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*Mr Warkins*  
*for file*  
*24/3*  
*Mr Quinn*  
*Mr [unclear]*

Dear William,

US/ 'Peace Envoy': Letter from The Reverend Ian Paisley

Thank you for your letter of 11 March, enclosing a letter to the Prime Minister from the Reverend Ian Paisley. I enclose a draft reply from the Prime Minister, which has been cleared with the Northern Ireland Office.

I am copying this letter and its enclosure to Jonathan Rodell in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours ever,  
Christopher Prentice

UNDER/ SEC 1115/3  
24 MAR 1993  
CENT SEC

(C N R Prentice)  
Private Secretary

William Chapman Esq  
10 Downing Street

→ CC: PS/sqs (R)  
PS/pus (L+B)  
PS/H. Bell  
Mr. Thomas  
Mr. Bell  
Mr. Cooke.

Amcc 79012

Draft letter from the Prime Minister

TO: Rev Ian Paisley MP

Thank you for your letter of 9 March, with which you enclosed letters from Mr John Dinsdale and Mr John Mee about the idea that the US Administration might send a "peace envoy" to Northern Ireland, the role of the Irish Government, and the future of Northern Ireland.

I talked about Northern Ireland to President Clinton in Washington last month. I welcome understanding and support from the United States. Examples have been the condemnation of terrorist violence by successive US Administrations, action taken in the United States to prevent the export of arms for terrorist use in Northern Ireland, the contributions agreed by the US Congress to the International Fund for Ireland and the the widespread support last year in the United States for the political talks.

Such constructive help on Northern Ireland remains welcome. I see no role for a peace envoy and the President is aware of this. But there is nothing unusual about visits to Northern Ireland by US politicians, church leaders, businessmen and others. Indeed, we encourage visitors from all over the world to come and test the myths against the reality.

I believe that the Irish Government have an important role in progress to a shared understanding of constitutional issues consistent with the principle that Northern Ireland's status as a part of the United Kingdom will not change without the consent of a majority of the people who live there. We need to continue efforts to reach an agreement which will not prejudice any group's essential political interests.