1. FOLLOWING IS DRAFT OF SPEECH TO BE DELIVERED BY PETER BARRY ON 23 NOVEMBER AT THE LAUNCH OF COLONEL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE "START-YOUR-OWN BUSINESS" COMPETITION - FRIDAY 23 NOVEMBER 1984. TEXT SUBJECT TO CHANGES MADE ON DELIVERY

ON SUNDAY AND MONDAY LAST A SUMMIT MEETING TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS. IT WAS THE FULLEST, THE FRANKEST AND THE MOST REALISTIC SUMMIT THAT MRS THATCHER HAD EVER HAD WITH AN IRISH LEADER. THOSE ARE HER WORDS - OTHER IRISH POLITICIANS WHO HAVE MADE LOUD AND PORTENTOUS NOISES AFTER MEETING THE LADY SHOULD HAVE PONDERED THEM VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE RUSHING OUT THEIR CONDEMNATIONS. I WOULD ADD THAT IT WAS AN EXTREMELY DIRECT AND OFTEN DIFFICULT MEETING. THE IRISH AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS IN A WAY THAT WE HAD NOT DONE FOR TEN YEARS AT LEAST. WE AGREED ABOUT SEVERAL IMPORTANT ISSUES. THE RESULTS OF OUR EXCHANGES WERE SET OUT IN A COMMUNIQUE WHICH EMBODIES TO A SIGNIFICANT EXTENT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS - THE (FOLLOWING WORD UNDERLINED) PROPOSALS, NOT THE (FOLLOWING WORD UNDERLINED) OPTIONS - OF THE FORUM REPORT. WE AGREED TO CONTINUE OUR TALKS AND TO MEET AGAIN AT AN EARLY DATE TO REVIEW FURTHER PROGRESS.


IT IS TRUE THAT TWO STATEMENTS IN MRS THATCHER'S PRESS CONFERENCE CAUSED SERIOUS OFFENCE TO IRISH NATIONALISTS AND THAT MR HURD MADE A SERIES OF UNHELPFUL AND UNACCEPTABLE STATEMENTS. THESE ARE ALMENABLE EVENTS AND I PERSONALLY SHARED IN THE STRONG FEELINGS THEY AROUSED. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN MADE FULLY AWARE OF THE REACTION OF OUR GOVERNMENT AND OUR PEOPLE.

NOW, FOUR DAYS AFTER THE SUMMIT, FOUR DAYS CONFUSED BY EMOTION AND MANIPULATIVE OPPORTUNISM, I LOOK BACK IN ANGER, ANGER NOT JUST WITH BRITISH INSENSITIVITY, BUT MUCH MORE WITH THE ATTEMPTS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN HERE AT HOME TO DESTROY THE REAL PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE AND TO DESTROY THE HOPES FOR PEACE AND STABILITY OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND.

THE THREE MODELS IN THE FORUM REPORT WERE (FOLLOWING WORD UNDERLINED) OPTIONS NOT, AS MRS. THATCHER MISTAKENLY SAID IN THE COMMONS, (FOLLOWING WORD UNDERLINED) PROPOSALS, AND INDEED THE FORUM ITSELF STATED THAT OTHER POSSIBILITIES COULD BE CONSIDERED. ONLY ONCE DID THE FORUM USE THE WORD "PROPOSES". IN CHAPTER 5 THE FORUM PROPOSED TEN REQUIREMENTS "AS NECESSARY ELEMENTS OF A FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH A NEW IRELAND COULD EMERGE". MRS. THATCHER IN THE COMMUNIQUE, IN HER PRESS CONFERENCE AND IN HER REMARKS IN THE COMMONS SUBSCRIBED TO A SIGNIFICANT EXTENT TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THOSE PROPOSALS. I AM TODAY RELEASING A SHORT PAPER WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE HARMONY AND THE LARGE MEASURE OF IDENTITY ACHIEVED BETWEEN THE PROPOSALS IN THE FORUM REPORT AND THE PUBLIC APPROACH OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AS OUTLINED AFTER THE SUMMIT.

I am saddened, indeed angered, at the way in which some of our opponents in the Dáil and some other commentators have sought to create hysteria in public opinion here during these past four days. We were in a way prepared for something of this sort by Mr Haughey’s dismissal of the Summit even before we left for Chequers and by his instant savaging of its results within minutes of the Communique being published. Our objectives were and remain crystal clear: to end the nightmare of the Northern Nationalists as quickly as possible and to create lasting peace and stability throughout Ireland. We have not been helped in this common goal by the distortions, personal attacks and appeals to a presumed Nationalist xenophobia and a presumed national inferiority complex of the past days. To those who have indulged in this pathetic activity I say two things: first, I am sorry that you are so fiercely driven by political ambition that you have, far more viciously than anything done by our British interlocuters, chosen to knife, knife and knife again the Government of this country as we work to try to find a common approach with the British and, second, you’re wasting your time because the Irish people have too much maturity and too much real pride in themselves to fall for this pandering. And I add for Mr Haughey’s own benefit that, if he cannot bring himself to back the Government of his country in the achievement of peace and stability, he should in the national interest take his own advice and depart the national stage once and for all.

In our difficult task we have been powerfully sustained by the remarkable evidence of sophistication and steady maturity shown by the vast majority of our people. A major opinion poll published last week showed that the open approach by the Government based on the Forum report in its entirety has the support of the great majority of the people, including the overwhelming majority of young people. The poll also shows that those who take a narrow and absolutist view are supported on this issue only by a tiny proportion of Irish men and women either young or old. This is a cause for real pride in the judgement of our people and shows for once and for all that the days of national inferiority complexes are well and truly behind us.

We are now in business with the British. We cannot make promises of success. We can only promise that the Irish Government will spare no effort in our attempt to find enough common ground to enable a viable initiative to be attempted. The going will not be easy. It wasn’t easy at Chequers but I can tell you that I have never been more confident or proud of our Taoiseach as when, during those difficult exchanges, he time and time again brought Mrs Thatcher to face the full dimensions of the problem of Northern Ireland. As we proceed there will probably be moments of serious difference, serious misunderstanding and perhaps even of panic on the part of some. The Irish Government will not allow itself to be unnerved or deterred by these difficulties.

Government and people, in this difficult search for peace and reconciliation, we must stand steadily together and work for real progress, not ephemeral emotional hypes. I am absolutely confident that we have the self-respect, the self-confidence, the maturity and the courage to do this.