the wake of the report did not have any immediate effect. On 19 December gunmen narrowly failed to assassinate Lord French near Ashtown in County Dublin. A month later the newly appointed assistant commissioner Redmond was shot dead. This was a particular blow to Alan Bell, as 'through him I was able to make inquiries which I should not care to entrust to the "G" Division', of which he was justifiably suspicious.¹⁰⁰ Bell himself was taken off a tram and shot in March 1920 by men of Collins's 'Squad', the usual explanation being that he was 'investigating the Republic's secret bank accounts'.¹⁰¹ In fact the evidence suggests that he was doing rather more: he led secret inquiries into the attempt on Lord French and the killing of Redmond, and appears to have been an unofficial head of intelligence for the administration.¹⁰² By the time of his death, the regime which had sponsored his activities was on its last legs. In May the organisation of Dublin Castle was radically altered on the orders of the British government, and following this a determined effort was made to get to grips with terrorism in Ireland. This led to an escalation in violence, but it also saw occasional victories for the intelligence services over their IRA opponents. Thenceforth the antagonists were distinguishable less by their methods than by their efficiency.

The reform of the civil administration was accompanied by changes in the conduct of intelligence operations. At the suggestion of the army commander, General Macready, the cabinet appointed an officer to supervise the work of all the intelligence agencies in Ireland.¹⁰³ He was to perform the coordinating function carried out by Major Price up to 1919, but he would have greater authority to direct the efforts of the various organisations. Unfortunately for the British, the man chosen was not up to the job: Brigadier General Ormonde de l'Epee Winter, or 'O' as he preferred to be known, was a colourful figure, but his fondness of cloak and dagger methods could not conceal his incapacity for effective organisation. Macready complained of him in 1921 that he 'has not got the right method, and we here very much doubt whether he will ever get it'.¹⁰⁴ With the exception of military intelligence in Dublin, the collection and analysis of information remained a haphazard business.¹⁰⁵ In the

second half of 1920 there was an influx of 'sleuths' into Dublin, undercover and plain clothes agents who roamed the streets in search of the IRA and the Republican leaders: besides the army's own people, the RIC and Basil Thomson's directorate of intelligence also had men engaged on such work.¹⁰⁶ Some were army officers of Irish extraction, others men on loan from the Indian secret service.¹⁰⁷ These agents were not under adequate control – for example, they spied on a senior Dublin Castle official whose brief was to build up contacts with Sinn Féin.¹⁰⁸ In the violent circumstances of the time they did not operate within the law: suspects were sometimes shot, and prisoners tortured. The political repercussions of such behaviour probably outweighed the results gained, though it must be said that they made life a great deal harder for the IRA and scored some successes against them.

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the contending intelligence services in the most intense period of disorder. The success of Michael Collins in infiltrating Dublin Castle and in neutralising the DMP has been lauded *ad nauseam*, and like all good stories has acquired gloss after gloss over the years.¹⁰⁹ The attacks in 1919 on DMP detectives were successful and they severely shook the administration, but it should be said that the victims were men who had been doing political work openly for years and who were well known to their assailants.¹¹⁰ Their killing required not a masterstroke of intelligence work but rather ruthlessness and efficiency. The systematic shooting of officers which took place on 21 November 1920, Bloody Sunday, was in a different category. Although it is still not clear whether all those killed were in fact intelligence officers, some were undoubtedly members of the 'Cairo gang', a network which had been operating in Dublin since the summer. This action has been described as marking 'the defeat of the police and the nullification of their intelligence services', but while it certainly was spectacular it did not bring the operations of British intelligence to a halt.¹¹¹ After all, seven IRA men were subsequently hanged for their part in the killings, while an eighth was convicted but escaped from prison.¹¹² A few weeks after the shootings, a Dublin Castle official wrote that 'O' would 'I'm sure ... regard peace now as a tragedy', and on balance Bloody Sunday appears to have dispelled the 'amateurish attitude' of intelligence officers towards their work, not to have intimidated them into retreat.¹¹³ Furthermore, the fact that the IRA continued to kill suspected informers indicates that Collins at least believed that the intelligence services still posed a serious threat, whatever Bloody

Sunday had achieved.¹¹⁴ It is true to say that the IRA held the upper hand in intelligence during the war of independence – without it they could not have survived. They had the considerable advantage of popular support for their aims if not always for their methods, and their intelligence work was efficiently conducted. But there is also strength in numbers: the British had many thousands of troops and police to hand, and although the swarms of undercover agents in Ireland achieved little, the lack of adequate information could partly be remedied by large-scale sweeps and searches.¹¹⁵ This was how most IRA men were captured and worthwhile intelligence gathered. By the time of the truce in July 1921 the rebels were under extreme pressure as a result of such operations, although the prospects for a decisive British victory were as slim as ever. The IRA had won by not being defeated.

V

British intelligence in Ireland from 1914 to 1921 failed in its primary objective of ensuring that the government had adequate information on the activities and intentions of the separatist movement. It was a failure on the one hand of collection and analysis of intelligence, and on the other of security.

The two police forces never succeeded in obtaining worthwhile material from within separatist organisations, in previous decades notoriously easy to penetrate, and they seem barely to have tried. The DMP was badly led and inefficient, but until the autumn of 1919 the RIC did provide reliable information on the state of the country. Thereafter its progressive isolation from the community, and the political fixations of its new commanders, made it ineffective as a police force. Furthermore, by 1920 the IRA had well-placed informants within both the DMP and the RIC, the Dublin police being particularly affected. These informants did a great deal of damage, yet efforts to neutralise them were half-hearted and inept. Furthermore, security precautions were remarkably casual: one of Collins's informants in the DMP was able to read the notes made by detectives investigating political crime, while another agent in RIC headquarters, a confidential typist, simply took an extra carbon of each document which he handled.¹¹⁶ Even Alan Bell, who appreciated the danger and who knew that there were spies within the administration,

helped his killers by taking the same route into Dublin each morning and by travelling unarmed. As late as November 1920 security was sufficiently slack to enable the IRA to kill on Bloody Sunday about a dozen newly arrived intelligence officers.¹¹⁷ This laxity was not confined to the police: as late as the autumn of 1922 the Republican side in the civil war had an agent within British military headquarters, while it is said that the IRA received much information from a secretary of the army commander in Cork, General Strickland.¹¹⁸ The security defects of the Admiralty's network in Ireland should also be noted.¹¹⁹

The army in Ireland took little part in intelligence operations until the war with Germany had ended, but in the course of 1919 military intelligence officers set up a fairly efficient organisation in the Dublin military district. It is the impression of this writer that the army was thereafter somewhat more successful than its civilian counterparts in intelligence work, perhaps because its officers were better organised and were able to deal systematically with a large volume of low-grade information. Despite the appointment of 'O', coordination with other bodies seems to have been inadequate, due partly to mutual rivalry and partly to mistrust of the police.

Basil Thomson, the director of intelligence at Scotland Yard, dabbled in Irish affairs throughout the period without displaying the least grasp of what was happening, while other departments took an interest from time to time. Of these the most important was Hall's naval intelligence division, which was predominant in intelligence matters throughout the First World War. Whether through incompetence or otherwise, Hall on occasion seriously misrepresented information available to him in such a way as to push Dublin Castle into repressive action which had serious political consequences and which was not justified by the situation. His part in the events leading up to the 1916 rising is somewhat obscure; what however is clear is that in 1918 he misled both Dublin Castle and the British cabinet about the 'German plot'. If he believed that the scrappy and inconclusive information which he held was definite proof of an actual plot then he was a fool; if he did not, then he deliberately deceived his political masters on the matter. While the war lasted Hall was a law unto himself, but his influence disappeared with the Armistice and naval intelligence ceased to count.

In addition to the various agencies involved in procuring information, the British government or members of it often received material

from private individuals concerned at the state of affairs in Ireland. This was particularly the case during the First World War, when there were frequent warnings from Irish Unionists that the country was on the verge of anarchy and that rebellion could be expected at any time. They distrusted the Irish administration almost as much as they did Sinn Féin, and so they made their complaints directly to London. Some politicians took such information seriously, in particular Walter Long, the most important minister where Ireland was concerned, and this affected the cabinet's approach to Irish questions. The Irish authorities in general were not given a full account of such warnings and where they came from, receiving at most a cryptic message from one or other of the London intelligence organisations. Coming from such a source Dublin Castle had to accept this material at face value. Here again the suspicion arises that the intelligence people in London, in particular Hall, deliberately misled the Irish authorities.

British policy towards Ireland in the 1914–21 period was inept, and consisted largely in refusing to take difficult decisions until forced to by events. It would be wrong to lay the blame for what happened at the door of the intelligence services alone: for the most part their performance reflected rather than created the incoherence and confusion of the cabinet's Irish policy. But there was one instance where a failure of intelligence seems in retrospect to have been decisive: the 1916 rebellion. The dilatory attitude of the Irish authorities in the months leading up to the outbreak was in itself deplorable; worse still however was the approach of naval intelligence in London. Whether or not Hall deliberately withheld information and allowed events to take their course, having ensured that any rebellion would take place without German arms and without Casement, remains a matter of opinion. His part in the 'German plot' two years later, and his behaviour as an MP in the 1920s, do not give a favourable impression either of his integrity or of his judgement.

In conclusion, it should be asked whether there are any lessons to be learnt from the history of British intelligence in Ireland in this period. If the case of Ireland is any guide, intelligence organisations require firm political supervision, especially when producing information upon which vital political decisions will be based. The more compelling and authoritative the intelligence, the more closely it must be examined. Intelligence agencies tend to be mistrustful of politicians; politicians in turn should not trust them unreservedly.

13. Andrew, *Delcassé*, chapter 14.
14. Haverna, 'Note'; Andrew, 'Déchiffrement et diplomatie', pp. 51–3.
15. Andrew, 'Déchiffrement et diplomatie', pp. 53–5; J.-C. Allain, *Joseph Caillaux: le défi victorieux 1863–1914* (Paris, 1978), pp. 391–6.
16. Andrew, 'Déchiffrement et diplomatie', p. 54.
17. J. Chastenet, *Histoire de la Troisième République*, vol. iv (Paris, 1955), p. 94.
18. Haverna, 'Note'.
19. Poincaré, 'Notes journalières', 28 May 1914, BN n.a.fr. 16027.
20. Poincaré, 'Notes journalières', 14–16 Jan, 28 May 1914, BN n.a.fr. 16026–7.
21. Andrew, 'Déchiffrement et diplomatie', p. 57.
22. Poincaré, 'Notes journalières', 28 May, 23–25 June 1914, BN n.a.fr. 16027.
23. Poincaré, 'Notes journalières', 19–29 July 1914, *ibid.*
24. Rayner Heppenstall, *A Little Pattern of French Crime* (London, 1969), pp. 149–50.
25. Poincaré, 'Notes journalières', 22 July 1914, BN n.a.fr. 16027.
26. Ferry, *Carnets secrets*, p. 21.
27. Haverna, 'Note'; Andrew, 'Déchiffrement et diplomatie', pp. 57–8.
28. A. Ramm (ed.), *The Political Correspondence of Mr Gladstone and Lord Granville, 1876–1886*, vol. II (Oxford, 1962), pp. 33–5. Monson to Lansdowne, 21 Feb 1902, PRO FO 800/124.
29. F.O. to Treasury, 8 and 18 Dec 1911, PRO T11/35//22/13. The changes made brought only a limited improvement. See below, pp. 106ff.
30. C. M. Andrew, 'The British Secret Service and Anglo-Soviet Relations in the 1920s. Part I', *Historical Journal*, xx (1977), 678–9.
31. The best study of naval codebreaking is in Patrick Beesly, *Room 40* (London, 1982). On the broader context see C. M. Andrew, 'The mobilization of British Intelligence for the Two World Wars', in N. F. Dreisziger (ed.), *Mobilization for Total War* (Waterloo, Ontario, 1981).
32. A. G. Denniston, MS memoir on Room 40, n.d., Churchill College Archives Centre, Cambridge, Denniston MSS. Oliver to Admiralty, 7 March 1919; Oliver, 'Notes About Room 40 and Sir Alfred Ewing in the 1914–18 War', National Maritime Museum, Oliver MSS OLV/8.
33. F. H. Hinsley *et al.*, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, vol. 1 (London, 1979), pp. 9–10. On the Zimmermann telegram see below, p. 141.
34. Denniston, MS memoir on Room 40.
35. Denniston, TS memoir on GC&CS, 2 Dec 1944. Denniston MSS. W. F. Clarke, 'The Years Between', Churchill College Archive Centre, Clarke MSS CLKE 3.
36. Andrew, 'The British Secret Service . . . Part I', pp. 683–7.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 692–5.
38. C. M. Andrew, 'British Intelligence and the Breach with Russia in 1927', *Historical Journal*, xxv, no. 4 (1982).
39. *Ibid.*, p. 964.
40. Christopher Morris, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, interviewed by Christopher Andrew on 'Timewatch', BBC2, 15 Dec 1982.
41. Andrew, 'The British Secret Service . . . Part I', p. 686.
42. Herbert Yardley, *The American Black Chamber* (New York, 1931), p. 21.
43. It was indeed 'Neptune'. David Kahn, *The Codebreakers* (New York, 1968), p. 351.
44. R. S. Baker, *Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters* (New York, 1928–39), vol. v, pp. 204ff, 307, 317–18; vol. vi, pp. 51–2, 143ff.
45. Kahn, *Codebreakers*, pp. 370ff. 'Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency', vol. II, chapter I, Washington National Archives, RG 457–77–1.
46. 'Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency', vol. III, pp. 39–55. Yardley refers to the breaking of British diplomatic codes in *The American Black Chamber*. He also claims various successes during the 1920s with some of the codes and cyphers of

- Argentina, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, France, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Russia, El Salvador and Spain.
46. 'Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency', vol. III, pp. 69–118.
 47. W. F. Friedman, 'A Brief History of the Signal Intelligence Service', pp. 9–10, 29 June 1942, National Archives RG 457–SRH–029.
 48. R. Lewin, *The Other Ultra* (London, 1982), p. 33.
 49. J. Bamford, *The Puzzle Palace* (Boston, Mass., 1982), pp. 18–26.
 50. Friedman, 'Brief History', p. 12.
 51. 'Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency', vol. III, pp. 169–70. Lewin, *Other Ultra*, p. 38. 'The SIS began work in 1930.
 52. Lewin, *Other Ultra*, p. 25.
 53. 'Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency', vol. III, pp. 288–9.
 54. *Ibid.*, p. 308.
 55. Friedman, 'Brief History', pp. 13–14.
 56. 'Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency', vol. III, p. 323.
 57. Lewin, *Other Ultra*, p. 41.
 58. Friedman, 'Brief History', p. 14.
 59. Bamford, *Puzzle Palace*, p. 40.

3. BRITISH INTELLIGENCE IN IRELAND, 1914–1921 *Eunan O'Halpin*

1. Memorandum by Long, 19 May 1916, India Office Library, Curzon papers, MSS Eur. F112/176. For information concerning Major Price I am very grateful to Mr Norman Stewart Price CMG OBE. For their comments on an earlier draft of this article I would like to thank Dr Leon O'Broin, Emmet O'Connor, Dr C. S. Andrews and Colonel Dan Bryan.
2. Report by Basil Thomson on the organisation of intelligence in Ireland, September 1916, cited hereafter as 'Thomson report', p. 2. With Thomson to French, 8 May 1918 I[mperial] W[ar] M[useum], French papers, 75/46/12.
3. P[ublic] R[ecord] O[ffice], CO 904/157/1–2 contain the intelligence officers' reports from 1916 to 1918.
4. Kell to Hardinge, 13 May 1916, Cambridge University Library, Hardinge MSS 42/126–7.
5. Harrel had been dismissed from the DMP following the Bachelor's Walk shootings in 1914. Robert Brennan, *Allegiance* (Dublin, 1950), pp. 41–2, describes how he was approached by Harrel when a reporter in Wexford to act as an agent. Brennan was a known Sinn Féiner, and was struck by Harrel's ignorance of this. On p. 45 he mentions that Harrel's correspondence was routinely intercepted and read by Michael Collins's men in 1917 and 1918.
6. PRO, CO 904/23/4 has material on the political affiliations of dockyard employees. 'Thomson report', p. 3.
7. Admiral Sir Lewis Bayly, the senior naval officer in Ireland throughout the war, wrote a memoir, *Pull Together* (London, 1939), in which he gives an account of the navy's activities.
8. 'The army did prepare a list of suspects for deportation and detention in October 1915. If acted on 'there would not have been a rebellion & the consequent executions for all the leaders were included in these recommendations', wrote General Maxwell to Lord French, 7 Sept 1916, French papers, 75/46/11.
9. S[ta]te P[ap]ers O[ffice], Dublin, CSO RP 1918. 18746.
10. Long to Gwynne, 19 Nov 1914, Bodleian Library, Gwynne MS 20.
11. Gwynne to Bonar Law, 28 Dec 1914, enclosing notes by J. D. Irvine dated 19 Dec 1914. H[ouse] of L[ords] R[ecords] O[ffice], Bonar Law papers. 36/5/59. The

disaster referred to was the sinking in October of the battleship *Audacious*, which struck a mine off the Donegal coast.

12. SPO, Crimes Branch Special carton no. 23, file on Casement.

13. Admiral Sir William James, *The Eyes of the Navy: a Biographical Study of Admiral Sir Reginald Hall* (London, 1955), pp. 45–53.

14. Draft of a chapter by Hall on 'The cruise of the *Sayonara*', Churchill College, Cambridge, Hall papers, 3/3. See Long to Bonar Law, 16 Jan 1917, on Lord Sligo, HLRO, Bonar Law papers, 81/2/16.

15. James, *Eyes of the Navy*, pp. 110–15. Hall circulated extracts from Casement's diaries during the latter's trial in 1916, in order to discredit him by proving him a homosexual. James, op. cit., pp. 112–15, and B. L. Reid, *The Lives of Roger Casement* (New Haven, Conn., 1976), pp. 382–4. Some writers maintained that the diaries were forgeries, but the evidence suggests that they were genuine.

16. PRO, CO 904/120/1–2 contain numerous police reports on the movements of suspects. Most of the leaders of the 1916 rebellion had been under observation for some years.

17. Royal commission on the rebellion in Ireland, *Parliamentary Papers* (1916) xi, p. 201. Unsigned note, 14 Apr 1916, PRO, CO 904/23/3 part 2.

18. 'Thomson report', p. 3; 'Royal commission', p. 199. For a sympathetic account of the Under-Secretary, Sir Mathew Nathan, see Leon O'Broin, *Dublin Castle and the 1916 Rising* (Dublin, 1966). It is worth noting that Nathan was not entirely inexperienced in intelligence matters: he gave evidence in 1902 to a secret War Office committee on 'permanent establishment of the mobilisation and intelligence division'. PRO, T1 10966/617.

I have located figures showing expenditure by the Irish government from the secret service vote, 1885–6 to 1921–2. They should be treated with caution: although accurate in themselves, they reflect only a proportion of expenditure on political intelligence in those years. The RIC and DMP evidently had some funds of their own for such work, and of course their staff costs would be met from the ordinary votes. Furthermore, naval intelligence and military intelligence had money for secret intelligence work other than that from the secret service vote.

Year	Amount	Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1885–6	17,487 11 11	1899–00	2,139 10 6	1913–4	869 6 2
1886–7	7,936 10 2	1900–1	1,945 0 6	1914–5	995 10 0
1887–8	4,248 18 4	1901–2	1,347 14 6	1915–6	981 0 0
1888–9	4,484 12 3	1902–3	1,962 11 9	1916–7	932 12 0
1889–90	4,423 17 2	1903–4	1,549 15 6	1917–8	1,803 5 0
1890–1	4,031 12 0	1904–5	1,502 7 7	1918–9	1,412 9 5
1891–2	4,505 18 9	1905–6	2,634 5 5	1919–20	8,499 4 0
1892–3	2,457 9 5	1906–7	837 6 3	1920–1	63,602 4 9
1893–4	1,303 14 3	1907–8	997 17 6	1921–2	36,308 10 4
1894–5	1,505 12 7	1908–9	813 1 0		
1895–6	1,536 18 4	1909–10	916 14 0		
1896–7	1,639 4 4	1910–11	984 4 2		
1897–8	1,758 17 7	1911–12	904 0 0		
1898–9	1,240 17 1	1912–13	807 0 0		

Source: PRO, T1 11689/25138 and T1165/46 and 48.

19. See Maureen Wall, 'The background to the Rising' in K. B. Nowlan (ed.), *The Making of 1916: Studies in the History of the Rising* (Dublin, 1969), pp. 157–97.

20. 'Royal commission', p. 222.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Bayly, *Pull together*, p. 206. The sequence of events outlined here is given in some detail in O'Broin, *Dublin Castle, passim*.

23. James, *Eyes of the Navy*, p. 112.

24. Brian Inglis, *Roger Casement* (London, 1973), pp. 317–18. O'Broin, op. cit., p. 83.

25. Leon O'Broin, *Michael Collins* (Dublin, 1980), p. 15.

26. O'Broin, *Dublin Castle*, p. 83.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 10. For his action in opening fire on the rebels, thereby causing them to retreat from the Castle, and for his general conduct during the Rising, Major Price was awarded the DSO. Information from Norman Stewart Price.

28. 'Royal commission', p. 250.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 22. For Birrell's career, see Leon O'Broin, *The Chief Secretary: Augustine Birrell and Ireland, 1907–1916* (London, 1968). Birrell was somewhat unfortunate to be saddled with all the blame, given the vacillations of the cabinet on Irish policy, but he undoubtedly allowed his administration to become rather slack in its observation and treatment of separatist groups. After years of listening to nationalist hyperbole, he found it difficult to take the various extremist groups seriously. The same attitude appears to have pervaded the detective unit of the DMP.

30. See note 20 above.

31. In *The Scene Changes* (London, 1939), Thomson quotes from a diary he kept during the war. His grandson knows of no papers of any consequence that have survived.

32. 'Thomson report', pp. 1, 4 and 5.

33. Thomson to French, 8 May 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/12. See note 94 below.

34. Eunan O'Halpin, 'H. E. Duke and the Irish administration, 1916–18', *Irish Historical Studies*, xxii, no. 88 (September 1981), 364; Maxwell to French, 7 Sept 1916, IWM, French papers, 75/46/11.

35. MacDonogh (Director of Military Intelligence) to General Officer Commanding in Chief, Ireland, 2 Sept 1916, PRO, WO 35/69/8.

36. *Ibid.* Documents relative to the Sinn Fein movement, *PP* (1921) xxix, 444–51.

37. Minute by Price, 4 Sept 1916, as in note 35 above.

38. MISD to GHQ, Irish command, 25 Sept 1916, *ibid.*

39. As in note 36 above. Sean Cronin, *The McGarrity papers* (Tralee, 1972), pp. 64–5.

40. 'Documents', pp. 454–6.

41. O'Halpin, 'H. E. Duke', p. 366.

42. The Belfast man was R. J. Lynn, MP, editor of the *Northern Whig*. See Strachey to Lynn, 9 July 1918, HLRO, Strachey papers, S21/2/5. See also Carson to Lloyd George, 30 Oct 1917, enclosing material from Lynn warning of 'a repetition of 1641' in Ulster, with Sinn Fein using 'fire, poison and sword' in a new rebellion. HLRO, Lloyd George papers, F/6/2/18.

43. Unsigned [Thomson] to Strachey, 29 June 1918, HLRO, Strachey papers, S/21/2/5.

44. Strachey to Lynn, 9 July 1918, *ibid.* Strachey to Headlam, 17 Oct 1917, HLRO, Strachey papers, S/21/2/6. O'Halpin, 'H. E. Duke', p. 366.

45. Long had his own source of secret information on Irish affairs, as he was constantly in touch with the permanent head of the Irish local government board, Sir Henry Robinson, who produced capable reports from a strongly unionist perspective. They were concerned not with tales of mysterious foreigners and submarine landings, but with political conditions. Robinson occasionally sought confidential accounts of the state of the country from his subordinates stationed throughout Ireland. IWM, French papers, 75/46/12.

46. 'Documents', pp. 463–4. It transpired that the man in question, Robert

Monteith, was already back in Ireland. This slender evidence formed the basis for the claim that 'before the end' of 1917 'a secret headquarters had been set up in South America whence agents were sent to Ireland'. Draft memorandum on 'the story of the active links between the Sinn Fein movement and Germany', IWM, French papers, 74/46/12.

47. 'Documents', p. 467, says that on 2 Dec 1917 a man arrested in Mayo was found to be in possession of 'two pamphlets printed in Germany'. From this it was inferred that these had been sent by submarine. The Germans were notably reluctant to send even arms by those means, which makes it all the more unlikely that they would risk a U-boat simply to provide publicity material for Sinn Fein.

48. PRO, CO 904/92-114 contain the inspector general's monthly reports.

49. See note 3 above.

50. PRO, CO 904/23/5 contains papers on arms smuggling, 1916-17. Dissatisfaction with the intelligence agencies' failure to penetrate Sinn Fein and to find evidence of collusion with Germany was sometimes expressed in cabinet. See WC 186(1), 14 July 1917, PRO, Cab. 23/3.

51. WC 372(11), 25 Mar 1918, PRO, Cab. 23/5.

52. 'Documents', pp. 468-9. 'Précis of information re German help to Sinn Fein rebels' by Major Price, with Samuels to Lloyd George, Bonar Law and Long, undated. c. 13 May; telegram [from Hall?] on his interrogation of Dowling, with Mahon to French, 21 Apr 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/12.

53. Précis by Major Price, as in note 52 above.

54. H. C. Hoy, *40 OB or How the War was Won* (London, 1932), pp. 147-8. He claims that at the appointed time a handkerchief was waved in the prescribed manner, causing a submarine to surface and approach the shore: '... when she was close in two aeroplanes promptly appeared on the scene, and bombs, I am informed, put an end to that mission'. This is scarcely credible: from R. H. Gibson and Maurice Prendergast, *The German Submarine War* (London, 1932), it appears that no submarines were sunk off the Irish coast between 25 Apr and 10 July 1918, and none were destroyed by aircraft during the entire year.

55. Hoy, *40 OB*, p. 147.

56. French diary, 21 Apr 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/3.

57. *Ibid.*, 19 and 25 Apr 1918.

58. *Ibid.*, 5 May 1918.

59. Précis by Major Price, as in note 52 above. See also 'Documents', p. 469. The Cotters were keen sailors, and this probably explains the incident. Information from Dr C. S. Andrews, 8 June 1982. Richard Cotter was a brother-in-law of Mrs Eamon de Valera.

60. See 'Notes on the position in Ireland in the years 1917, 1918 and 1919', University College Dublin, Mulcahy papers, P7/D/35.

61. Précis by Major Price, and telegram [by Hall?], as in note 52 above.

62. French diary, 24 Apr 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/3.

63. Report from Irish command, 2 May; report from MI5D, 3 May 1918, conveying the substance of an Admiralty communication. IWM, French papers, 75/46/12. This report was cited in 'Documents', p. 472, but the date given was 4 May, and Copenhagen was not mentioned as its origin.

No arms appear to have reached Ireland, and it is unlikely that any were sent. From Dowling's admissions it seemed that no German landing could take place before mid-June.

64. French diary, 2 May 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/3.

65. Bonar Law to Carson, 25 Apr 1918, HLRO, Bonar Law papers, 84/7/25. WC 408(11), 10 May 1918, PRO, Cab. 23/6.

66. French diary, 8 and 12 May 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/3.

67. The proclamation also called for an increase in voluntary recruitment, warning that conscription would otherwise be enforced.

68. WC 408/A/2, 10 May 1918, PRO, Cab. 23/14.

69. French to Stamfordham, 18 May 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/3.

70. Leon O'Broin, *Michael Collins* (Dublin, 1980), pp. 30-1.

71. Long to Reading (ambassador in Washington), and Reading's reply, 17 and 20 May 1918, British Library, Balfour papers, MS 49741/178-9 and 186-8. I am grateful to Dr J. R. Fanning for this reference.

See Thomson's message to Long, 20 May 1918, that 'it is only possible... to give a rechauffé' of post-January 1917 material in order to avoid 'giving away sources of information'. W[iltshire] R[ecord] O[ffice], Long papers, 947/373. Long to French, 20 May 1918, WRO, 947/701; unsigned memorandum by Long on secret service organisation, undated, autumn 1918, WRO, Long papers, 947/672.

72. S. W. Roskill, *Hankey, Man of Secrets* (London, 1970-4), 1, 554, diary of 21 May 1918. One draft of the proclamation asserted that 'an important feature in every plan for rebellion' was 'the establishment of submarine bases in Ireland to menace the shipping of all nations'. Draft memorandum, as in note 46 above.

73. WC 414/A, 22 May 1918, PRO, Cab. 23/14.

74. Charles à Court Repington, *The First World War 1914-1918* (London, 1920), II, 311, diary for 29 May 1918. He later described it as 'a myth' to Donal O'Sullivan, author of *The Irish Free State and its Senate* (London, 1940), p. 42.

75. Sir Henry Robinson to French, 30 May 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/12, says the arrests took Sinn Fein supporters by surprise, but that if convincing evidence was forthcoming the separatist movement would never recover.

76. See A. W. Samuels to Lloyd George, 15 Dec 1920, PRO, PREM 1/7, in connection with the publishing of the 'Documents' White Paper. He had been Irish attorney general in 1918, and remained convinced that 'dangers' had then 'threatened not merely Ireland and the British Empire but the whole allied cause'. Samuels to French, 25 Apr 1921, IWM, French papers, 75/46/11.

77. James, *Eyes of the Navy*, *passim*.

78. Unfortunately there is nothing in Hall's papers in Churchill College, Cambridge, to throw fresh light on the 'German plot' affair.

79. French to Lloyd George, 19 May 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/11.

80. Minutes of viceroy's executive council, 1 July 1918, IWM, French papers, 75/46/13. See also Saunderson to Long, 12 Sept 1918, on military complaints that secret service information from London was never given in full. WRO, Long papers, 947/347.

81. Minutes of viceroy's executive council, 12 July 1918, as in note 80 above.

82. Inspector general's monthly reports, June 1918-Oct 1919. PRO, CO 904/106-10.

83. Unsigned memorandum by Long, as in note 71 above.

84. Hoy, *Room 40*, p. 268.

85. For the sequel to his removal, see Eunan O'Halpin, 'Sir Warren Fisher and the coalition, 1919-1922', *Historical Journal*, xxiv, 4(1981), 917-25.

86. The best account of events in Ireland from 1919 to 1921 is Charles Townshend, *The British Campaign in Ireland, 1919-1921* (Oxford, 1975).

87. Minutes of viceroy's executive council, 18 Jan, and French to Macpherson, 31 Jan 1919, IWM, French papers, 75/46/13. Major Price became county inspector in Cavan and Fermanagh, but he was frequently called to Dublin to advise on the situation generally. In October 1920 he was appointed assistant inspector general, and returned to work full time in Dublin Castle. In 1922 he received a warning that he was about to be shot, and was advised to walk out of his office and go straight to England 'leaving his hat on the door', so that the IRA would not realise he had left for good. This he did. He died there in 1931. Information from Norman Stewart Price.

88. Townshend, *British Campaign*, pp. 21–2. See French to Long, 5 June 1919, in which he complains that the navy no longer patrolled to prevent arms smuggling. IWM, French papers, 75/49/13. However, some form of naval intelligence seems to have continued: see A. W. Cope and B. G. Harwood to Sir Warren Fisher, 12 May 1920, HLRO, Lloyd George Papers, F/31/1/32.

89. O'Broin, *Michael Collins*, pp. 49–50.

90. Minutes of viceroy's executive council, 25 May, 2 and 10 June 1919, IWM, French papers, 75/46/13. On 10 Apr French had sought the services of Colonel Kell, 'the best man' to advise on how to set up 'a proper criminal investigation department'. Letter to Churchill, IWM, French papers, 75/46/11. This was symptomatic of the confusion which prevailed within the administration: Kell was head of MI5, which was an intelligence agency rather than a detective unit of the police.

91. French to Macpherson, 4 Nov 1919, IWM, French papers, 75/46/13.

92. Saunderson to Long, 19 Dec 1919, WRO, Long papers, 947/348.

93. Taylor was effectively head of the Irish administration, as his nominal superior had been cut out of all important decision-making by French.

94. Report of the committee of inquiry into the detective organisation of the Irish police forces, dated 7 Dec 1919. IWM, French papers, 75/46/12. In fact the copy cited was typed.

95. *Ibid.*

96. See French to Macpherson, 5 Mar 1920, IWM, French papers, 75/46/13. For the effects of the changes made on the RIC, widely seen within the force as sectarian and political in nature, see J. A. Gaughan, *Memoirs of Constable Jeremiah Mee, R.I.C.* (Dublin, 1975), pp. 77–9, 259.

97. Saunderson to Long, 17 Dec 1919, WRO, Long papers, 947/348.

98. Bell's report to French, undated, Jan 1920, PRO, CO 904/188/1.

99. Townshend, *British Campaign*, p. 91. Collins to William O'Brien, 6 July 1921, National Library of Ireland, O'Brien papers, MS 15687. I am grateful to Emmet O'Connor for this reference.

100. Bell to French, as in note 98 above.

101. Townshend, *British Campaign*, p. 65.

102. This assumption is based on Bell's report and notebook in the PRO, CO 904/188/1. On the inside cover of the notebook is written in Bell's handwriting, 'The Director of Intelligence, Scotland House, London SW1'. The director of intelligence was Sir Basil Thomson. For examples of Bell's activities, see the entries for 15 and 17 Feb 1920. He had 'just got in touch with a party in a prominent position in the Dublin Dockyard and am in hopes that some useful information may be obtained as I believe it is a happy hunting ground for S.F.', was 'on the track of one of the S.F. who escaped from M'Joy [Mountjoy Prison], and had noted an offer of information on the Ashtown ambush from a Mr Quigley, who unfortunately 'left phone box before any further information could be obtained'.

103. Townshend, *British Campaign*, p. 82.

104. Macready to Anderson, 8 Apr 1921, PRO, CO 904/188/2.

105. Townshend, *British Campaign*, p. 91.

106. Sturgis diary, 26 Sept 1920 and 13 Feb 1921, PRO, PRO 30/59/1–4.

107. See Montagu to Lloyd George, 29 June 1920, discussing the possible loan of agents from the Indian police to Irish command. HLRO, Lloyd George papers, F/40/3/11.

108. Sturgis diary, 26 Sept 1920, as in note 106 above.

109. One of Collins's informers, David Neligan, published an interesting but somewhat unreliable memoir, *The Spy in the Castle* (London, 1968). He and another agent, Eamon Broy, were well rewarded for their services, becoming senior police officers in the Irish free state.

110. Detective Hoey, for example, who was shot in 1919, had been bodyguard to H. E. Duke, the chief secretary from 1916 to 1918.

111. Tom Bowden, *The Breakdown of Public Security: the Case of Ireland 1916–1921, and Palestine 1936–1939* (London, 1977), p. 308. This book is confused, inaccurate and repetitious where Ireland is concerned.

112. This was Frank Teeling, who as an officer in the Free State army in 1923 'misconducted himself in such a way . . . as to run the danger of bringing serious discredit on us', as the army commander complained to the head of the government on 5 Feb 1923. The cabinet agreed to pay Teeling £250 to enable him to emigrate to Australia, but although the money was issued from a secret service fund it was not spent, as Teeling was detained after shooting a man dead in Dublin's Theatre Royal. SPO, S 2166.

113. Sturgis diary, 7 Dec 1920, as in note 106 above.

114. Collins was killed in an ambush in County Cork during the civil war which followed the treaty with Britain. Although the evidence seems straightforward enough, there has always been a slight air of mystery about his death. In *The Shooting of Michael Collins: Murder or Accident?* (Dublin, 1981), pp. 90–4, John M. Feehan put forward the bizarre theory that Collins was killed by one of his closest comrades, who was in reality an agent of 'the British secret service', a 'worldwide body' with 'millions of pounds of public money at their disposal'. This is scarcely credible.

In the autumn of 1922 one of the leading Republicans, Ernie O'Malley, got copies of British army intelligence documents, evidently sent to him 'by one of his agents from British General Headquarters'. These were appreciations of the situation rather than evidence of active intelligence operations, but the publication of extracts in a Republican newsheet greatly angered the Free State government, as they spoke of the murder by government forces of Republican prisoners. SPO, S 1784.

115. For the experiences of one army officer on intelligence duty in Ireland, see Major General Sir Kenneth Strong, *Intelligence at the Top* (London, 1968), pp. 1–5. He had £5 per month with which to pay informants, whom he would travel to meet disguised 'usually as the owner of a small donkey cart'. His sources were people such as railway workers and barmen who were well placed to notice any strangers or unusual occurrences in their districts. These were the sort of people, and this was the sort of intelligence, that would normally be the concern of the local police.

116. Neligan, *Spy in the Castle*, p. 78.

117. Nigel West, *M.I. 5: British Security Service Operations, 1909–1945* (London, 1981), p. 46, says all those killed were agents of the secret intelligence service (SIS). As already indicated in note 105 above, it is extremely doubtful whether all the victims were intelligence officers. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that they were SIS men, in that it was supposed to operate only outside the empire; within was the province of MI5. West is wrong also in dating Bloody Sunday in 1919, and in using the term 'Fenians' to describe IRA suspects detained in England in 1922. The book is not very authoritative on the early history of MI5, and it contains a good number of errors of fact.

118. See note 114 above. The woman concerned in Cork was engaged to Florence O'Donoghue, a leading IRA man in the area. Information from Dr C. S. Andrews, 8 June 1982.

119. See note 5 above.

4. BRITISH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC INTELLIGENCE: ASSESSMENTS OF NAZI GERMANY BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR Wesley K. Wark

1. See W. K. Wark, 'British Intelligence on the German Air Force and Aircraft Industry 1933–1939', *The Historical Journal*, xxv, 3 (1982), 627–48.