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## Consolidating ‘traditional methods’ of public order policing: the response of the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police to mass demonstrations in 1968

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### ABSTRACT

This article examines the response of the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police to mass demonstrations in 1968. Using a variety of contemporaneous sources, including underused archival material, documents released through freedom of information requests, and evidence disclosed as part of the ongoing Undercover Policing Inquiry (UCPI), it shows how the experience of mass demonstrations that year, which came against the backdrop of widespread international protest, prompted significant developments in terms of crowd control tactics, covert intelligence gathering practices and the use of new technology to enable greater command and control over police resources. Taken together, these measures represented a permanent change to the public order capacity of the Metropolitan Police, providing a model that was gradually exported to other forces across England and Wales with the encouragement of the Home Office. However, despite the significant changes introduced in 1968, this article shows how police officers, civil servants, and politicians emphasised the continuation of ‘traditional methods’, a term that functioned as a way of situating public order policing within an idealised image of a uniquely English policing tradition, with an appeal to historical continuity that aimed to convey legitimacy and construct consent.

### KEYWORDS

Demonstrations; public order; police; protest; undercover policing

As 1968 witnessed a global revolt against capitalism and imperialism, London, like many other cities around the world, saw demonstrations organised around a host of inter-related left-wing causes, with links drawn between local, national, and global struggles. Demonstrators turned out in support of educational reform on university and college campuses, organised around issues of racial inequality and civil rights, rallied against controversial immigration and industrial relations legislation, and protested apartheid in South Africa and white minority rule in Rhodesia. By far the largest demonstrations to take place in London that year, however, were those organised in opposition to the war in Vietnam, which acted as a rallying cause for activists across the world and a prism through which to understand the linkages between colonialism and state-sponsored violence

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abroad and at home.<sup>1</sup> On 17 March 1968, 10,000 people joined an anti-war rally in Trafalgar Square, before marching through central London and on to the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square, long a site of anti-war protest. While intelligence from Metropolitan Police Special Branch (MPSB) had warned that a small minority had plans to gain entry to the Embassy, police cordons struggled to contain the crowd and a disorganised dispersal operation by foot and mounted officers descended into a pitched battle lasting over an hour.<sup>2</sup> Televised scenes of the disorder showed demonstrators throwing banner poles and clods of earth at the police, while groups of officers beat protesters with their truncheons and led individual sorties in search of arrests.<sup>3</sup> While much was made in the press of the number of police injuries—145 officers recorded as receiving on-site medical treatment—accredited observers sent by the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) recorded a number of instances of serious police misbehaviour, including assault, wrongful arrest, and the fabrication of evidence.<sup>4</sup>

The demonstration had been organised by an Ad Hoc Committee representing a broad coalition of groups on the anti-war left, though the driving force behind the protest had been the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign (VSC), a Trotskyist organisation set up in the summer of 1966. The VSC had been formed in opposition to the mild passivism and non-partisanship of the more moderate British Campaign for Peace in Vietnam (BCPV), finding support among an emergent student movement.<sup>5</sup> In calling for 'Victory to the NFL [National Liberation Front]' and the 'Defeat [of] US Aggression in Vietnam', VSC-organised demonstrations highlighted a significant shift in the politics and protest tactics of the 'new left'.<sup>6</sup> While anti-nuclear campaigners earlier in the decade had used civil disobedience and non-violent direct action to draw attention to their cause, by 1968 a structural critique of the violence inherent within capitalist and imperialist societies had contributed to a greater acceptance of confrontation among some protest groups, while the need to draw media attention to specific causes had led others to see strategic benefits in public displays of disorder.<sup>7</sup> As the Spring and Summer of 1968 saw violent protest take place in France, Italy, Germany, and the US, and with the more vocal activists from the anti-war movement promising an 'Autumn Offensive', the British press fed concerns of political violence and further disorder.<sup>8</sup> A number of Conservative MPs called for a ban on demonstrations in the capital, suggesting that the police should be equipped with specialist riot control equipment and water cannon to control future disorder. Such measures were ultimately resisted, however, and when 50,000 people turned out for an anti-war march on 27 October 1968, the event passed off without major incident, a small group of police and protesters even joining chorus for a rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne' outside the US Embassy.<sup>9</sup> Labour Home Secretary James Callaghan quickly celebrated the day as 'a demonstration of British good sense' and the following month the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir John Waldron received a petition of over 300,000 signatures congratulating his officers on their 'restraint, tact and good humour' in response to the protest.<sup>10</sup> The event represented a successful public relations exercise for the police, bolstering their symbolic power and providing, at least for some, evidence of the effectiveness of a uniquely 'English' approach to public order policing.<sup>11</sup>

The apparent anti-climax of the anti-war movement has led some historians to trivialise the impact of late 1960s protest in Britain, with the disorder in Grosvenor Square seen as little more than ritualised pushing and shoving, insignificant or overblown when compared to the scale of civil unrest and police violence witnessed in Northern Ireland,

continental Europe, and the US. Instead, such accounts have emphasised the cultural changes of the period, which are seen to have had little impact on the steady, moderate, and parochial conservatism of Britain's institutions.<sup>12</sup> But as Richard Vinen notes, 'this distracts attention from the ways in which protest was managed and contained'.<sup>13</sup> Mass demonstrations in 1968, both at home and abroad, were difficult to predict, and politicians and senior police officers shifted between public displays of confidence that good sense and moderation would prevail and private concern that protests were a harbinger of more serious civil disorder, with preparations made accordingly. While Callaghan reassured his colleagues in the House of Commons that there would be no curbs on peaceful demonstration and that the police would 'continue to rely on traditional methods', this article shows that the experience of mass demonstrations in 1968 prompted significant developments in terms of crowd control, intelligence gathering, and the use of new technology to enable greater command and control over police resources.<sup>14</sup> These changes were implemented by the newly established Public Order and Operations Branch (A8) at New Scotland Yard and by MPSB, two units that would go on to shape national public order and intelligence gathering practices in the decades that followed.<sup>15</sup> The Home Office, and in particular, the Home Secretary, also played an important role in the policing of protest, privately encouraging careful preparations while publicly celebrating the continuation of 'traditional methods'. While this was clearly intended to convey the legitimacy of the police, it was also an attempt to bolster the legitimacy of Wilson's beleaguered Labour Government, whose public support for the war in Vietnam was deeply unpopular among Labour politicians, party supporters, and a large section of the British public.

While the 'Battle of Grosvenor Square' in March 1968 is often recognised by criminologists as an important moment in the development of public order policing, it has not as yet drawn significant attention from historians.<sup>16</sup> Previous scholarship in this area has tended to focus on the relationship between the anti-war movement and the press or the establishment's response to the international dimensions of 1968, particularly the movement of activists across national borders.<sup>17</sup> By focusing more specifically on public order policing and using newly available material, this article makes a number of arguments related to the historiography of policing in post-war England. The first concerns the term 'traditional methods', which is seen to serve two functions in its usage in 1968. At one level, it was used by politicians and police officers to refer to a rather loose, uncodified collection of policing tactics and strategies based primarily on unarmed, non-specialist officers attempting to control crowds by minimum force, with an emphasis placed on facilitation and containment, rather than prevention and dispersion. At another level, the term functioned as a way of publicly legitimising police action by situating public order policing within an idealised image of a uniquely English policing tradition. This tradition emphasised the phlegmatic English character and a national respect for civil liberties and the right to protest, which set the country apart from the repressive, 'Gendarmerie-style' paramilitary policing that had developed across continental Europe and the British Empire.<sup>18</sup>

While historians have rightly challenged the idea that the civilian model of English policing was entirely distinct from the 'state military' model of colonial policing, or indeed that this civilian model was consensual and non-repressive, they have also shown that belief in the distinctive character of these two models, however

idealised, had an important impact on police administration and elite attitudes.<sup>19</sup> This ‘indulgent tradition’ of English policing was part of a deliberate construction of national identity, which accelerated during the 1950s and 1960s as rising crime rates, public disorder, and a series of corruptions scandals raised concerns about police legitimacy. Indeed, Clive Emsley has argued that there is no evidence that ‘Peelian principles’ – supposedly the foundational values of the English policing model—were written in 1829 with the establishment of the Metropolitan Police, but were instead given their first formation by Charles Reith in 1952, later becoming a cliché of police textbooks in the second half of the twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, this article argues that the use of the term ‘traditional methods’—which has not been found in parliamentary debates, newspapers reports, police or Home Office files prior to 1968—should be seen less as evidence of a longstanding and coherent policing philosophy and more as part of the management of the police image at a time when police legitimacy was seen to be under threat. To be sure, this is not to say that crowd control techniques and the organisation of police resources for public order policing were invented entirely anew in 1968, though some were. Rather, it is argued that their presentation and consolidation as ‘traditional methods’ was intended to evoke historical continuity at a time of apparent rupture in order to convey legitimacy and construct consent.

The second argument this article makes is that changes in the intelligence gathering practices of MPSB introduced in the summer of 1968 marked a significant development in political policing in twentieth-century England, embedding long-term undercover policing as a standard tactic against left-wing political organising. To be sure, MPSB had, since its establishment as the Special Irish Branch in 1883, routinely deployed plainclothes officers at public meetings, marches, and demonstrations, some even attending private meetings to collect information on the plans and motivations of target groups and their leadership.<sup>21</sup> While the 1929 Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure had dismissed the use of *agents provocateurs* as ‘alien to our habits and traditions’, it recognised the use of plainclothes officers as an important part of policework.<sup>22</sup> As Mark Roodhouse has shown, such methods were often relied upon in moments of perceived crisis, such as when police in London responded to rising crime rates and a manpower shortage at the end of the Second World War by establishing the Metropolitan Police Special Duty Squad (or ‘Ghost Squad’), the first unit in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) solely responsible for collecting and disseminating criminal intelligence.<sup>23</sup> However, the significance of the establishment of the Special Operation Squad (SOS)—an undercover unit tasked with infiltrating the anti-war movement following the disorder in Grosvenor Square—was that it embedded intrusive practices of covert human surveillance into MPSB’s coverage of left-wing protest movements, with officers from the unit deployed on long-term operations against target groups. The interest of the Security Service (MI5) in the work of the SOS saw the remit of the unit develop from intelligence gathering to assist public order operations to more expansive taskings in counter-subversion, watching, recording, and becoming intimately involved in the political activities and private lives of citizens. The SOS remained a closely guarded secret, even within the police, with civil servants and senior officers aware that public knowledge of its activities would undermine the supposedly moderate nature of ‘traditional methods’ and their implicit respect for civil liberties.

The third argument this article makes is that changes in public order policing during 1968 should be seen as part of a broader process of modernisation in policing that accelerated during the 1960s. This was realised through a greater emphasis on training and professional development, an embrace of technological innovation to improve efficiency and control of police manpower, a greater acknowledgement of the ‘public relations’ aspect of policing, and the development of a national police bureaucracy designed to consolidate expertise through centralisation. The Home Office played a key role in this regard, encouraging the proliferation of successful policing strategies and the gradual adoption of common minimum standards among police forces in England and Wales, the overall number of which was reduced from 116 to 44 between 1965 and 1969 following a series of amalgamations.<sup>24</sup> The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), established in 1948 as a non-statutory professional body for senior officers, was another vehicle for this project, and in 1968 ACPO was reconstituted to establish a Secretariat with a full-time general secretary in recognition of its growing responsibilities.<sup>25</sup> Given its size, resources, experience, and constitutional position—the only force under the direct authority of the Home Secretary—the Metropolitan Police was encouraged to take a lead role in national policing, part of a much longer history in which the Force acted as a source of reinforcements, expertise, and leadership for ‘provincial’ forces.<sup>26</sup> The response of the Metropolitan Police and the Home Office to protest in 1968 thus provides further evidence of the growing influence of both institutions in national policing affairs, a trend that accelerated as challenges of public order continued during the 1970s and 1980s.

The research for this article was initially based on a variety of primary source material produced by, and shared between, the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police (including MPSB), and ACPO. Some of this material had been released to public archives (particularly the National Archives at Kew and the Hull University Archive), but other records were secured through freedom of information requests and shared by journalists and researchers. Taking inspiration from Wesley K. Wark, this research was underpinned by a view of the intelligence and public order archive as ‘the record of all those Government departments [and, I would add, other agencies] who receive, incorporate, digest and report on intelligence’ and public order.<sup>27</sup> However, the significant evidence disclosures made as part of the ongoing UCPI offer a chance to substantiate, develop, and correct previous research, whilst also acknowledging the limits of the Inquiry’s own practices of evidence publication and redaction.<sup>28</sup> In focusing on the changes in public order and intelligence gathering practices introduced in 1968, this article takes seriously Jennifer Luff’s challenge of ‘thinking about the cultural forces that produced and legitimated each security regime’, in order to ‘bring surveillance and policing back into the “social history of politics”’.<sup>29</sup>

### **Consolidating ‘traditional methods’ and building police capacity**

From the perspective of the Metropolitan Police, the disorder at Grosvenor Square on 17 March 1968 was unprecedented in the recent history of political demonstration in post-war London. While the press were quick to praise the actions of the police, behind closed doors senior officers acknowledged that their plans for the demonstration had been outdated and insufficient, based on the experience of protests in previous years which, though ‘noisy and militant in nature’, had never contained ‘such a large faction

organised for and determined to provoke serious disorder'.<sup>30</sup> While the mass civil disobedience of anti-nuclear campaigners during the early 1960s had been met with a tough and sometimes aggressive police response, large 'sit-down' demonstrations like those organised by the Committee of 100 (C100) had primarily presented a challenge for the police in terms of capacity, as large numbers of officers were required to maintain cordons, carry out mass arrests, and transport demonstrators to charging centres.<sup>31</sup> Police tactics had largely avoided significant public scrutiny, as though widespread allegations of heavily handed policing at a C100 demonstration in central London in September 1961 had led to calls for a public inquiry, the Conservative Home Secretary Richard Austen Butler had refused to investigate the matter, fearing that a public review of police tactics and behaviour would damage police morale and suggest a lack of confidence in the Commissioner.<sup>32</sup> Police had, by 1965, begun to develop the use of 'arresting squads', small mobile units made up of 1 Sergeant and 10 Constables, which could be held in reserve and called up to remove disobedient protesters from the crowd without drawing officers away from police cordons.<sup>33</sup> But training for public order operations still came largely 'on the job', with the thirteen-week basic training for new recruits paying little attention to policing demonstrations beyond rote learning of the law.<sup>34</sup> The Sergeant's booklet on *Demonstrations etc. Powers and Duties of Police*, reissued in 1964 following its last update in 1938, contained nothing on the practical side of crowd control and instead focused solely on the legal powers of the police, an omission that reflected a general lack of written material on the subject.<sup>35</sup>

Given this lack of experience, the disorder at Grosvenor Square had shown that many officers were unfamiliar with even basic techniques, and that cordons passively resisting the weight of pushing demonstrators were thought to have contributed to the significant number of police injuries. By their own admission, senior officers felt that the crowd dispersal operation intended to alleviate pressure on the cordon outside the Embassy had been poorly understood and 'haphazardly organised', leading to a loss of control and discipline.<sup>36</sup> When mounted officers were brought forward to strengthen the police line, some riders had lost control of their horses, which were frightened by the sudden sight and sound of the crowd.<sup>37</sup> Recognising a need to update police capacity for the new challenges of public order, Chief Superintendent John Lawlor, Commander of the newly-formed Public Order and Operations Branch (A8), was instructed to oversee a comprehensive review of public order practice within the Metropolitan Police, forming a working party with representatives from Uniformed Branch, CID, and MPSB.<sup>38</sup> Lawlor had previously served as Commander (Operations) for central London's No.1 District between 1965 and 1968, a role dissolved as part of a recent restructuring of the Force.<sup>39</sup>

As part of its review, the working party carried out research into crowd and riot control methods used by police forces around the world. While the availability of English language sources meant that this research was principally focused on practice in the US and in British Colonies, those involved also made note of the type of equipment used by their European counterparts, with instructions for a German-made water cannon translated by an officer in MPSB.<sup>40</sup> Research also included a survey of the brochures and marketing material produced by manufactures of various lethal and non-lethal weapons, including riot batons, firearms, CS gas—a particularly potent type of tear gas, which came in shell and grenade form—nerve gas (mace), water cannon, and a lubricated foam marketed as 'instant banana peel'.<sup>41</sup>

Despite their research, the working party found little in terms of equipment and crowd control tactics that appeared appropriate for policing in London. They noted that publications from the US started with the assumption that both police and demonstrators would be armed, something quite alien to officers in the Metropolitan Police. Registering the incompatibility of even the most basic practical lessons from American policing, the report noted that, 'It was common ground that the minimum force should be used against demonstrators at the onset—but the minimum in some cases was one bullet to kill the ringleaders in an attempt to disperse a crowd before using more bullets for more demonstrators'.<sup>42</sup>

In their review of British colonial policing methods, members of the working party came to similar conclusions. They noted that tear gas was often seen as a 'first step' for dispersing protesters, an approach they regarded as quite inappropriate for policing in London.<sup>43</sup> As Eric Linstrum has shown, tear gas had come to be used regularly by colonial police forces by the 1940s, overcoming an earlier taboo among politicians and civil servants who associated it with the cruelty of German chemical warfare.<sup>44</sup> As anticolonial movements accelerated during the 1960s, tear gas was being used regularly in British territories from Cyprus to Hong Kong, British Guiana to Rhodesia.<sup>45</sup> But while the use of tear gas had become permissible in the colonies, Linstrum notes that 'the belief in a bright line marking off the "non-European" world of tear gas from the gentler traditions of British policing showed remarkable durability'.<sup>46</sup> Although some police stations in London during the 1960s were permitted to hold limited stocks of protective shields and tear gas, use of this equipment was strictly limited to the apprehension of violent persons or for hostage situations and was explicitly not for public order operations.<sup>47</sup> Even in cases of armed besieged criminals, caution against the use of tear gas was strongly advised. An ACPO working group on the issue in late the 1950s noted, 'There may be arguments in favour of the humanity of non-lethal gas as compared with the truncheon', but senior officers 'have an instinctive dislike of introducing as a regular feature of police work anything remotely savouring of American gangster films'.<sup>48</sup>

In summing up the state of the field, the working party concluded that, 'Our research has failed to find any authoritative work on crowd control methods as distinct from armed riot control methods, in this or any other country'.<sup>49</sup> They thus came to the unanimous decision that none of the weapons considered in their review should be adopted by the Metropolitan Police, so long as there was no escalation in the degree of violence used by demonstrators. Their report, published in June 1968, instead advised that 'traditional methods, i.e. on a man to man unarmed basis', should continue, since the 'recent police experience abroad' provided evidence that 'arming the police or resorting to tougher physical measures against demonstrators would provoke retaliation against police by like violence'.<sup>50</sup> Protests in Paris in May 1968, for example, had led to large-scale disorder, with the Parisian police launching baton charges to incapacitate demonstrators, while units from the paramilitary *Compagnies républicaines de sécurité* fired tear gas into the crowds.<sup>51</sup> Although the working party 'did not overlook the possibility of conditions deteriorating through a worsening of political tensions or through example, advice or incitement from abroad', their report concluded that 'the type of demonstration currently taking place in France, Germany, USA etc. is the result of both sides being armed—both vieing [sic] with the other in violence'. Distinguishing the English police from those elsewhere in the world, the working party 'hope[d] the day will not come when it is thought necessary



for police in this country to be armed and equipped in the manner of their foreign colleagues'.<sup>52</sup>

While eschewing the type of riot control equipment used by foreign and colonial police forces, the working party felt that a set of common minimum standards in crowd control techniques was needed among all officers across the Force. Since the police's 'traditional methods' had not been codified in any training manuals or instructor's booklets at this point, the report made a series of practical suggestions to improve the handling and dispersal of disorderly crowds, including different types of police formations for various public order scenarios. This included Serials—each consisting of one Inspector, three Sergeants, and 20 Constables—organising together to establish a 'double cordon' to resist crowd pressure, and a 'wedge' formation that could be used to clear a path through a mass of protesters. These practical improvements came alongside public relations concerns, with the report noting that, 'Frequently four or five officers are seen struggling with a prisoner when the task can be more efficiently done by two properly trained officers'. Not only was this considered a waste of manpower, but it was also seen to 'present a poor police image on the press and television and leads to unnecessary complaints'.<sup>53</sup>

Developments in crowd control practice were led by Kenneth Newman, then Superintendent at 'D' Division (Marylebone), who was co-opted onto the working party having shown leadership in organising officers at the 17 March demonstration.<sup>54</sup> With the VSC planning a large anti-war rally for 27 October 1968, work quickly began to develop Newman's recommendations into a one-day public order training course, which was then delivered at the Metropolitan Police's new training facility in Hendon, north-west London. During these sessions, Chief Superintendents with recent operational experience on demonstrations used a projected video recording of the 18 March disorder to highlight weaknesses in police formations, while exemplary crowd control manoeuvres were relayed via a recently prepared instruction video and then practiced through a series of drills out in the yard. Between August and October, more than 8,000 officers undertook this training, a significant logistical undertaking that highlighted the importance senior officers placed on building police capacity in preparation for the next demonstration.<sup>55</sup> These developments were also shared with police chiefs from across England and Wales during a special ACPO conference on public order, which was held at the Police Training College at Bramshill in September 1968. The afternoon was dedicated to a special two-hour video presentation by Commander Lawlor, which focused on the tactics protesters had used at the 17 March demonstration and the new crowd control techniques then being developed by the Metropolitan Police.<sup>56</sup> Following the conference, training officers from other forces were invited to attend and observe sessions at Hendon, with steps made to introduce the tactics at Regional Training Centres across the country.<sup>57</sup>

While common minimum standards were developed through the introduction of special crowd control training, the working party also recommended that more use should be made of the Special Patrol Group (SPG) on public order operations. Modelled on the New York Police Department's Tactical Patrol Force and taking inspiration from a crime control experiment introduced by Liverpool City Police, the SPG had been set up in April 1965 as a way of tackling motor crime, housebreaking, and 'hooliganism'.<sup>58</sup> The four units—each consisting of an Inspector, three Sergeants, and 24 Police Constables—acted as a mobile reserve that could be deployed across London to augment regular

police strength. All four units of the SPG had been deployed at the 17 March demonstration and the working party felt that its officers had provided a useful backup force that could be radioed in to strengthen police numbers and respond quickly to the diversionary tactics of demonstrators or violent members of the crowd.<sup>59</sup> This application spoke to police perceptions of crowd psychology and crowd behaviour, which corresponded closely with classical theories of crowds as irrational and easily manipulated by 'agitators'.<sup>60</sup> As the working party report noted, the police view was that, 'In some crowds there is a militant section which gives the crowd a collective objective or intention; or, in other words, makes up the crowd's mind'. It was suggested, therefore, that 'early efforts should be made to identify the militants and segregate them from the main crowd, which will then become like a body without a head'.<sup>61</sup> It was noted that senior officers needed training to be alert to changes in crowd behaviour, acting decisively before the crowd could reach a 'collective intention' that might go against police directions and make dispersal more difficult.<sup>62</sup>

With crowd control based on the proliferation of common minimum standards and the fast deployment of reserve units like the SPG, the working party also placed an emphasis on what was described as 'new ideas of control and deployment of manpower together with a better use of transport and communications'.<sup>63</sup> Their report criticised the lack of radio devices available for Inspectors deployed on public order duty, noting that, 'We see this as a serious defect as it is not realistic to expect Inspectors to give the kind of leadership we want if there are no means or inadequate means of keeping them in the picture when circumstances affecting their serials are changing rapidly'.<sup>64</sup> They also found that the Urgent Communications Room set up in the new offices of New Scotland Yard was under-utilised and insufficiently equipped for multiple demonstrations, meaning that the Commander of Operations usually directed his deputies from the ground. Impressed by the control room of the West London Central Area Traffic system, the working party suggested that a new facility should be developed, which would act as a visual and communications hub from which the Commander could monitor and direct responses to simultaneous events, with closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras identified as a way of removing the 'feedback loops' that tended to slow the relay of information at the top of the police's command and control structure.<sup>65</sup> While police had previously hoped that CCTV cameras would help them identify 'troublemakers' within crowds, Chris A. Williams shows that, by 1968, '[CCTV] held out the attraction that the police institution could better coordinate in real time: that technology could help the organization integrate a collection of autonomous police officers into a unit that could react as one'.<sup>66</sup>

In preparation for the 27 October demonstration, therefore, an additional 400 pocket radios were made available to A8 Branch, tuned to a special frequency to allow Serial Inspectors to keep their command officers up to date on crowd behaviour and police deployments.<sup>67</sup> Four CCTV cameras were requisitioned from a crime prevention experiment in Croydon and installed specially along the route of the march, relaying a live feed of the procession to a temporary operations room at New Scotland Yard.<sup>68</sup> While organisers from the Ad Hoc Committee had agreed that the official route of the march would not go to the US Embassy and would instead begin on the Embankment and end with speeches in Hyde Park, police intelligence confirmed that some groups viewed this as a capitulation and intended to make their own way to Grosvenor Square. Given concerns of disorder, groups like the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the National Union of

Students had withdrawn from the march, and police estimated a turnout of around 30,000, well below the 100,000 predicted by organisers.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, the Operational Order for the event called for the deployment of 8,846 officers (more than half of the uniformed force of the Metropolitan Police District), with reserve Serials, including the four units of the SPG, stationed close to possible flashpoints, including Downing Street and the US Embassy.<sup>70</sup> On the day of the demonstration, the police were well prepared for the splinter group as it arrived at Grosvenor Square, with British Pathé newsreel footage showing Serials deploying the tactics learnt at the training college in Hendon, slowing the momentum of the protesters' charge by giving way at the point of contact and pushing inwards from the sides until the group had thinned out.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, with only 74 officers injured and 42 people arrested, the policing of the 27 October rally was widely seen as a success, with a report from the NCCL concluding that 'the causes of friction from the police side were removed and the general strategy was ... more successful to promoting good order'.<sup>72</sup>

While disorder on 17 March had exposed significant shortcomings in the police approach to mass demonstrations, senior officers had been reluctant to adopt the type of riot control equipment and offensive tactics used by colonial and American police forces. The reforms overseen by A8 Branch instead focused on the introduction of common minimum standards in crowd control, the deployment of mobile reserve units like the SPG, and a more effective system of command and control. While these changes represented a significant shift in police capacity for public order operations, senior officers and politicians publicly maintained that they were little more than a continuation of 'traditional methods', a term that evoked historical continuity as a source of legitimacy. Nevertheless, we should be cautious of writing out the influence of colonial policing experience to these reforms. After all, Newman, who led the changes in crowd control tactics, had previously served in the Palestine Police between 1946 and 1948, a period in which escalating anti-colonial protest and civil unrest led to significant developments in counter-insurgency policing, with 'snatch squads' from the heavily militarised Police Mobile Force providing a model that was exported across the British Empire.<sup>73</sup> Indeed, Newman's colonial policing record is often cited as an example of the process of 'imperial feedback' that took place between the colonies and the metropole during the second half the twentieth century, as he went on to serve as Deputy Commissioner (1973–1976), then Commissioner (1976–1980), of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, before returning to the Metropolitan Police as Commissioner (1982–1987) after two years as the Commandant at Bramshill (1980–1982). For many, Newman's career follows the import of colonial counter-insurgency techniques and riot control equipment back to England, having been domesticated through their use during 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland.<sup>74</sup>

However, from the perspective of 1968, it is difficult to assess the degree to which the crowd control tactics Newman helped to introduce were the product of experience gained during his two years' service in the Palestine Police or the subsequent twenty years he spent in the Metropolitan Police. It is certainly true that the circulation of police personnel between the metropole and the colonies during the post-war period led to what Georgina Sinclair and Williams have called the 'cross-fertilisation' of policing ethos, culture, and expertise, with British police officers, most notably from the Metropolitan Police, seconded to Cyprus (1955–60) and Anguilla (1968–69) in moments of colonial emergency.<sup>75</sup> But this took place in a context where a distinction between 'English' and

'colonial' policing models carried cultural valence. As Julian Go has argued, 'imperial feedback' in policing was not just the result of '*imperial importers*: actors who appropriate new methods of social control from the peripheries of empire to apply in the domestic site'.<sup>76</sup> Just as important were 'field homologues': 'similarities between, on the one hand, the peripheral-colonial field (the colonial or imperial space abroad where the new methods were initially invented and used) and, on the other, the domestic or metropolitan field (the site within the imperial metropole for which the methods are imported)'.<sup>77</sup> While changes in the racial politics of Britain during the 1970s and the experience of urban disorder during the early 1980s led police and counter-insurgency 'experts' to see deprived, multi-racial urban areas as 'internal colonies', the type of disorder caused by the majority-white, often university educated, anti-war demonstrators in London in 1968 was not seen by senior police officers as analogous to the type of protest seen in the colonies, and thus impacted the lessons that could be learned.

### Developing intelligence gathering practices

While the report of the working party on public order primarily focused on reform within Uniform Branch, the disorder at Grosvenor Square on 17 March also provoked significant developments within MPSB, particularly in the field of intelligence gathering. Officers from 'B' Squad—the unit responsible for monitoring anarchist and Trotskyist groups—had been carefully following changes in the politics and protest tactics of the anti-war left, as momentum within the movement shifted from the moderate BCPV to the more radical VSC.<sup>78</sup> Prior to all political demonstrations in the capital, MPSB would provide intelligence reports to the Commander of Operations, which would inform police deployments for the day. In this role, the most common type of intelligence, and by far the easiest to access, was that which came from 'open' sources, such as communication with the secretary or press officer of a known organisation, announcements made in publications of targeted groups, reports culled from newspapers, and tip-offs or gossip passed to the police by members of the public. MPSB officers also relied on intelligence passed on by other parts of the police force, including Special Branch Port Units, who could provide information on the movements and baggage contents of known overseas political suspects, Uniform and CID officers of the Metropolitan Police, particularly the crime intelligence units and the station collators posted across the capital, and information passed on by 'provincial' police forces, particularly the details of coach parties travelling to London to take part in major demonstrations.<sup>79</sup>

More covert practices of intelligence gathering included the deployment of plainclothes MPSB officers at public meetings and demonstrations, where they would observe proceedings, obtain all relevant literature on sale or available for distribution, and report back on the identities of those present. This was not just about taking a political temperature of the event; statements of incitement or other offences disclosed at the meeting were also recorded, with a report later submitted to the Department of Public Prosecutions. Plainclothes MPSB officers were among those in attendance at one of the first meetings of the VSC at Mahatma Gandhi Hall, WC1 on 6 August 1966, taking record of speeches made by a number of activists, trade unionists, and Labour Party campaigners, before joining 250 other demonstrators on an orderly torch-lit procession to the US Embassy.<sup>80</sup> But these tactics of surveillance had their limits and during a VSC meeting

at Toynbee Hall, E1 on 11 January 1968, a MPSB Detective was recognised by someone at the meeting and asked to leave, along with a junior MPSB Constable.<sup>81</sup> Two months later on 7 March 1968, an MPSB officer attending a VSC meeting with a colleague at the Dolphin pub, WC1, was forced to report back that, 'The meeting was held in an upstairs room at the premises and in view of the mode of dress of those present and the fact that they arrived in groups and appeared to be known to each other, I deemed it inadvisable to try to obtain admittance'.<sup>82</sup>

More surreptitious methods of intelligence gathering, therefore, included the use of informants, the status of which was usually described in MPSB reports as either 'information from a reliable source' (used when the informant was unpaid) or 'information from a reliable but delicate source' (used when the informant was a paid agent).<sup>83</sup> Informants provided advanced details of the plans of political groups, but their intelligence alone did not count as provable evidence for prosecutions. Records show that during the mid-1960s, 'B' Squad had cultivated a 'delicate but reliable source' within the C100, who provided details on internal meetings and copies of committee minutes, a level of intelligence without which officers felt they would be 'sorely handicapped'.<sup>84</sup> However, as momentum shifted within the anti-war movement, officers from 'B' Squad were forced to cultivate new sources of intelligence within groups like the VSC. The practice of informant handling was expanded on in a speech given by then MPSB Commander, Chief Superintendent Arthur Cunningham, who was asked to present at the special conference on public order organised by ACPO in September 1968. Cunningham explained that short-term or one-time informants were mostly 'local citizens, friends of officers, who will get a "kick" out of acting as agents, and who, for little more than their expenses and/or a suitable present, will turn in some good material if properly coached'. More useful informants, however, were those 'established, politically conscious individuals', who had 'short distances to travel to the inner councils' of protest groups and could be manipulated for long-term exploitation. Situating informant handling in pseudo-psychological terms that pathologised the far-left, Cunningham suggested that:

It is a reasonable proposition to say that many anarchists and trotskyists are psychologically disturbed (otherwise they would not be anarchists and trotskyists) and although they outwardly accept the credo of the organisation to which they belong, they sometimes find it does not fulfil all their inners needs. They want someone or something of substance to hang on to, and on more than one occasion we have unearthed individuals with this need to talk to a sympathetic officer. By skilful cultivation, encouraged eventually by suitable payment, such a person can be well exploited. One of my officers has said to me, when discussing his experience in the application of this technique, 'We have found that many of these people want to be loved and understood'. Odd, but true.<sup>85</sup>

'Such informants', Cunningham continued, 'produce their best work and results when handled by their original "father confessor" . . . so we try to keep the same officer with him as far as possible and for as long as possible'.<sup>86</sup>

Indeed, documents show that, more than six months prior to the March 1968 disorder, then MPSB Detective Inspector Conrad Dixon was running at least two paid informants within the anti-war movement, each drawing £25 per month.<sup>87</sup> This coverage fed into senior officers' assessment that the demonstration on 17 March would be large and disorderly, with Cunningham sending a memo to Commander Lawlor on

13 January 1968 stating that ‘reliable information’ had been received that some demonstrators would attempt to gain entry to the US Embassy, while ‘splinter groups’ were being organised to breakaway from the main body of the crowd and head for Downing Street and the House of Parliament, using events in Grosvenor Square as a diversion.<sup>88</sup> Other heavily redacted MPSB documents show that information from a ‘sensitive source’ suggested that a significant foreign contingent would attend the demonstration and attempt to break through the police cordons.<sup>89</sup>

Despite this advanced intelligence, senior MPSB officers later concluded that the disorder at Grosvenor Square had exposed the limits of traditional intelligence gathering practices. As Cunningham explained in his speech to chief officers at the ACPO public order conference:

The essential difficulty lies in the fact that we are not at present dealing with one single disciplined organisation but, under the umbrella of an Ad Hoc Committee, with a multiplicity of individual groups. These may all ostensibly subscribe to the main theme of the demonstration, but some pursue within it very different ends to those publicly stated by the organisers . . . Then there are groups within groups, ready to act independently of their parent body and making their tactical plans at very short notice.<sup>90</sup>

Police had found that many of the groups orbiting the Ad Hoc Committee were all too willing to disregard the instructions of stewards and act according to their own agendas, with one MPSB report authored by Dixon describing the anti-war movement as ‘an uneasy coalition of warring factions’ in which the ‘tail is wagging the dog’.<sup>91</sup> What was needed was a more detailed understanding of the views and intentions of the various groups that participated in anti-war demonstrations and the amount of support they held.

It was to this end that Dixon, now a Chief Inspector within MPSB, proposed setting up the SOS in late June 1968, described as a small group of ‘bearded and unwashed males and scruffy females’, who would be sent undercover to infiltrate the anti-war movement and keep senior police officers and the Home Office well informed about its activities.<sup>92</sup> As Cunningham told police chiefs at the ACPO conference, the deployment of undercover officers was ‘a tricky assignment, involving a good cover story, a cover address for contact, and plenty of nerve and imagination on the part of the officer’.<sup>93</sup> While the SOS also made use of more traditional practices of MPSB surveillance and intelligence gathering—including information obtained from publications, informants, police sources, and technical aids such as phone tapping and listening devices—undercover policing quickly became the main *modus operandi* of the unit, with SOS officers assuming a cover identity and assimilating themselves within the target groups for a number of months.<sup>94</sup> While no formal training was given to undercover officers on the limits of infiltration, Cunningham acknowledged the dangers of this type of intelligence gathering:

Use of an officer in this way exposes police to the accusation of acting as agent provocateurs, should the identity of the officer be exposed. To avoid this, those involved must be carefully instructed not to get themselves elected to any office in the organisation or to take any active part in planning operations which would bring the group into contact with the law.<sup>95</sup>

Under this limited guidance, 12 undercover officers from the SOS were deployed to infiltrate the anti-war movement between August and October, regularly attending both the public and private meetings of local VSC branches across London and taking part in other activities such as distributing campaign propaganda and attending

demonstrations. Intelligence was fed back to Chief Inspector Dixon, who authored a series of weekly reports summarising developments in the VSC's plans for an 'Autumn Offensive'. These reports show that particular effort was made to establish the degree of support and influence held by the patchwork of far-left groups involved in the Ad Hoc Committee organising the 27 October demonstration, with SOS officers spending time mapping out sectarian infighting. The reports also recorded the possible tactics and targets being considered by different groups, which ranged from demonstrators linking arms to avoid arrest and occupying the full width of the road, to rumours that some were manufacturing Molotov cocktails and acquiring weapons to be used against police and government buildings.<sup>96</sup> Undercover officers were sent specifically to infiltrate VSC branches in Notting Hill Gate and Earl Court, as these had been captured by more radical Maoist elements, while other officers used their new aliases to gain access to important meetings such as the VSC National Council meeting in Sheffield on 7 September 1968 and a large organising meeting held by the VSC Committee at Conway Hall on 17 September 1968.<sup>97</sup> While much of this intelligence was relevant to police planning for public order operations, the undercover surveillance practices of the SOS also included watching and recording details on the lawful political activities and private lives of citizens. Typical of much of the everyday surveillance carried out by undercover officers is a report covering a private meeting of the Camden Branch of International Socialism, which was holding an evening event on 'the Negro experience in America' in the back-room of the Dublin Castle pub, NW1 on 6 August 1968. The names and personal descriptions of the two speakers and the chairman of the meeting were recorded, as were the vehicle registration plates of those that attended, details then used to identify the names of the owners. This 'intelligence' was then filed with the MPSB Registry, with copies also passed on to 'Box 500', a colloquialism for MI5.<sup>98</sup>

The sharing of SOS intelligence with MI5 reflected MPSB's responsibilities not only for maintaining public order, but also for countering 'subversion', an ill-defined term that during the mid-to-late 1960s shifted from a Cold War focus on communism to the subversive threat posed by Trotskyists, Black Power activists, and Irish nationalists. Indeed, in the year prior to the March 1968 disorder, liaison between MPSB and MI5's F Branch—the unit responsible for domestic counter-subversion—had been encouraged by then Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, who had been concerned about a duplication in work and asked the two surveillance bodies to explore opportunities for intelligence sharing. Documents suggest that in late 1967, an MPSB officer was posted on a six-month secondment to MI5, with a view to obtaining first-hand knowledge of its work and methods.<sup>99</sup> While it is not clear whether this had any influence on the establishment of the SOS, the disorder at Grosvenor Square on 17 March certainly shifted attention in MPSB towards the type of longer-term infiltration and surveillance that governed practice within MI5. A file note from 2 August 1968 confirmed that Chief Inspector Dixon and a member of MI5's F.4 Branch—the unit responsible for agent-running and informants—'were already working closely together ... [redacted] ... against Trotskyist and Anarchist targets', and that Dixon and MPSB Inspector Sanders had visited F.4, 'where Sanders was introduced to Lord Clanmorris [a senior MI5 spymaster] who would stand in for [redacted] while he was away on leave'.<sup>100</sup> MI5 certainly valued the intelligence it received from the SOS, with minutes from a meeting between MI5 and MPSB on 6 November noting that representatives from the former had 'warmly welcomed' news that undercover infiltration would continue

beyond the 27 October demonstration, even promising to discuss the possibility that MI5 could fund SOS operations with the Director General.<sup>101</sup> In addition to its close relationship with MI5, the experience of MPSB was also relayed to police forces outside the capital through a special conference on public order for senior Special Branch officers, which was held at New Scotland Yard on 17 October 1968.<sup>102</sup>

After four months running undercover operations into the anti-war movement, Chief Inspector Dixon authored a study paper titled 'Penetration of Extremist Groups', reflecting on recent experience. He noted that the advantages of undercover infiltration when compared to traditional practices of intelligence gathering were three-fold: that information gained in this way was more accurate since the intelligence-gathers, unlike informants, were trained observers; that the use of undercover officers cut out the delay normally experienced in waiting for public announcements or reports from informants; and that close infiltration of organisations allowed MPSB to make more accurate assessments of future trends and developments.<sup>103</sup> The optimal size of the unit was recommended to be 12–20 officers, as this gave sufficient coverage of the fragmented groups of the British left without overburdening supervising officers, who would each be responsible for three undercovers. The best candidates for these types of deployment were young officers (with between two and eight years' service), who had a 'full political vocabulary', 'can relate their cover-stories to their pre-service life', and 'have yet to acquire the bright-eyed inquisitive manner that betrays the veteran detective'.<sup>104</sup> Dixon acknowledged that 'the nervous strains involved in this work are considerable', and that undercover deployments should not last more than twelve months, except in special circumstances, with officers operating out of a safehouse in 'some anonymous, cosmopolitan area of the city'.<sup>105</sup> Upon joining the squad officers would develop a legend, and once the autobiographical details of their new identity had been tested for inconsistencies, identification papers could be obtained. Sharing both the loose guidance and disparaging tone adopted by Cunningham in his presentation to police chiefs, Dixon's report noted that:

The incompetence of the British left is notorious, and officers must take care not to get into a position where they achieve prominence in an organisation through natural ability. A firm line must be drawn between activity as a follower and a leader, and members of the squad should be told in no uncertain terms that they must not take office in a group, chair meetings, draft leaflets, speak in public or initiate activity.<sup>106</sup>

Nevertheless, Dixon felt that undercover officers should be 'given full scope for initiative' and that the squad as a whole should be 'autonomous, independently financed and flexible'.<sup>107</sup> Given the time and risks involved with undercover infiltration, Dixon insisted that agents should not expose themselves, for example, by providing evidence for prosecution, simply 'to gain a petty propaganda victory over the left-wing in this country'.<sup>108</sup> The report, therefore, made the case for a significant transformation in the intelligence gathering practices of MPSB, establishing an independent undercover unit with long-term surveillance objectives.

### **Political support for 'traditional methods'**

Speaking to his colleagues in the House of Commons following the disorder at Grosvenor Square on 17 March, the Labour Under-Secretary of State at the Home



Office, Dick Taverne, had given a robust defence of the police handling of the demonstration, blaming disorder on the violence of a provocative minority. Responding to suggestions that the police should have used hoses to disperse the demonstrators, Taverne argued that, 'It seems to me that there is a great deal to be said for not departing from the traditional methods', and that, 'on this occasion, generally speaking, I would have thought that the reputation of the police in this country was higher as a result of their use of traditional methods to contain this particular demonstration than it would have been had hoses been used'. Suggesting that any departure from the 'traditional methods' was something of a slippery slope towards more specialist riot control equipment, Taverne reasoned that, 'It would be a short step from hoses to tear gas, and a short step from tear gas to the use of steel helmets and shields'.<sup>109</sup>

This measured public response did not reflect concerns shared privately, with one former Home Office official later candidly recalling that the disorder at Grosvenor Square had been viewed as 'a distinct threat to the order of the body politic, exposing a vulnerability in policing which had to be mended, and pretty fast'.<sup>110</sup> While the Metropolitan Police were reviewing their own tactics and methods for mass demonstration, a report by the Working Group on Counter Measures of the Official Committee on Communism (Home) recommended in May 1968 that the Home Office should ensure that police experience from the 17 March demonstration should be shared with forces across the country, particularly those in university towns and cities. This brought the Home Office into murky territory, given the traditional operational independence of Chief Constables. Indeed, a note from 13 June 1968 suggested that, 'A search of earlier files has not disclosed any record of advice being given in recent years to the police by the Home Office on how to deal with political demonstrations', concluding that, 'It appears to have been accepted that it was not for civil servants to advise police officers on their operational duties'.<sup>111</sup> While civil servants found no recent precedent for direct intervention, and the suggestion of a Home Office Circular on the matter was dismissed as insufficiently discreet, other means were quickly found to ensure the national proliferation of Metropolitan Police experience, both in terms of public order tactics and intelligence gathering.

It was initially suggested that a special conference on public order should be held at New Scotland Yard, but civil servants within the Home Office Police Department (F4) were concerned this would draw unwanted press attention. Aware that ACPO was holding its annual conference at the National Police College at Bramshill in September, steps were taken to ensure that public order was high on the agenda, with it agreed that the programme would be drawn up in collaboration with the Home Office.<sup>112</sup> Discretion was required, however, particularly as the Metropolitan Police working party on public order had not yet returned its report. Civil servants noted that:

We ought to find means of ensuring either that doctrine is not presented at the conference (e.g. about the use of non-traditional methods and weapons by the police) which the S. of S. would not feel able to support or that if some doubtful doctrine is presented we are in a position to contradict it. This may involve us in a careful advance examination of what the various contributors intend to say and when we know the shape the programme is taking, I would like to consider with you how we can best meet the point.<sup>113</sup>

However, with the working party coming down in favour of a consolidation of 'traditional methods', civil servants were able to agree the rest of the agenda. This included the previously mentioned lectures by A8 Branch Commander Lawlor on protest and crowd control tactics, and the lecture on intelligence gathering by MPSB Commander Cunningham. Police chiefs were also addressed by Richard Thistlethwaite, an MI5 officer with counter-insurgency experience in Malaya, Palestine, and Singapore, who provided a lecture on the foreign connections of student protest, including a brief and disparaging explanation of Herbert Marcuse's theory of alienation in modern industrial society.<sup>114</sup> Based on his dealings with the Home Office in preparation for the two-day conference, ACPO General Secretary, Douglas Osmond, Chief Constable for Hampshire Constabulary, noted in a letter to a colleague that, 'I can but surmise there is deep interest in high places and not a little anxiety'.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, this was reflected in a letter sent to police chiefs by the Assistant Under Secretary of State, Herbert Stotesbury, who warned that, 'The Home Secretary himself has shown great personal interest and has recently intimated that in his view every Force should be represented and that he would regard with disfavour any evidence of [a] lack of interest in the subject'.<sup>116</sup>

While civil servants at the Home Office were working to ensure the proliferation of Metropolitan Police experience, Callaghan himself became increasingly involved in preparations for the upcoming 27 October demonstration. Home Office documents show that one of Callaghan's main concerns in the months leading up to the rally was the media's alarmist reporting of the possibility of disorder.<sup>117</sup> Worthy of particular criticism was *The Times*, which on 5 September had carried news of a 'startling plot' 'uncovered by a special squad of detectives', whose investigations revealed that protesters were manufacturing 'Molotov cocktails' and 'amassing a small arsenal of weapons'.<sup>118</sup> Frustrated by this coverage and believing that it significantly raised tensions, Callaghan asked MPSB and MI5 to investigate the likely source of these stories, with Chief Inspector Dixon reporting back with characteristic felicity that press reports were 'a carefully-constructed pastiche of information ... spiced with inspired guesswork'.<sup>119</sup> Callaghan also took an active role in securing favourable media coverage for both the Government and the police. In a meeting with Lord Hill, Chairman of the British Broadcasting Company's Board of Governors, Callaghan complained that militant members of the anti-war and student movement had been given too much media attention, with Lord Hill promising to pursue with discretion the issues raised.<sup>120</sup> At a subsequent meeting, Callaghan, Commissioner Waldron, and Sir Philip Allen met with Lord Aylestone, Chairman of the Independent Television Authority, and the chairmen of eight leading newspaper publishing companies.<sup>121</sup> Despite the hugely favourable coverage the police had received after the disorder on 17 March, Callaghan complained that, 'there was a feeling among the police that the published photographs tended to concentrate on some retaliation by a police officer, rather than on the blow by a demonstrator which provoked the police officer', an issued those present agreed to discuss with their editors.<sup>122</sup> Also present at the meeting was G. D. Gregory, a public relations specialist who had recently joined the Metropolitan Police to lead 'a task of image reconstruction' following growing concerns about a deterioration in police-public relations.<sup>123</sup> The revamped Press Bureau of the Public Relations Department then arranged for television and newspaper cameras to have access behind police cordons to ensure sympathetic coverage of the demonstration from the point of view of the police. Furthermore, having received information from MPSB that the

Ad Hoc Committee was in a dire financial situation, Callaghan also asked those present to prevent journalists from offering payments to members of protest groups for contacts and interviews.<sup>124</sup>

While Callaghan continued to publicly express confidence in traditional police methods, events in Northern Ireland at the beginning of October significantly raised concerns about the ability of the police to maintain order. On 5 October, a civil rights march in Derry descended into several days of rioting after Loyalists and off-duty members of the Ulster Special Constabulary (a paramilitary reserve commonly known as the 'B-Specials') attacked demonstrators outside the city. Rather than provide protection for the demonstrators, the Royal Ulster Constabulary had used baton-charges and water cannon to disperse the crowds, which only inflamed the situation further.<sup>125</sup> As Callaghan came under pressure from the Conservative Opposition to guarantee that the Metropolitan Police were prepared for the anti-war demonstration in London, the Home Secretary wrote to Minister of Defence, Denis Healey, with inquiries as to what role the army could play if the police were to lose control of public order. Healey, for his part, informed Callaghan that the suggestion that troops might be called upon during the 27 October demonstration had created 'uneasiness' in his department, insisting that, 'it would be extremely undesirable for troops ever to be used in an active role once a demonstration had got out of hand', since 'the troops are not trained in riot control in this country'.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, Healey noted that unarmed troops could help fulfil traditional police roles such as providing security for Government buildings and creating road blocks, though training was needed first and any call for military assistance would require at least two or three days' notice.<sup>127</sup> Callaghan's exchange with Healey clearly shocked some senior civil servants in the Home Office, with James Waddell noting that though such measures should not be totally ruled out, 'In present circumstances [the] use of troops would be disastrous', since 'the dividends would certainly vanish'.<sup>128</sup> This comment suggests that those within the Home Office were firmly of the opinion that a successful resolution to the anti-war demonstration would benefit the police, as it would validate 'traditional methods' and secure further support from the public.

Callaghan continued to maintain considerable personal involvement in the police plans for the demonstration, requesting that television monitors be set up in his office providing direct access to the four CCTV cameras that had been installed specially along the route of the march.<sup>129</sup> Minutes of a Home Office meeting on 8 October suggest that the original plan was for Callaghan and Commissioner Waldron to stay in contact via a direct telephone line between the Home Secretary's office and New Scotland Yard, but in her autobiography Shirley Williams, then Minister for Education and Science, recalls that the Home Secretary ended up joining Commissioner Waldron and Commander Lawlor in the temporary control room at the police headquarters.<sup>130</sup> Home Office documents show that, in preparation for the rally, it had been agreed that 'the Commissioner would be in charge of the police handling of the demonstrations, but the Home Secretary would be available to provide a second opinion if he was asked'.<sup>131</sup> While police operational independence was closely guarded, Shirley Williams' account of the demonstration from the temporary Operations Room makes the remarkable claim that as the splinter group arrived in Grosvenor Square, Waldron asked Callaghan whether he should deploy mounted police to disperse the crowd outside the Embassy, the Home Secretary apparently calmly advising against such action.<sup>132</sup> Having taken significant personal interest in

police arrangements for the 27 October demonstration, Callaghan's intentions appear to be threefold: to ensure that the police were sufficiently prepared for future disorder; to encourage other forces to learn from the recent experience of the Metropolitan Police; and to consolidate public support for the police, whose planning for future mass demonstrations was being presented as a continuation of 'traditional methods'.

While Callaghan's involvement in the policing of the anti-war movement was motivated by a desire to bolster police legitimacy, this was part of a broader contestation over the legitimacy of Wilson's Labour Government, whose complicity in the war in Vietnam—even if limited to rhetorical support for the US and minor intelligence and medical assistance, rather than troops—was deeply unpopular among Labour politicians, party supporters, and a large section of the British public. Taking power with a precarious majority in 1964, Labour had publicly positioned itself as the party of peace and international morality, promising an independent foreign policy that hoped to reconcile Cold War polarity.<sup>133</sup> Wilson's unwavering support for the war as it escalated in the mid-to-late 1960s seemed to represent the worst of his famed pragmatism, with Ben Pimlott concluding that, 'It was on Vietnam, above all, that the party of conscience seemed to lose touch with its soul . . . many people who had looked forward to a Labour Government, and pinned their hopes on Wilson, came to see Labour principles as a shattered crystal, beyond hope of repair'.<sup>134</sup> As mass demonstration in 1968 represented a challenge to the legitimacy and morality of Wilson's position on Vietnam, the police response offered a means by which Callaghan could reassert the moderation and legitimacy of the Labour Government. The Home Secretary's personal involvement can be seen as an attempt to transform a divisive political issue into a police issue, where 'British good sense' would prevail. A rhetorical investment in supposedly benign 'traditional methods' thus undermined the charges of state-violence made by anti-war protesters, but it also served to mask significant changes in crowd control and intelligence gathering practices brought in by the challenges posed by mass demonstration in 1968.

## Conclusion

Using a variety of contemporaneous sources, including underused archival material, documents released through freedom of information requests, and evidence disclosed as part of the ongoing UCPI, this article has examined the response of the Metropolitan Police and the Home Office to mass demonstrations in 1968. Following Luff's challenge that historians should 'bring surveillance and policing back into the "social history of politics"', it has highlighted 'the cultural forces that produced and legitimated' the response of police professionals, police administrators, and politicians.<sup>135</sup> It has shown that the experience of anti-war demonstrations that year, which took place against the backdrop of major international protest, prompted significant developments in terms of crowd control practice within the Metropolitan Police, but that rather than adopt the specialist riot control equipment and dispersal tactics deployed by police in the US, continental Europe, and across the British Empire, experienced officers favoured a greater emphasis on in-service training, operational planning, and command and control. This is not to discount the other ways in which the 'civilian' model of English policing 'cross-fertilised' with the 'state military' model of colonial policing, particularly during the protracted period of decolonisation.<sup>136</sup> Rather, it is to show how belief in the

distinctive character of these two models, however idealised, was an important influence on police administration and elite attitudes. As other scholars have argued, this 'indulgent tradition' of English policing was part of a self-conscious construction of national identity and a source of 'symbolic power' for the police, appeals to which often came during moments of perceived crisis.<sup>137</sup> While much was made of the continuation of 'traditional methods' in 1968, the term functioned less as an articulation of a longstanding and coherent policing philosophy and more as part of the management of the police image at a time when police legitimacy was seen to be under threat.

The consolidation of 'traditional methods' in 1968 built on mythic ideas of Britain as a uniquely 'peaceable kingdom'. While such myths have a long history, Jon Lawrence has argued that they were greatly amplified during the 1920s and 1930s by fears that the profound traumas of the First World War had had a brutalising effect on British society.<sup>138</sup> The political and cultural legacy of the war was a fundamental reconfiguration of British discourses of violence, with an emphasis placed on the peacefulness of popular politics during the inter-war period. 'It became common place', Lawrence writes, 'to argue that the use of violence—both at home and in the empire—was somehow uniquely "un-British"', a reassuring national story that placed Britain apart from the extremism and political violence of Continental Europe.<sup>139</sup> While Britain did not suddenly become a 'peaceable kingdom' during the inter-war period, the idea of this unique history did become a metanarrative in stories of national character, which remained relevant in the post-war period for both policing professionals and peace campaigners alike.<sup>140</sup> The response of the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police to mass demonstration in 1968 was influenced by this cultural history, but it also looked to consolidate it through an appeal to a supposedly moderate English policing tradition.

Less compatible with this benign view of English policing was the development of new practices of intelligence gathering within MPSB, with the establishment of the SOS—later renamed the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS)—embedding intrusive practices of covert human surveillance into MPSB's coverage of left-wing protest movements. While undercover policing had previously been relied upon for crime detection and general intelligence gathering, the coverage SOS officers gave of the anti-war movement meant that the unit continued beyond its original remit, with officers deployed on long-term operations infiltrating target groups. The interest of MI5 in the work of the SOS saw the remit of the unit quickly develop from intelligence gathering to assist public order operations to more expansive taskings in counter-subversion, watching, recording, and becoming intimately involved in the political activities and private lives of citizens. The existence of the SOS remained a closely guarded secret among a small number of civil servants and senior officers, who remained conscious that public knowledge of its activities would undermine the supposedly moderate nature of 'traditional methods' and their implicit respect for civil liberties. As Roodhouse has noted, officials remained reluctant to acknowledge the use of undercover policing given the belief that such practices were 'un-English', the result being that practices developed largely unsupervised.<sup>141</sup> Secrecy suggested importance and importance conveyed legitimacy, with few questioning how much actionable intelligence was gained from such intrusive methods.

Finally, this article has also argued that the changes to public order policing introduced in 1968 should be seen as part of a broader process of, and cultural and political

commitment to, modernisation in policing that accelerated during the 1960s. This was realised through a greater emphasis on training and professional development, an embrace of technological innovation to improve efficiency and control of police manpower, a greater acknowledgement of the ‘public relations’ aspect of policing, and the development of a national police bureaucracy designed to consolidate expertise through centralisation. The Home Office and the Metropolitan Police played a key role in this process, the former encouraging the proliferation of successful policing strategies and the gradual adoption of common minimum standards among police forces in England and Wales in large part based on the experience of the latter. Officers from A8 Branch and MPSB would go on to shape national public order and intelligence gathering practices in the decades that followed, with the changes introduced in 1968 in many ways prefiguring developments more commonly associated with the 1970s and 1980s.

## Notes

1. Sedlmaier ed. *Protest Vietnam War Era*.
2. Undercover Policing Inquiry (henceforth UCPI), MPS-0730076, “Metropolitan Police Special Branch (henceforth MPSB) report on VSC demonstration,” March 17, 1968.
3. “World in Action the Demonstration 1968” (undated) [online audio visual], (accessed March 1, 2020) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgbAsiW9Q3Y>
4. A total of 1,437 officers were deployed in connection with the demonstration. See Waldron, *Report of the Commissioner*: 40; Hull University Archives (henceforth HUA), Liberty Archive, U DCL 640/4, ‘Report on the Demonstration in Grosvenor Square, London, on March 17 1968’, Apr 1968.
5. Ellis, “Promoting Solidarity at Home and Abroad”.
6. University of Warwick, Modern Records Collection [hereafter MRC], MSS.189/V/1/10/1, ‘In Solidarity with Vietnam: the VSC case’, undated.
7. For a contemporary discussion of the protest tactics, see MRC, MSS.149/2/14/1/8, “Geoff Richman, ‘On Demonstrations’, VSC Bulletin No. 14,” May 1968. For the politics and protest tactics of the anti-nuclear movement, see Nehring, *The Politics of Security*; Burkett, ‘Direct Action and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 1958–62’; on the changing politics and tactics of the anti-war left, see Ellis, ‘Promoting solidarity’; Bruendel, ‘Global Dimensions of Conflict and Cooperation’. For the relationship between the anti-war movement and the press, see Thomas, ‘Protests Against the Vietnam War in 1960s Britain’.
8. For an early study of press reportage in advance of the 27 October demonstration, see Halloran, Elliot and Murdock, *Demonstrations and Communications*, 344–47.
9. This bizarre chorus was later used by former Home Office civil servant turned police historian, T.A. Critchley, as evidence that the British has miraculously ‘conquered violence’ as a result of national mores. See Critchley, *The Conquest of Violence*.
10. Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 772, 30 Oct 1968, 11–153; Parliamentary Debates (Lords), 297, 31 Oct 1968, 34–114; Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 772, 7 Nov 1968, 137; The National Archives: Public Record Office, Kew (henceforth TNA:PRO), MEPO 2/10986, ‘Greater London Council, Petition’, 1968.
11. This article has tried to be specific in distinguishing between references to ‘English’ and ‘British’ policing, particularly given the formal separation and different historical development of policing in England and Wales and policing in Scotland. However, not all sources are consistent and part of the argument of this article is that the public order experience of the Metropolitan Police, whilst based on an appeal to a uniquely ‘English’ policing tradition, became something of a national standard after 1968. While maintaining consistency in its references to English policing, this article uses Britain when discussing the broader social, cultural, and political context of the period. On the subject of the ‘symbolic power’ of the

- 'English' policing tradition, see Loader and Mulcahy, *Policing and the Condition of England*, 37–60. For a discussion of the 'English' approach to public order policing, see Reiner, 'Policing, Protest, and Disorder in Britain'.
12. See, for example, Fielding, *The Labour Governments, 1964–70*, 18; Byrne, *Social Movements in Britain*, 32; Harman, *The Fire Last Time*, 155; Ellis, "'A Demonstration of British Good Sense?'" 54; DeGroot, *The 60s Unplugged*, 355–363; Marwick, *The Sixties*, 634.
  13. Vinen, *The Long '68*, 196.
  14. Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 761, 28 Mar 1968, 1717.
  15. St John, "The Metropolitan Police and the Politics of Public Order".
  16. Jefferson, *The Case Against Paramilitary Policing*, 2–3; King and Brearley, *Public Order Policing*, 37–39; Joyce and Wain, *Palgrave Dictionary of Public Order Policing*, 137–39.
  17. Thomas, 'Protest'; Fowler, "From 'Danny the Red' to British Student Power"; Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain*; Prince, "'Do What the Afro-Americans Are Doing'"; Jobs, 'Youth Movements'. The exception here is Ben Taylor, whose doctoral thesis includes a brief discussion of the changes introduced in 1968. See Taylor, 'Science and the British Police', 123–25.
  18. For a discussion on the different models and types of policing, see Emsley, "Policing the Empire/Policing the Metropole".
  19. For accounts of the shared origins of the Irish Constabulary and the London Metropolitan Police Force during the early nineteenth century, see Brogden, 'The Emergence of the Police'. For accounts of the process of 'imperial feedback' that took place between the colonies and the metropole during the twentieth century, see Sinclair and Williams, "'Home and Away'"; Sinclair, *At the End of the Line*; Go, 'Imperial Origins'; Go, 'From Crime Fighting to Counterinsurgency'; Linstrum, 'Domesticating Chemical Weapons'.
  20. Emsley, 'The English Bobby'; Lentz and Chaires, 'The Invention of Peel's Principles'. For more on the social construction of police legitimacy in post-war England, see Williams, 'Police Governance'; McLaughlin, 'From Reel to Ideal'.
  21. Porter, *Origins of the Vigilant State*; Brückenhaus, *Policing Transnational Protest*, 8–41; Solomon, *State Surveillance, Political Policing and Counter-Terrorism in Britain, 1880–1914*; Paola, 'The Spies Who Came in from the Heat'; Smith and Varnava, "Creating a 'Suspect Community'"; Morgan, *Conflict and Order*, 93; Clark, 'Sincere and Reasonable Men?'; Clark, *The National Council for Civil Liberties and the Policing of Interwar Politics*.
  22. Report of the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure (1929), Cmd. 3297, 40. See also Wood, "Press, Politics and the 'Police and Public' Debates in Late 1920s Britain".
  23. Roodhouse, "The 'Ghost Squad'".
  24. Williams, 'Rotten Boroughs?'.
  25. Charman, "Lobbying and Representation"; Charman and Savage. "Singing from the Same Hymn Sheet".
  26. Morris, "What the Met Brought to the Party".
  27. Wark, "In Never-Never Land?," 201.
  28. The UCPI was set up in 2015 after a sustained investigation by activists and journalists forced the government to appoint a series of independent reviews that found 'appalling practices in undercover policing'. The Inquiry is now in its eighth year and has only just completed 'Tranche 1', which focuses on the period between 1968–1982. See UCPI, 'About the Inquiry' [online], <https://www.ucpi.org.uk/about-the-inquiry/> [accessed 21 Sep 2023]. At the time of writing, the UCPI has released more than 3,000 documents, all of which can be found online. See UCPI, 'Published Evidence', <https://www.ucpi.org.uk/published-evidence/> [accessed 27 Aug 2022].
  29. Luff, "Covert and Overt Operations," 756.
  30. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Report of the First Working Party on Public Order," 1968, 2.
  31. Ewing, "The Cold War, Civil Liberties, and the House of Lords".
  32. NCCL, *Public Order and the Police*; TNA:PRO, HO 325/180, 'Note from Mr Glanville to Mr Allen', 24 Oct 1961.
  33. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Memorandum from Assistant Commissioner 'A' Waldron on demonstrations involving civil disobedience or serious public disorder," 1965.

34. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/8483, "Syllabus of Instruction for Constables on Probation," 1955, 39.
35. Knight, "Recent Book".
36. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Report of the First Working Party on Public Order," 1968, 2.
37. *Ibid.*, 8.
38. Membership included Chief Superintendent Fowler and Superintendent Hope (both from A8 Branch), Chief Superintendent Gilbert (Uniform Branch), Chief Superintendent Gerrard (CID), and Detective Superintendent Lawrenson (Special Branch).
39. *The Times*, 20 Mar 1968, 2; The restructuring followed a nine-month study by PA Management Consultants, aimed at the reorganisation and rationalisation of the Force's central departments. See Lowe, 'Management Consultants and the Police'.
40. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, 'Report of the First Working Party on Public Order', 1968, 4.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*, 5.
44. Linstrum, 'Domesticating Chemical Weapons', 568–9.
45. TNA:PRO, CO 1037/201, 'Tear smoke and gas: enquiries by colonial governments of occasions in previous five years that tear gas was used', 1963–1965.
46. Linstrum, 'Domesticating Chemical Weapons', 575.
47. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, 'Appendix A—Use of Tear Gas in the Apprehension of Violent Persons', 1968; TNA:PRO, MEPO 1/10155, 'Provision of mattresses and protective shields for use in arresting violent persons', 1961–1971.
48. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/10990/1, "Assistant Commissioner 'A' quoted in Minute 3," undated.
49. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Report of the First Working Party on Public Order," 1968, 4–6.
50. *Ibid.*, 4.
51. Provenzano, 'Beyond the *Matraque*'.
52. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, 'Report of the First Working Party on Public Order', 1968, 4.
53. *Ibid.*, 15.
54. *Ibid.*, 'Minute 24 by Commander Lawlor', 21 Nov 1968; Tendler, 'Sir Kenneth Leslie Newman'.
55. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Minutes on the provision of public order training at the Cadent Training School in Hendon," 1968.
56. HUA, Records of the Association of Chief Police Officers (hereafter ACPO), U DPO/10/694, 'Letter from Chief Constable Osmond to unknown', 16 Aug 1968.
57. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Letter from Chief Constable Osmond to all Chief Constables," 1 October 1968.
58. Keene, 'The Metropolitan Police Special Patrol Group'. In January 1965, Liverpool City Police had begun experimenting with the use of CCTV cameras and a squad of 'commandos' to stop street crime in the city centre. See TNA:PRO, HO 377/15, 'Report on visit to Liverpool City Police Force, 18–20 January 1965', 1965 and HO 377/16, 'Supplementary report on the experimental use of television cameras and commando police patrolling by Liverpool City Police', 1966.
59. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Appendix P—Demonstrations Involving Civil Disobedience or Serious Public Order," 1968.
60. For a classical study of crowd psychology, see Le Bon, *The Crowd*. For a contemporary discussion of crowd psychology, including criticism of Le Bon's theory, see Mannheim, *Comparative Criminology*, 645–50.
61. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/11229, "Report of the First Working Party on Public Order," 1968, 6.
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*, 4.
64. *Ibid.*, 10.
65. *Ibid.*, 4.
66. TNA, MEPO 2/9956, "Notes of a meeting to discuss the use of closed-circuit television cameras," January 12, 1961; Williams, "Police Surveillance and the Emergence of CCTV in the 1960s".



67. Released following request under the Freedom of Information Act (hereafter FOIA), HO 325/185, "Minutes of meeting at Home Office on August 16, 1968," undated. Between 1967 and 1968, the total number of personal radio sets in the Metropolitan Police increased from 663 to 3,486, with 2,000 more ordered for 1969. Waldron, *Report of the Commissioner*, 34.
68. TNA:PRO, MEPO 2/9956, "Memorandum from Commander Lawlor to unknown," August 1, 1968.
69. UCPI, MPS-0730084, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," October 9, 1968.
70. Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 772, November 7, 1968, 1059.
71. "Grosvenor Square Anti-Vietnam Riots," 1968 [online audio visual], <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/grosvenor-square-anti-vietnam-riots> [accessed 9 Mar 2020].
72. HUA, Liberty Archive, U DCL 640/6, "Letter from Mr Smythe to Mr Callaghan," November 27, 1968.
73. Sinclair, "'Get into a Crack Force'".
74. See, for example, *Ibid.*, 61; Sinclair and Williams, "'Home and Away'," 231; Trafford, *The Empire at Home*, 68. On the 'domestication' of riot control equipment in Northern Ireland, see Linstrum, 'Domesticating Chemical Weapons', 577–85; Drohan, 'Unintended Consequences'.
75. Sinclair and Williams, "'Home and Away'," 221–38; Northam, *Shooting in the Dark*, 126–39.
76. Go, "Imperial Origins," 1210.
77. *Ibid.*, 1211.
78. UCPI, MPS-0736497, 'MPSB report on a meeting of the Britain Vietnam Solidarity Front', 25 Jul 1966. 'B' Squad was also responsible for monitoring fascist, anti-fascist, anti-nuclear, and Irish nationalist groups. Elsewhere in MPSB, 'A' Squad was responsible for protection and port control; 'C' Squad was responsible for monitoring communist activity; 'D' Squad was responsible for naturalisations and visa applications, 'E' Squad was responsible for aliens, Commonwealth and Colonial communities, and "racial or 'colour' problems"; and 'R' Squad was responsible for discipline, internal security, positive vetting, vetting for government departments, research, lectures and training, and threats to VIPs. See UCPI, UCPI0000030040, 'Note entitled responsibilities of MPSB', 21 Mar 1967. With the onset of 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland, 'B' Squad became solely responsible for policing Irish nationalism, with 'C' Squad taking over its other duties.
79. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Presentation by Commander Cunningham on Intelligence Gathering Problems for Major Demonstrations," undated.
80. UCPI, MPS-0747773, "MPSB report on a meeting and torchlight procession held by the VSC," August 6, 1966.
81. UCPI, MPS-0730079, 'MPSB routine meeting report', 11 Jan 1968.
82. UCPI, MPS-0730083, "MPSB report on meeting of Vietnam Ad Hoc Committee," March 7, 1968.
83. UCPI, UCPI0000030764, "MI5 note for policy file," August 22, 1967.
84. TNA:PRO, MEPO 1/11256, "Note from Chief Superintendent Attwood to Commander Townsend," March 1964.
85. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Presentation by Commander Cunningham on Intelligence Gathering Problems for Major Demonstrations," undated.
86. *Ibid.*
87. UCPI, UCPI0000030764, "MI5 note for file," August 22, 1967.
88. UCPI, MPS-0730079, "Memorandum from Commander Cunningham to Commander Lawlor," January 13, 1968.
89. UCPI, MPS-0730082, "Document redacted, gist provided," March 2, 1968; UCPI, MPS-0730078, 'Memorandum from Deputy Commander Wilson to Commander Lawlor', March 14, 1968.
90. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Presentation by Commander Cunningham on Intelligence Gathering Problems for Major Demonstrations," undated.
91. FOIA, HO 325/90, "MPSB report," October 3, 1968.
92. UCPI, UCPI0000030046, 'MI5 note for file', August 29, 1968.
93. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Presentation by Commander Cunningham on Intelligence Gathering Problems for Major Demonstrations," undated.
94. UCPI, MPS-0728973, "SOS annual report for 1969," May 20, 1969.

95. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Presentation by Commander Cunningham on Intelligence Gathering Problems for Major Demonstrations," undated.
96. See, for example, UCPI, MPS-0730061, 'MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive', 21 Aug 1968; MPS-0730066, 'MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive', 5 Sep 1968; MPS-0730063, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," September 10, 1968; MPS-0730064, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," September 19, 1968; MPS-0730095, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," September 23, 1968; MPS-0730096, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," October 3, 1968; MPS-0730084, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," October 9, 1968; MPS-0730091, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," October 16, 1968; MPS-0730092, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," October 22, 1968.
97. UCPI, MPS-0738726, "MPSB report on Notting Hill VSC," August 14, 1968; MPS-0738834, "MPSB report on Earls Court VSC," September 19, 1968; MPS-0730064, "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," September 19, 1968.
98. UCPI, MPS-0733716, "MPSB report on meeting of International Socialism (Camden Branch)," August 6, 1968; MPS-0733721, "MPSB report on International Socialism," August 8, 1968.
99. UCPI, UCPI0000034284, "Notes on meeting held between the Home Office, MI5 and MPSB," 13 Nov 1967. See also UCPI0000030040, "Note on responsibilities of MPSB," 21 Mar 1967; UCPI0000030877, "Letter from Commander Smith to MI5," July 3, 1967; UCPI0000030764, "MI5 note for policy file," August 22, 1967.
100. UCPI, UCPI0000030045, "MI5 note for file, August 2, 1968. The role of F4 is listed in Andrew, *Defence of the Realm*, 498.
101. UCPI, MPS0730219, "Commander Smith, minute 2, minute sheet 1," November 9, 1968.
102. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Letter from Chief Constable Pennington to all forces," October 1, 1968.
103. UCPI, MPS-0724119, "Report on Penetration of Extremist Groups," November 26, 1968, 1.
104. *Ibid.*, 2.
105. *Ibid.*, 3.
106. *Ibid.*, 4.
107. *Ibid.*
108. *Ibid.*
109. Parliamentary Debates (Commons), 762, 4 Apr 1968, 752.
110. Loader and Mulcahy, *Policing and the Condition of England*, 271.
111. FOIA, HO 325/185, "Note by [redacted] on advice to the police on demonstrations," June 13, 1968.
112. *Ibid.*, "Note from [redacted] to [redacted]," 13 Jun 1968; HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Letter from Stotesbury to Chief Constable Osmond," June 19, 1968.
113. FOIA, HO 325/185, "Note from [redacted] to [redacted]," June 26, 1968.
114. UCPI, UCPI0000035301, "Presentation by Thistlethwaite to ACPO conference," September 23, 1968.
115. HUA, ACPO, U DPO/10/694, "Letter from Chief Constable Osmond to unknown," August 16, 1968.
116. *Ibid.*, "Letter from Stotesbury to Chief Constable Osmond," 19 Jun 1968; "Letter from Chief Constable Aston to all Chief Constables and Assistant Chief Constables," September 12, 1968.
117. *The Times*, 6 Sep 1968, 1; FOIA, HO 325/185, "Memorandum from Waddell to unknown," 5 Sep 1968; "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," September 5, 1968.
118. *The Times*, September 5, 1968, 1.
119. FOIA, HO 325/185, "Memorandum from Waddell to unknown," 5 Sep 1968; "MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive," September 5, 1968.
120. *Ibid.*, 'Minutes of a meeting between the Callaghan and Lord Hill', October 21, 1968.
121. *Ibid.*, "Note of a meeting between Callaghan, Commissioner Waldron, Sir Allen and leading media figures," October 18, 1968.

122. Ibid., "Minutes of a meeting between Callaghan, Commissioner Waldron, Sir Allen, and ten leading television and newspaper proprietors," October 18, 1968.
123. Gregory, "Public Relations and the Police"; Chibnall, *Law-and-Order News*, 72.
124. FOIA, HO 325/185, "Minutes of a meeting between Callaghan, Commissioner Waldron, Sir Allen, and ten leading television and newspaper proprietors," October 18, 1968; 'MPSB report on VSC Autumn Offensive', October 9, 1968.
125. Prince, "5 October 1968 and the Beginning of the Troubles".
126. FOIA, HO 325/185, "Memorandum from Healey to Callaghan," October 14, 1968.
127. Ibid.
128. Ibid., "Memorandum from Waddell to unknown," October 23, 1968.
129. Ibid., 'Minutes of meeting between Callaghan, Commissioner Waldron, Sir Allen and others', October 10, 1968.
130. Ibid.; Williams, *Climbing the Bookshelves*, 228.
131. FOIA, HO 325/185, 'Minutes of meeting between Callaghan, Commissioner Waldron, Sir Allen and others', October 10, 1968.
132. Williams, *Climbing the Bookshelves*, 228.
133. Ellis, *Britain, America, and the Vietnam War*; Ellis, 'Promoting Solidarity at Home and Abroad'; Ellis, 'British Public Opinion and the Vietnam War'; Vickers, 'Harold Wilson, the British Labour Party, and the War in Vietnam'; Roberts, "The Campaign of the 'Red-Bearded Radical'".
134. Pimlott, *Harold Wilson*, 194.
135. Luff, 'Covert and Overt Operations', 756.
136. Emsley, 'Policing the Empire/Policing the Metropole'; Sinclair and Williams, 'Home and Away'.
137. Emsley, 'English Bobby'; Loader and Mulcahy, *Policing and the Condition of England*.
138. Lawrence, 'Forging a Peaceable Kingdom'.
139. Ibid., 559.
140. Nehring, 'Towards a Transnational Social History'.
141. Roodhouse, 'Ghost Squad', 175.

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