



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

17 Grosvenor Place  
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*Mr. McCaffrey*  
*12/11/87*

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*cc PSS*  
*PSS*  
*Mr Nally (file note last para.)*  
*Mr Matthews,*  
*Carrollor A1*  
*Rox.*

9 November 1987

Dear Assistant Secretary

Lunch with Charles Powell, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister

This meeting had been arranged some months ago. I made clear when we met that I did not see us as having any formal business to do in the context of current Anglo-Irish questions. Powell understood clearly that I had nothing official to say, and saw our meeting rather in the context of a personal relationship going back some years.

He made a number of points which are worth recording:

- They are a bit concerned that Robert Armstrong's conciliatory manner may have had the wrong effect in Dublin. If Armstrong gave the impression "that everything will be alright", then this was misleading. If the Convention does not go ahead, said Powell, everything will not be alright. There will in his view be a "sharp" reaction from Mrs Thatcher, and the overall relationship will be affected.
- He stressed, however, several times that there is no question whatsoever of the future of the Agreement being at issue if the Convention does not go ahead. Her commitment to it is total and she will not go back on that. Nor will she give any concessions to the Unionists toward whom she feels continuing anger. In her view they will simply have to work themselves round to a more reasonable frame of mind.
- I enquired about the Eksund arms cargo, and he confirmed that it was Libyan. They are, he said, awaiting fuller reports from the interrogation process, but it seems that, contrary to their initial assessment, the lot was headed for the IRA.

.../

- He asked me to inform Dermot Nally that they expect to travel to Copenhagen the night before the Summit starts (it starts early in the morning). It might, therefore, be worth looking at the night before as possibly the best opportunity for a meeting with the Taoiseach.

Yours sincerely

*Richard Ryan*  
Richard Ryan  
Counsellor