

RESTRICTED



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 Novmeber 1985

Dear Jim,

PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN THE DEBATE ON THE  
ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT

I enclose a further revise of the Prime Minister's speech in the Debate on the Anglo-Irish Agreement next week. Further revision will be needed to take account of discussion at Cabinet this morning and at the subsequent informal meeting of Ministers. It would be helpful to have comments and contributions by lunch-time on Saturday.

I am sending a copy of this letter and enclosure to Len Appleyard.

*Yours sincerely*  
*C.D. Powell*

(C.D. Powell)

Jim Daniell, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

SP1AFD

DRAFT SPEECH FOR THE PRIME MINISTER TO OPEN THE DEBATE

ON NORTHERN IRELAND

MR. SPEAKER, SINCE 1969, [ ] PEOPLE HAVE LOST THEIR  
LIVES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AS A RESULT OF  
TERRORISM, [ ] OF THEM MEMBERS OF THE  
SECURITY FORCES.

THAT IS THE STARK BACKGROUND TO TODAY'S  
DEBATE.

WHATEVER THE DIFFERENCES WHICH MAY EMERGE IN  
OUR DEBATE WE SHALL ALL BE UNITED IN OUR  
HORROR AT THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE AND OUR  
DETESTATION OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE.

WE SHALL ALL BE UNITED IN OUR DEEP SYMPATHY  
FOR THE THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES WHOSE LIVES  
HAVE BEEN DARKENED BY THE SHADOW OF THE  
GUNMAN.

AND WE SHALL ALL BE UNITED IN OUR ADMIRATION

FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE SECURITY FORCES  
SO MANY OF WHOM HAVE PAID THE PRICE OF  
FREEDOM WITH THEIR LIVES.

ON ALL THIS WE SHALL BE UNITED.

BUT IT HAS BEEN APPARENT IN RECENT WEEKS THAT  
ANY INITIATIVE, HOWEVER MODEST, TO BRING THE  
PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND CLOSER TOGETHER  
WOULD RAISE ALARMS AND FEARS ROOTED DEEP IN  
ITS TROUBLED PAST.

I UNDERSTAND THESE ALARMS AND FEARS, ALTHOUGH  
I DO NOT BELIEVE THEM TO BE JUSTIFIED.

FACED WITH ALL THAT WE HAVE SEEN IN THE LAST SIXTEEN  
YEARS, IT WAS NOT ENOUGH FOR THE GOVERNMENT

TO RELY SOLELY UPON THE SECURITY FORCES,  
VALIANT THOUGH THEY ARE, TO CONTAIN AND  
RESIST THE TIDE OF VIOLENCE.

MR. SPEAKER, THERE CAN BE NO SUCH THING AS AN  
ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE, WHETHER IN  
NORTHERN IRELAND OR ELSEWHERE IN THE UNITED  
KINGDOM.

THE GOVERNMENT OWES A DUTY TO THE SECURITY FORCES AND  
TO THE LAW ABIDING PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND  
TO DO EVERYTHING WITHIN ITS POWER TO STAMP  
OUT TERRORISM.

NOT BY GIVING INTO THE TERRORIST, NOT BY  
GIVING HIM A SINGLE INCH.

THE REACTION OF THE TERRORISTS TO THE

AGREEMENT WHICH HAS BEEN REACHED IS THE  
CLEAREST POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATION THAT WE HAVE  
DONE NO SUCH THING.

THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM IS GREATLY WEAKENED IF THE  
COMMUNITY IS DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF.  
AND IT IS GREATLY STRENGTHENED IF ALL PEOPLE  
COMMITTED TO DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW  
CAN JOIN TOGETHER AGAINST THE MEN OF  
VIOLENCE.

FOR TOO MANY YEARS WE HAVE FAILED TO LIGHT THE BEACON  
OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

AT THE HEART OF THAT FAILURE HAS BEEN A  
FAILURE TO RECONCILE THE TWO COMMUNITIES IN

NORTHERN IRELAND.

ON THE ONE HAND THE UNIONIST COMMUNITY, FIRMLY LOYAL TO

THE CROWN AND TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THEY REPRESENT A PROUD TRADITION OF DEVOTION

TO THE UNION WHICH EVERYONE IN THESE ISLANDS

SHOULD RESPECT - AND WHICH THIS AGREEMENT

DOES RESPECT.

THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO FEEL SECURE ABOUT

NORTHERN IRELAND'S POSITION IN THE UNITED

KINGDOM.

THIS AGREEMENT, BY REINFORCING THE PRINCIPLE

OF CONSENT, SHOULD MAKE THEM FEEL MORE

SECURE, NOT ONLY TODAY BUT IN THE FUTURE TOO.

THEY HAVE THE ASSURANCE THAT NEITHER A

BRITISH GOVERNMENT NOR AN IRISH GOVERNMENT  
WILL TRY TO FORCE UNIONISTS INTO NEW  
CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AGAINST THEIR  
WILL.

ON THE OTHER HAND IS THE NATIONALIST COMMUNITY, WHO  
THINK OF THEMSELVES AS IRISH IN TERMS OF  
THEIR IDENTITY, THEIR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL  
TRADITIONS AND THEIR POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS.  
THIS HOUSE CAN RESPECT THEIR IDENTITY TOO -  
AND THEIR ASPIRATIONS, EVEN THOUGH WE MAY NOT  
SEE THE PROSPECT OF THEIR BEING FULFILLED.

IT IS RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THESE TWO COMMUNITIES AS  
THE ONLY LASTING WAY TO PUT AN END TO THE

VIOLENCE THAT IS THE GOAL OF THIS AGREEMENT.

WHAT THE AGREEMENT DOES

MR. SPEAKER, I PROPOSE FIRST TO DRAW THE HOUSE'S  
ATTENTION TO WHAT I CONSIDER THE MOST  
SIGNIFICANT POINTS OF THE AGREEMENT.

THE PREAMBLE SETS OUT THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM AND THE IRISH REPUBLIC TO WORK FOR  
RECONCILIATION; OUR UTTER AND TOTAL  
REJECTION OF VIOLENCE; OUR RECOGNITION AND  
RESPECT FOR THE SEPARATE IDENTITIES IN  
NORTHERN IRELAND; OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE  
RIGHT OF EACH TO PURSUE ITS ASPIRATIONS BY

PEACEFUL MEANS.

THESE PRINCIPLES ARE TO BE FOUND BOTH IN THE UNIONIST  
DOCUMENT "THE WAY FORWARD" AND IN THE NEW  
IRELAND FORUM REPORT.

THEY REFLECT THE HOPES OF BOTH COMMUNITIES.

ARTICLE 1 OF THE AGREEMENT MAKES ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT  
THERE IS NO THREAT WHATSOEVER TO UNIONISTS'  
HEARTFELT DESIRE TO REMAIN PART OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM.

IT PROVIDES IN A FORMALLY BINDING  
INTERNATIONAL ACCORD, A RECOGNITION BY THE  
IRISH GOVERNMENT THAT THE STATUS OF NORTHERN  
IRELAND WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED AS LONG AS THAT

IS THE WISH OF A MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF  
NORTHERN IRELAND.

IT ALSO RECOGNISES THAT THE PRESENT WISH OF A  
MAJORITY IS FOR NO CHANGE IN THAT STATUS.

THERE CAN BE NO BETTER REPLY TO THE FEARS WHICH HAVE  
BEEN EXPRESSED IN THIS HOUSE THAN THIS  
EXPLICIT RECOGNITION OF THE LEGITIMACY OF THE  
UNIONIST POSITION.

THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND ARE THUS ASSURED THAT  
THEIR PLACE AS FULL CITIZENS OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM IS SECURE, SO LONG AS THAT IS WHAT A  
MAJORITY OF THEM WISH.

ARTICLE 2 OF THE AGREEMENT ACKNOWLEDGES IN A PRACTICAL

WAY THE INTEREST WHICH THE IRISH REPUBLIC

HAS LONG HAD IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE NORTH.

THE NATIONALIST COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

AND ITS CONSTITUTIONAL ELECTED

RESPRESENTATIVES HAVE CONSISTENTLY LOOKED TO

DUBLIN TO LEND SUPPORT TO THEIR VIEWS.

THAT IS A REALITY.

IT IS NOT GOING TO CHANGE AND WE CANNOT

PRETEND IT DOES NOT EXIST.

IN THIS AGREEMENT WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT

REALITY.

AND WE SEEK TO CHANNEL IT IN A WAY THAT WILL

HELP BOTH OUR COUNTRIES.

FOR IN THE PAST THE IRISH INTEREST HAS TOO

OFTEN BEEN EXPRESSED IN CRITICAL OR  
NEGATIVE TERMS.

THAT DOES NOT HELP US.

IT DOES NOT HELP OUR RELATIONS WITH THE IRISH  
GOVERNMENT.

IT CERTAINLY DOES NOT HELP HARMONY BETWEEN  
THE COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

SO ARTICLE 2 PROVIDES MACHINERY FOR THE IRISH

GOVERNMENT TO ADVANCE VIEWS AND PROPOSALS ON  
CERTAIN MATTERS RELATING TO NORTHERN IRELAND  
CONSTRUCTIVELY AND METHODICALLY.

IT ESTABLISHES AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
CONFERENCE TO CONSIDER ON A REGULAR BASIS  
POLITICAL, SECURITY AND LEGAL MATTERS,

INCLUDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, AS  
WELL AS CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION.

THIS COOPERATION WILL BE A TWO-WAY STREET.

THE IRISH GOVERNMENT WILL BE ABLE TO PUT ITS  
VIEWS AND PROPOSALS ON CERTAIN MATTERS  
AFFECTING NORTHERN IRELAND.

WE FOR OUR PART SHALL BE ABLE TO PURSUE  
ISSUES OF CONCERN TO NORTHERN IRELAND,  
NOTABLY COOPERATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST  
TERRORISM.

THE MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE CONFERENCE ARE SPELLED  
OUT IN GREATER DETAIL IN ARTICLES 4 TO 9 OF  
THE AGREEMENT.

I SHOULD LIKE TO DRAW THE HOUSE'S ATTENTION  
TO FOUR PARTICULAR POINTS ABOUT THESE  
ARTICLES.

FIRST, THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE WILL CONCERN  
ITSELF WITH THE MATTERS SET OUT IN THE  
AGREEMENT AS LONG AS THERE IS NO RETURN TO  
DEVOLUTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

IF DEVOLUTION IS RESTORED THEN THOSE MATTERS  
THAT BECOME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE  
DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT WILL NO LONGER BE WITHIN  
THE PURVIEW OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL  
CONFERENCE.

WE HOPE THAT THE AGREEMENT WILL ENCOURAGE THE  
CONSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH

COMMUNITIES TO COME TOGETHER TO FORM A LOCAL  
ADMINISTRATION ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH.

THIS HOPE HAS BEEN SPECIFICALLY ENDORSED BY  
THE IRISH GOVERNMENT.

I WAS ENCOURAGED TOO BY THE REMARKS MADE IN  
THIS HOUSE ON 18 NOVEMBER BY THE HON. MEMBER  
FOR FOYLE.

MY RT. HON. FRIEND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR  
NORTHERN IRELAND WILL BE EXPLORING WITH THE  
CONSTITUTIONAL PARTIES HOW BEST TO MAKE  
PROGRESS.

MEANTIME THE ASSEMBLY WILL OF COURSE CONTINUE  
IN BEING.

SECONDLY, ARTICLE 8 WHICH DEALS WITH LEGAL MATTERS SAYS

THAT CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE  
POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING MIXED COURTS.

LET ME SAY STRAIGHTAWAY THAT WE HAVE ABSOLUTE  
CONFIDENCE IN THE JUDICIARY IN NORTHERN  
IRELAND.

INDEED THE INTEGRITY AND COURAGE WHICH THEY  
HAVE SHOWN IN RECENT YEARS IN MAINTAINING THE  
HIGHEST STANDARDS OF JUDICIAL IMPARTIALITY  
HAVE BEEN BEYOND PRAISE.

IN THE FACE OF VIOLENCE, THREATS AND  
INTIMIDATION, THEY HAVE STUCK TO THEIR TASK  
AND ENSURED THAT JUSTICE HAS BEEN DONE.

MR. SPEAKER, WE KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THE  
DIFFICULTIES WHICH WOULD BE INVOLVED IN MIXED  
COURTS BOTH IN THE NORTH AND IN THE REPUBLIC.

WE RECOGNISE THE RESERVATIONS WHICH ARE HELD BY THE LEGAL PROFESSION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER.

WE SEE NO EASY OR EARLY WAY THROUGH THESE DIFFICULTIES.

THAT IS WHY, WHILE WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF THEM AT SOME FUTURE TIME, WE HAVE NOT GIVEN ANY COMMITMENT TO INTRODUCE THEM.

THIRDLY, I DRAW THE HOUSE'S ATTENTION TO THE PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVED SECURITY COOPERATION IN ARTICLE 9.

THIS PROVIDES FOR A PROGRAMME OF WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF THE RUC

AND THE COMMISSIONER OF THE GARDAI TO IMPROVE  
COOPERATION IN SUCH AREAS AS THREAT  
ASSESSMENT, EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION, LIAISON  
STRUCTURES, TECHNICAL COOPERATION, TRAINING  
OF PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONAL RESOURCES.

THESE MR. SPEAKER ARE SPECIFIC MEASURES WHICH  
I BELIEVE WILL LEAD TO REAL IMPROVEMENTS -  
IMPROVEMENTS WHICH WILL BE WELCOME ABOVE ALL  
TO THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO LIVE IN THE BORDER  
AREAS AND WHO HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO SO MANY  
MERCILESS ATTACKS DESIGNED TO DRIVE THEM FROM  
THEIR HOMES AND FARMS.

THEY NOW HAVE THE PROSPECT OF A REAL AND  
TANGIBLE IMPROVEMENT IN SECURITY.

THAT IMPROVEMENT SHOULD BE FURTHER REINFORCED BY THE  
IRISH GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO ACCEDE TO THE  
EUROPEAN COVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION OF  
TERRORISM.

THE CONVENTION'S PURPOSE IS TO ENSURE THAT  
THOSE WHO COMMIT TERRORIST OFFENCES SHOULD BE  
BROUGHT TO JUSTICE AND NOT ESCAPE BY CROSSING  
NATIONAL FRONTIERS.

ARTICLE 1 OF THE CONVENTION REQUIRES  
CONTRACTING STATES NOT TO CONSIDER AS  
OFFENCES INVOLVING THE USE OF EXPLOSIVES OR  
FIREARMS AS POLITICAL OFFENCES.

IRISH ACCESSION SHOULD GREATLY INCREASE OUR  
PROSPECTS OF SECURITY EXTRADITION FROM THE  
REPUBLIC OF PERSONS ACCUSED OR CONVICTED OF

TERRORIST CRIMES.

THIS IS A MAJOR AND WELCOME STEP FORWARD IN  
THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM.

FOURTH, I DRAW THE HOUSE'S ATTENTION TO ARTICLE 10  
WHICH RECORDS OUR INTENTION TO COOPERATION ON  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND REFERS TO  
THE POSSIBILITY OF SECURING INTERNATIONAL  
SUPPORT FOR THIS.

MEMBERS WILL HAVE NOTED THE REFERENCE BY THE  
SPEAKER OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE TO THE  
POSSIBILITY OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO BOTH  
NORTHERN IRELAND AND REPUBLIC.

WE SHALL BE EXPLORING THE SCOPE FOR THIS WITH  
THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION IN THE

COMING WEEKS.

FINALLY, MR. SPEAKER, I WOULD REMIND THE HOUSE OF THE REFERENCE IN ARTICLE 12 TO THE POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ANGLO IRISH PARLIAMENTARY BODY.

BOTH WE AND THE IRISH GOVERNMENT FELT THAT THIS WAS A MATTER FOR PARLIAMENT ITSELF AND FOR THE DAIL RATHER THAN FOR GOVERNMENTS TO PURSUE.

I HOPE THAT CONTACTS WILL BE ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE NORMAL CHANNELS TO CONSIDER HOW DISCUSSIONS ON A PARLIAMENTARY BODY CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY BE TAKEN FORWARD.

WHAT THE AGREEMENT DOES NOT DO

MR. SPEAKER, I HAVE TRIED TO EXPLAIN TO THE HOUSE THE

MOST SIGNIFICANT POINTS OF THE AGREEMENT.

IN VIEW OF SOME OF THE MISTAKEN CLAIMS ABOUT

IT, I WANT ALSO TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT

IS NOT IN THE AGREEMENT.

THE AGREEMENT DOES NOT AFFECT THE STATUS OF

NORTHERN IRELAND WITHIN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

IT DOES NOT SET US ON SOME IMAGINED SLIPPERY

SLOPE TO IRISH UNITY.

INDEED I REGARD IT AS ABSOLUTE NONSENSE TO

CLAIM THAT IT MIGHT.

ARTICLE 1 ECHOES THE PROVISION IN SECTION 1

OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT -

THAT NORTHERN IRELAND REMAINS PART OF THE  
UNITED KINGDOM AS LONG AS A MAJORITY THERE SO  
WISH.

THAT AGAIN IS A RECOGNITION OF REALITY.

THE GUARANTEE FOR THE MAJORITY LIES IN THE  
FACT THAT THEY ARE A MAJORITY.

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSENT MUST PREVAIL IN  
NORTHERN IRELAND.

IT IS A PRINCIPLE THAT NEITHER I NOR ANY  
GOVERNMENT LED BY ME WILL FORSAKE.

IT IS REINFORCED BY THIS AGREEMENT.

THE SECOND THING I WANT TO MAKE CLEAR IS THAT THE  
AGREEMENT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM BRITISH - OR  
FOR THAT MATTER IRISH - SOVEREIGNTY.

HOWEVER THIS AGREEMENT IS INTERPRETED, IT  
CANNOT BE HELD TO UNDERMINE OUR SOVEREIGNTY.  
WE, THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABLE  
TO PARLIAMENT, REMAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE  
GOVERNMENT OF NORTHERN IRELAND.

YES, WE WILL LISTEN TO THE VIEWS OF THE IRISH  
GOVERNMENT.

YES, WE WILL MAKE DETERMINED EFFORTS TO  
ACCOMMODATE THOSE VIEWS.

INDEED WE WELCOME IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS  
PARTICULARLY FROM A COUNTRY WITH WHICH WE  
HAVE UNIQUELY CLOSE RELATIONS.

BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY DECISIONS NORTH OF  
THE BORDER WILL CONTINUE TO BE MADE BY US AND  
SOUTH OF THE BORDER BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT.

THIS IS A FUNDAMENTAL POINT.

THERE CAN BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING.

GENERAL POLICY

BUT, MR. SPEAKER, THIS AGREEMENT CANNOT WORK MIRACLES.

IT IS NOT ON ITS OWN GOING TO BE ENOUGH.

I MAKE NO SUCH CLAIMS FOR IT.

NOR, I KNOW, WOULD THE TAOISEACH.

NO, IT MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A CONSIDERED, DETERMINED

AND COORDINATED DRIVE TO DEAL WITH THE OTHER  
ISSUES THAT FACE US IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

AND THAT DRIVE MUST REST ON CLEAR AND

CONSISTENT PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, EQUITY AND

FAIRNESS.

IN ALL WE DO, WE MUST INSIST ON OBSERVANCE OF  
THE RULE OF LAW, PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUAL  
RIGHTS AND RESPECT FOR THE NEEDS OF THE TWO  
COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

CERTAINLY THERE MUST BE NO SECOND CLASS  
CITIZENS ANYWHERE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

SO, ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, WE MUST CONTINUE TO PAY  
SPECIAL ATTENTION TO NORTHERN IRELAND'S  
NEEDS.

DURING DIRECT RULE, SPENDING ON ECONOMIC AND  
SOCIAL PROGRAMMES HAS RISEN FROM £590 MILLION  
IN 1972-73 TO £3,600 MILLION LAST YEAR - AN  
INCREASE OF OVER 50 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS.

THESE RESOURCES HAVE BEEN USED TO SECURE MUCH  
NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE,  
SERVICES AND THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY IN  
NORTHERN IRELAND.

THERE COULD BE NO MORE EFFECTIVE WAY OF  
GIVING THE LIE TO THOSE WHO SAY THAT HER  
MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT DOES NOT CARE ABOUT THE  
PROBLEMS OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND ITS PEOPLE.  
OUR CONCERN WILL CONTINUE.

IN THE SECURITY FIELD OUR EFFORTS WILL ALSO CONTINUE.

THANKS TO THE MAGNIFICENT WORK OF OUR  
POLICEMEN AND SOLIDERS, WE HAVE ALREADY MADE  
GREAT STRIDES.

THOSE WHO GO TO NORTHERN IRELAND TODAY FIND

IT UNRECOGNISABLE FROM THE DARK DAYS OF THE  
EARLY SEVENTIES.

THE SECURITY STATISTICS TELL THEIR OWN STORY.  
BUT WE STILL HAVE MUCH TO DO, AND OUR  
SECURITY FORCES CAN TAKE NEW HEART FROM THE  
PROMISE OF GREATER SECURITY COOPERATION THAT  
WILL FLOW FROM THE AGREEMENT.

AS FOR POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND,

THAT IS WHERE WE HAVE LITTLE TO SHOW.

THIS GOVERNMENT, LIKE ITS PREDECESSORS, SEEKS  
A RETURN TO DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT IN A FORM  
THAT IS BROADLY ACCEPTABLE ACROSS THE TWO  
COMMUNITIES.

THAT PRINCIPLE OF ACCEPTABILITY IS

INESCAPABLE IF ANY NEW SYSTEM OF DEVOLVED  
GOVERNMENT IS TO BE WORKABLE.

AND IT IS ENDORSED IN THE AGREEMENT.

WE ARE THEREFORE EVEN MORE FIRMLY COMMITTED  
TO THAT PATH AND WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK A WAY  
OF BRINGING THE PARTIES TOGETHER SO THAT  
PROGRESS CAN BE MADE.

WE HOPE THAT ALL THE CONSTITUTIONAL PARTIES  
IN NORTHERN IRELAND WILL JOIN US IN THIS  
ENDEAVOUR.

PERORATION

MR. SPEAKER, I SHOULD LIKE IN CLOSING TO MAKE THREE  
REMARKS.

THE FIRST IS TO PAY TRIBUTE TO DR. FITZGERALD, THE TAOISEACH, FOR THE TRANSPARENT HONESTY AND SINCERITY WITH WHICH HE HAS WORKED FOR AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD BRING REASSURANCE TO BOTH COMMUNITIES AND A REAL PROSPECT OF PEACE AND STABILITY.

SECOND, I WOULD SAY TO THE MEMBERS OF BOTH COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND THAT IF THIS HOUSE APPROVES THE AGREEMENT, THIS GOVERNMENT INTENDS STEADFASTLY TO IMPLEMENT IT. WE SHALL LOOK TO THE COOPERATION OF ALL MEN AND WOMEN OF GOODWILL WHO WANT A BETTER FUTURE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND AND FOR THEIR FAMILIES.

WE SHALL NOT GIVE WAY TO THREATS OR TO  
VIOLENCE FROM ANY QUARTER.

NORTHERN IRELAND IS PART OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM, AND THIS HOUSE REPRESENTS ALL THE  
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND MUST ACCEPT  
WHAT FLOWS FROM THAT.

THAT INCLUDES ACCEPTANCE OF THE POLICIES OF  
FREELY ELECTED GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED  
KINGDOM, ENDORSED BY PARLIAMENT.

FINALLY, I ADDRESS MYSELF ONCE MORE TO THE UNIONIST  
COMMUNITY WHO HAVE OPENLY EXPRESSED THEIR  
FEARS AND WORRIES ABOUT THIS AGREEMENT.  
THIS AGREEMENT BRINGS SPECIFIC BENEFITS TO

YOU.

FAR FROM REPRESENTING ANY THREAT TO THE  
POSITION OF NORTHERN IRELAND WITHIN THE  
UNITED KINGDOM, IT SHOULD GIVE YOU  
REASSURANCE AND NEW STRENGTH.

IT CONTAINS CLEAR RECOGNITION BY THE IRISH  
GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT  
OF THE VALIDITY OF YOUR GREAT TRADITION.

AND IT HOLDS OUT THE PROSPECT OF GREATER  
SUCCESS IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE SCOURGE  
OF TERRORISM FROM WHICH YOU HAVE SUFFERED SO  
MUCH.

IN THE RESPECT WHICH I FEEL FOR THE STAUNCH TRADITION  
OF UNIONISM, I CALL UPON UNIONISTS TO GIVE

THIS AGREEMENT THE CHANCE WHICH IT DESERVES.

MR. SPEAKER, THE AGREEMENT OFFERS TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF  
NORTHERN IRELAND A REAL HOPE OF MAKING  
PROGRESS TOWARDS LASTING PEACE AND POLITICAL  
STABILITY - IF MEN AND WOMEN OF GOODWILL TAKE  
ADVANTAGE OF THE CHANCE IT OFFERS.

I BEG TO MOVE.