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2009 NIPSA ANNUAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

NIPSA General Secretary Pledges to Fight Public Service Job Cuts

The General Secretary of Northern Ireland's biggest public service trade union has pledged to fight public service job cuts in Northern Ireland.

Speaking at NIPSA's Annual Conference in Newcastle today John Corey said that the Executive Ministers should be creating more public service jobs to beat the recession.

NIPSA represents over 46,000 public servants and up to 350 delegates attend the three day conference from all parts of the public sector in Northern Ireland

With fears that the UK Government is going to demand expenditure cuts after bailing out banks the union would be doing all in its power to stop public service cuts. Mr Corey also strongly criticised the Social Security Agency for seeking to cut services from local benefits offices. Mr Corey said:

"The message from this Conference is that we will resist cuts to public services and cuts to public service jobs. In fact at a time of recession public services should be supported and expanded not cut. We will need more public servants not less.

According to Sunday's papers, economic commentators are projecting that unemployment levels will double before this recession ends. The human tragedy of that for workers and families doesn't bear thinking about.

If our Executive Ministers are so keen to help people facing redundancy I'll tell you where they should start.

At the very least workers facing the devastation of the loss of their employment should have the human right to be able to go to a local Jobs and Benefits office which is fully staffed and equipped to meet all their benefits needs.

Instead of that we have had to deal with the SSA Management's attempts to decimate locally available services under the so called Strategic Business Review."

In a wide ranging address to the Conference he also called on the Executive Ministers to end the policy of using Private Finance Initiative/Public Private Partnerships (PFI/PPPs) in Northern Ireland.

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NIPSA represents over 40,000 members in the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Education & Library Boards, Health and Social Services Boards and Trusts, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, & District Councils.

General Secretary: **John Corey** • Deputy General Secretary: **Brian Campfield** • Media Contact: **Geraldine Alexander**

Strongly criticising the HR Connect privatisation of personnel and payroll service in the NI Civil Service Mr Corey said:

“There never was a place for PFI and PPP in delivering public services. Although it is too late in the day for some, our demand is that the Executive Ministers should act now in the interests of the people of Northern Ireland and say there will be no more PFI/PPP projects in Northern Ireland.”

NIPSA's membership levels have increased by 4% over the year which against the trend for many trade unions.

Not surprisingly the MPs expenses are a topic for delegates. In his address Mr Corey blasted claims that MPs were lowly paid saying:

“The so-called mother of Parliaments is reeling. At least we all now know what a duck island is and let me be clear I will not be approving any expenses claims for a duck island.

But it beggars belief what our public representatives have been up to. These are the same people that have been quick to demand the highest standards of probity from the civil and public servants that this union represents.

One of the excuses I heard put forward for the expenses gravy train is the low pay of MPs and just for the record that is £64,766 per year.

Plenty of public servants could tell MPs what low pay really is which brings me to the issue of public sector pay.”

ENDS