

attacks on other centres of population hitherto almost untouched, as was demonstrated just before the truce. In short the intensity of the IRA campaign will reach a new level demanding a response from the Security Forces greater than anything we have achieved so far.

7. No differentiation is made between the Official and Provisional wings. The latter are more likely to resume hostilities first, but the former can hardly afford not to follow suit.

The UDA Threat

8. The major threat from the UDA is that their militant action will lead to widespread intersectorian conflict and eventually civil war, although strenuous military action against the IRA should prevent the latter. Nevertheless, assuming that civil war is averted and an anti IRA campaign begun in earnest, the UDA could be a constant source of irritation and worry to the Security Forces. Their strength is now approximately 25,000 of which about 12,000 are in Belfast. Having tasted power, they will no doubt attempt to influence both the political and military situation. They will demand to assist the Security Forces in their task; they will barricade their own areas and generally provoke trouble on the interfaces. They may indulge in indiscriminate shooting into Catholic areas. All this will increase Catholic support for the IRA and lend credence to their claim that they are defending the minority. It will be even more necessary to acquiesce in unarmed UDA patrolling and barricading of Protestant areas. Although no interference with Security Forces action could be tolerated, it would be as well to make the most of the situation and obtain some security benefit from UDA control of their own areas. Indeed it is arguable that Protestant areas could almost be entirely secured by a combination of UDA, Orange Volunteers and RUC. It may even be necessary to turn a blind eye to UDA arms when confined to their own areas.

9. A further threat well within UDA capability is effective strike action to bring essential services to a halt although this is unlikely once vigorous Army action is in train. Electricity is particularly vulnerable in this respect. Military contingency plans exist to