

Heavy lorries get off lightly

FIRMS THAT persistently overload their lorries are getting away with trivial fines. The *New Statesman* has details of recent court cases where eight companies faced a total of 112 summons for overloading: the average fine was under £40. Ten drivers were prosecuted separately from the companies: their average fine was £32. In 1970 the Magistrates' Association recommended that fines should start at

£200 per offence for operators and £100 for drivers.

This week the House of Commons debated whether to raise the maximum weight of heavy lorries from 32.5 tonnes to 38 tonnes. In order to persuade reluctant Tory backbenchers, the government pledged tougher enforcement of the rules on overloading. One measure is to increase the maximum fine from £400 to £1,000. But, as the cases above show, raising the maximum penalty will have no effect.

These cases were given to the *New Statesman* by Devon's county trading standards officer, Ken El-

lis. All the offences were committed by lorries leaving the docks at Exmouth or Teignmouth. Drivers were warned that they were overweight when they were on the docks' weighbridge, which is on private land, so the law does not apply. All the drivers ignored the warnings.

The drivers' attitude clearly demonstrates that overloading fines are seen as just another overhead. One firm was summonsed for over 100 offences, but Devon decided to proceed with only 34 specimen offences. The average fine, given by Exmouth magistrates, was £37.24.

Another firm's vehicle was so overloaded that it would have been over the government's new 38-tonne limit, since it weighed 40 tonnes. The firm was fined a total of £202 on seven charges (average £28.86). The most the firm could have been fined was £2,800.

These cases are not unduly exceptional. During the two months from 9 July to 10 September Devon caught 22 operators with overloaded lorries, making 106 offences in all. The average fine on these was £60.

Mick Hamer

Friends and others

Duncan Campbell concludes his anatomy of Britain's secret services, following the Prime case

Organisation charts for the British secret intelligence agencies shown below have never been made public before. They were obtained from a handbook issued by American intelligence agencies to their own staffs. Of British agencies, only the Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) is publicly identified, with its structure of four directorates set out in the Civil Service Lists sold by HMSO. The others operate under a variety of covers.

MI5, the Security Service, refuses to be identified other than by its code - 'Box 500'. It is referred to in conversation as 'Box' or 'Five'. Employees of MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service, are collectively known as 'Six' in this country and 'the friends' while abroad.

'Five' has six directorates concerned with intelligence and security operations in the United Kingdom. Directorate F is concerned with 'domestic subversion' - largely a euphemism for the study of the British political left and the trade unions. After the 1972 miners' strike, a group of industrial managers with suitable political views and experience was recruited into this directorate.

Directorate K co-ordinates counter-espionage in Britain. It is divided into numbered sections. Thus K7 is responsible for counter-intelligence within the intelligence services themselves (including MI5), while K9 investigates people who unexpectedly resign or retire from sensitive positions. Both these sections face criticism for the Prime debacle. Within sections, individual desks co-ordinate spying on individual targets - for example Plaid Cymru, or the Labour left in London.

Directorate S ('Support') is responsible *inter alia* for MI5's giant computer installation in Mayfair (see NS 5 March). This central computer has 'satellites', co-ordinating information with other agencies and government departments, including one in the MI6 HQ at

Century House in Westminster Bridge Road near Waterloo station.

MI5 still has residual responsibility for security in British colonies. It has, for example, a Security Liaison Officer in Hong Kong. There are also SLOs in Washington, Ottawa and Canberra, linking with their counterparts there.

MI6 has both a 'Chief' and a director to deal with routine administration. SIS activities in South America appear to have no Regional Controller. This is probably a

reflection of American dominance in this field in Latin America - where SIS's main activity is to accept what the 'cousins' (the CIA) offer by way of intelligence exchange. This may have affected the handling of intelligence about the Argentinian invasion of the Falklands.

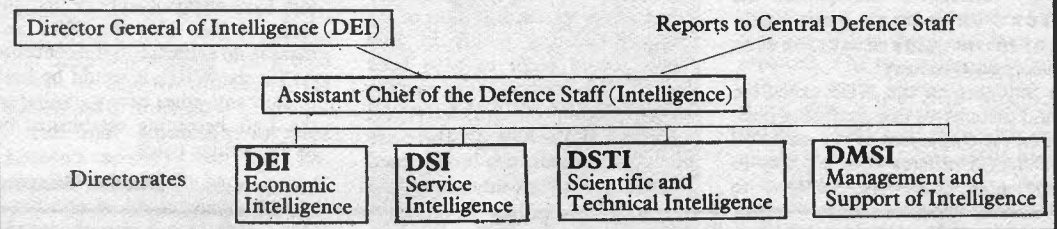
SIS's Directorate of Special Support is responsible for providing the technical paraphernalia of modern spying. Counter-intelligence and Security includes in its function 'aggressive counter-intelligence' - like trying to infiltrate the KGB. Requirements and Production are MI6's 'salesmen', responsi-

ble for discovering the 'needs' of the customers - mainly the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence - and then providing them with the 'finished product'.

The Ministry of Defence, besides hiding much of the secret agencies' budgets, has three directorates responsible for Economic, Scientific and Technical and Military intelligence. A fourth directorate provides military support to other intelligence agencies - including several major 'eavesdropping' posts for GCHQ and the SIS training school at Gosport in Hampshire (which is disguised as an army training camp).

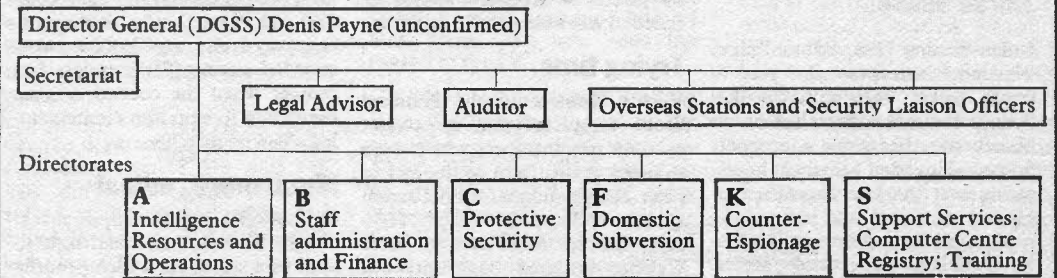
DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE STAFF (DIS)

Headquarters: MoD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1



SECURITY SERVICE ('MI5')

Headquarters: Curzon Street House, Curzon Street, W1



SECRET INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (SIS or 'MI6')

Headquarters: Century House, Westminster Bridge Road, SE1

