

# Alliance

The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland

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“ P R E S S R E L E A S E ”

11 February 1997

## Alderdice challenges M.P.'s to defend volunteering in Northern Ireland.

The Alliance Leader Lord Alderdice has called on all the Northern Ireland M.P.'s to ensure that the government does not impose a "tax on volunteers"

Lord Alderdice said:

"When the Police Bill was tabled in the Lords it contained a proposal that volunteers be charged for the provision of criminal record certificates. This disgraceful proposal which amounts to a tax on volunteering would have a disastrous effect on churches, charities and other voluntary organisations. The scouting organisation in Britain has calculated that it would add £50,000 per year to their costs, and it is estimated that the bill for the voluntary sector, including churches, throughout the U.K. could be anywhere between £40million and £80million per year. Fortunately this was turned down by the Lords and indeed I am proud to say that it was one of the first important votes in which I played a part - the Government being defeated by 137 to 135.

"There is great concern that when the Bill comes to the Commons that Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, will try to re-introduce the provision. I trust that Northern Ireland's M.P.'s to attend and vote against this very damaging proposal if it is retabled."

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