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The following joint statement was issued today in Dublin following the discussions:

1. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister had a wide ranging discussion on the situation in Northern Ireland and other issues affecting relations between the two countries.
2. They were in agreement on the need to bring the suffering of the people of Northern Ireland to an end as quickly as possible and to secure peace and reconciliation there. It was accepted that this objective can be achieved only through the democratic process, through the growth of trust and confidence between the two communities in the North and by closer cooperation between North and South. In this context, they reaffirmed their support for the concept of a Council of Ireland and their willingness to assist in its formation in a conference at which they would discuss with Northern Ireland representatives the form and functions of such a Council.
3. Means of containing and eliminating violence in Northern Ireland, irrespective of its source, were discussed.
4. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister look forward to further meetings.

17th September 1973.
Issued at 20.15 hrs.