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FROM: M T H MAXWELL
AS CENT SEC
3 MARCH 1995

cc Mr Gibson, DED
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Bramley - B
Mr Todd, IFI
Mr Gordon, RID, FCO - B
Mr Alexander, NIB
Sir Alistair Hunter,
New York
Ms Michison, HME Washington
Mrs McAuley

Mr T...
Mr...
Mr...
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Mr...
Mr...

TO: MR WESTMACOTT, HME WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON TRADE AND INVESTMENT CONFERENCE: MEDIA PLAN

1. Thank you for copying to me your minute of 2 March to Miss Garrett about the proposed plan for handling the media in the run up to the Washington Trade and Investment Conference.
2. Could I firstly make a plea that correspondence about any aspect of the Washington Conference be addressed to me. While Jill and the Information Service were responsible for drawing up the media plan Central Secretariat is responsible for co-ordinating the arrangements for the Conference, and the issues which you raise in your minute go well beyond the responsibilities of the Information Service.
3. Turning to those issues a primary aim of the Conference, as seen from Belfast, will be to portray it as part of the Government's immediate political objective of embedding the peace process, and putting forward a positive image of Northern Ireland. The Americans too have a political agenda: the fact that the plenary session is to be addressed exclusively by the most senior American politicians demonstrates their clear intention to use what they claim is an essentially economic conference to achieve internal US political objectives. The Irish will also have their own political objectives.

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4. Within this broad political agenda, however, our aims will be:
- (i) to cultivate relationships with those industrialists who are, or are likely to be, interested in investment in Northern Ireland; and
 - (ii) to develop trade relationships between US and NI businesses.

We also have secondary objectives relating to tourism, technology exchange and training opportunities.

5. On your further thoughts:
- (a) on the question of tax incentives, our Secretary of State did make representations to the Chancellor just before the Budget statement about improving the regime of tax incentives to businesses wishing to locate in Northern Ireland. These representations fell on stony ground. We will, however, continue to make the case; and
 - (b) we have already made contacts with the CBI (NI), Chamber of Commerce etc about their role in the Washington Conference. Our understanding here is that they will be involved as part of the panel in a "break out" session on investment opportunities, as will a trade union representative.

6. On the question of Ministerial visits to the US I very much agree with the thought that the itineraries and aims of such visits need to be clear and targeted. With this in mind, SIL (Mr Bramley and Mr Margetts) have been tasked with drawing up a

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strategic plan, to be cleared by Michael Ancram's Information Management Committee, for visits to the US by Ministers in the run up to the Conference.

[signed: MTHM]

M T H MAXWELL

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