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Dublin, 2

Baile Átha Cliath, 2

ON BEHALF OF	THAR CEANN
Government Information Services, Government Buildings, Dublin, 2. Tel. (01) 67571 Telex 5800.	Seirbhís Eolais an Rialtais, Tithe An Rialtais, Baile Átha Cliath, 2. Tel. (01) 67571 Telex 5800.

STATEMENT BY THE TAOISEACH, MR. LIAM COSGRAVE, IN DÁIL ÉIREANN, 3 p.m., ON TUESDAY, 21st MAY, 1974.

DUBLIN AND MONAGHAN BOMBINGS, 17th MAY, 1974.

Members of the House have asked to be associated with the expression of sympathy already tendered by the Government to the victims of the bombings in Dublin and Monaghan last Friday and their relatives. I have received similar messages of condolence from the British Prime Minister, Mr. Wilson, the Head of the Opposition there, Mr. Heath, the Chief Executive Minister; Mr. Faulkner and many other leaders of Church and State who have asked that their sympathy too should be made known to the victims of these mindless outrages and their relatives.

Nothing I can say will adequately describe the feelings of shock and horror caused by the destruction of human life and hope last Friday. It was without exception the worst single outrage in these islands - measured in terms of human death and misery, caused deliberately by man against his fellowmen - since the end of the Second World War.

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As a result of the bombings, more than 30 men, women and children alive on Friday afternoon are now dead. More than 100 are injured. The persons caught up in this calamity bore no malice towards those who destroyed or maimed them. Their lives were no threat to those who treated them as enemies. But because they happened to be in certain streets at certain times, they are now dead - or disfigured for life. Those responsible have reaped their grim harvest.

What do they hope to gain? What does any man of violence in these islands hope to gain? For the blood of the innocent victims of last Friday's outrage - and of the victims of similar outrages in the North and in England - is on the hands of every man who has fired a gun or discharged a bomb in furtherance of the present campaign of violence in these islands - just as plainly as it is on the hands of those who parked the cars and set the charges last Friday. In our times, violence cannot be contained in neat compartments and justified in one cause but not in another. Those who practise it must anticipate an answer in kind. What they are creating in the end is a world where reason and compassion are dead and only might is right. To them I would say that the only unity they are capable of creating is the unity, in opposition, of all decent men, to their values and methods.

I said last Friday that it was on occasions like this that we appreciate the dedicated work of our police, army, fire, medical, nursing and other emergency services. The Government look for and will give all possible support to the forces in their efforts to apprehend the perpetrators of last Friday's outrage - and of all crimes of violence in this island or elsewhere.

It only remains for me now to ask the House to rise in token of sympathy with those killed or injured last Friday and with their relatives and friends.