

UNCIVIL WAR

When Operation Banner was launched in 1969, civil war threatened to break out in Northern Ireland and spread across the Irish Sea. *Uncivil War* reveals the full story of how the British army acted to save Great Britain from disaster during the most violent phase of the Troubles but, in doing so, condemned the people of Northern Ireland to protracted, grinding conflict. Huw Bennett shows how the army's inability to repress loyalist violence undermined the prospects for peace and heightened Catholic distrust in the state. British strategy consistently under-estimated community defence as a reason for people joining or supporting the IRA, whilst senior commanders allowed the army to turn in on itself, hardening soldiers to the suffering of ordinary people. By 1975 military strategists considered the conflict unresolvable: the army could not convince Catholics or Protestants that it was there to protect them and settled instead for an unending war.

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UNCIVIL WAR

The British Army and the Troubles, 1966–1975

Huw Bennett



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For Claudia, Lina and Orla, with love

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Abbreviations

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACDS(Ops)	Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Operations)
AG	Adjutant General
APS	Assistant Private Secretary
AUS(GS)	Assistant Under-Secretary (General Staff)
BAOR	British Army of the Rhine
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BGS(Int)	Brigadier General Staff (Intelligence)
C2(AD)	Central Department 2 (Army Department)
CCDC	Central Citizens' Defence Committee
CDC	Citizens' Defence Committee
CDS	Chief of the Defence Staff
CGS	Chief of the General Staff
CLF	Commander Land Forces
Col GS	Colonel, General Staff
COS	Chief of Staff/Chiefs of Staff
CPR	Chief of Public Relations
CSA	Chief Scientific Adviser
CS gas	2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile gas (tear gas)
DASD	Director of Army Staff Duties
DCDA	Derry Citizens' Defence Association
DCDS(I)	Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Intelligence)
DCS(A)	Deputy Chief Scientist (Army)
DGI	Director-General of Intelligence
DMO	Director of Military Operations
D of DOP	Director of Defence Operational Plans
DOpsINTCOM	Director of Operations Intelligence Committee Northern Ireland
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DPR(A)	Director of Public Relations (Army)
DS	Directing Staff

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DS6	Defence Secretariat 6
DS10	Defence Secretariat 10
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
DUS(Army)	Deputy Under-Secretary (Army)
DYH	Derry Young Hooligans
EEC	European Economic Community
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EOKA	Ethniki Organosis Kypriou Agoniston (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters)
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FOI	Freedom of Information
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GSO 1	General Staff Officer, Grade 1
GSO 2	General Staff Officer, Grade 2
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HQNI	Headquarters Northern Ireland
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
INTSUM	Intelligence Summary
IRA	Irish Republican Army
IS	Internal Security
ITV	Independent Television
IWMSA	Imperial War Museum Sound Archive
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JSCSC	Joint Services Command and Staff College
KOSB	King's Own Scottish Borderers
LAW	Loyalist Association of Workers
LHASC	Labour History Archive and Study Centre
LHCMA	Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives
LSE	London School of Economics and Political Science
MA	Military Assistant
MI5	Military Intelligence, Section 5 (The Security Service)
MI6	Military Intelligence, Section 6 (The Secret Intelligence Service)
MO3	Military Operations, Branch 3
MO4	Military Operations, Branch 4
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Member of Parliament
MRF	Military Reaction Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCO	Non-commissioned Officer

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NEC	National Executive Committee
NICRA	Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
NITAT	Northern Ireland Training and Advisory Team
OC	Officer Commanding
OIRA	Official Irish Republican Army
OP	Observation Post
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army
PRONI	Public Records Office of Northern Ireland
PS	Parliamentary Secretary/Private Secretary
PSO	Personal Staff Officer
PS2(Army)	Personal Services, Branch 2 (Army)
PS4(A)	Personal Services, Branch 4 (Army)
PUS	Permanent Under-Secretary
PUSD	Permanent Under-Secretary's Department (Foreign and Commonwealth Office)
RA	Royal Artillery
RAF	Royal Air Force
RARDE	Royal Armament Research and Development Establishment
RCT	Royal Corps of Transport
RGJ	Royal Green Jackets
RM	Royal Marines
RMP	Royal Military Police
RNAS	Royal Naval Air Station
RPG	Rocket-Propelled Grenade
RSRM	Royal Scots Regimental Museum
RTÉ	Raidió Teilifís Éireann (Radio and Television of Ireland)
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SAS	Special Air Service
SCDS	Staff of the Chief of the Defence Staff
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SoS	Secretary of State
SPG	Special Patrol Group
TNA	The National Archives
UDA	Ulster Defence Association
UDR	Ulster Defence Regiment
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UKLF	United Kingdom Land Forces
UKREP	United Kingdom Representative
UPV	Ulster Protestant Volunteers
USA	United States of America
USC	Ulster Special Constabulary
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force
UWC	Ulster Workers' Council
VAG	Vice Adjutant General
VCDS	Vice Chief of the Defence Staff
VCGS	Vice Chief of the General Staff