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“ P R E S S R E L E A S E ”

May 18 1998

Alderdice Seeks Assurances On RUC

Alliance Leader Lord Alderdice, speaking in yesterday's House of Lords debate on the Police Bill, has sought assurances from Lord Dubs on the levels of financial compensation that would be made available in the event of any reduction in the number of RUC personnel.

Lord Alderdice said:

"In the debate I sought assurances from the Minister that, in the event of an end to the terrorist campaigns which would make it possible for us to have fewer police officers, the Government would ensure that substantial levels of financial recompense would be available to any who chose to take early retirement.

"I also sought to ensure that those who are younger, and have the ability to take up other careers, would have proper re-training and that investigations would be taken up in the remainder of the UK and other places. There are a number of possibilities throughout the EU for members of the RUC and indeed the Garda Siochana to help to train police services which badly need the level of professionalism, experience and skill of the RUC.

"I have discussed these proposals in a recent meeting with the Taoiseach in Dublin and will carry them forward in further meetings. It is essential that all those affected by the Agreement and the stability which we must hope that it will bring, particularly those who have served Northern Ireland in the face of the most extreme pressure, are rewarded for their service to this community."

Notes: The debate took place in the House of Lords on Monday, May 18.

For further information contact Alliance Press Officer Richard Good on 0468 151972 (Mobile) or 01426 245779 (Pager).