



VC3AJE  
ce + N10

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 December 1985

Dear Bishops,

Thank you for your letter of 10 December and for setting out so clearly the Bishops' impressions of the feelings of the people within their dioceses on the Anglo-Irish Agreement. I am sorry that it has not yet been possible for us to meet to talk about this and I share your hope that I shall be able to meet representatives of the House of Bishops before long. I am glad, however, that in the meantime you have been able to have a useful discussion with Tom King.

I am also glad that you perceive the Agreement as an attempt to meet deep-rooted and highly emotive issues which have divided communities in the past and which have caused immense suffering for people of all political and religious persuasions. This is, of course, exactly what we intended. As Tom King said during the debate in the House of Commons, we do understand and sympathise with the frustration caused by our inability to take people in Northern Ireland fully into our confidence before the Agreement was reached in a way that we would normally wish, because the negotiations between the two Governments had to be confidential. It is our strong hope that people in Northern Ireland will not allow frustration and resentment about the way in which the Agreement was produced, any more than groundless fears that the Agreement in some way undermines the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, to divert their attention from the real benefits which it offers. We believe that the Agreement holds out new hope for peace and stability in Northern Ireland. We hope that, in time, all sections of the

888

community will take advantage of the opportunities which it provides for lasting reconciliation between them.

You suggested that the confidence of the majority community in the Agreement could be increased if their elected representatives were empowered to contribute to the Intergovernmental Conference procedure. The problem with that is that the Intergovernmental Conference is a conference between Governments. We shall of course take account, both in our discussions with the Irish Government and in our decision-making, of the views of the majority community. But the majority population already have many channels through which to put their views to the Government. The fifteen Unionist Members of the United Kingdom Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and unionist district councillors are important sources of advice, of which the Government takes careful heed. Tom King and his colleagues at the Northern Ireland Office have made every effort to encourage people of the unionist tradition to put their views forward, and to take account of them. They will continue to do so.

You proposed that ways should be investigated of involving each of the communities in Northern Ireland in a sharing of responsibility for the running of the affairs of the Province. Tom King remains ready to explore ways in which the representatives of both sides of the community could assume a greater degree of responsibility for the affairs of Northern Ireland than they have at present. Some form of devolved government which would be widely accepted across the community in Northern Ireland would permit a sharing of responsibility such as you describe. We shall continue to seek ways of bringing that about. One of the effects of such a devolved government would, of course, be to remove from the ambit of the Intergovernmental Conference those subjects which were the responsibility of the devolved government.

You also mentioned the possibility of making more use of Bills to legislate for Northern Ireland. At present, Order

in Council procedure is used because the routine extension of Bills to Northern Ireland would, in practice, either present formidable drafting difficulties or narrow the range of subjects which is available for devolution to the Northern Ireland Assembly. Certainly Parliament could not handle a large number of Bills dealing with Northern Ireland issues alone. But the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland compensates for this by an exhaustive consultation process within and outside Northern Ireland before draft Orders are brought to the House for decision. We remain ready to listen to suggestions as to how these procedures could be improved, just as we are ready to listen to the representations of all the people of Northern Ireland on any matter concerning Northern Ireland's affairs.

I hope you and the other members of the House of Bishops will find that, in time, all sections of the community will be ready to set aside their differences and join with you in working for peace and reconciliation, secure in the knowledge that the Government listens to and respects the views of both traditions in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

His Grace The Archbishop of Armagh

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

Charles Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1

18<sup>th</sup> December 1985

Dear Charles,

We agreed that I would send you a draft letter by today for the Prime Minister to send in reply to the letter of 10 December from the Archbishop of Armagh.

I attach a draft which deals with the points he raises.

Yours Sincerely

Neil Ward

N D WARD

Enc

with CSP?

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

<p>To</p> <p>His Grace the Archbishop of Armagh The See House Cathedral Close ARMAGH Co Antrim BT16 7EE</p> <p>(Full Postal Address)</p>	<p>Enclosures</p> <p><i>KEATJE</i></p>	<p>Copies to be sent to</p> <p>(Full Address, if Necessary)</p>
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LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PRIME MINISTER  
(Name of Signatory)

Thank you for your letter of 10 December and for setting out so clearly the Bishops' impressions of the feelings of the people within their dioceses on the Anglo-Irish Agreement. I am sorry that it has not yet been possible for us to meet to ~~discuss~~ <sup>talk about</sup> this ~~subject~~ and I share your hope that I ~~will~~ <sup>shall</sup> be able to meet representatives of the House of Bishops ~~at a later date~~ <sup>before long</sup>. I am glad, however, that in the meantime you have been able to have a useful discussion with Tom King ~~about the issues involved~~.

I am also glad that you perceive the Agreement as an attempt to meet deep-rooted and highly emotive issues which have divided communities in the past and which have caused immense suffering for people of all political and religious persuasions. This is, of course, exactly what we intended. ~~I am sorry that you consider that, because the representatives of the majority were not taken fully into our confidence~~

/...


~~during the negotiations which led to the Agreement, opposition to it~~  
~~is widespread in the majority community.~~ As Tom King said during the  
debate in the House of Commons, we do understand and sympathise with  
the frustration that this caused, ~~but it was simply not possible to~~  
take people in Northern Ireland ~~into~~ <sup>by our inability to</sup> fully <sup>into our confidence</sup> ~~consultation~~ before the  
Agreement was reached in a way that we would normally wish, because  
the negotiations between the two Governments had to be confidential.  
~~Nevertheless we did seek to keep party leaders in focus of the~~  
~~general framework of the Agreement, but regretfully certain leaders~~  
~~refused to come and speak to Tom King.~~ It is our ~~fervent~~ <sup>strong</sup> hope that  
people in Northern Ireland will not allow frustration and resentment  
about the way in which the Agreement was produced, any more than  
groundless fears that the Agreement in some way undermines the  
constitutional status of Northern Ireland, to divert their attention  
from the real benefits which it offers. We believe that the Agreement  
~~offers~~ <sup>holds out</sup> new hope for peace and stability in Northern Ireland, and we  
hope that, in time, all sections of the community will take advantage  
of the opportunities which it provides for lasting reconciliation  
between them.

You suggested that the confidence of the majority community in the  
Agreement could be increased if their elected representatives were  
empowered to contribute to the Intergovernmental Conference procedure.  
<sup>The problem is that in fact,</sup>  
The Intergovernmental Conference, ~~however~~ <sup>shall</sup> is a Conference between  
Governments. We ~~will~~ <sup>shall</sup> of course take account, both in our discussions  
with the Irish Government and in our decision-making, of the views of  
the majority community. But the majority population already have many  
channels through which to put their views to the Government. The  
fifteen Unionist Members of the United Kingdom Parliament, the  
Northern Ireland Assembly, and unionist district councillors are  
important sources of advice, of which the Government takes careful  
heed. Tom King and his colleagues at the Northern Ireland Office  
have made every effort to encourage people of the unionist tradition

to put their views forward, and to take account of them. They will continue to do so.

proposed that ways should be investigated of involving each of the communities in Northern Ireland in a sharing of responsibility for the running of the affairs of the Province. Tom King remains ready to explore ways in which the representatives of both sides of the community could assume a greater degree of responsibility for the affairs of Northern Ireland than they have at present. Some form of devolved government which would be widely accepted across the community in Northern Ireland would permit a sharing of responsibility such as you describe. We <sup>shall</sup> will continue to seek ways of bringing that about. One of the effects of such a devolved government would, of course, be to remove from the ambit of the Intergovernmental Conference those subjects which were the responsibility of the devolved government. ~~But as you will appreciate, it is difficult to make progress when the parties are not as willing to talk about these matters to Tom King as he is to them.~~

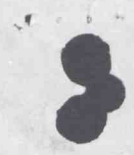
You also mentioned the possibility of making more use of Bills to legislate for Northern Ireland. At present, Order in Council procedure is used because the routine extension of Bills to Northern Ireland would, in practice, either present formidable drafting difficulties or narrow the range of subjects which is available for devolution to the Northern Ireland Assembly. Certainly Parliament <sup>could not</sup> ~~does not have the~~ ~~capacity~~ to handle a large number of Bills dealing with Northern Ireland issues alone. But the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland compensates for this by an exhaustive consultation process within and outside Northern Ireland before draft Orders are brought to the House for decision. We remain ready to listen to suggestions as to how these procedures could be improved, just as we are ready to listen to the representations of all the people of Northern Ireland on any matter concerning Northern Ireland's affairs.



I hope you and the other members of the House of Bishops will find that, in time, all sections of the community will be ready to set aside their differences and join with you in working for peace and reconciliation, secure in the knowledge that the Government listens to and respects the views of both traditions in Northern Ireland.

edm.





The See House,  
Cathedral Close,  
Armagh,  
Co. Armagh, BT61 7EE.

10th December, 1985.

Dear Prime Minister,

I write to thank you for your response to the request of the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland that they should be allowed to put to you in person their reactions to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Unfortunately I cannot come to London to meet you as my doctor feels it would be most unwise for me to travel at this time owing to a recent illness. I do, however, hope that you will be willing to receive representatives of the House of Bishops at a later date.

If I had been able to visit you on 12th December I would have hoped to discuss the Anglo-Irish Agreement within the over-all context of the problems of Ireland, north and south. As you will know membership of the Church of Ireland is contained in both Northern Ireland and the Republic and because of this fact I feel the House of Bishops is uniquely placed to appreciate the feelings of their people in both jurisdictions.

In the course of their pastoral responsibilities the bishops have become conscious of various opinions being expressed within their dioceses and I feel that you should be aware of the impressions we have gained over the last few weeks:

1. There is a great yearning for peace and stability throughout Ireland and a repugnance on the part of the vast majority of people to violence as a means of political influence.
2. Within Northern Ireland the people have endured with great fortitude over 16 years of violence, terrorism and upheaval which have effected every strata of society.
3. The Anglo-Irish Agreement is an attempt to meet deep-rooted and highly emotive issues which have divided communities in the past and which have caused immense suffering for people of all political and religious persuasions.

/OVER

4. The Anglo-Irish Agreement has met opposition within Northern Ireland on the grounds that a majority of people feel decisions regarding their future have been taken without their elected representatives being allowed to influence in any real manner the outcome of pre-Agreement discussions.
5. The manner in which the Agreement was produced has caused genuine apprehension and unease which has permitted speculation that future developments will disenfranchise a majority of people in Northern Ireland from any realistic part in the running of the Province.
6. I would emphasise that the feelings of great frustration, reservation and opposition to the Agreement are not confined to a group of people in Northern Ireland but are reflected across a wide spectrum and include many who would see themselves as genuine moderates.

I recognise that membership of the United Kingdom involves the sovereignty of Parliament but I feel that in this case there has been such an absence of sensitivity to the feelings of a majority of people in Northern Ireland that the necessary element of consent by those governed is so lacking at present that unless certain changes are made in the out-working of the Anglo-Irish Agreement this Province will be subjected to further periods of unease, violence and instability.

I would therefore suggest:

1. Some way is now found to permit a genuine in-put by elected representatives of the majority community in Northern Ireland in the Governmental Conference procedure outlined in this Agreement.
2. Matters concerning the affairs of Northern Ireland should be dealt with in the House of Commons by a Bill procedure rather than by Order in Council. This policy would have long-reaching effects in convincing people here that their problems were being genuinely and openly analysed by elected representatives.
3. That ways are investigated of involving each of the communities in Northern Ireland in a sharing of responsibility for the running of the affairs of the Province which will allow consent on the part of those governed to be encouraged.

/OVER

May I assure you that it has always been and will continue to be the policy of the House of Bishops to work individually in the dioceses and collectively as a House for reconciliation, justice and greater understanding throughout Ireland.

We are remembering in our prayers and pastoral responsibilities all those charged with leadership at this time.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

+ *John Armagh!*

+JOHN ARMAGH

John W. Armstrong,  
Archbishop and Primate

on behalf of the House of Bishops  
of the Church of Ireland.



22 Feb Jan 3 p.m.

- 1. MR. POWELL ✓
- 2. MRS. RICHARDS
- 3. DIARY MEETING FOLDER

MEET  
 He will ring on Friday -  
 but 22 January looks  
 all right. It'll be less  
 than 12 con

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

I have agreed with the Bishop of Clogher that the Prime Minister will hold a meeting with representatives of the House of Bishops. This would be a separate exercise from the three lunch-time sessions which are being set up, and to which a number of Bishops have already been invited. The Bishop had informed me that his Primate had taken the Prime Minister's letter of 20 December to mean that she was proposing such a separate meeting; I said I thought there had been a misunderstanding about this, but that the meetings already agreed would offer some Bishops an early opportunity to put their views to the Prime Minister, and that we would arrange the further meeting with the House of Bishops itself when we could. The Archbishop would wish to nominate the representatives to attend. I said the maximum number would be 12. I also said the Prime Minister would be taking stock of her engagements for the next few months in the New Year, and that we would go back to the Bishop when she had done so. He pressed me when this would be, and urged that it be before 12/13 January. I said we would do what we could. He is of course coming to the meeting on 15 January.

The Bishop said, in view of all this, he hoped that the meeting of the House of Bishops on Thursday would agree that the individual Bishops who had already been invited to meet the Prime Minister should accept those invitations.

The Bishop's telephone number is 03655-21265.

MAA

(Mark Addison)

31 December 1985

1  
CBI



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
WHITEHALL  
LONDON SW1A 2AZ

Prime Minister  
Agree to go ahead  
see the Presbyterians & Yes

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

Methodists, but leave the  
Church of Ireland  
bishops to be included Yes  
in a later occasion? (They want a  
separate meeting, but Mr King is  
already seeing them on 16 December)

10 December 1985

Dear Mr Powell, CJP  
10/12

Thank you for your letter of 4 December enclosing one from the Secretary-General of the Anglican Consultative Council about a possible meeting between the Church of Ireland Bishops and the Prime Minister.

Once the Prime Minister had agreed to Mr King's suggestion that she should meet the leaders of the three Protestant churches in Northern Ireland (my letter of 29 November refers), we contacted the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the President of the Methodist Conference in Ireland and the Archbishop of Armagh (Church of Ireland). The first two accepted the offer of a meeting on 12 December, and I am sending you briefing for this. The Archbishop, after consulting the House of Bishops, declined the invitation.

The reasons for not accepting, given to us by the Archbishop, were that he is in poor health and had been given medical advice not to make the journey to London; and the Bishops had decided that if the Archbishop could not go, none of them would go in his place. When we received your clearance to extend attendance at the meeting so as to permit the Moderator and the President to be accompanied by their respective General Secretaries, we informed the Bishop of Clogher (who is Convenor of the House of Bishops) of this change in the hope that they might reconsider. But their position remains the same.

While the Archbishop's health is clearly a major factor in their decision, we suspect that the Bishops are also unwilling to be seen attending the same meeting as the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church. As you know, from his letter to the Prime Minister which you sent to me on 4 December (and I shall reply separately), the moderator is strongly opposed to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The Bishops, while expressing considerable unease about the effects of the announcement of the Agreement, are more likely to want to approach it cautiously, seeking clarification from, and offering constructive advice to, both Governments. This is the sense, both of the statement issued by the House of Bishops on 20 November (attached to the Secretary General's letter to No 10) and of a conversation my Belfast Opposite number had with the Archbishop last week.



There are two other considerations. First, the Bishops (including the Archbishop) will be meeting Mr King in Belfast on Monday 16 December, at their request. Second, in preparing a response to your request for lists of leading figures from Northern Ireland who could be invited in groups to meet the Prime Minister, we have included three of the most influential Church of Ireland Bishops whose dioceses cover Northern Ireland (Dr McMullen, Dr Mehaffey and Dr Eames). These lists are being considered by the Secretary of State and I hope to let you have them during the next day or two.

Accordingly, and given the other commitments of the Prime Minister to see groups from Northern Ireland, Mr King suggests that the Prime Minister should not agree to the House of Bishop's request at present. If, following his meeting on 16 December, Mr King changes ... his view, I will be in touch. Meanwhile, I attach a draft reply to the Secretary-General of the Anglican Consultative Council. If the matter is raised again by this route and if Mr King's advice remains the same, you could point to the involvement of some of the Northern Bishops at any lunches which may have been arranged.

Yours Sincerely  
 Bowdler

PP N D WARD



BEMAAJ

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

To	Enclosures	Copies to be sent to
<p>The Rev Canon Samuel Van Culin</p> <p>Secretary General</p> <p>Anglican Consultative Council</p> <p>14 Great Peter Street</p> <p>LONDON</p> <p>SW1P 3NQ</p> <p>(Full Postal Address)</p>		<p>(Full Address, if Necessary)</p>

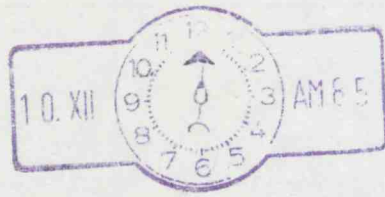
LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PS/PRIME MINISTER  
(Name of Signatory)

Thank you for your letter of 30 November about the possibility of a meeting between the Church of Ireland Bishops and the Prime Minister, which Robin Catford has passed to me.

The Prime Minister had earlier received requests for meetings from the leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and of the Methodist Church in Ireland. An invitation was extended to the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist President, as well as to the Archbishop of Armagh, to meet the Prime Minister later this week. The Archbishop was unable to accept it, I understand because of poor health, and the meeting will take place without representation from the Church of Ireland.

I know a number of the Bishops are seeing the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in Belfast on Monday 16 December. Perhaps the matter could be considered again in the light of the outcome of that meeting and of any other opportunities that may have arisen for the Government to be made aware of opinion in the Church of Ireland.

IRELAND: Relations : Pt 13



CR

MR POWELL

cc Mrs Ryder

HOUSE OF BISHOPS

BF1 I have now agreed an alternative date  
with Bishop McMullan. The meeting  
will be on Wednesday 26 February at  
3 p.m. I said the maximum <sup>not</sup> representatives  
to come would be 8 and the Bishop will be  
coming back to us with names in due course.

MEB

9 January 1986



*file No*

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

9 January 1986

As you know, we have the Prime Minister's lunch with Northern Ireland representatives on 15 January. We have also now arranged for the Prime Minister to see the Church of Ireland Bishops on Wednesday, 16 February at 1500 hours.

*N* It would be helpful to have briefing for the lunch by 13 April at 1600 hours; and for the meeting with the Bishops by 14 February at 1600 hours.

CHARLES POWELL

Neil Ward, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

*sv*



M.E.A  
1500  
- 1600

Feb 19<sup>or</sup>

10 DOWNING STREET

M.A.H.

CR

25<sup>CR</sup>

Can you offer me 2;  
then I'll ring him.

Now

rang to <sup>M.A.H.</sup>

say they want a

date after 7

February so tell

the new Pinnett

can send.

Ed. you please  
ring him & offer a  
choice of 2. CDP



File PA

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

24 December 1985

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 19 December.

The Prime Minister has in fact now written to your Primate, the Archbishop of Armagh. Her letter was dated 20 December and I think it must have crossed in the post with yours.

The Prime Minister is glad to hear that you felt the meeting with Tom King was valuable.

(Mark Addison)

The Rt. Rev. Gordon McMullan.

GA

The Church of Ireland

House of Bishops

R23/12

Secretary:

The Rt. Rev. Gordon McMullan, Ph.D.,  
Bishop of Clogher,  
The See House,  
Fivemiletown,  
Co. Tyrone, N. Ireland.  
Tel. (STD Code 03655) 21265.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
10 Downing Street,  
London.

CE - 1 pm, and the letter 5/1.  
MWB 23/12

19<sup>TH</sup> December 1985.

Dear Prime Minister,

Some time ago the Church of Ireland House of Bishops requested the privilege of a meeting with you to discuss the Anglo Irish Agreement and Conference. You were kind enough to invite our Primate, the Most Rev. Dr. John Armstrong, to accompany other Church leaders at a recent meeting and this had to be postponed because of the Archbishop's illness.

ATTACHED

At that time a letter was sent to you setting out some of the fears associated with the Agreement but also presenting a number of positive suggestions. It is obviously too soon to expect a detailed response to some of the points raised, but on behalf of the House of Bishops I again ask you to grant representatives of the Bishops an early interview.

Earlier this week, 16<sup>TH</sup>, representatives of the House met the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt. Hon. Tom King, M.P., and had a valuable discussion. This we appreciated and at the same time expressed our hope that we could have an early opportunity of meeting the Prime Minister.

We do appreciate the heavy demands on your time but also hope you will sympathetically consider our request particularly

as it comes from a body of churchmen who have been moderate and constructive in public utterances.

Every good wish, especially at this Christmas season.

Yours sincerely,

+ Gordon Logher.

Secretary, Church of Ireland House of Bishops.

IRELAND  
RELATIONS  
97779



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# The Church of Ireland

## House of Bishops

ce NW

Secretary:

The Rt. Rev. Gordon McMullan, Ph.D.,  
Bishop of Clogher,  
The See House,  
Fivemiletown,  
Co. Tyrone, N. Ireland.  
Tel. (STD Code 03655) 21265.

Mark Addison, Esq.,  
Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary,  
10 Downing Street,  
London.

14<sup>th</sup> February 1986.

Dear Mr. Addison,

As agreed in our recent telephone conversation I here list the names of the Church of Ireland group who will be at the meeting with the Prime Minister in 10 Downing Street, on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1986, at 3.00pm.

Here are the persons:

1. The Most Rev. Robert Eames, Archbishop of Armagh.
  2. The Most Rev. Donald Caird, Archbishop of Dublin.
  3. The Most Rev. Walton Empey, Bishop of Meath.
  4. The Rt. Rev. Gordon McMullan, Bishop of Clogher.
  5. The Rt. Rev. Samuel Poyntz, Bishop of Cork.
  6. The Rt. Rev. James McHaffey, Bishop of Derry.
  7. The Rt. Rev. William McCaffin, Bishop of Connor.
  8. Mr. Barry Seane
  9. Mr. Binstow Stevenson
- } Honorary Lay Secretaries of Church of Ireland General Synod.

I would mention that 1, 4, 6, are Bishops of cross-border dioceses; 2, 3, 5, are Bishops of dioceses in the Republic of Ireland; 7 is a Bishop with a diocese in Northern Ireland though Archbishop Eames was until last week Bishop of Down, a northern diocese. One of the laymen is from the Republic of Ireland and one from Northern Ireland.

May we also have permission for the Church of Ireland Press Officer, Mrs. Elizabeth Harries, to enter to confer with our group at "No 10" after our meeting with the Prime Minister so that

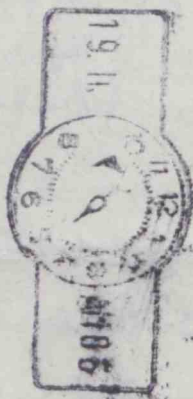
P.T.O.

we may word a short statement for press release that evening. This would probably be of a general nature and your Press Officer might wish to liaise with us at that time.

Finally to confirm your guidelines that we do not require any documentation to gain admission to Downing Street and to "No. 10".

Thank you for all your help in these arrangements.

Yours sincerely,  
+ Gordon Blagden  
Secretary, House of Bishops.





10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

11 December 1985

I am writing to thank you for your letter of 10 December to the Prime Minister. I shall draw it to her attention as soon as possible, and I am sure that she will wish to reply personally.

(C. D. POWELL)

The Most Reverend The Archbishop of Armagh

Archbishop of ARMAGH

16/12



ech

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

11 December 1985

I now enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from the Archbishop of Armagh. I should be grateful for an early and full draft reply on the points which he raises. I suggest that you should let me have this by 5 p.m. on 16 December.

(Charles Powell)

Neil Ward, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

ech



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

11 December 1985

Thank you for your letter of 30 November about the possibility of a meeting between the Church of Ireland Bishops and the Prime Minister, which Robin Catford has passed to me.

The Prime Minister had earlier received requests for meetings from the leaders of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and of the Methodist Church in Ireland. An invitation was extended to the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist President, as well as to the Archbishop of Armagh, to meet the Prime Minister later this week. The Archbishop was unable to accept it, I understand because of poor health, and the meeting will take place without representation from the Church of Ireland.

I know a number of the Bishops are seeing the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in Belfast on Monday 16 December. Perhaps the matter could be considered again in the light of the outcome of that meeting and of any other opportunities that may have arisen for the Government to be made aware of opinion in the Church of Ireland.

(C.D. Powell)

The Revd. Canon Samuel Van Culin

do



Sam

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 December 1985

9F  
I think you  
might keep this?  
J 12/12

Thank you for your letter of 10 December about the Prime Minister's meeting with Northern Ireland Church leaders.

The Prime Minister is content with what Mr. King proposes and I have despatched the draft letter which you sent me.

(C.D. Powell)

Neil Ward, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office

h

Canon van CULIN file

ca

9/12



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

Ack 4 December 1985

I enclose a copy of a letter to No.10 from the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council conveying the desire of the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland for a meeting with the Prime Minister.

I am not quite sure whether you envisage that Church of Ireland Bishops should be part of the delegation of Church leaders which we are arranging for the Prime Minister to see. I should be grateful for very early advice and a draft reply.

(Charles Powell)

Neil Ward, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

SPW



Brief  
replied  
CSP

10 DOWNING STREET

CAROLINE

6/12

Please see the attached letter from the Northern Ireland Office recommending that the Prime Minister should see the Leaders of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches and the Church of Ireland as soon as possible.

The Prime Minister attaches great importance to doing this and I should be grateful if you could find one hour in the diary before Christmas. Please let the Northern Ireland Office (Neil Ward) know when you have set a time.

CSP

CHARLES

1 December 1985

arranged for 1730.  
on Thursday 12 Dec.  
+ general Secs of  
Church leaders.

CR.



CONFIDENTIAL



SPW

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

1 December 1985

Thank you for your letter of 29 November conveying the Northern Ireland Secretary's recommendation that the Prime Minister should meet the leaders of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in Ireland and of the Church of Ireland.

The Prime Minister is ready to do this and Mrs. Ryder will be in touch shortly to propose a time.

(C. D. POWELL)

Neil Ward, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

CONFIDENTIAL