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John

I have not passed this on to Trimble as I thought it would only give him the opportunity to ask us to do more and would be better left until he called us.



British Embassy  
Washington

30 September 1997

Philip  
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From The Minister

Dear Philip,

#### VISIT TO US BY ULSTER UNIONISTS

1. Thank you for your letter of 30 September to Anthony Caryl about David Trimble's visit to Washington next week.
2. I am afraid Mr Trimble must be realistic. There is no chance of a separate meeting with the President. Even Governors of American States (37 of which have populations larger than Ulster) do not expect a meeting with the President when they happen to be in Washington. So Mr Trimble would be most unwise to make such a meeting *sine qua non* of his entire visit to the US.
3. However, as Mr Trimble knows, the NSC have guaranteed a meeting with Berger (which would be excellent). Even better, the NSC are working on a Presidential drop-by (the cherry on the cake). The best way to bring this about would be for Mr Trimble (and his party colleagues) to keep quiet about the possibility. Conversely, the best way to dash their hopes is to share their hopes with the press.
4. As you asked, we have spoken to the NSC. Larry Butler repeated that the NSC had requested a drop-by from the Oval office schedulers; nothing could be guaranteed but everything possible was being done. There would be no point in anyone picking up the 'phone and speaking to Berger: Berger was already fully on board. But drop-bys were nearly always arranged at the last moment. It would be another couple of days before they had any firm news.
5. Our understanding of Mr Trimble's mood (from the Ulster Unionists' office here, also in touch with their leader) is that he is happy to come as long as a drop-by meeting has not been ruled out. That clearly remains the case.

Yours sincerely  
Stephen

S J L Wright