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Note

Mr. Ford
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Ms Henning

The Embassy in London reports that at the Conservative Party press conference this morning Mr Thatcher answered two questions on Anglo-Irish relations. Because of the peculiar conference arrangements it was not possible to hear the questions. The answers were as follows:

1. "We cooperate with the Irish Republic very much in defence and economic policy areas across the Border. We believe in keeping very friendly relations with the only country with which we have a land border."
2. (Obviously à propos Anglo-Irish discussions). "There were not specific bilateral talks taking place of a kind which we had before. We thought it better to wait a bit. Of course I see the Taoiseach at European Council meetings."

Mr Dempsey contacted the Conservative Central Office about the use of the word "defence" when obviously what was meant was "security". They undertook to correct any misapprehension that might arise.

M.H.

25 May 1983

cc ASM
PSS
PST.
Ms Hillis