

SPEAKING NOTE: DR PAISLEY - 7 MAY 1997

INTRODUCTION

The cut of £120 million from the education, health and training budgets in order to pay for increased security following the resumption of IRA violence is opposed right across the Province. No other part of the UK has to face these cuts in order to pay for extra security. It means pupils and parents are being punished for IRA violence.

EDUCATION

1. The number of teachers being made redundant is totally unacceptable. Morale is very low in the teaching profession and pupil/teacher ratios will increase.
2. The cuts in research for universities and third level institutions are causing alarm to industry as well as academics.
3. Plans for nursery education - we would like to see one year of nursery education for all children.
4. The current Boards set up should remain until a locally elected assembly can deliberate on administration of education for Northern Ireland.

HEALTH

1. There is intense concern at what is seen as the dismantling of the Health Service with operations cancelled, waiting lists lengthened, wards closed, services cut, residential and nursing homes cut, and staff not replaced.

2. Care in the community as a concept is good but it has not been properly implemented. The cuts to the home help services have been outrageous. Elderly and disabled people have suffered as a result.
3. We oppose the process which means those needing residential or nursing care have to sell the family home or take out extra insurance to pay for it.
4. There must be more nurses, doctors etc. and less bureaucrats in administration.

CUTS IN ACE FUNDING

1. Ace schemes have made a very valuable contribution to improving employment prospects and community development particularly in deprived areas. Since inception it has put more than 40,000 people into jobs. It is aimed at the long term unemployed in Northern Ireland fall into that category.
2. Last year funding was £39.8 million. The plan is to reduce that by £11 million or 28% this year with the loss of more than 2,000 places and further cuts to follow.
3. A number of projects which fall below a threshold for core positions will have to close completely.
4. The cuts to ace schemes should be abandoned.