

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



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Mr Herman af Trolle
Second Political Division
Utrikesdepartementet
Gustav Adolfs Torg 1
STOCKHOLM

Your reference

Our reference

Date 4 October 1984

Dear Herman,

ARREST OF THE IRISH TRAWLER, THE MARITA ANN

You may be interested in the enclosed background we have received from the FCO on this arrest.

A copy goes to Tom Hanney at the Irish Embassy, who will no doubt let you know if he has any further information.

Yours sincerely,
R M Jackson

R M Jackson
Counsellor

ARREST OF THE IRISH TRAWLER, THE MARITA ANN

1. There has been considerable coverage in the British and Irish press of the interception and seizure on 29 September off the Irish coast of the Co Kerry-based trawler, the Marita Ann, by the Irish Naval Service. Reports vary, but it is clear that a large quantity of arms and ammunition was seized including an armour-piercing Browning heavy machine gun, Heckler and Koch sub-machine guns and rifles, a large number of armalite rifles and more than 100,000 rounds of assorted ammunition. The total has been put at 7-10 tons of munitions, well in excess of that found on the 'Clauda' in 1973. The five members of the crew have been arrested and charged with the unlawful possession of explosives, and with having firearms and ammunition with intent to endanger life. It is believed that the consignment was transhipped from another vessel sailing from the US.

2. This operation comes as a boost to the Irish Security Forces, which have lost a Chief Prison Officer and a Policeman, both victims of terrorist attacks, in the past two months. Dr Garrett Fitzgerald, the Prime Minister said that the capture was significant, commenting 'These guns were being brought into the country to murder Irish people, North and South'. He also said 'There are still people in the US who, failing to comprehend the situation in this country, are willing to give aid to purchase and send arms to murder Irish people, including our police and armed forces'.

3. The Irish Minister of Justice, Mr Noonan said that he was in no doubt that they (the arms) had been bought with money raised by Noraid 'to murder people North and South'.

4. Martin Galvin, Noraid Director has since denied these charges.