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Stakeknife: Britain's Secret Agents In Ireland (History Of Ireland & The Irish Diaspora)



Synopsis

An explosive exposé of how British military intelligence really works—from the inside. This book presents the stories of two undercover agents: Brian Nelson, who worked for the Force Research Unit (FRU), aiding loyalist terrorists and murderers in their bloody work; and the man known as Stakeknife, deputy head of the IRA's infamous "Nutting Squad," the internal security force that tortured and killed suspected informers. This book is copublished with O'Brien Press, Dublin and is for sale only in the United States, its territories and dependencies, Canada, and the Philippines.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Backstabbing, Double Agents & the IRA "Stakeknife: Britain's Secret Agents in Ireland" by Martin Ingram and Greg Harkin is look inside the shadow of human intelligence, detailing the recruitment and handling of informers for operation against the IRA. The Force Research Unit (FRU; also not to be confused with the Mobile Reconnaissance Force (MRF)) is a covert military intelligence unit established by the United Kingdom Ministry of Defense in the Intelligence Corps of the British Army tasked to conduct these operations. The unit was established as an agent handling organization. The FRU primarily spotted for agents in Northern Ireland from where its members recruited and handled agents operationally. This unit was also a parallel unit to 14th Intelligence Company, which has now been absorbed into the current Special Reconnaissance Regiment (SRR). This book deals with FRU operations and handled agents within Republican paramilitary groups with a number of

agents from IRA units who planted bombs and assassinated. These controversial attacks are believed to have taken place involving FRU controlled agents highly placed within the IRA. That is where this book comes in to play. The main agent to have been uncovered was codenamed "Stakeknife". It has been debated as to whether this agent is IRA member Freddie Scappaticci or another, as yet unidentified, IRA member. "Stakeknife" was a member of the IRA's Internal Security Unit- a unit responsible for counter-intelligence, interrogation and court martial of informers within the IRA. This book details how "Stakeknife" was used by the FRU to influence the outcome of investigations conducted by the IRA's Internal Security Unit into the activities of IRA volunteers.

I wish I could give this book 6 or 7 stars, it's simply explosive, even revelatory. Stakeknife is coauthored by Martin Ingram, the pseudonym of a former case officer from an ultra-secret British military intelligence unit referred to as "FRU," for "Force Research Unit," who describes how Britain in it's decades long dirty war with the IRA gave it's agents literally a license to kill. Many spy novelists make too much use of the spying as chess analogy, however in the case of FRU's most prized agent Fred "Scap" Scappaticci this notion is most apt. He was the executive officer (XO) of the IRA's counter-intelligence unit or "knutting squad," as it was responsible for "knutting" or putting bullets into the heads of suspected informants. And it was in this position that his case officer's at FRU allowed him to abduct, brutally torture, interrogate, and execute upwards of 50 other informants of lessor importance than himself, to build his credentials and keep him in place. In addition, to using Scap as the head witch hunter in divisive mole hunts that helped demoralize the organization by feeding paranoia to the paranoid, his other duties included vetting all new recruits to the IRA which meant that the IRA ceased to be a secret organization. Stakeknife is also the story of FRU agent Brian Nelson, who as the head of intelligence for a Protestant terror group at war with the IRA was given intelligence dossier's by his FRU handlers that he used to brief hit teams who then assassinated IRA member's. This "collusion," a type of state sponsored terrorism, previously unheard of in a western democracy demonstrates that the British government was not above using tactics previously thought to be the lone preserve of totalitarian dictatorships and central American death squads.

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