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W. R. Holman

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SECURE FAX # 37

14 APRIL 1994

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
FOR A/SEC O HUITGINN FROM AMBASSADOR

RE: VISIT OF DUP LEADER TO WASHINGTON

Further to Mr Collins report, the following additional points, gleaned late last evening, may be of interest:

(a) asked by Congressman Richie Neal, in the course of the meeting with the Speaker and four colleagues, if he felt the British were trying to slip away from Northern Ireland, Dr Paisley said he believed they were. However, he added caustically that the position would be otherwise if oil had been found in the North!;

(b) Dr Paisley later argued that the British would be wary of holding a referendum in the North because of the precedent for Scotland and Wales - Northern Ireland, he said, was the only part of the U.K. which firmly wished to stay within the Kingdom; and

(c) to the Speaker's great surprise, Peter Robinson seemed to base his argument against the Joint Declaration on the grounds that it undermined the Anglo-Irish Agreement. His specific point (the Speaker thought, though the reasoning was hard to follow) was that, under the Agreement, Northern Ireland was the only unit to which the consent requirement applied; this had been undermined by the reference in the Declaration to self-determination applying to the people of the island as a whole.

END