

THE 151ST ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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Held at:

**The Brighton Centre,
Brighton**

on:

**Sunday, 8th September 2019
Monday, 9th September 2019
Tuesday, 10th September 2019
-and-
Wednesday, 11th September 2019**

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Congress President:

MARK SERWOTKA

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**PROCEEDINGS — DAY THREE
(Tuesday, 10th September 2019)**

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THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY, 10TH SEPTEMBER 2019

MORNING SESSION

Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.

The President: Good morning, colleagues. I call Congress to order. There are some sore-looking heads out there this morning. We will make sure that is even louder for you tomorrow. I will start by asking you to join me in thanking the Hampshire Youth Folk Ensemble who have been playing for us this morning. (*Applause*) That was a particularly lively number we heard this morning.

Congress, can I remind you all of our statement of conduct that was circulated to all delegates as part of the registration process and can I also remind all delegates to ensure we get through all the business that it is important to respect speaking times, five minutes for moving a motion, three minutes for seconding, and I thank you all in advance for your cooperation.

Congress, we lost one item of business yesterday and we have quite a tough agenda today. We have been notified by a lot of unions who want to speak at debates this morning so we are very tight for time and we have some very important debates. I want to give you all fair warning now that I will prioritise unions who are movers and seconders of motions or parties to composites and I may not be able to take all additional speakers who have indicated they want to come in.

I have been a delegate to this Congress over the years and I know that people who have prepared speeches really do want to speak so if we all stick to time and are disciplined I am sure we can get in as many as possible. I thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Congress, the General Council this morning has improved the inclusion of an address this afternoon by Laura Pidcock, Shadow Minister for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy, and therefore there will be a change to the order of business for this afternoon. That change is as follows: Laura Pidcock will address Congress at the start of the afternoon session, so can I urge all delegates to be in their seats because I am sure you want to hear some of Laura's exciting announcements today. After Laura has spoken I will then take the Climate Change and the Environment debate, and that will be followed by the video and presentation of Congress Awards.

Delegates will have seen this morning that we have had a photo opportunity but I am going to leave the delegate who will be moving the motion in a moment to tell you what all that is about and I will make a few comments myself at the end of the debate. Now I am going to ask us all to turn to section 1 of the General Council Report, the Economy, and the section on Industrial Strategy from page 22. I call paragraphs 1.1, 1.4-1.7, 1.11 and 1.12, and Motion 1, Industrial strategy: delivering real change. The General Council is going to support the Motion. The motion is to be moved by Unite, seconded by ASLEF, and I am also intending to call the CWU, who have indicated they wish to speak. Could ASLEF and CWU take a seat down here and it is my great pleasure to ask Len McCluskey on behalf of Unite to move Motion 1.

INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Section 1 The economy

Industrial strategy: delivering real change

Len McCluskey (*Unite the Union*) moved Motion 1. *He said:* Thank you, Chair, and good morning, Congress. Colleagues, Jeremy Corbyn's commitments last week to a real industrial strategy and serious economic plan were music to my ears. No more tinkering around the edges, instead pushing democracy further into the workplace and the economy to give people more control over their lives and shifting power away from the greedy bosses and landlords to workers and tenants. The Labour Party is committed to an economic alternative that will bring security and equality to our communities in stark contrast to the tax cuts for the wealthy promised by Johnson.

No wonder the *Financial Times* devoted so much space to analyzing Labour's plans with hysterical headlines about raids on company shares but while the *FT* was, of course, right that Labour will be transferring significant amounts of shareholder wealth to workers, let's be clear, the £300 billion raid is not theft, it is giving workers back what is rightfully theirs. (*Applause*) Redistribution of income, assets, ownership and power, is at the heart of Labour's economic and industrial strategies but, colleagues, we live in challenging and very dangerous times.

A general election is coming and we face the political fight of our lives, not on Johnson's terms but on ours, on the principle of bringing our nation back together. That is the very essence of trade unionism and Jeremy Corbyn is the only leader who can do that, who can give hope and heal the divisions after years of Tory governments deliberately dividing it, a government that spent the last nine years waging class war

against the poor and incapable of offering any coherent industrial strategy. Only a transformative radical Labour government can rebuild and reunite our communities and restore hope to those who feel abandoned by Westminster.

Only Labour can ensure decent secure jobs with an end to the scandalous abuse of migrant workers and agency labour, empowered by the force of our Movement, embodied by the likes of the Harland & Wolff workers who are here today and have occupied their yard for the past month 24/7 fighting to save their jobs, demanding nationalisation, and demonstrating our Movement's wonderful values of solidarity and community spirit. (*Applause*) There is also the strike of the Lincolnshire health visitors denied a pay rise by a Tory council for nearly three years of which you will hear more about later. (*Applause*)

Colleagues, the manufacturing crisis we are in the grip of has worsened with no deal of certainty but it is about much more than Brexit or industrial base and communities have been ravaged by generations of neo-liberalism, our great manufacturing industries decimated. The crisis is the lasting impact of the biggest act of industrial sabotage ever seen, sabotage that includes the anti-union laws and the dramatic changes made to collective bargaining and made wholesale market deregulation. It is no accident that workers' share of GDP declined from over 64% in 1975 to 51% now, and even an A-level economic student will tell you the devastation this does to an economy.

The refusal of the Tories to engage with trade unionists as industrial partners to work together to scale the economic and industrial challenges is, frankly, astonishing. Colleagues, our class consciousness and community spirit can be the foundation for a

fundamentally different kind of society, one in which no place is ever left abandoned. To achieve that we as a movement have to be at the forefront of the political, industrial, and community resistance to this hard-right government. It is a government that despises us and the places we come from. We know who you are, Boris Johnson, we know your game, your wish to be Churchillian rather than the wrecking Ralph that you are, but know this: we will fight you in our hospitals, we will fight you in our factories, we will fight you in our communities, and we will never surrender. (*Applause*) So, pick your beach, Prime Minister. We are the workers of Britain and we are coming for you. (*Standing ovation*)

The President: Congress, just before I ask ASLEF to second the motion, Len in that brilliant speech just mentioned to Congress that we have been joined today by some workers from the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast. I am pleased to say that some of the workers, Barry Reed, Edmond Gilbert, Robert Childs, and Joe Passmore, have taken a break from the occupation to join us today. They are in the front row. Can I ask them to stand and ask Congress to give them the real reception they deserve? (*Standing ovation*)

Thank you, Congress. I am sure that these workers will have recognised that they have been such an inspiration to everyone. We thank you for joining us today and you are welcome to stay with us this morning as we will have the Leader of the Opposition addressing us in a bit. Thanks very much. Thank you, Len. Can I now ask ASLEF to second Motion 1 and then ask the CWU to be ready.

Tracy Whitbread (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) seconded Motion 1. *She said:* Our industrial nation has been steadily dismantled

with no regard whatsoever for our communities and the loss of livelihoods to the people there. The result of the closures of many of our industries has cost people lots to their lives. It is vital that the next Labour government has an industrial strategy at its core. We are in the midst of another industrial revolution and trade unionism must be at the forefront securing the best future for all working people.

In the rail sector we are fortunate that rail produces less and lower emissions than other major transport. Improving the rail network on both passenger and freight will make a massive contribution to our industrial success. Rail freight is a particularly important bit yet often an overlooked element to the working environment. Long distance rail freight produces 76% less carbon dioxide emissions to any similar HGV journey and less damage to the air quality. Moving freight by rail also promotes safety and helps reduce congestion. Rail freight is far from secure, though. The industry is vulnerable to market forces relying on government grants and disadvantaged by subsidies that are not afforded to it like the road users. An effective freight system fit for the future would see a mixture of rail, waterway, and road, working together to move freight across the country. This would take advantage of a cleaner rail movement for long distance journeys and allow local journeys to be covered by road.

Planners in government need to prioritise rail, road, and maritime hubs to maximise environmentally friendly and greener technology to rebalance our economy and to deliver an industrial strategy fit for the future. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tracy. CWU?

Rob Wotherspoon (*Communication Workers Union*) spoke in support of Motion 1.

He said: I must say in talking about industrial strategy under the Tories is much like talking about Boris Johnson's majority or Jacob Rees-Mogg's ability to function without a nanny. We are talking about something that is non-existent with a short-term free market driven approach that has comprehensively failed. It is not just in manufacturing and transport; the decimated Post Office network, the universal postal service and the nation's digital infrastructure are under threat from privatisation, low-cost competition, and underfunding. In the digital infrastructure this nation lags well behind Europe where 98% of properties in Spain, 99% in Portugal, are connected to fibre broadband, and just 10% are connected in the UK, a huge waste of the potential in the regions of the digitally savvy population for who can doubt in the 21st century that broadband infrastructure is every bit as vital as good roads and running water were in previous centuries.

In 2018, the former head of the Civil Service, Lord Kerslake, warned that productivity and depravations in the regions outside of London are amongst the worst in Europe. Regional policy decisions are made in London and the UK has no national plan for economic and infrastructure investment. Now we live in a country amongst the most regionally unequal in the developed world but those inequalities only increasing under the Tories. It is little wonder, then, that many outside of London and the South East do not see the status quo as much worth defending. That is why we absolutely support the industrial strategy put forward by the Labour Party for a strategy that works for the many, not the few, with sustained investment prioritised over quick returns for institutional shareholders. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Rob. Again, full support to the CWU in your campaign and ballot. Congress, there are no other speakers so I am going to move to the vote on Motion 1. All those in favour please show. Thank you. All those against? Thank you. That is overwhelmingly carried.

* *Motion 1 was CARRIED*

The President: I now call Motion 2, Save our Steel. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by Community and seconded by Unite. Good morning, Roy.

Save our Steel

Roy Rickhuss (*Community*) moved Motion 2. *He said:* Since Congress last met we have seen more turbulence in our industry, more change, more restructuring, more challenges for us to overcome. Ever since the 2015 tragedy of SSI in Teesside we have been in crisis mode. It certainly feels to our members that the crisis has never gone away. Since then we have been fighting for survival of steel making in this country. Together the steel unions, Community, Unite, and GMB have campaigned hard to save our steel by coming together and working together. We have lobbied at every level for government to deliver for our industry. We will not stop until we are competing on a level playing field, but we are a very long way from where we need to be. The prices we pay for electricity are now double what they pay in France, and business rates can be 10 times more than they pay in other parts of Europe. We are suffering from lack of investment. The steel industry needs a lot of investment. It is needed to make our plants competitive. By their own figures Government procuring

at just 43% of the steel it uses in public-funded projects from the UK is a complete and utter disgrace.

We now have new macro challenges to face. Trump's steel tariffs have compounded problems of global overcapacity and led to a new climate of trade protectionism. Then there is Brexit. The abject failure of our politicians to resolve Brexit is destroying our manufacturing base. Not a week goes by without announcements of job cuts or plant closures. The steel industry needs certainty but above all we must avoid a no-deal Brexit, which would mean new duties and friction at borders making our steel more costly and less competitive.

British steel workers have faced many challenges but, unfortunately, there is more to come. Many of you will know of recent developments at Tata Steel and British Steel, the biggest employers in the sector. In May, the merger discussions between Tata Steel and Germany's Thyssenkrupp collapsed and they collapsed due to their failure to agree a remedy to a competition issue we all knew was going to be a problem years ago. We told them often enough but they did not listen and they had no plan B. We now have concerns that Tata will attempt to issue a short-term cost cutting approach that could be devastating. Just last week Tata announced the crushing news that they intend to close the Orb works in Newport, South Wales, which is the UK's only electrical steel plant and employs nearly 400 highly skilled workers. We will not accept the closure of this vital strategic business and we are ready to fight for the future of the Orb. It makes no sense at all to let the only plant we have that can make electrical graded steel to close just when that steel is going to be needed more than ever for electric car production.

Then on 22nd May came the news that British Steel had gone into liquidation, a devastating blow for the workforce and all those who depend on British Steel for their livelihoods, 25,000 jobs placed in the balance, whole communities fearing for their future. Since the announcement the unions have been working closely with all stakeholders to secure a new future under the right ownership. Last month we reached an important milestone when Ataco were confirmed as preferred bidders. They are now in the due diligence process and could conclude a deal shortly. Congress, we know that British Steel is a great business making world-class products with the most committed workforce that there is, but even now under these circumstances are breaking all production records. There is no doubt that British Steel can have a bright future and we need all stakeholders to support the unions' campaign to secure the business.

Secretaries of state, ministers, and even prime ministers, have stood at the despatch box and said, "You cannot have a successful manufacturing sector without a successful steel industry at the heart of it." Now is the time to follow warm words with real action, get back around the table, secure the steel sector deal we have demanded and has been stalled for too long. Steel is our past, our present, and will be our future. We are going to have to fight for it and we will. Together we will save our steel. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Roy. I call Unite to second.

Mick Joyce *(Unite the Union)* seconded Motion 2. *He said:* I am speaking in solidarity with Unite workers. Congress, as you meet today 4,000 of our brothers and sisters at British Steel and 400 workers at the Tata Orb Works in Newport are fighting

for their future. We are all versed in the symptoms of this crisis, government disinterest, major contracts going overseas, and the dumping of cheap imported steel. Congress, behind all of this we find a very simple question: what is the steel industry for? Is it a get-rich-quick scheme for the fly-by-night investors like Greybull Capital, a firm who let one of the airlines go to the wall after stripping out £10m and went on to repeat the same old money trick with British Steel.

Congress, steel is a national asset. It is a foundation upon which an entire advanced manufacturing industry can and should be built. Congress, we hear that a buyer may have been found for British Steel. If that means highly skilled jobs upon which whole communities rely will be saved and given a bright future, then of course we must seize that chance. I know that for Unite's part our shop stewards will be scrutinising any deal and reading the small print, and demanding long-term investment plans for at least a decade. Let me add this, if the buyer is to be OYAK, the pension fund of the Turkish military, then Unite will be scrutinising their human rights' records with a very, very careful eye. As internationalists we will continue to build real solidarity with progressive trade unions in Turkey and the Kurdish people.

Congress, it is time for the crisis of ownership to end. I say that means end the ownership of the spivs and the asset-strippers. I say that means elect union stewards into the boardrooms and oversee production in the public interest and, yes, I say that means seeing steel plants back under public ownership and run for the public good. *(Applause)* Congress, let us stand behind our steelworker comrades now, follow their lead, and let's secure for good and all the future of this vital industry. Please support, colleagues. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you very much, Mick. There are no more speakers. Can I ask Congress, all those in favour of Motion 2, Save our Steel, to show. Thank you. Any against? Thank you. That is unanimously carried and I hope that both Roy and Mick will take back to your members in all our steelworks and steel communities the 100 percent support of this Congress. Good luck to you all.

* *Motion 2 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, I now call Composite Motion 1, Real jobs and apprenticeships, the General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the UCU, seconded by SOR, supported by COP, and I am also intending to take Unite, UNISON, and NEU, in that order. Could all the other speakers sit at the front? Good morning, delegate, you are welcome to move the motion.

Real jobs and apprenticeships

Douglas Chalmers (*University and College Union*) moved Composite Motion 1. *He said:* Congress, apprenticeships should be a highly valuable part of the education sector. They allow people to earn while they learn and they should provide an important route to employment and also higher levels of learning. When compared to similar level qualifications apprenticeships offer a significant earnings premium and they also offer clear benefits to employers.

So, given the value of apprenticeships to individuals, to employers, and society, it is right that they have risen up the political agenda in recent years. We have seen a rapid expansion of apprenticeship numbers and the introduction of an apprenticeship

levy, yet the drive to grow apprenticeships has often been at the expense of quality and genuine job creation. Now the problems are that the apprenticeship levy does little to influence where apprenticeship opportunities are, what level they are at, and who can access them. It has been too easy for levy-paying employers to recoup their payments by essentially just re-badging existing training schemes as apprenticeships.

We are finding that more apprenticeships are at what you would call an advanced level and while education at any stage of life must be supported we are finding apprenticeships essentially to be for existing staff rather than for new younger staff so we are getting MBAs for executives. That was never really the intention of the levy but that is what is happening. The number of starts at the lower and intermediate level in 2017 was the lowest it had been for seven years. Young people in particular are disadvantaged by the tendency to create apprenticeships from existing paid staff and often higher paid staff. These apprenticeships are more expensive to deliver and they cause problems for the overall financial sustainability of the programme.

So, what we need to demand is that levy funds are being used for additional opportunities to meet the skills needs of the workforce and paving the way to higher level learning, and that they are not being used to enhance already highly skilled employees. Finally, we believe an expansion of high-quality apprenticeships must have education at their heart, must relate to real job opportunities and to get to the root of tackling inequality and access to education and to the labour market. Apprenticeships must offer a clear programme of education and training importantly linked to the job itself. That is what is at the heart of an apprenticeship, a real genuine apprenticeship approach.

With education forming the core of apprenticeship programmes educators need to have a key role in developing it but too often it is employers taking the initiative and doing this. Partnerships between employers, teachers, and trade unions, should provide better apprenticeships for all concerned but it is vital that we as teachers, we would argue, are given the time, space, and resources, and our expertise is respected.

Finally, apprenticeships need to have parity in terms and conditions with all other employees. They need to be paid a fair rate and the gap between apprenticeship minimum wage and the national minimum wage should be abolished. Congress, I hope you will back this move unanimously and help provide a future for new entrants into the labour market. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Douglas. SOR to second.

Richard Evans (*Society of Radiographers*) seconded Composite Motion 1. *He said:* I am very happy to second the composite motion, real jobs and apprenticeships. As we have heard from Douglas the central importance of education within apprenticeship programmes is not recognised. A fair deal for apprentices includes the fundamental right to education for all. Education is a vital component of any apprenticeship programme, as we have heard. What is it, Congress, about the word “vital” that immediately reads “optional” in the hands of unscrupulous employers and providers of funding? Education is a right, not an option.

In healthcare professions apprenticeships as a route to registrable professional qualifications at level 6 are relatively new. Bodies such as the Nursing and Midwifery Council, or the Health Professions Council set standards that have to be

met if registration is to be granted and without registration to the same standard for an apprentice as for any other traditional graduate approach the qualifying student cannot practise, and this is a good thing. You do not want a two-tier health profession system.

It is not surprising that in these health profession apprenticeships there has been identified a need for education standards right the way through, which is great. However, it is disappointing that the funding that is available for the higher education institutions in order to provide this education is very frequently inadequate and falls way below the actual cost of delivering the training. Consequently, there is a disincentive for universities to provide apprenticeship education in the higher cost programmes, such as those in radiography and sonography. These are not programmes for people that already are in the workforce. These are people who aspire to health professions but cannot reach their aspirations through another route.

The funds are allocated by the Institute for Apprentices, the very body that we would expect to promote and value high-quality apprenticeships. I imagine they are under pressure like everyone else. However, promoting apprenticeships without providing for the educational component is what the composite is all about. The Institute of Apprenticeships' decision is bizarre and shameful and is setting the programmes up to fail.

In the case of radiography and sonography apprenticeships, the same is directly affecting access to a valuable new source of recruits for the desperately hard-pressed workforce and it is restricting those opportunities for people for whom an apprenticeship would represent a chance to follow an otherwise inaccessible career in

the NHS. Everyone has a right to education. Do not let education be squeezed out of apprenticeship programmes. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Richard. COP?

Martin Furlong (*The College of Podiatry*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1.

He said: I am pleased to be supporting the UCU and Society of Radiographers in Composite Motion 1. The College of Podiatry, like most other unions, is very supportive of apprenticeship schemes. Podiatry, like some of the other allied health professionals, have seen our student bursaries cut for our degree programmes and this has led to a disproportionate effect on what has now been determined four-bundle professions, podiatry, orthoptics, therapeutic radiographers, and orthotics. This has led to a 49% decline in student numbers in some areas of the UK. Previously, many podiatrists entered the profession as mature students or as a second degree and therefore the bursary was of great assistance to be able to support them and their families whilst gaining a new qualification.

Podiatrists play a key role in preventative care and stopping hospital admission in the UK. 3.7 million people in the UK have been diagnosed with diabetes, based on this figure 1.2 million of these will require regular podiatry appointments to ensure they remain ulcer and amputation free. The NHS currently spends £1bn a year on diabetic foot complications and approximately 6,000 people with diabetes have leg, foot, or toe amputations each year yet with the correct care 80% of these could be prevented.

Despite this, podiatry is an at-risk profession. Therefore, the apprenticeship model was welcomed by us as a way to assist people into this much needed profession.

However, we are acutely aware that without proper governance apprentices can be exploited and not receive proper remuneration for the work they do and are seen as a cheap labour force.

The College of Podiatry has worked with universities and the apprenticeship trusts to make sure that there is a robust scheme which increases the number of podiatrists getting trained whilst also making sure that the apprentice podiatrists are treated properly. We welcome this approach to all apprenticeship schemes and welcome this important campaign of the UCU, and others, to make sure that all apprentices get real jobs and real wages. However, our experience in trying to agree terms and conditions in discussions with the NHS has been a disappointing one.

In the NHS there is an opportunity for thousands of apprenticeships in a wide variety of professions, including our own, but also nursing and midwifery, physios and other essential services, opening opportunities for people from all backgrounds and other under-represented groups. However, the NHS has so far missed the opportunity that apprenticeships give them to be a shining light and a leader and by continually trying to keep rates of pay low they are also missing the opportunity to affect the numbers needed to keep our NHS services moving. Therefore, we support this motion.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Martin. I call UNISON.

Elliott Carter (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1. *He said:* I am a first time delegate and a first time speaker. *(Applause)* In UNISON we know the incredible value that the quality of an apprenticeship can bring both by giving young

people an opportunity to learn vital skills in the workplace and increasingly by giving working people an opportunity to build their skills at work.

Congress, there is a sustained lack of investment by this Government when our country faces a skills gap that can only be closed with the aid of apprenticeships. At a time when youth employment is at an all time high, when the training budgets have been slashed, a successful national plan for apprenticeships is what we need. Unfortunately, Congress, this is not what we have. David Cameron was Prime Minister, if you remember him, when he introduced the target of three million apprenticeships by 2020. It was in the Tory Manifesto in 2017 but last year it was abandoned because it could not be met. Instead of an increasing number of apprenticeships available the Government's plans actually reduced them at a time when there is so much uncertainty about the future of our country, the future of our work, and the public services. The very least that those who want to get an apprenticeship and learn skills and training deserve is a fair chance but the current system is failing them.

So, Congress, much more needs to be done to ensure apprenticeships are available at the right skills levels for those who want and need them. At the same time we have to be sure that employers are not misusing apprenticeships. An apprenticeship is not a cheap replacement for staff who retire or are made redundant. This is not fair on staff or apprentices themselves. UNISON welcomes the reference in this motion to the vital role that education must play in quality apprenticeships. An apprenticeship without education and without training simply is not an apprenticeship and does not deserve the name. That is why education is the key commitment in UNISON's own apprenticeship charter. Our charter actually goes further than the composite. We

want to see apprentices paid the actual rate for the job rather than a separate apprenticeship minimum wage.

Congress, it is also important that we address the imbalances in who apprentices are. Right now there is a gender imbalance. Black workers remain underrepresented and we must do all we can to recognise that older workers increasingly are apprentices too. Only by ensuring that apprenticeships are more widely available and reflect the diversity of our country and communities can they begin to properly address the challenges we face. Congress, we owe it to apprentices and would-be apprentices to make sure they are done properly and funded properly. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Well done, Elliott. I am sure you can tell from the reception that you have done really well. Elliott was from UNISON for those who spotted it. Can I now ask Unite and then NEU to speak.

Jonathan Davies (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1. He said: As our President, I was also born in Aberdare but bred in Merthyr Tydfil.

The President: Take as long as you want! *(Laughter)*

Jonathan Davies (*Unite the Union*): Thank you very much. My brother and I have been in the construction industry for about 15 years and my father was also in the delegation 33 years. We all work at Hinckley Point C down in Somerset on the new nuclear power station where Unite has negotiated an aspiration of employing 1,000 apprentices made up of 400 for the civil construction phase, 400 for the mechanical

electrical phase, and 200 for facilities and office staff. Amazing figures, I am sure you will agree, for one single project but there have been some bad stories to date.

We have apprentices in the civil sector who have been used to sweep up, carry out traffic-marshalling duties and the like, hardly what you would call a proper apprenticeship. We have seen apprentices leave the project due to money issues, lack of training, and in some cases due to mental health issues. This is happening on the largest construction project in Europe with trade union recognition. We are continually pushing for quality apprenticeships and we will not stop until it is guaranteed. Imagine what it is like on our smaller projects or those without a trade union to support them.

However, there is some positive news you will be pleased to know. We have a purpose built apprentice hub on site at Hinkley Point where apprentices can spend quality time on catching up with their studies, furthering their education in a warm and friendly environment. This is the standard we demand for the young to learn. We have nowhere near enough qualified workers to build the up and coming projects such as Sizewell C, Bradwell, and of course HS2.

The average age in our industry is over 50 years. This is just one industry that this Government are failing. We must ensure that the quality of the apprenticeships must be bettered and never lowered. We demand quality and quantity and Unite is leading the way. This is nowhere enough to sustain our industry where we already have huge skill shortages. We need this to be replicated across our great industry. We are struggling to attract young people into our industry due to the long hours, adverse

weather, coupled with the health and safety conditions on some projects. It is not an attractive industry, especially with mental health issues amongst the young.

I believe they should start a national minimum wage to reflect the true cost of living. They are working the same hours, have the same outgoings, and in some cases do the same work as their co-workers but earning up to four times less. Our agreements at Hinkley Point are enhanced from the national agreement but it is still not enough. Apprentices are our future workers. We must support and fight for pay and rights for our apprentices. We need a government willing to put its money where its mouth is and get the young working. We need a Jeremy Corbyn-led government. We want apprentices. We want quality. We want quantity. Most of all, we want a Jeremy Corbyn-led government. I support this composite. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Jonathan. We will be raising a glass tonight. Well done. Can I finally call the NEU in this debate and then we will go to the vote.

Thom Kirkwood (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1. *He said:* I am a first time delegate and so far as I can find out a first ever non binary speaker at Congress. (*Applause*) Good morning. I am an English teacher and, let's be honest, something of a pedant so I care very, very deeply about the accurate and precise use of language. Being a teacher I always carry round my dictionary. I have here the definition of an apprenticeship: apprenticeship, noun, the state in which a person is receiving training in a skilled trade or profession from an employer under legal contract. Origin, French, *apprendre*, to learn.

I would quite like to share that with Therese Coffey, who is for the moment at least the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, hopefully it will be someone much more friendly to us in a couple of weeks' time but let's not get into that now. They do not seem to quite understand what apprenticeships mean. They think apprenticeships mean patronising and exploitation rather than training and education. Doing a big pile of photocopying for your boss is not gaining training in a skilled profession. Making a cup of tea is not learning and doing the job that you have been doing for a decade for half the pay you were on before, which is the situation that some TAs have found themselves in after being dismissed and re-engaged as apprentices, absolutely disgracefully, but it is not education.

Apprentices often do not know their rights and that is how the Government likes it. The Government and employers do not want workers who are highly skilled, highly trained in their jobs and know their rights because they might argue with their bosses. They do not want that. They want workers who will do what they are told.

I am going to take a moment, being from Yorkshire, to congratulate Gareth Lewis from Yorkshire TUC and Jo Wheatley from GMB in Bradford, who have been going round the schools in Bradford, talking to school leavers about their rights if they are going to do apprenticeships, talking to them about trade unions, and giving out apprentice rights cards, which has been absolutely brilliant.

It should not be our job. The Government should be making sure that apprentices get the pay, the rights, and the education that they deserve. When the Government does not do that, we need to hold their feet to the fire. I am obviously speaking metaphorically. I am not actually advocating torture on government ministers though

where Jacob Rees-Mogg is concerned, it might be tempting. Congress, we need to say no to patronising and exploitation, but yes to training and education. I urge you, please, to support this motion. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

The President: Thanks very much to you as well, Thom. It was an excellent debate. I am now going to move to the vote. All those in favour of Composite 1 please show. Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Composite Motion 1 was CARRIED*

The President: I now call paragraph 3.6 and Motion 4, Skills and retraining. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by Community, seconded by Prospect, and I also intend to call Usdaw. So, could Prospect and Usdaw come to the front and Community to move Motion 4.

Skills and retraining

Audrey McJimpsey (*Community*) moved Motion 4. She said: Congress, not only have we fallen to the bottom of the G7 fourth league table due to the uncertainty around our economy, we are now set to fall from fourth to sixth of that G7 group, with low skills and qualifications. We are lagging behind other countries due to the lack of action from our government and we are set yet to see significant signs of improvement and investment in our country's education, skills, and training. Instead we have seen cuts in public funding for adult skills and diminishing employer investment in training. That means that we are most in need of skills and retraining and getting the help we need, plus our economy and attitudes to work are changing.

Research from the Social Mobility Commission showed that half of the adults in the most social economic group are doing no training at all after leaving school. Low skilled workers are getting less opportunity to build their skills and escape low pay. It is no surprise that one in four of the UK's low paid workers will never actually escape low pay. When we look to the changing world of work most of the young workers and adults have not only been let down but are at risk of being left behind.

Low skills and younger workers will be the most affected by automation displacement and many challenges workers face across the country as part of the changing world of work are the skills and challenges of the future. That is why in order to drive innovation, productivity, and economic growth re-skilling programmes and training offer a critical route in supporting workers transitioning through technological change. Trade unions, union learning, and our education teams, have a huge role to play in giving workers opportunities to access skill-based learning and retraining. Already through our work we have transformed the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers and got them into our Movement but, Congress, we need to go further. We need a clear strategy, increased investment, and a strong commitment from employers. They are the ones failing to offer thousands of workers the training they need which would increase the skills and wages and help progress in the workplace. The reality is by improving skills of adults across the country we could boost the UK economy by £20 billion a year and help an extra 200,000 people into work. That is transforming for our economy.

Congress, as part of the strategy workers need environments where people can develop their skills, where they are provided with well paid apprenticeships, better skills provision, and increased investment in training, where we see a reversal in cuts

to adult learning and further education and free college courses for people who have left employment, and re-skilling programmes and training which the people need the most. This will take a concerted effort from employers, government, and unions, but if we work together we can ensure employees will continue to have a valuable role to play in the future workplace and adults across the UK will be able to access these jobs. Learning and skills are crucial to economic growth and for social justice and as part of the wider long-term economic strategy an industrial strategy. The relationships people will have with work will change over the coming years and how this happens depends on the decision-makers in business and how government respond to the challenges as they arise, and trade unions shape those challenges.

Congress, the skills challenging base is one of the greatest battles of our age and it is vital that we get this right and it is our responsibility to deliver for all industries and sectors for generations to come. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, Audrey. Prospect to second.

Neil Hope-Collins (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 4. *He said:* I am proud to be seconding this motion on skills and education. Who wouldn't? Skills and education are a good thing; right? They are a foundation for our lives, our working lives, society, and us as a trades union movement. Our Movement is built on educating and empowering our members to take the jobs that are there, to equip them for whatever technological changes are coming. This has been the same for as long as we have been in existence and as long as people have worked.

The tech changes but the problem does not. The problem is how do you equip people, workers, our members, to take advantage of the wealth that exists in the jobs to come. We know how to approach this, Congress. We have done this before so many times. This time the transition is driven by tech changes around computers and AI, and programming, and it is also boosted by the green agenda, a just transition. I am not going to talk a huge amount about that now because that comes this afternoon, but that does have a huge influence on the changes that are coming. So would an industrial strategy, if the country had one.

An industrial strategy has to start with what does the future of industry in the UK look like, and then actually coming from my day job inspecting as the health and safety inspector looking at what companies do to equip themselves to actually deal with the stuff to come, you do a training needs analysis. You look at what skills those future jobs need. You look at what you have already and you look at the difference between the two and actually it is down to the businesses and to government to fund that because if they want the benefit and we want to share those benefits, then they have to pay for it. They should not put all the costs of the training on to the people who have to take the training. It is the people who benefit who need to be investing in the training of our members.

The green agenda brings so many opportunities. The International Labour Organisation says that the green jobs will actually add up to about 15-16 million jobs globally in addition to the jobs that are coming now. The transition from emission intensive industries to the green industries is an opportunity for our members and for those workers who are not our members yet. Let's not forget that. There is a whole future of people who are not members yet. We need to be looking at those.

Unfortunately, the tech areas that are the real growing ones, the fastest growing areas around coding are the most male dominated. A survey of open sourced projects in 2017 said that only 3% of contributors were women. Education and skills is not just for the few. Education and skills has to support a diverse future workforce. Congress, I urge you to support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you very much, Neil. Thank you to those unions, who, to assist with time, have declined speaking in this debate. I now move to the vote on Motion 4. All those in favour please show. Thank you. Any against? Thank you. That is carried unanimously. Thanks very much.

* *Motion 4 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, before we take Motion 65, I am really pleased to announce that we have been joined now by some very important and brave strikers. These are health visitors taking strike action in Lincolnshire. Could I ask them to stand and could I ask Congress to give them all our traditional solidarity. *(Standing ovation)* We hope you can take this back to all your colleagues, and I hope you can share the inspiration you are giving to trade union delegates here from throughout the UK, representing all parts of the workforce everywhere. Well done. We hope you enjoy the debate and listening to Jeremy Corbyn shortly. Fantastic! The most brilliant thing I think so far about our Congress has been the amount of disputes and the welcomes that we have given strikers. It has been a real sign of what is going on. Well done to everybody. Good luck with your strike.

I am now going to move on to call paragraph 4.6 and Motion 65, Re-building local government. The General Council support the motion. It is going to be moved by Unison, seconded by Equity, and I am going to call Unite to speak in this debate. Could Unison move the motion and if Equity and Unite can get ready that would be great.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Section 4: Good services

Rebuilding local government

Josie Bird (*UNISON*) moved Motion 65. She said: Congress, local government workers like myself know that local government has been in the forefront of Tory austerity since it commenced in 2010. While we sit in this hall the Tory Party are tearing themselves apart or are in a new political row. As entertaining as it may be to watch the Government start to decimate themselves rather than public services, it really does not fix anything. We are still facing a crisis across the whole of local government. Remember back in the day when David Cameron and George Osborne told us, *We are all in this together*, that cutting spending on public services would ensure that everybody knew they were playing an equal part in the tough times the country was going through. It is not exactly how it played out.

The poor, as the saying goes, have got poorer. Public servants have paid with their jobs, their livelihoods, the communities they support have lost essential services they rely on and, make no mistake, the rich have got richer. Nearly a decade later Boris Johnson is Prime Minister and Theresa May's premiership has looked comparatively successful. We know that Johnson's vision of Britain is one of low tax and zero

regulation, a home from home for the global banking elite where anyone but the British public owns our public services. We also know that in reality Brexit has helped shift the attention away from austerity. Austerity has not ended. The Government have just stopped talking about it. We are facing the consequences of austerity every day in our workplaces. Due to lack of funding, local government is stretched to crisis point barely able to provide even statutory services. Exacerbating this is the continued rollout of Universal Credit, pushing even more families into poverty and increasing the need for quality public services. We have no government action to address the crisis in social care, investment in council housing, the underfunding of the NHS, damaging cuts to schools funding, the undoubted link in the increase in food bank use and the increase in child poverty.

This Government have no regard for the needs of working class people, the vulnerable people, and for those who provide vital public services to everyone. Congress, Johnson did state that alongside his vision for the future was a promise to spend more on public services but we know you should never trust a Tory, let alone one who drove round the country in a big red bus promising to spend £350m on the NHS. Johnson also told us that he would not prorogue parliament and then we found out he had ordered it to happen weeks ago. He told us he did not want a general election and then a day later he stood in the House of Commons and said he was going to try and call one. He told us he wanted a deal with Europe but did nothing to make that happen. When it came to last week's spending review the settlement for councils disappointed once again. There was certainly nothing to undo the huge damage that has been done through a decade of devastating cuts that have decimated local services. It has not even begun to touch the shortfalls in spending on public services that have resulted from our last decade of austerity.

Congress, let's not forget that these cuts have destroyed communities in a way that we have not seen since my childhood in the 1980s. The Tories still plan to remove all central funding for local government next year and completely wreck any concept of local funding based on need. These cuts have had real world impact, destroying the ability of councils to help the most vulnerable. Just look at adult social care. The money the Chancellor announced last week comes nowhere near reversing the £7bn of cuts councils have had to their care budgets since 2010.

UNISON has promoted a strategy for jobs and growth as part of a plan on how the national economy can start growing again, by using cheap borrowing for investment to bring jobs to areas of high unemployment, kick-starting the economy by clamping down on tax avoidance, and cutting back on government vanity projects like free schools. Instead of public sector pay restraint and the so-called national living wage we are campaigning for a real living wage in councils and education establishments across the country. We are looking at how a government can build an economy that focuses on industries across the country rather than the Tories' continuing obsession of financial services in the City of London. For local councils what we need is a long-term sustainable funding solution for local government that takes into account regional disparities and the needs of local people. Congress, councils are a vital part of the public services family. Let's stand up for them today and in the future and let's make sure that they have a future that lasts longer than Boris Johnson's premiership.

(Applause)

Isabella Jarrett (*Equity*) seconded Motion 65. *She said:* Congress, local government has borne the brunt of austerity. As well as the shocking impact this has

had on its ability to provide essential services supporting people, it has also hit arts and culture in the regions particularly hard.

The value of the creative industries to the UK is now over £100 billion. This success has been built in the main on public investment. Local authorities remain the biggest funder of arts and culture because of the huge benefits this investment brings to their areas, from helping to drive economic growth and jobs to making our cities, towns and villages interesting and vibrant places to live.

When Hull was the UK City of Culture in 2017, it helped to generate not only £300 million from local tourism over that year, but it led to a real boost to local pride in the city and its history. But the loss of funding from local government has put the sustainability of many creative organisations at risk, which is having a knock-on effect on work opportunities for Equity members, who often struggle to find enough work in the UK's nations and regions to sustain a career in the sector.

Regional theatre has always played a pole role in our industry for training and nurturing its future talent -- its actors, designers, directors and writers. Danny Boyle started out in Bolton's Octagon; Indhu Rubasingham at Theatre Royal, Stratford East; and Rachel O'Riordan at Perth Theatre. The role of public investment allowed them to take risks and to produce new and exciting work, precisely because they did not have to rely completely on ticket sales at the box office.

At Equity, we have been watching with alarm the parlous state of some of our much-loved regional theatres and a growing trend of some of them largely becoming host venues for touring productions rather than for producing their own work. Some

got it right, maintaining funding against unprecedented pressures; some did not, by cutting. In Scotland, investment has held up; in Northern Ireland and Wales, not so much.

The rise in spending announced last week is something, but more needs to be done to make sure that local government gets the long-term sustained funding it needs and can rely on. In our sector, local funding and the provision of locally-commissioned services is also vital for ensuring that public investment and culture engages local communities and provides for local needs and wants and the local economy reaps the economic rewards of that investment. Please support the motion. Thank you.
(Applause)

Gail Cartmail (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 65. *She said:* I am speaking in support of Motion 65, which states unreservedly that more resources are needed to support people from cradle to grave and one such service is health visiting.

Congress, a history lesson. In 1896, the Women's Sanitary Inspectors' Association was founded and was renamed the Women's Sanitary Inspectors and Health Visitors' Association in 1915. It was the first health union to affiliate to the TUC in 1924. These pioneering women supported women's suffrage, working in the slums, shoulder to shoulder with the likes of Sylvia Pankhurst, fighting appalling deprivation, the hallmark of capitalist greed and exploitation then and now.

Today in Unite, health visitors have held on to their emblematic colours -- green, white and violet, "Give women the vote" -- although I see they are in red today, but there is a reason for that. They have a proud history of independent advocacy and yet

now many have been transferred to local authorities and they are at the sharp end of cuts.

Congress, since 2015, the number of health visitors has been cut by 25% and those that remain struggle with dangerously high case loads. In Lincolnshire, health visitors have been at the receiving end of a three-year pay freeze. These 58 health visitors, having been transferred from the NHS, have since been robbed of £3,000 a year. Apart from this accumulative pay cut, they are seriously concerned about the downgrading of the health visitors' professional status, resulting in fewer staff doing the specialist health visitor role. Alarming, they have been told that health visiting is not a life and death service. Tell that to a health visitor giving harrowing evidence to a child death inquiry.

Congress, as you have heard, they have said, "Enough is enough." Lincolnshire health visitors have taken 18 days' strike action and they are now in the midst of a nine-day run of continuous industrial action. Their strike is unprecedented in the health visiting profession. As you have heard, Congress, three of these magnificent women are here today: Claire, Hayley and Nicola. *(Applause)*

Congress, this motion calls on us all to support a high-profile campaign to reverse the cuts. I ask that we salute again the Lincolnshire health visitors and campaign to achieve just that. As the women's suffrage Movement demanded, "Action in deeds not words". Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you very much for that, Gail. I hope that Claire, Nicola and Hayley take that back to their colleagues. It is fantastic and I am sure we are about to

carry the motion unanimously. You can take that back as well, not that I am pre-empting the vote!

Congress, can we now move to the vote on Motion 65. All those in favour, please show? Thank you. All those against? Thank you. That is unanimously carried so solidarity, colleagues.

* *Motion 65 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, I would now like to invite on to the stage the leader of the Labour Party and hopefully our next Prime Minister, Jeremy Corbyn. Over the last couple of months and days, Jeremy has shown our country true leadership by defending working people and Parliament against this hard-right Tory Government. He stood up against a no-deal Brexit, he stood up against prorogation of Parliament, and last night he once again stood up against the Prime Minister's efforts to circumvent our democracy.

We all know, Congress -- and we have talked about it a lot this week -- that it is a case of when and not if a general election will be held. We look forward to Jeremy setting out Labour's vision to win that election. Congress, can you all now give a big welcome to Jeremy Corbyn. (*Cheers and applause*)

Address by the leader of the Labour Party

Jeremy Corbyn MP: Congress, thank you for that very warm welcome and thank you for inviting me here. It is an absolute honour to be asked to address you again. I

got home from Parliament at about 2 o'clock this morning. We made it here this morning, but I guess some of you probably got back to your hotels even later than I got home! *(Laughter)*

I am proud that trade unions and the Labour Party are working as closely together now as we ever have because together we are one movement, the Labour Movement, the greatest force for progressive change this country has ever known. Let us be proud of our Movement and proud of the changes we can and will bring about. *(Applause)*

So thank you to every single one of you for what you do for your members and for our society and thank you, Frances O'Grady, for your work as TUC General Secretary. *(Applause)* You are a brilliant voice standing up for workers.

I want to pay special thanks too to the TUC President, Mark Serwotka. Mark, you are one of the most dedicated and bravest trade union leaders we have ever had and you are a walking advertisement for our National Health Service and the principles behind it. *(Applause)* Your union, the PCS, is doing brilliantly representing workers at BEIS, the department in Whitehall, some of whom were here yesterday and who have been on strike for two months now because the Government will not pay them the living wage. Solidarity to them. *(Applause)* It comes to something, does it not, when a department in Whitehall has to set up a food bank for people who work in that building because their wage levels are so low they can only get enough food by going to a food bank. That is modern Britain.

I also want to send solidarity to the occupying workers at Harland & Wolff, some of

whom have joined us here today. (*Applause*) Well done on your campaign to defend jobs and in trying to ensure that there is a future for Harland & Wolff in Belfast.

Congress, this time last week, the Conservatives and the DUP had a majority of 1 in the House of Commons. The last time I checked, their majority was down to -45. Today, Parliament stands empty, shut down by a Prime Minister running away from scrutiny. But let me say this: we must not ever mistake the drama at Westminster for what real politics is about. What truly matters to people is not resignations, defections and late-night votes in Parliament. For most people, all of that is a million miles away. What truly matters is the reality of their everyday lives in their community, on their streets and at their workplace. Real politics, for me, is not about the Parliamentary knockabout with all its baffling language and procedures. Real politics is about giving power to people who do not have a lot of money and do not have friends in high places so they can take control of their own lives.

Boris Johnson's political strategy is perfectly clear. He wants to stage a showdown over a no-deal Brexit that he can repackage as a battle between Parliament and the people, with the people in this melodrama played by none other than that man of the people, Boris Johnson himself. But the idea that Johnson and his wealthy friends and backers somehow represent people is truly absurd. Johnson and his right-wing Cabinet are not only on the side of the establishment; they are the establishment. (*Applause*) This Tory Government is not so different from any other Tory Government. They will help the rich to get richer and make working-class people pay.

Johnson's reckless no deal would destroy jobs, push up food prices in the shops and

cause shortages of everyday medicines that people rely upon. It will disrupt supply chains in the manufacturing industry and lead to all kinds of problems in many other places of work. Who bears the cost of that? It will not be Johnson and his wealthy friends. It is not their livelihoods on the line. It will be the rest of us, just as it was not the bankers who Boris Johnson still defends. Who paid the price for the financial crash of 2008? It was tens of millions of working people who had absolutely nothing to do with it. *(Applause)*

For the Tories, this is about so much more than leaving the European Union. It is about hijacking the referendum result to shift even more power and wealth to those at the top. They will use a no-deal crash to push through policies that benefit them and their super-rich supporters and hurt everyone else, just as they did after the financial crash. Under the cover of no deal, they will sell off our public services, strip away the regulations that keep us safe and undermine workers' rights. They will cement all of this in a race-to-the-bottom trade deal with Donald Trump.

Be in no doubt that a no-deal Brexit is really a Trump-deal Brexit, which will lead to a one-sided United States trade deal negotiated from a position of weakness. It will put us at the mercy of Trump and the big US corporations itching, absolutely itching, to get their teeth even further into our National Health Service. It will sound the death knell for our steel industry and permanently drive down rights and protections for workers.

I am not prepared to stand by and let that happen and we will not be importing the so-called "right to work" laws from the United States -- an Orwellian name if ever I heard one -- or any other union-busting laws opposed by our comrades and brothers

and sisters in the American trade unions that Trump will want to impose on workers in this country. A Trump-deal Brexit would be a betrayal of the generations of workers who went before, who fought so hard to win rights and build the public services that bind our society together. That is their legacy, their gift to us. We are not going to let Boris Johnson trade it all away for a sweetheart deal with Donald Trump. *(Applause)*

That is why our first priority is to stop no deal and then to trigger a general election. Amber Rudd's resignation confirmed that the Government is not serious about trying to get a deal in Brussels. As the Prime Minister's top adviser reportedly said, the negotiations are "a sham". No one can trust the word of a prime minister who is threatening to break the law to force through no deal.

So, a general election is coming, but we will not allow Johnson to dictate the terms and I can tell you this: we are ready for that election. We are ready to unleash the biggest people-powered campaign we have ever seen in this country and in this Movement. *(Cheers and applause)* In that election, we will commit to a public vote with a credible option to leave and the option to remain.

Labour is on the side of the people in the real battle against the born-to-rule establishment that Johnson represents. We stand for the interests of the many, the overwhelming majority who do the work and pay their taxes, not the few at the top who hoard the wealth and dodge their taxes. It is Labour's historic mission to transform people's lives and that transformation begins in the workplace.

In our country, workers have been losing out for far, far too long. For 40 years, the

share of the cake going to workers has been getting smaller and smaller and smaller. Take these figures: in 1976, wages took over 64% of the GDP; that figure is now only 54%. It is no coincidence that the same period has seen a sustained attack on the organisations that represent workers -- trade unions. We are here today. We have witnessed a deliberate, decades-long transfer of power away from working people. The consequences are stark for all workers, whether they are members of a trade union or not. Pay is lower than it was a decade ago in real terms.

I am told that the last decade has seen the biggest squeeze on wages since the Napoleonic Wars. Personally, I cannot remember that far back so I tried to contact Jacob Rees-Mogg this morning to check because he knows these things, but he was fast asleep again on the Government benches, as he always is! (*Applause*)

Things cannot go on as they are. Change is coming and it must be change that gives power to the true wealth creators -- the workers. So today we are announcing that the next Labour government will bring about the biggest extension of rights for workers that our country has ever seen. (*Cheers and applause*) We will put power in the hands of workers. What will that mean for people? It will be better wages, greater security and more say. We will give workers a seat at the Cabinet table by establishing a new Ministry of Employment Rights. Our Shadow Secretary of State for Employment Rights, Laura Pidcock, will explain the detail of our plans when she speaks later today and I am looking forward to hearing her speech.

But let me give you an overview. At the core of its work will be rolling out collective bargaining across the economy, sector by sector. (*Applause*) It is a system that they have in many of the most successful economies around the world. It prevents

undercutting on wages, fosters workplace stability and encourages businesses to invest in productivity. It is only by acting together collectively that workers can really make their voices heard. So, within 100 days of our Government taking office, we will repeal the Tory Trade Union Act. *(Cheers and applause)*

There is nothing scary about trade unions, however hard the billionaire-owned media tries to paint them as such. They are the country's largest democratic organisations rooted in the workplace and indeed in the communities. Why should democracy end when you walk into work? Why should the place where you spend most of your day sometimes feel a bit like a dictatorship? If, as an individual, you are asked to work in conditions that are unsafe, what choice do you have? It is take it or leave it. But as part of a union with strength in numbers, you can demand a safe working environment. I want to say this to everybody who is watching beyond this hall. If you are feeling powerless about your work situation, take action now, today. Join a trade union. *(Cheers and applause)*

But there is a big role for Government too in extending workers' legal rights. Labour will deliver a real living wage of at least £10.00 per hour for all workers from the age of 16. *(Applause)* Action will be taken on the gender pay gap, with equal rights for all workers from day one and, let us be absolutely clear, the end of zero hours contracts. *(Cheers and applause)* Also, Labour will not tell people they have to work until they are 75 before getting their pensions. *(Applause)*

But rights, as all of you in this hall know, only mean anything if they are enforced and you have the power to enforce them. Too many employers are getting away with flouting laws. Nearly half a million people are still being paid less than the minimum

wage. We will put a stop to that. We will create a Workers' Protection Agency with real teeth, including the power to enter workplaces and bring prosecutions on behalf of workers. (Applause)

If you are a worker with a boss who makes you work extra hours for no pay or forces you into a dangerous situation, you deserve a government that is on your side and ready to step in to support you. In a small workplace, as a worker on your own, you are not in a very powerful position if you are asked to do something you should not be doing. You know it is wrong, but you cannot do much about it. We need a change of power in our society.

Our proposals have been developed in consultation with experts. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking John Hendy and Keith Ewing in particular for all their help and advice, and special congratulations to John Hendy and Christine Blower today for joining the Labour team. (Applause)

Congress, what we are outlining today will lay the ground for a fundamental transformation of our economy in favour of the many. But I have some bad news. We have been found out, absolutely found out, bang to rights. Last week, the *Financial Times* said that the Labour Party is -- and I am forced to quote this -- "determined to shift power away from bosses and landlords to workers and tenants." Well, there has been no shortage of rather unkind reporting about our party over the last few years, but this time they have got it absolutely right. (Applause)

We will put workers on company boards and give the workforce a 10% stake in large companies, paying a dividend of as much as £500.00 a year to each employee. We

will give tenants more rights, including caps on rent rises, and that principle of empowering people does not just apply to the workplace. We will bring rail, mail, water and the National Grid into public ownership. *(Cheers and applause)* So the essential utilities that people rely on are run by, and for, the public and not just the shareholders.

I want to thank all of the unions that are working with us to develop our new model of public ownership. I want to thank all of the unions that have put forward great ideas and have taken part in very interesting discussions about how we are going to bring this about. We are not recreating the nationalised industry boards of the past; we are creating the democracy of tomorrow. *(Applause)*

As we set out how our future economy will operate, we cannot ignore the most pressing issue of all -- the climate crisis. The destruction of our climate is also a class issue. It is working-class communities that suffer the worst air pollution. Think of all the children living on our most polluted streets and where they are. It is working-class people who will lose their jobs as resources run down. The super-rich and the giant corporations will never solve the major design flaws in our economy that are the cause of the problem because their interests are tied up with them, but by working with the trades union Movement, we will start a green industrial revolution, creating 400,000 well-paid, high-skilled, unionised jobs in renewable energy and green technologies. We will locate these new industries in the parts of the country that have been held back by successive governments that have focused on the richest in the City of London.

Congress, the general election is coming. There will be a real change of direction. In

Steve White (*Fire Brigades Union*) moved Motion 66. *He said:* On 14th June 2017, a fire occurred at Grenfell Tower in west London that killed 72 people, 72 people who had every right to believe that their homes had been built, maintained and refurbished with their safety from fire in mind. But 72 people and hundreds of others (bereaved, survivors and residents) deserve justice.

Last year, Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry considered the events of that night, considering 668 statements from fire fighters (operational and in control) and hearing oral evidence from 88 of them. I want to thank our members at the incident and in control rooms who were faced with a situation that they were never trained to deal with, who worked tirelessly throughout that night to save as many lives as they could. I want to pay tribute to every member who gave a statement to the inquiry, reliving events of that night, sometimes at great personal cost, and to the members that we witnessed day after day giving oral evidence to the inquiry, honestly and clearly to the best of their ability.

I also want to place on record our thanks for the immense work of FBU officials from around the country who ensured that every member who gave evidence to the inquiry was supported by their union. (*Applause*) Our message to our members is clear: the FBU have got your back.

Congress, I also want to pay tribute to the community, who continue to respond to this tragedy with dignity and tenacity. We are all still waiting for the inquiry's interim report. It is bound to be critical of the London Fire Brigade. It may also make criticisms of individual firefighters. Rest assured that we will respond robustly if any

of our members are attacked by the public inquiry. It is our duty to ensure that our members are not scapegoated for the failings of those above their pay grade, be they fire service bosses or Government ministers.

Phase 2 -- what happened before and after the fire -- is unlikely to start until next year and may go on for many years. The FBU will continue to participate in the inquiry for as long as necessary. We have made detailed submissions about the fire safety regime, deregulation and the failures of politicians over many decades.

We need to remind politicians that the people who lived in Grenfell Tower are not to blame for what happened. We need to remind politicians that firefighters are not responsible for the fire at Grenfell Tower. The owners and senior managers of the building -- the construction firms, the contractors, those who sold and installed the cladding, the fire doors and the windows -- all need to answer for their role in this tragedy, as must local councillors who made decisions to contract out the building and ignored their own residents' concerns and, above all, Westminster politicians who watered down fire safety regulations, imposed austerity on the fire and rescue service (and indeed on all of us) and who failed to respond to the advice of coroners, fire safety experts and warnings given by this union.

Congress, I ask you to support us in our campaign "Grenfell - never again". We seek to engage with the community and other campaigners to demand the removal and banning of all combustible cladding. Whilst we have been here, Congress, we have seen pictures of another fire at Worcester Park and we must ask questions about that building's construction.

We call for a national review of the "stay put" policy, the strengthening of tenants' rights, new national structures for the fire and rescue service and an increase in specialist fire safety officers. Congress, we must make sure that nothing like Grenfell Tower ever happens again. Congress, I move. Justice for Grenfell! *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you for that, Steve. I am sure the whole of Congress would want to convey our admiration and solidarity with the FBU and the fabulous work that has been done in the face of this tragedy, so well done. *(Applause)* I call on Unite to second.

James Mitchell *(Unite the Union)* seconded the motion. *He said:* I am speaking as a proud brother of a firefighter so my solidarity goes to you all.

Congress, we lost members of our Unite family at Grenfell and we continue to share the pain of the community and of our FBU comrades who rushed to their aid. Even as recently as yesterday, 120 firefighters have been saving lives at Worcester Park, as was mentioned, and our solidarity is with them all. I would like Congress to show their solidarity to people who always put their lives first for the safety of ours. Can you give them a round of applause, please? *(Applause)*

Our Movement is built on the belief that an injury to one is a concern of us all and I am proud that my union has risen to this ideal. Over the past two years, Unite ensured that our members were registered as core participants in the Grenfell inquiry and we added our collective voice to their demand for an immediate ban on the use of combustible materials on high-rise blocks.

Congress, just as the warning of the Grenfell residents was ignored before the fire, so the lessons that should have been taken from their deaths are going unheeded. It is staggering that two years later, at least 2,000 public buildings continue to be wrapped in the same cladding of dangerous materials. It is a scandal.

The bitter truth remains that Grenfell was not an act of God or a tragedy which could not have been prevented or foreseen. It was the result of decisions taken by people in authority, who were prepared to allow other people to shoulder the blame. I will not mince my words on this; it was by some greedy bastards who are guilty and must be dragged from the shadows into the light of justice. For justice to be done for the people of Grenfell, we must be able to hold to account each and every individual in the chain of responsibility from ministers all the way down.

Two years may have passed, but we have not forgotten, nor will we forget. Congress, as a mark of our continued collective solidarity with the heroes and the victims of Grenfell, I call for you to support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Keith Brockie (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of the motion. *He said:* Two PCS members escaped from Grenfell on that day although one of them unfortunately went on to lose the baby she was carrying. Another PCS member was not in Grenfell that day, but he lost his entire family. Still, two-and-half-years later, scandalously, tens of thousands of people are still living and working in unsafe buildings.

The ultimate cause perhaps of Grenfell was deregulation, outsourcing and austerity. That is what caused those 72 deaths on that day in June 2017, but virtually no

progress, as you have heard, has been made at all. The Royal Institute of British Architects in England has said that apart from abandoning cladding on new buildings, nothing at all has changed in building regulations since Grenfell two-and-a-half years later. Unsafe buildings are still being built today according to those regulations. RIBA, quite rightly, are scathing in their condemnation at this glacial (at best) approach to reform and they are also quite clear that England, unfortunately, lags far behind Scotland and Wales, where significant changes to building regulations have been made in the light of Grenfell.

As well as the building regulations changing, the whole deregulation and outsourcing agenda needs to be reversed. PCS, as the largest civil service union, has repeatedly called on the UK Government to reverse the outsourcing of health and safety legislation and the building regulations in England. They are still in the public sector in Scotland and Wales, thankfully. We will continue to do that.

I want to finish by applauding our brave firefighters not only at Grenfell, but at Worcester Park the other day, and at every event like this. They put their lives on the line to protect us, the public. We stand in full solidarity with our comrades who have campaigned tirelessly on this issue: never again. Please support, Congress.

(Applause)

Conroy Lawrence (*UNISON*) spoke in support of the motion. *He said:* Congress, the devastating tragedy of Grenfell was the worst residential fire since the Second World War. It took many lives and continues to wreck the lives of many more. It has exposed the failures of Government policies, including poor-quality housing investment, poor safety standards, deregulation and the privatisation of building

control services. This has left many social homes of poor quality, unfit for human habitation.

Congress, two years after the tragedy, Grenfell is still an open wound for the community. Thousands of people are still trapped in residential tower blocks in both social and private rented sectors, which are clad in flammable material and are living in fear of a devastating fire. This is made worse by the fact that some private buildings' owners are passing on huge bills for safety works to leaseholders.

The Government pledged to provide support and justice for those affected by the tragedy, but to date they have not done enough to ensure the safety of residents in residential buildings. Congress, Grenfell happened because the concerns of residents about fire safety in their homes were not heard. Tenants across the country continue to voice concerns yet many are being silenced as they face threats and intimidation, just the same as those faced by the Grenfell residents.

The slow progress in rehousing tenants and in providing support to them is a blatant disregard of residents and their safety. Grenfell survivors and those affected by fire safety issues across the country need ongoing support to rebuild their lives. UNISON stands in solidarity with them. Our members are working hard to provide support and to rehouse survivors. The task remains a priority which is hindered by the failed Tory policies which continue to denigrate social housing. The Grenfell Tower inquiry has been delayed. To date, we still do not know the full details of the causes of the fire that led to the worst tower-block fire in history, nor has anybody been held responsible over failures in the building safety regulations system.

Congress, the Government have promised to reform the regulatory system and to give residents a stronger voice. It must now deliver. It must also introduce a universal ban on the use of combustible materials on residential blocks and commit more money for the removal of dangerous materials and cladding. It must reverse the outsourcing of health and safety and building control services. It must commit more resources to fire and rescue services and local authority building control services. It must commit to investing in new and existing social homes to ensure that the horrific tragedy of Grenfell never happens again. This will ensure that people have access to safe and decent homes and rebuild a trust amongst residents. Congress, please support this important motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you for all the speeches. Can I move straight to the vote on Motion 66, Grenfell Tower -- never again. All those in favour? All those against? Thank you. That is carried unanimously.

* Motion 66 was CARRIED

The President: We now move on to Composite Motion 16, Over-75s TV licenses and BBC funding. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by Prospect and seconded by the NUJ. I intend to call the GMB. If those speakers could be ready, we will move on as swiftly as we can. It is Prospect to move.

Over-75s TV licences and protecting BBC funding for over-75s

Gavin Moffitt (*Prospect*) moved Composite Motion 16. *He said:* I am the BECTU Secretary of Prospect and also a BBC staff member, moving Composite 16. In 2015,

the BBC, under immense pressure from the Tory Government, announced a new funding formula which linked the annual increase in the licence fee to inflation in return for the Corporation taking on the responsibility for free TV licences for 4.5 million households with an over-75 occupant. It should be pointed out that the Cameron/Clegg Coalition of 2010 pledged to protect this benefit. Forecasts suggest that this would cost the Corporation, by 2020, £745 million a year and, to put that into context, that represents 85% of BBC1's annual budget. Chancellor, George Osborne, allowed the BBC to determine itself the scale and scope of the licence concession from 2020, opening the way for the reduction or even abolition of the benefit. This was not widely reported at the time despite the press coverage.

The BBC attracted criticism from unions rightly arguing that the licence concession was a benefit payment which should be funded by the fiscal system through a governmental department budget. If the BBC has to fund the full cost, this would set a dangerous precedent, posing risks, in theory, to the winter fuel allowance, free bus passes, free prescriptions, free dentistry and free eye tests, similar benefits to pensioners from non-governmental providers that could have their costs transferred from the Government.

Last year, the BBC ran a consultation based on five options: maintaining the concession unchanged; scrapping the concession; reducing the discount to 50%; raising the qualifying age to 80; or means-testing household need before granting any concession. This garnered over 190,000 responses, nearly half of which favoured means testing. The outcome of the consultation was announced in June this year and having taken the consultation responses into account, the BBC's decision was that the over-75s concession would be means tested from April 2020, after which it would be

paid to around 900,000 homes where pension credit was being claimed.

However, pension credit is not claimed by all pensioners who qualify and by next year, it is estimated that roughly 1.5 million pensioners could be entitled to claim if they applied, obviously entitling them to a free TV licence. Concurrent with this announcement, the DWP reported that almost one million pensioners entitled to the credit do not claim it and if they did, this would cost the Exchequer an extra £2.5 billion per year.

By next year, if the new proposal is adopted, the BBC estimates that the cost of free over-75 licences to pensioners receiving pension credit will be £225 million a year with an additional £38 million in admin costs. This is equivalent to the annual combined budget of Radio 1, 2, 3 and Radio 5 or the combined budget of BBC4, CBBC and the BBC News channel.

Prospect's position is that the BBC is the cornerstone of the UK's public service broadcasting system and needs adequate funding to continue providing a unique mix of programming without advertising aimed at a broad range of interests amongst UK audiences. Everyone recognises how important TV content is in pensioner households. On average, over-75s watch more than 34 hours of television per week. Television is a vital source of information and entertainment to those pensioners where nearly 50% of those households have only one occupant, making it an essential antidote to loneliness and isolation.

We, in Prospect, absolutely support the continuation of free licences for all over-75 pensioners, but we absolutely believe also that the cost of this should revert to the

Government since the burden of the concession cannot be carried by the BBC without significant reductions in the services it provides. The reality of those reductions would be that it would mean job losses, not for the wonderful highly-paid on-air talent, but for real people like me and union members like you. This matters. Therefore, Congress, I move this composite and ask you to support it. Thank you.
(Applause)

Steven Bird (*National Union of Journalists*) seconded Composite Motion 16. *He said:* This motion is about two things. It is about another welfare cut on the most vulnerable and another attempt by the Government to put political and financial pressure on our public service broadcaster, the BBC.

As you heard just now very eloquently, research suggests that three million households could be affected by this attack on free licences. The concerns are that many of the one million plus households which do not claim benefits will also be affected. Therefore, this is also an attack on some of the most vulnerable and that is bad enough in itself.

Behind this is also further political and financial pressure on the BBC to toe the line. It forces the BBC to make the choice between an attack on pensioners or cutting services and programming. That is clearly going to be a divisive issue in terms of its relationship with the public. So, in supporting this motion, which I urge you all to do unanimously, we are asking you to support a move both to reverse this decision, to fully fund free licences for the over-75s, but also to join a campaign to make sure that there is sustainable and adequate funding for the BBC, our public service broadcaster, so that we can truly believe that they are free from political interference from the

Government of the day. That is why this is an important motion. I urge you all to support it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

John McDonnell (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 16. *He said:* I would like to take this opportunity to thank Age UK for their petition of 500,000 to maintain the free TV licence for the over-75s. *(Applause)*

I would like to talk today about the hypocrisy of the Tories. On June 6th, we celebrated 75 years since the Normandy landings. The Queen was there, the Prime Minister, Trump and the lot from Europe, saying, "What wonderful people you are for the sacrifices you made for the men, women and children." We had no sooner got home than we got a letter to say, "We are going to take the TV licence from you. You have got to pay for it as it is too expensive and it is a drain on the economy." It is disgusting!

I would like now to give you the background of myself and my generation. I was born in 1933. I was six when the war started. I was 14 when I left school and started work. At 18, I was called up and I did my National Service. I finished, I came home, I got married and had a daughter. In 1956, they called me up and I went to Suez and that fiasco when they attacked the Egyptians for the canal that they wanted back.

So I am saying from this rostrum that we have earned that free TV licence. I am saying to everybody who is over 75, "Don't pay it because John McDonnell won't be paying it!" Thank you. *(Cheers and applause)*

The President: Thank you very much for that, John, for really bringing home what is

at stake, which is great. Can I now move to the vote. Will all those in favour of Composite Motion 16 please show? Thank you. All those against? Thank you. If the *Daily Mail* is here, tomorrow's front page is: "John McDonnell is not paying his TV licence". (Laughter)

* *Composite Motion 16 was CARRIED*

The President: We are now going to move to Motion 26, Safety of rail workers. The General Council supports the motion. It is going to be moved by the RMT, seconded by ASLEF and I then intend to call Unite, if those speakers can be ready. I call on Mick Cash to move Motion 26 and can I congratulate you, Mick, on your recent re-election as General Secretary.

Mick Cash (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) moved Motion 26. He said: Thank you very much. I have just had my sell-by date extended by another five years so thanks to my members for that.

Congress, this motion is about the safety of rail workers and it is about the safety of passengers. Since we last met, our guard members in companies throughout the country have continued to take strike action for passenger safety. It is the longest dispute in our union's history and one of the most important. It is a dispute that has been prolonged by the Government, who are giving strike bail-outs to the train companies. It is a dispute where the Government have tried to break my union, but they have failed and I would like to thank you today for your solidarity from the trades councils, from local union branches and passenger groups. Your solidarity, their solidarity and our members' resolve means that we are winning. It means we

will beat the bosses. It means that we will beat this rotten Government.

Congress, in July, two of our track worker members, Gareth Delbridge and Mike Lewis, were killed after being hit by a train. They were killed while at work. I know everyone today will want to send our sympathy and solidarity to their loved ones and to their community and to pay tribute to their lives. (*Applause*)

It was an accident that should never have happened. The independent Rail Accident Investigation Branch had already issued warnings. They had already said, "There have been too many near misses in which railway workers have had to jump for their lives." They have criticised what they have called "Victorian methods of protection".

What has the safety regulator done to act on these warnings? They have done next to nothing. Our members' deaths were preceded by another death, by another case of the safety regulator failing to take action. That saw a track worker killed as a result of fatigue caused by a zero-hours contract. It was a zero-hours contract worker alone on the track, covering a shift for his brother after only three-and-a-half hours' sleep. Again, this tragedy should never have happened. The safety regulator had already warned that zero-hour contracts were not "conducive to a safe railway". What has the safety regulator done to take action on zero-hour contracts? Again, they have done nothing, absolutely nothing.

Why is this? It is because the safety regulator, who is meant to enforce rail safety regulation, is also the economic regulator enforcing rail cuts. These are cuts to protect the profits of the rail companies, cuts that mean dividends are as important as preventing deaths, and cuts that put profit before protecting safety. Congress, it is a

disgrace. They have blood on their hands and they should get out of our industry.
(Applause)

It is not just the railway regulator that needs to go. The so-called Rail Safety Standards Board is meant to be responsible for developing safety standards, but they are responsible for presiding over a rise in assaults on our railways. We have an epidemic of assaults on rail and tube workers, who are being attacked on a daily basis. They are also responsible for driving a campaign to get rid of our guards. They have even told the train companies that if they sack all our guards, they can make £350 million in profit.

Why is this? It is because they are not independent. They are funded by the train companies and they have been found out. They are panicking because they know they are on the way out. They had a fringe meeting here at the TUC called "Working together for a better, safer railway". Now, after telling train companies to sack our guards, they had the cheek to come here and tell the TUC that they want to work together and they want to work with us. Well, I have a message for the RSSB: "You can poke working together." (Applause) We will work with anybody who genuinely wants to work in the interests of passengers and rail workers. That is not the RSSB.

Congress, I will tell you what we need. We need safety before profit. We need a truly independent safety regulator. We need to kick the parasites out of our railways. We need to renationalise our railways. I move. (Applause)

Simon Weller (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) seconded Motion 26. *He said:* It is a great privilege to second this motion because these

tragedies and the near misses, which are becoming increasingly commonplace, reverberate throughout the entire railway family. These are tragedies where we see lives destroyed and lives for ever changed.

That is why we need to see some fundamental changes and the point -- and it is only a brief point -- that I want to reinforce is to highlight the rot that lies at the very core of the railways. It is the three organisations, two of which are supposedly for safety and standards. There is the Office of Road and Rail Regulation and the Rail Safety and Standards Board and above those is the slightly mysterious Rail Delivery Group, but all three have one thing in common. They are funded by the employers and they do not have a commitment to independence. This is the foxes in charge of the chicken coup and we need to see fundamental change in the railways. I second. *(Applause)*

Peter Holden *(Unite the Union)* supported Motion 26. *He said:* This is my first time at Congress and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Jeremy has just taken us up there and I am going to just drop us down a bit. I work at a traction and rolling stock maintenance depot. The guys I represent clean and maintain the oldest trains on the network, the HSTs. They are proud workers and workers who will do a good job.

Every train has 13 toilets. The trains go out in the morning and come back at night. All those toilets discharge on to the tracks at up to 125 mph so all the contents of those toilets go all over the underframes, the brake equipment and everything under the trains. Sadly, if there are any Network Rail workers at the track side, they will cop for it as well.

But it is not just that. The trains go along and they will run into animals and, sadly,

humans. At 125 mph, there is not much left. Our staff have to go and maintain the brake equipment on these trains. We are given very little protection and it is an absolute scandal. The DfT said that these trains would not be discharging after 31st December this year, but I guess it will go on for another four years.

My second issue for our workers is diesel engine emissions ('DEE'). According to both Unite and the ORR, our depot is the worst workplace in the country. I invite the ORR to attend our meetings, but they do not turn up. Instead, they have a meeting with the senior managers. I am proud that Unite's diesel register recognises that industrial diesel emissions from trains and buses and other machinery are a health threat on the same scale as asbestos. We have witnessed in my workplace six people with cancer in the last two or three years, which I believe is down to diesel emissions.

Congress, our employers constantly put profits before the welfare of employees. The ORR do little or nothing to support the workers. All rail workers have the right to a safe working environment so please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: I move to the vote on Motion 26. All those in favour? Those against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 26 was CARRIED.*

EU Copyright Directive

The President: We now move to Motion 27: EU Copyright Directive. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by Equity and seconded by the Musicians' Union.

Stephen Spence (*Equity*) moved Motion 27. *He said:* Conference, I am proud that my grandfather was a joiner in the Harland & Woolf shipyards in Belfast. (*Applause*)

Comrades, there are huge misconceptions about working in performance. It is often not even considered to be work. One of our members' main skills is to make it look easy as if it just magically happens, but that could not be further from the truth. What the audience, the viewer and the listener hear and see is only the tip of the iceberg. The impression is that the job is easy and overpaid because there are a small number of high-profile performers who do earn a lot of money. But the reality is that most performers are low paid with work characterised by short and insecure contracts, with periods of unemployment and uncertainty about where the next job will come from.

However, our members do have something that other workers do not have, and that is exclusive rights in their performance, the build up of residual entitlements, of repeat fees and other secondary payments can make all the difference to our members trying to earn a living and trying to sustain a career over the long term. The union monetises those rights through collective bargaining, which we have fought to maintain successfully at national and sectoral level.

Under Equity's collective agreements and contracts, the union is mandated to negotiate our members' exclusive rights for the secondary and additional use payments for the repeat use of their work, securing payments for members when a

programme is repeated, released on DVD or sold to other channels or platforms. The union also distributes through the Equity Distribution Service micropayments for uses of a performer's work which arise from those collective agreements, including licensing agreements negotiated by Equity for members working on those collective contracts.

This model means that performers share the success of their work. It is a model of workers' ownership, ownership of a section of the fruits of the means of production, distribution and exchange. The engagers and the investors don't get to keep it all. But that system is coming under threat from a shift to video-on-demand platforms that increasingly want to buy out long-rights windows of 10 years or more, the aim being to build up a large library of content with all of the fruit in their bowl.

Earlier this year the EU Copyright Directive finally got passed after a very long tussle over its contents and an almost successful attempt to derail it completely by the big tech giants. The Directive marks a massive step forward for the ability of performers to get fairly paid for the use of their work in the digital age. Some of its key clauses include the principle of appropriate and proportionate remuneration. This means that authors and performers will be able to seek compensation for the exploitation of their work proportionate to the revenues generated by their material. The principle is a remarkable achievement and a first law with collective bargaining by unions expressly considered as a mechanism for implementing it. There is a transparency obligation giving us the right to understand how much revenue is derived from a member's work. The engagers must share information with us on their returns and profits. There is a contract-adjustment mechanism, which would allow us to claim extra remuneration if a manifest and disproportional gap has opened up

between the original fee and the revenue that it has generated because the engagers' investments are hoovering up a disproportionate amount of the product returns.

But we are facing a problem. The UK is only obliged to implement this directive if it is still a member of the EU 24 months after it was passed. We know from bitter experience how the UK Government can weaken important changes introduced by the EU when implementing an international law. So improvements made at the EU level for copyright and, therefore, intellectual property rights, also has a significant bearing on the UK's creative workers. As part of a new deal for working people, it is important to advance the share of returns that labour generates. Whatever happens with Brexit, a UK Government needs to protect the creative industries, which is worth £100 billion to the nation's GDP, and in doing so protect the self-employed, creative workers' ability through their union and through collective bargaining to obtain a share of the fruits of their labours in exchange for the work that would not be made without their labour. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Stephen. I call the Musicians' Union to second.

Rab Noakes (*Musicians' Union*) seconded Motion 27. *He said:* President and Congress, the future of copyright is under threat. There are organisations out *there* for whom it is just a nuisance. These are large, often monolithic, organisations which, although wealthy to an extent that can be described "obscene", wish to increase their wealth by pillaging resources produced by the hard work and creative talent of such resources. I am typical in our industry as a songwriter and as a performer who releases records. These are essential albeit variable income streams of considerable value.

We at the MU, alongside the mover Equity, play their part in the discussions with the EU on the Copyright Directive. The music activity is mainly through FIM, the International Federation of Musicians, a tireless organisation on all aspects of threat to copyright.

For creatives the Directive, although not yet law, is a major initiative in which the principle of ownership of our own work, whilst enhancing the income generated, will be preserved. Article 17 of the Directive contains controversial elements, most significantly the “under value gap”. That addresses the idea that on-line content-sharing platforms obtain unreasonable value from enabling their users to share copyright content without ensuring that the underlying rights holders receive their share. There are no easy solutions, but we need more equitable behaviour from the content users. Alongside that, we need better information provision and a compliant behaviour from consumers. That will go some way to develop the initiatives for the future. There need to be fairer on-line distribution models and a move from pro-rata to a user-centric system. The subscribers know that may receive nothing from their monthly payment whilst big hitters suck up the lion’s share of the dosh.

The directive is expected to be law in 2021. Who knows what the UK’s contribution will be in its final stages. Who knows whether we will have governments that will or won’t adopt it. Comrades, this is not a wee matter affecting just a few people. It has affected, does affect and will affect anybody who has made anything qualifying for rights ownership and subsequent residual payment for usage. It will also affect the people who consume it. Congress, let us ensure that the directive is taken into law

and over time restore at least some security for all the creators, rights holders and consumers affected. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Rab. We are going to move straight to the vote on Motion 27. Can I ask all of those in favour, please, to show? All those against? That motion is carried.

* *Motion 27 was CARRIED.*

The inclusion of freelance workers in TUC policy

The President: I am now going to move to Motion 28: The inclusion of freelance workers in TUC policy. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the Musicians' Union, seconded by the College of Podiatry and then I will be taking speakers from Equity, Prospect and the NUJ. Welcome, again, Rab. Thanks for the CD when I went to Scotland. It was great.

Rab Noakes (*Musicians' Union*) moved Motion 28. *He said:* I'm back again. In my world, this is called "Hoggin' the stage".

President and Congress, the gig economy is nothing new to us. It is a phrase that we in the MU recited a couple of years in the light of the rise of such conditions being offer to and chosen by workers in many areas. Such conditions are, of course, the world of the freelancer, managing multiple activities with multiple income streams. It is our unfailing duty as trade unionists to find inventive ways to support such workers because that is what they are and remain: workers! In our union no more than 20%

of our members are workplace employees. More and more we are finding ways to help and support the freelancers and self-employed but there is no doubt that there is work to be done.

Major organisations are currently engaged in practices which can only be described as attacks on working people. An on-air radio presenter who I conversed with the other week told me that our national broadcaster is engaging in tactics designed, virtually, to belittle people who are essential operators at the heart of their activities. The tactics involved leave people with all the disadvantages although none of the advantages of being self-employed. Many people I know have in fact chosen to be self-employed.

Comrades, our whole trades union Movement needs now to find ways to support people whose engagement with the world of work is like this. They are all too often regarded as entrepreneurs and have aspirations to be Tesco in a decade's time. The reality is that what they are doing is creating a circumstance within which they can utilise their often considerable skills, work hard and make a decent living. We even have members who are, effectively, employers. Many musicians are in positions to hire other musicians in a variety of situations. What they need is support across the board. Such initiatives are shared resources, which can provide valuable time-saving scenarios. A request for support will often find them directed to 'enterprise agencies' which have little or no interest in their plight. We, in our unions, can offer and provide something far more tailored to their needs and, let's face it, increased trade union membership to boot.

I engage with the STUC in Scotland, amongst other things, as a member of the General Council. There we have interrogated the scenario, often under the heading and description of ‘precarious work’, and some useful suggestions are emerging there. The red line, of course, is any hint of exploitation, which must be tacked and eradicated wherever it makes its presence felt. Under the wider reaches of conditions at work, our union is a proud part of the Hashtag: *this is not working alliance*, which is calling for a new law to make employers prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. As part of the alliance, we have asked representatives from the TUC multiple times, both verbally and in writing, to ensure that a campaign to boost duty and guidance protects freelancers. To this request, I am pleased to report, we received a clear answer: Yes. This will protect everyone at work. Because of that, our members were expecting to see themselves protected, but the draft EHRC Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance, as circulated, does not include freelancers, who remain unprotected. In short, the guidance protects employed people and workers but because of the personal service requirements most freelance musicians will be excluded. Let’s address this matter also and not only support the current freelance and self-employed workers in the present but prepare to do so into a fervently fluid future.

Please take a look, folks, at freelance, self-employed, portfolio careers and the like make up an ever-increasing circumstance within which many workers from a wide range of disciplines are finding themselves in. It is not going away. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Rab. I call the College of Podiatry. We are on course to lose a little bit of business this morning, so we will try and move the pace along a

little bit if we can. It does not mean you have to run to the rostrum. That's just to give people an indication. Yes, Martin.

Martin Furlong (*College of Podiatry*) seconded Motion 28. *He said:* Congress, we are a trade union of around 10,000 qualified podiatrists and very active in supporting our members who work and are employed in the NHS. However, only about 45% of our members actually work in the NHS all the time. They may do work within the private sector in private medical practices either as the owner of the business or as a freelance self-employed person. Sometimes they also do work in the NHS as well.

Therefore, a trade union like ourselves has policies which are flexible to provide them with the services they need as self-employed freelance workers, to continue to get them to join us and also stay in membership. Many of the services that we offer are based around the professional aspects of their work and their continued learning. We provide advice on how to become further qualified and more forward thinking in the services that they offer.

We also have to be more imaginative and provide them with business services and insurance as well as give them advice on the employment of staff and others, as was mentioned earlier. If they don't get the service they need from us, they will stop being members of the union and get advice from somebody else.

Whilst a lot of the people who own the practices are very clearly self-employed or freelance workers, we also have people who work in those environments, and sometimes their employment status is not as clear as it should be. We also have to continue to give them advice to ensure that their work status is correct and, frankly,

that they pay the right sort of taxes. So we do that by working with the employers and our members to make sure that they have all the advice and education they need to make sure work statuses are correct. However, they are an important part of our membership and we have to offer them the services that they need.

We, therefore, welcome the MU call for the General Council to ensure that freelancers are included in the policy work of the TUC. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Martin. I call Equity.

Christine Payne (*Equity*) spoke in support of Motion 28. *She said:* President and Congress, I am very grateful to Rab for setting out so eloquently how the vast majority of our members work in the creative industries. Only a tiny majority of our members work on full-time, regular and open-ended contracts with a single employer. Atypical work has always been our typical. Our union has long-standing experience, as Stephen has explained, in organising, representing, campaigning and bargaining for atypical workers in the creative industries in a labour market that is characterised by short-term contracts and insecure work. This has involved supporting the status of creative professionals as workers for employment law purposes and negotiating collective agreements across the live performance and audio-visual sectors that go considerably beyond the statutory minimum, and include, for example, sick leave, holiday pay and a contractual entitlement.

At the same time, the vast majority of members are genuinely self-employed for tax, with work patterns that might fluctuate, for example, from an hour's voice-over work to a short-term theatre contract, but with the ability to offset tax against costs, which

is absolutely critical for our members in order to stay afloat financially and remain available to work in a very insecure labour market.

The atypical workers who we represent need to be included more, we believe, in the TUC's policies and structures. First, we would like to see changes to ensure that the equal and active participation of our members in TUC structures as part of the current review, such as greater flexibility to allow members to participate in meetings by technologies such as skype or job sharing, which would allow for the precariousness of the work opportunities our members to be catered for.

Secondly, we would also like freelance workers to be better represented and referenced by the TUC in its policy work. Alongside the vital work of the TUC to prevent employers from using false self-employment arrangements to avoid workplace obligations, it must also recognise that some workers are genuinely self-employed. Some of this is simply about the language that is used. It seems that it is standard for the term "self-employment" to be prefixed by "bogus". The term "false employment" leaves space for the genuinely self-employed. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Performers' Alliance for listening to us on this point and for incorporating our amendment into its *New Deal for Working People* booklet. Thank you very much. I hope it now becomes a standard term. Thank you.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you very much, Christine. *She said:* It is so good to see you at Congress representing Equity. I call Prospect and then I will be taking the NUG.

Ann Jones (*Prospect*) spoke in support of Motion 28. Conference, just before I start, let me tell you that I am the BECTU secretary of Prospect. I haven't brought my scooter because I beep when I reverse and I didn't want to upset anybody.

Colleagues, I have been a freelancer for most of my working life. I've been a trade unionist throughout my working life. I was an ACTT member, a BECTU member and now I am a proud member of the BECTU sector of Prospect.

When BECTU and Prospect were discussing amalgamation, one of the many strengths that BECTU brought to the negotiations was our recognised successful record for representing and organising freelance workers in the film, television, radio and theatre industries.

I am delighted that my union, Prospect, and the BECTU sector, have committed to continuing and building upon this important and innovative work, offering freelancers effective and relevant representation. There are many forms of freelancing, including those who are falsely self-employed, but all freelancers, whatever their circumstances, require and deserve effective trade union representation. Please support this motion.

Thank you. (*Applause*)

Pennie Quinton (*National Union of Journalists*) spoke in support of Motion 28.

She said: I am also the Chair of the London Freelance Branch of the NUJ, which is the largest branch in our union, consisting of over 3,000 members. We find that within the trade union Movement freelance work is often seen as an option of last resort. This is not the case for many of our members for whom the freedom of freelancing is a choice, giving them autonomy and control over their lives. However,

our members, like other workers, need the support of their union to tackle late payments, low pay and poor working conditions. Small craft unions, such as the NUJ, the Musicians' Union and Equity, have a vast wealth of experience representing creatives. We ask that the TUC utilise this body of knowledge in developing collective bargaining arrangements for our sector, because unless authors and performers are paid fairly for the skilled work that we do, there is little hope of a vibrant, diverse, cultural and news industry that represents the voices of a diverse world that is not just pale, male and stale.

Our members are often told that because they love their work publicity is sufficient recompense. Try telling your telephone provider that you will tweak your gratitude for their services and good publicity is enough to pay your phone bill. This is not just a battle for freelance workers. We in the NUJ have worked on this issue with the International and European Federations of Journalists placing the creative rights of all workers at the heart of the global trade union agenda. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Pennie, and for all speakers in that debate. I move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 28, please show? Any against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 28 was CARRIED.*

Ending exploitation of seafarers

The President: We now move to Motion 29: Ending exploitation of seafarers. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by RMT and seconded by Unite.

Karlson Lingwood (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) moved Motion 29. *He said:* Congress, I move this important motion as a Welsh seafarer based at the port of Holyhead. I would also like to extend my solidarity to the workers in Harland & Woolf, an area where I have spent a number of years in dry dock.

In 2016 the RMT launched the *SOS 2020* campaign: Save our Seafarers. What we continue to see is a scandalous exploitation, which is a nationality-based discrimination of seafarers. In the UK shipping industry there are more than 80,000 ratings, but only 15,000 — 72% — of those ratings are recruited from countries outside of the European Economic Area. These seafarers are not protected, as you might believe, by the national minimum wage, and are subject to rates of pay and conditions of service which are, frankly, discriminatory and exploitative. Of these seafarers — we have gathered evidence in the past five years as RMT — about 9,500 EEA ratings, these contracts completely flout and would be illegal if they were applied to workers who are land based. There are many examples of these. In fact, in the previous five years, RMT have taken third-party complaints to the HMRC National Minimum Wage Enforcement on behalf of foreign seafarers. In the last year, nine low-paid foreign seafarers were paid arrears of £3,400, and the employer was fined £56,000. But due to the restrictions placed on third-party complaints, we can't identify the employer. The case taken by HMRC took well over a year to complete. As we heard from our Leader of the Opposition a little earlier, rights only

mean anything if they are enforced. What we see is a lack of enforcement. Not only do we see deregulation but we see a lack of enforcement of the very poor regulations that we have in place.

Often you will see many employers operating in the Irish Sea and the North Sea, but also these practices extend to the offshore sector and also to the burgeoning wind-farm sector. We need change. We need rapid change. Although I stand here today as a delegate from the maritime sector, if we don't receive the support now and we legislate to change these exploitative practices in the shipping industry, basically, we will diminish to the point that we will no longer exist. There will be no opportunities for young people to come into this sector. We need to regulate this area and we need to have cabotage, which would place an emphasis on training, recruitment and opportunities for UK seafarers.

Currently we are in dispute with P&O, which is a broadly known company, and today in London many shipping companies will be sitting around and discussing, during London International Shipping Week, but I guarantee you that this matter will not be on the agenda. Rates of pay and conditions of service for seafarers will not be on their agenda at all, but we need to place it on our agenda. As an island nation, where our economy is inextricably linked to shipping, it is a national shame — it is an absolute shame on this nation — that these practices in 2019 continue, and that workers can go to work for rates of pay as little as £1.75 an hour. Bearing in mind that seafarers are exempt from the Working Time Directive, they can be on board ship for two months or more, working anywhere up to 14 hours a day. Myself — I am contracted to do this — I work 84 hours a week, as do my colleagues. You live on board. That's your workplace. You don't go home. When you finish your work you

are still on call. Every seafarer, irrespective of their department, has a safety-critical role on board their ship in the event of an emergency. You can't call out, for instance, the FBU or British Transport Police. Any incident on board, to safeguard the ship, to safeguard life and to safeguard the environment, is the responsibility of the seafarers who live and work on that vessel.

What we are calling for is — I have to thank the Shadow Transport team for their support — is, in effect, to legislate and bring forward the recommendations that were given in the Carter Report, which was commissioned by the last Labour government in 2010, which will regulate the industry. That will protect the opportunities for the future and to prevent this exploitation.

I mentioned P&O —

The President: Karlson, would you wind-up, please?

Karlson Lingwood: — but the company will not redeploy those seafarers because of the business model that they applied to that sector, where they were paying seafarers way below the national minimum wage and they don't want to accommodate our 15 members in that sector. Please support this very important motion. I ask you to fully support the motion. *(Applause)*

The President: I call on Unite to second.

Paula Brennan *(Unite the Union)* seconded Motion 29. *She said:* Congress, I am seconding this motion — Ending exploitation of seafarers — on behalf of Unite. It is

an outrage that as an island nation which is so reliant on shipping that vessels arriving at UK ports are often little more than floating sweatshops. Throughout my own work at docks and ports across the country for Unite and the ITF, I have seen the reality first hand. Taking the example of these European ratings, sailing into Portsmouth, they are being paid as little as £2.40 an hour. That wouldn't even buy you a cup of coffee. This is the result of the twin loopholes of the flags of convenience and the so-called low-cost crewing models. It is a story that is repeated in ships arriving in international ports throughout our island. In any other industry, discriminating against workers based on their nationality would be a crime. We would not accept it in a car plant, we wouldn't accept it on a construction site and we wouldn't accept it on land so we won't accept it at sea.

Unite joins with the RMT in welcoming Labour's commitment to implementing the Carter Report. Finally, nationality-based pay discrimination will be outlawed. Congress, support this motion to end sweatshop labour at sea and abolish these ships of shame. I second this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Paula. I am going to move to the vote on Motion 29: Ending exploitation of seafarers. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried unanimously.

** Motion 29 was CARRIED.*

Threat to British seafarers

The President: We now move to Motion 30: Threat to British seafarers. It is going to be moved by Nautilus International, seconded by the RMT and I have had a respect from Prospect to speak.

Mark Dickinson (*Nautilus International*) moved Motion 30. *He said:* Congress, I rise to speak in relation to Motion 30 on the Threat to British seafarers. Nautilus International members and, indeed, RMT members, maritime and shipping professionals, are working day and night, week by week and month by month to deliver all the essential goods that this nation needs to prosper, delivering the food, the medicines, the fuel, the parts and the essential components for our industries and exporting UK manufactured goods.

Congress, 95% of everything globally moves by sea. In the UK alone, this is a £37-billion industry providing tens of thousands of jobs and it is the essential component of the global, regional and national economies and a critical part of the global supply chain. Consequently, many of our members, maritime professionals, are working in that industry globally. All too often that can mean they find themselves in the frontline during times of heightened international tensions. This has been starkly highlighted recently by the attempted seizing of the BP tanker *British Heritage* by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. Also, as I am sure you are all familiar because it made headlines during a substantial period of time, the successful hi-jacking by the IRG of the *Stena Impero* and its 23 crew members.

With the support of our global union federation, the International Transport Workers Federation, we have been able to secure a visit by the local affiliate in Iran and, as a consequence of that, seven of those crew members have recently been released on

humanitarian grounds. However, the vessel and the remaining crew are still under detention in Iran, although over the weekend you, like I, may have read that there are local press reports that suggest the vessel may soon be released.

Right now we have members working on ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz. There are up to 30 large oil and gas tankers in the Gulf at any one time and several of those will transit the Strait every day.

Following your decision taken by the Joint Industry Social Dialogue Committee on Warlike Operations, these waters have been designated as a “high-risk zone”. Soon after the decision taken in the UK the international committee, of which I am a member, also designated the area “high risk”. This is important because this is effective social dialogue in action and it seeks to ensure that our members, and indeed all seafarers, are entitled to enhanced protection when they agree to enter those high-risk areas. It follows similar decisions taken both nationally and internationally to declare high-risk areas for shipping and seafarers following the piracy attacks in the Gulf of Oman and the threat of kidnap in the Gulf of Guinea. I hope you are all reaching for your globes so that you can see where those places are.

Colleagues, the maritime profession is a rewarding and fulfilling career. It does, however, come with some risks, of which you will have heard much from this union and, indeed, the RMT over the years addressing you at Congress. Those risks, Congress, can be mitigated with industry and government support, crucially with naval support in times of heightened risk, to ensure the safety of seafarers on UK ships. For this, we need more resources for our Royal Navy and, indeed, for our civilian Royal Fleet Auxiliary. I am proud to be wearing the RMT sticker on my

jacket *Far Pay for the RFA*, and I will leave that to our RMT colleagues to tell you more about that shortly. *(Applause)*

In closing, President, I urge Congress to join us in highlighting the importance of supporting ship masters who put the safety of their crews first and take action to maintain safety in these high-risk areas. Also I take this opportunity to highlight our request, and with the support of the International Transport Workers' Federation, that the Iranian government release the UK registered tanker *Stena Imperial* without further delay. Please support the motion. Thank you, again. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Mark. RMT to second.

Michelle Rodgers (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Motion 30. *She said:* Colleagues, I am the National President of the RMT. We have a banner at the back of the hall and we can see the T-shirts we are all wearing and the stickers that we are all putting on. *(Applause)* It is really important that when we talk about solidarity we remember seafarers, and civilian seafarers, by the way, who are out *there* putting their lives at risk to do what we need them to do. We stand here and talk about solidarity for workers but sometimes we have to go deeper than just the workers who we represent. We have to look outside of our own little and comfortable space and say, "Without our armed forces and without our RFA we wouldn't have the services that deliver to keep this country safe". *(Applause)* The RFA are the lifeblood of the Royal Navy. During the last 10 years, they have suffered more than 20% in pay cuts because they come under the pay directive that public sector workers are all coshed with.

During the past two years, the Royal Navy was offered a 2.8% and a 2.9% pay award, and well done to the Government for giving them that. (*Applause*) It is absolutely deserved. But it is also deserved by the people who support them, and that is RFA workers. This year for the first time in I can't remember how long we had to ballot our members to defend their rights. We should not be put in a position like that. When these workers who go on board ships that do humanitarian duties out in the Bahamas after storms like Dorian, when they are in the Gulf making sure that our warships are supplied so they can do their duties, yet we are continually misinterpreting what their role is and put them down.

We are *here* today because we want to see a fair pay rise for all workers, but more importantly we want a pay rise for the RFA. Please support, Comrades. Solidarity!
(*Applause*)

The President: Thanks, Michelle. Solidarity to everyone at the back. We've all got your stickers on now, so thanks very much. I am going to call Prospect as the last speaker in this debate.

Ben Caile (*Prospect*) spoke in support of Motion 30. *He said:* Congress, I am delighted to be able to support this motion. At the UK Hydrographic Office my colleagues and I work hard to provide our seafarers with the charts needed to navigate the world's oceans. From the safety of my desk, I must confess to being envious of all this travel. But the truth is that in many parts of the world there is a clear and very real threat to our mariners from piracy, hostile states and other such dangers.

Congress, place yourself for a moment on the bridge of one of our merchant vessels. You have identified a threat and the clock is ticking. What do you do? If you are lucky a naval vessel may be close enough to intervene but, despite the Red Ensign group being the tenth largest trading fleet in the world, our Royal Navy has been subject to repeated cuts, leaving it unable to protect our merchant fleet without assistance. So if you are under imminent threat with naval protection too far away, what are your options? This is a situation that many of our mariners could face. So let's give our mariners the protection they deserve and need. An increase of naval support in high-risk areas is right and proper. To achieve this, let us invest in our excellent shipyards and put more naval vessels into service. That means building Type 31 frigates here in Britain. Let's reverse the closures and job losses and invest in the shipbuilding industry which has been a source of pride for hundreds of years.

But let us also give full support and backing to any ship's master who takes action to preserve life and limb whilst under threat. Safety, above all other considerations, must be paramount. Congress, support this motion. Let's support our navy and our shipbuilders, but above all let's guarantee protection for our excellent seafarers. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Ben. I am going to move to the vote on Motion 30: threat to British seafarers. All those in favour, please show? Those against? That is carried overwhelmingly.

* *Motion 30 was CARRIED.*

Flexible working

The President: I now move to Composite Motion 9, which will be moved by the FDA, seconded by the CSP and supported by Community. In order to minimise the loss of business, it is not my intention to take any other speakers in this debate other than the parties to the composite. Apologies for those who wanted to speak but I want to try and ensure that the other motions are taken. I ask the FDA to move Composite Motion 9.

Fiona Eadie (FDA) moved Composite Motion 9. She said: Congress, I hope that some of you will be aware that this year FDA is, proudly, celebrating our centenary. As part of those celebrations and as we look forward to our next hundred years, we have partnered with the Global Institute for Women's Leadership. That partnership has allowed us to commission some important research on flexible working, which we will launch at our first centenary lecture later in September and delivered by the Chair of the Global Institute, the former Australian Prime Minister, Julia Gillard.

Initially, our research from flexible working stemmed from our women's network who raised questions about how genuine the flexible working options are in the civil service. We surveyed all of our members, men and women, parents and carers, to find out what flexible working really looks like today. The results were stark. Nearly 50% of respondents felt that working part-time meant that their work is more likely to spill over into other areas of their life. 30% of respondents who felt that flexible working was not encouraged at their grade, were working an additional 10 or more hours each week. 35% of part-time women thought that flexible working had had a negative impact on their career progression or performance ratings.

Aside from these results, there were two main underlying themes of the research. Firstly, a workplace cannot truly embrace flexible working if the culture is not there to support it. Our members don't need to be chained to a desk to do their jobs, but there is still a misconception that if they are not visible in the office, they can't be delivering. Secondly, if workloads are not adjusted, then flexible working is destined to fail. Many members told us that they were working part-time but picking up the remainder of a full-time role on their non-working days. We know that flexible working not only allows parents to pick up their children from school but also allows carers to attend hospital appointments and others to pro-actively manage their mental health. It means that people with disabilities can work from home when they need to. In short, flexible working allows people to balance their work around their life without a detriment to either. It makes sense to our employers, too. We know that employers who allow staff to work flexibly, report improvement in recruitment and retention and have better staff satisfaction and engagement levels.

If we want a country that works for everyone, we need a truly diverse civil service, individuals who will bring their own experiences and insight to policy creation and who will make sure that the UK public is represented in the decision-making process, not just those who are able to work fixed hours.

This motion calls on Congress to campaign for not only a day-one right to flexible working but also to introduce an obligation for employers to outline the specifics of how their jobs can be worked flexibly at every level across the public sector. The 9-to-5 doesn't work for everyone, and it is not even necessary. People should be recruited on their merits, not just their timesheet. Support the composite. Thank you.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Fiona. To be seconded by CSP.

Vicky Reynolds-Cocroft (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Composite Motion 9. *She said:* I am a first-time delegate at the TUC. (*Applause*) Congress, despite the right to request flexible working, there has been little change in either the availability or uptake during the past decade. While many people already benefit from flexible working, there is a significant proportion of the workforce who are not given this option. I, proudly, work for the NHS, and the NHS staff survey, as we heard yesterday, can be shocking in so many ways.

In 2018 half of the staff were shown to be unsatisfied with their request for flexible working. A lack of understanding and even negative attitudes of line managers towards flexible working can prevent benefits from being realised for either the individual or the organisation. We regularly hear from our stewards that members are having their rights to request flexible working refused. In 2016 a survey of CSP shop stewards showed that nearly one in five are aware of members leaving their NHS jobs because they could not negotiate flexible working arrangements. This is why the CSP launched the *Building a Better Balance Campaign* to help stewards support members who were requesting flexible working but also to highlight the benefits of flexible working to managers and employers.

We know that flexible working aids recruitment and retention, improves productivity, reduces stress and makes staff feel valued as they achieve the work-life balance they need in the NHS environment. Physiotherapy managers in all sectors are reporting escalating difficulties recruiting the staff to a variety of grades and clinical

specialities. If organisations, including the NHS, want to attract and keep the best, they need to adapt.

The Labour Party has pledged flexible working rights from day one if they come to power. This will aim to tackle the gender pay gap and increase diversity in the workforce. Diverse workforces have a broader mix of skills and experience, giving organisations more creativity and flexibility to overcome challenges. We need to continue to campaign for the right to request flexible working from day one but also build on that by showing how flexible working is a win-win from both the employee and the employer. I support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Vicky. I call Community.

Susan Galloway (*Community*) supporting Composite 9. She said: Congress, the final part of this composite talks about men and flexible working. Studies show that men are less likely to use flexible working for reasons of care responsibilities. Men are less likely to make a request than women and, when they do, they are twice as likely as women to have their request refused. It is not hard to understand the reasons why. Employment is still highly segregated by sex, even in the 21st century. Yes, we have made progress in some areas, but there remains very entrenched occupational segregation. You can see that reflected in the delegations in this hall. The idea of men's jobs and women's jobs is alive and well, even in the minds of very young children. That segregation is a major factor in the gender pay gap. As long as men's jobs are valued more and pay better than women's, then for most working class families with children it will always make more sense for the women to work part-time rather than the man. It is these gender norms that that have explained the

cultural presumption against flexible working in male-dominated sectors and in the most senior roles at the top of organisations, typically held by men.

Congress, if we want to achieve equality both at the workplace and in the home, we must as well as promoting the use of flexible working continue to actively challenge gender stereotypes. We must actively be challenging these with children from their early years right through the education system and on into apprenticeship and training opportunities. Please support the composite and let's normalise flexible working for all. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Susan. I am moving to the vote now on Composite 9. Can I see all those in favour. Please show? Any against? That is overwhelmingly carried.

* *Composite Motion 9 was CARRIED.*

Outsourcing the finance sector

The President: We now move on to Motion 32: Outsourcing the finance sector. This will be moved by Aegis, seconded by Accord and I will take a contribution from Unite. If everyone sticks to time, we should get that in before lunch.

Fiona Steele (*Aegis*) moved Motion 32: Outsourcing the finance sector. *She said:* Congress, during the past few years financial services has become one of the most active sectors, if not the most active sector, in outsourcing their non-core work to third parties. The key drivers for this trend are the inevitable and relentless drives to cut

costs to satisfy the shareholders but also, increasingly, they are used to deliver the technological changes required to digitise and automate business processes and to transfer the risks associated with data security in the wake of high-profile cyber attacks. This trend is likely to increase as financial service providers reap the benefits of outsourcing in terms of reduced costs and risks, but it cannot and should not be used as a mechanism to drive down our members' pay and benefits and erode their job security by selling them off to the lowest bidder.

This Congress is only too well aware of the extent and impact of the outsourcing culture has had on our public services and the devastation this has caused to the workers in that sector as well as to the users of services. But outsourcing companies are growing in the financial services sector and we need to ensure that they do not wreak the same havoc on workers within their sector as they have in others. The financial services sector is essential to the economy of this country. It provides more than 1.1 million workers with relatively good jobs with good terms and conditions, which the unions in that sector protect.

The majority of our workers work in call centres or as administrators or in branches. They are not responsible for the financial crisis created by the bosses at the top but they are still paying for it like all other workers. Outsourcing is a further challenge that our members are now facing.

We have to learn from the bitter experiences of other sectors where service contracts have been continually passed on to the lowest bidder, with often third-party providers submitting low tender prices to win contracts, which may provide savings in the short term. However, time and time again they have been found to be unsustainable in the

long term, with outsourcing companies cutting their costs by suppressing the wages and terms conditions of the transferred workforce, undermining the quality of their employment.

The best way to protect workers against this is a recognised trade union, but many of these third-party providers are non-unionised. While they are often happy to work with unions to get the TUPE transfers through, things can and do become more difficult post transfer, especially if they refuse to collect members' subscriptions through check-off, which is traditionally the way that most members in the finance sector pay their subs. We are all too aware of the effect that this has on membership density, and we as a union have lost members through this union-busting strategy, which a third party implement just days after the transfer date. It very quickly led to de-recognition of the union.

I am sure there are many more examples out *there* which show that outsourcing in our sector is exacerbating the decline in private-sector collective bargaining, so we have to take action.

This motion calls on the TUC to investigate how prevalent this practice is, the impact it has on collective bargaining and how finance sector unions can turn this threat into an organising opportunity to ensure that the same problems and issues suffered by a public sector colleagues do not affect workers in this sector, too. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Fiona. Accord to second.

Maura Kelly (*Accord*) seconded Motion 32. *She said:* Congress, this is my first conference and I am a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Accord is a specialist finance union. As this motion rightly points out, the rate of outsourcing has increased since the financial crisis. Finance sector employers started by outsourcing and off-shoring IT and their ancillary services, such as recruitment, catering, security, postal and servicing. But the range and scale of outsourcing has increased and is expected to do so as the impact of artificial intelligence and robotics takes hold. The workers who are caught up in these transfers have their working lives transformed. They had no choice in the matter and they often feel that they are being sold on to new employers and treated no better than the fixtures and fittings of the offices that they work in.

Historically in financial services the wages weren't great, but there was a trade off. Jobs were secure, there were career prospects, decent pensions and a range of fringe benefits. For those who were TUPE'd out, the only thing that remains is that the wages aren't great, but employment now is more precarious and union protection has lessened. Congress, Accord supports the Aegis Motion 32 and the actions that it calls for. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Moira. I am going to call Unite.

Phil Jones (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 32. *He said:* Congress, outsourcing and off-shoring have been the twin scourges of the finances sector for more than a decade. It is claimed that it is far cheaper to employ a third-party company to provide services such as company contact centres, back-office processing and IT than it is to keep these tasks in house, but how can that be? It is the same work being done but it is by an outside company which, understandably, has to make a

profit, so how can it be cheaper? The answer is obvious. It is at the expense of the worker. The agenda is the same as it ever was. It is an agenda of driving down costs and exploiting and dividing workers. Congress, it is a common absurdity that a worker whose job role is outsourced will often come in to work to do the same job, to sit at the same desk and next to the same colleagues that they always have done before, the difference, of course, being that there will be a gradual divergence of terms, conditions and pay.

Congress, that does not mean that we cannot win. Unite is proud to organise workers in some of the major financial outsourcing companies, such as Capita and Diligentia. In fact, Congress, our reps and members of Capital have played something of a pioneering role within our union, most markedly with repeated nationwide strike action to defend pensions. At the very centre of that action, Congress, was our lead rep in Capita, a comrade who many of you may know, Mike Dyer. Congress, if I can beg your indulgence for just a few moments, I would like to pay tribute to Mike as it is my side duty to report that after many months of fighting illness, Mike, sadly, passed away on Sunday. Mike was, in Scotland, consistently fighting against attacks to our members' terms and conditions through outsourcing. He and his partner, Jan, played nothing less than a heroic role in fostering the spirit of militancy and unity in exactly where finance workers needed it the most: in the outsourced companies.

Friends, as I conclude, I ask you to support this motion in Mike's name and memory and join me in applauding Mike and Jan as a mark of respect and remembrance to solidarity. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Maura. That was really well done. I appreciate that. Thank you very much. I am going to move to the vote on Motion 32. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 32 was CARRIED.*

Are our staff wearing appropriate footwear

The President: If we move, quickly, now to Motion 33, I call the College of Podiatry to move and the GMB to second. Then I intend to put that to the vote. Apologies to the RMT, but we do not have time to take an extra speaker but it means we will have cleared all the business.

Katie Collins (*The College of Podiatry*) moved Motion 33. *She said:* Congress, trade unions have a long history of improving health and safety in the workplace as well as saving lives and workers from harm. The College of Podiatry believes that employers should do more to ensure that workers have access to proper footwear in order to protect feet from damage. Your feet are key to keeping you mobile and the working foot has many demands on it. In a normal working day, you can easily travel 15 miles. If you sustain damage to your feet, you can find everyday tasks, such as walking, driving and standing, difficult or painful to complete.

According to the HSE, 27.3 million days are lost annually due to work-related injuries, and accidents involving the foot make up 24% of those reported incidents each year and costs £85 million annually.

The College of Podiatry members deal with the impact of ill-fitting and wrong footwear from the workforce every day in our practices. Whether you are working on a building site, as a dancer or as a professional sports person, access to the right footwear is vital to the health of the nation's feet. As well as the obvious hazards at work, which could lead to injury, such as oily or slippery floors, or machines which can crush or burn, other issues, such as cold-working areas, such as frozen-food stores or wet conditions, can bring additional problems, like chilblains or athlete's foot.

This is further compounded by the elongation of the working life of the British worker, working now into old age. When accidents happen, such as trips and falls, older workers are more likely to incur serious injuries and permanent disabilities. Safety footwear needs to be specific to the environments that workers will be operating in and safety managers should consider wider requirements, such as grip, comfort and the avoidance of foot fatigue on top of the physical protections.

As well as issues with safety footwear, the College and the TUC have campaigned for many years around dress codes and footwear at work. We thank our GMB colleagues for their recent campaign around this and for seconding this motion. In many occupations, in particular where staff deal with the public, employers enforce a dress code that includes footwear. Sometimes this code prevents staff from wearing comfortable and sensible shoes. Instead, they wear slip-ons or inappropriate heels. This can apply particularly to women. Apart from being extremely sexist, these policies can lead to long-term problems. Numerous studies have shown that wearing high heels is associated with musculoskeletal pain and the physical effects can affect the body from spine to the toes. Dress codes should not prevent people from comfortable healthy footwear.

Employers need to be held account and share that workers have access to the proper footwear what ever industry they are in, and that it is proved and agreed with trade union representatives.

We, therefore, call on the TUC to work with the college and other stakeholders to ensure that information on safe footwear is available to all our members and workers' feet are protected. I move. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, Katie. GMB to second.

Brenda Carson (*GMB*) seconded Motion 33. *She said:* President and Congress, trade unions have thought throughout their existence to force employers to provide safe and healthy working conditions for our members and workers. GMB supports this motion and the College of Podiatrists calls for workers to have access to safe work footwear. Where workplaces do not have obvious risks, it should not mean that work there is overlooked. We need to make footwear accessible and safe to all workers. That is the overriding message that we want to convey today, that safe footwear has to be equal and accessible for all. In particular, we must finally get rid of the antiquated and sexist policies, forcing injuries through high-heeled shoes.

This motion makes reference to the airline industry, which is notorious for holding on to a shameful footwear culture. GMB represents 10,000 workers in the airline industry, many of who are worked to work under, frankly, dangerous dress codes. Some women are required to wear a minimum high heel of 1.5 centimetres, and are only permitted to wear flat shoes at work if they provide a doctor's note. It is

incredible that we should have to provide a doctor's note to be able to wear shoes that are safe for the job. What a waste of time for the NHS.

These women workers often have to walk several miles a day in a busy airport, covering different terminals, whilst their male colleagues are not required to wear such uncomfortable footwear. If an employer is forcing women to endure such discomfort and is putting our staff at high risk of serious harm, the answer is pure and simple. It's sexism!

As we have said before, these dress codes do not fall under sexual harassment. However, this all contributes, frankly, to the dangerous perception of the way that women should behave. Women should have the comfort of being able to carry out their jobs in the best of their ability. So, as trade unionists, when we are challenging employers over uniforms and dress codes, we must challenge the sexist bias. It is both a health and safety issue and an equality issue. It puts access at risk. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Brenda. For a first-time speaker, that was absolutely fantastic. Well done. Congress, I am going to put Motion 33 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 33 was CARRIED.*

The President: As we have been quick on our feet, we have managed to clear all the Congress business. I thank you all. You have been brilliant. The unions have really co-operated. So we did get through all the business.

In finishing, let me remind you that there are various meetings taking place at lunch time. You can find them at pages 13 to 16 of the guide and on the screen. The Congress hall will be shut. You cannot get back in until a quarter-to-2. We are starting promptly at a quarter-past-2 with Laura Pitcox. Can you all be in your seats. Finally, a bit thank you for yesterday, delegates, as yesterday's bucket collection for the PCS strikers raised £700. What a fantastic effort. (*Applause*) Thank you all. We stand adjourned.

Congress adjourned for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Congress re-assembled at 2.15 p.m.

The President: I call Congress to order. Good afternoon, Congress. You will see I have been joined by the next Prime Minister and Secretary of State on the top table. (*Applause*) Can I once again ask you to join with me in thanking the Hampshire Youth Folk Ensemble who have been playing for us this afternoon. (*Applause*) They really have been fantastic and very uplifting. Can I on everyone's behalf thank the National Education Union who have sponsored all the music for youth activities all this week. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Delegates, I want to update you on business that we lost from yesterday and again thank you for your cooperation so that we did not lose any this morning. The business we lost was Motion 63, Small and rural schools, and I intend to take that after scheduled business tomorrow. The Show Racism the Red Card photo opportunity is

going to be taken at the close of today's session so if you can all stay for that. The video presentation from Jacinda Ardern, the Prime Minister for New Zealand, which is definitely well worth watching, is going to be taken first thing tomorrow morning so if you can make sure everybody is here bright and early.

I have just a quick reminder, delegates, to ensure we get through all the business and respect speaking times, five minutes and three minutes, for moving and seconding, respectively, and I thank you for the cooperation this morning but ask you to continue in that spirit and hopefully we will get through all the business this afternoon and can finish at a decent time tomorrow.

Delegates, I now would like to introduce to Congress the MP for North West Durham, a trade unionist and, as announced by Jeremy Corbyn this morning, the future Secretary of State for Employment Rights, Laura Pidcock. (*Applause*) Just before Laura starts, Laura was only elected to Parliament in 2017 but she has been working hard behind the scenes laying the foundations for a Labour government to make radical changes to the balance of power in the workplace.

Congress, we discussed collective bargaining and some of the changes we want to see in the workplace yesterday and I am sure that what we are about to hear from Laura is going to form a vital part in taking those changes forward and as a sign of these changes form a central plank of Labour's plans for the future and I am really delighted that we have been joined on the platform by Jeremy Corbyn. Anyone who has heard Laura speak before knows how passionate she is. She is an absolutely fantastic representative of all of our members and the working class generally. Laura,

it is with great pleasure I would like to invite you to address our Congress.

(Applause)

Address by Laura Pidcock MP

Laura Pidcock: Thank you. Thank you very much to everybody here at Congress. Thank you so much for that fantastic welcome. Thank you for everything that you do in your trade unions, in representing and protecting workers. Thank you for all of the work that goes on behind the scenes. I know it can be stressful and it is often without any thanks. Thanks, of course, to Mark Serwotka, Frances O'Grady, and the TUC for its support, and to John Hendy and Keith Ewing, they have been thanked before but I would personally like to thank them again and to the IER for all their hard work and good advice.

The people in this room do the most amazing job of all. You represent workers in their time of need. You represent and negotiate their pay and their terms and conditions and you deliver time and time again for those people in a seriously difficult legislative environment. We are at a point in history where we have two paths ahead of us. We can have a very stark choice about what kind of society we want to be in. One path leads us to more deregulation, privatisation, and poverty pay. The other is a socialist vision of the workplace where the trades union Movement is free to do their job, where workers feel confident to be an active member of a union, feel free to meet with other union members, with their representatives, and can talk freely about their participation.

We have to be frank with each other in this room. There is a real sense of dissatisfaction in workplaces across the UK. Workers in this country know that despite working longer hours than those in all other EU countries, except Greece and Austria, millions cannot afford to make ends meet and are in poverty: 14.3 million people to be precise. That, shamefully, includes 4.6 million children. Is there anything worse than not being able to feed your own child or knowing that you are not able to give them everything that they need, going out to work day in, day in out, working unsocial hours often far from home, often in hostile environments, and at the end of that working week still not being able to live a life that allows you to be comfortable and free from worry, and it is particularly sickening that the number of people living in poverty includes nine million people in families where one or more adults are in work. There is only one conclusion that can be drawn from this, that is, that workers are not being paid enough.

A recent survey of its members by Usdaw, the shop workers' union, found that half of the members surveyed had missed meals in order to pay essential bills, with well over a third doing so on a regular basis. These are appalling statistics of the consequences of the fact that in real terms the value of people's wages is still lower than that of ten years ago. Yet leading chief executives are now paid 133 times more than the average worker, so while some are quite literally able to lounge around in their excessive wealth, there are huge numbers of people who cannot put food on the table, who are stressed by their rising debt, who are buying their shopping on credit cards, who are riddled with worry that another price increase will break the bank.

There exists in society staggering levels of inequality. In the UK 40% of total income goes to the top 20% of earners while just 7% goes to the bottom 20%. We know very

well that pay stagnation and income inequality are a direct result of the attack on workers' ability to organise through their trade unions. So, I want to explain that trade unionism to everyone outside of this room is a simple and beautiful concept at the heart of this Movement and for every young person who has only ever heard about trade unions through the framework of the vested interests of those whose aim is to smash organised labour I want you to know that the best way to see your pay increase, to see a safer environment at work, to feel freer to express your opinion and have your rights realised is to join a trade union. It is the best thing that you will ever do. *(Applause)*

Trade unionism is not just about protection at work, it is not just a personal insurance scheme, is it? It is a statement of a common bond between fellow working people because all we have is each other.

I understand that the Labour Party has not always been the best ally of the trades union Movement. New Labour with its three parliamentary majorities could have repealed the restrictive anti-union Thatcher legislation and shamefully they missed that opportunity. *(Applause)* As a result, and you will have felt this in your workplaces, many working class people lost confidence about which side this party was really on but now with the Jeremy Corbyn leadership we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to right that wrong, and we will do just that. *(Applause)*

We need a radical transformation of the workplace and therefore a Labour government will establish a Ministry of Employment Rights, a department that will be responsible for transforming our workplaces by delivering a huge rollout of individual and collective rights at work and legislation for enforcement powers to make these

rights meaningful. It will establish a National Joint Advisory Council for representatives of government, employers, unions, and experts to meet and advise. Above all, this will mean that working people will be heard at the cabinet table, exactly as it should be.

The beating heart of this department will be the rollout of sectoral collective bargaining. (*Applause*) I realise that the concept may be familiar to people in this room but people outside of this room may be wondering what on earth I am talking about and I do not blame them. The percentage of workers covered by collective agreements has dwindled rapidly over the last 40 years. Our Labour government will re-establish national collective bargaining between trade unions and employers in each sector of our economy. That was the British way for most of the 20th century and is still the way that successful economies of Northern Europe manage their industrial relations. Sector-wide collective bargaining will set minimum and legally binding pay, terms and conditions, for every employer and every worker in the sector. (*Applause*) In practice that means rather than the employer having all of the power to determine what your conditions and pay are at work, they will be legally obliged to enter into negotiations with your trade union, a giant step forward in rebalancing the unequal power relations that exist between worker and employer.

Just imagine the transforming impact that will have on, say, the care sector where the mostly female workforce have seen these highly skilled and professional areas of work become a minimum wage job, where care workers are not paid for travel time between visits and can end up working 10 hours for 5 hours pay. What a scandalous state of affairs that is. The very people looking after some of the most

poorly and vulnerable people in our country are being paid less than the minimum wage. Think of the effect on those in their care.

We are calling time on this kind of exploitative practice. Under a Labour government those care sector employers will be legally obliged to come to the table and negotiate all aspects of industry, the conditions in the workplaces and fundamentally their pay. So whether you are a care worker from Dundee or Durham, you would be secure in the knowledge that minimum terms and conditions negotiated for the sector will restore dignity and a decent life to you and those you look after.

As socialists we know that to blame individuals for what are failings of the system is futile. We do not do it. We know that often, though, issues over pay and jobs can fuel racism towards minority communities who have come to live and work here. It is utterly misguided to blame the suppression of wages on migrant labour. (*Applause*)

The blame must be placed squarely with the greedy exploitative employer and we know that anything that creates division amongst us is helpful to them. Sectoral collective bargaining will mean that whatever your nationality you will be paid the same terms and conditions and we will repeat again and again and again that immigrants are not a threat to your way of life but austerity and a government run by millionaires who could not care less about working people is. (*Applause*)

Of course, collective bargaining will take time but in the meantime once we have passed the legislation there will be things that we can do very quickly. Jeremy mentioned them earlier but let me say again what will change and let's repeat this over and over to every single person who says nothing will change.

We will fix the problem of different categories of worker having different rights by creating a single status of worker for everyone at work, except those genuinely in business on their own account. We will ensure every worker has their full rights from day one.

We will raise the minimum wage for all workers over 16 to £10 an hour by 2020.

(Applause)

We will eliminate zero-hours contracts by requiring employers to give all workers a contract that accurately reflects their fixed and regular hours.

There will be four new public holidays on top of the statutory holiday entitlement so that workers in the UK get the same time off as workers in other countries are given.

(Applause)

We will once and for all make equal pay a reality and make equality and discrimination law fit for purpose.

We will hold a public inquiry into blacklisting to ensure that that truly shameful practice becomes and remains a thing of the past. *(Applause)*

We will ban anti-trade union practices and protect union members from intimidation, harassment, and threats, and we will strengthen protection of trade union representatives against unfair dismissal and, of course, the Labour Party will repeal the 2016 Trade Union Act but more than that will stop trade unions being weighed down by unnecessary and burdensome legislation and create new freedoms that

enable workers to organise and negotiate better pay and a better quality of working life.

Of course, we will facilitate online balloting, as you resolved yesterday afternoon, but we will go further than that, we will allow workers' ballots and elections secret, secure, and free from interference. We will make trade union access to the workplace much easier.

As the Secretary of State – the future Secretary of State, I should not get ahead of myself – as the future Secretary of State let me assure you that I understand that working class people do not withdraw their labour without good reason. It is the last resort when all else fails. So, our new trade union rights and freedoms will acknowledge this.

What we are proposing to do is not an act of charity from the Labour Party to the trades union Movement but it is simply upholding our international obligations and doing what is right by working class people. (*Applause*) Nobody goes to work to be injured, made ill, or lose their life because of inadequate protection at work. These things are happening too often. The GMB have reported at one warehouse in Staffordshire where ambulances were called 115 times in three years. We know, therefore, that harm at work is commonplace and even before the new legislation comes in I will establish a royal commission to examine all aspects of health and safety and advise on new, fresh, and relevant legislation to keep very single worker safe and well.

Of course, I understand that the Labour Party can announce some of the most progressive rights for workers that Britain has seen in generations but without power to enforce them they become much more difficult to realise. The current government regularly announced that workers will have the right to request this or that, as though we should bow and be very, very grateful, be deferential to them, that a contract of employment or flexible working somehow will be good enough, when in reality we know, we see time after time that they can consider that request and turn it down with very little scrutiny. Therefore, a Labour government will set up a working protection agency which will be properly resourced and have the power to enter and inspect workplaces, issue enforcement notices and in some cases reinstate unfairly dismissed workers. They will uphold national and workplace agreements, they will enforce the outcome of tribunal ruling, and much, much more. This will be a mechanism that good employers can use to stop being undercut by bad employers. The agency will fundamentally be an ally of the worker, the trade union, and the good employer.

I mentioned two paths at the beginning, one which further entrenches us in the grip of unfettered capitalism and worker exploitation or one which breaks from this tradition offering a wave of hope to working people. I know that every single person in this room and working people across the UK will choose the path of hope, of light, and of justice. It is now within our gift to deliver it. That is some responsibility but I honestly have never been more optimistic that our Movement can achieve what we set out to do throughout history, and that working people will see that, they will see a socialist led Labour government delivering the most progressive and life-changing legislative programme the country has ever seen and when we are attacked for that, which we inevitably will be attacked for that, we should remember that our opponents do not attack us because they are strong, they attack us because they are weak, and

they are losing their grip. They attack us because they know very well that we are the ones in the right. We must have that change, brothers and sisters, not just for working people but for the planet that we inhabit. The crossroads that we have talked about for many years has arrived. We must not be led astray from the path of hope and fundamental change, and we must show absolutely no fear. We have to stay focused and in the coming weeks and months as a movement we have to convey to the almost 33 million workers out there, and their families who depend on them, exactly what it will mean to have a Labour government. John McDonnell promised to bring unions into the heart of government. My department is the door through which they can enter, but this inspiring vision, these essential reforms, will be no more than a dream if we do not win the next election.

So we will depend on you, your resources, your influence, your energy, your eloquence, and your persuasive powers to get the message out to working people of our four nations, but have absolutely no doubt, brothers and sisters, that we can and we will win. Thank you very much. (*Standing ovation*)

The President: Laura, I think you can see that went down fairly well so can I on behalf of everybody say that you can tell from the reception that you have had that we are enthused and inspired. We have striking health visitors up in the gallery, who I know will have been absolutely thrilled to have heard some of the things you said there. I hope, delegates, that we can agree, and our guests will be leaving us shortly, that we have been enthused, that we have committed ourselves this week to build strong unions to fight in the workplace but most of all to get rid of this rotten Tory government and replace it with a government of Jeremy, Laura, John, and everyone

else. Can I thank you on everybody's behalf for the time you have given us today. It has been fantastic. (*Applause*)

Their real sacrifice, colleagues, was as they were fighting to defend democracy last night they missed the pickled eggs that I served up at the General Council dinner. Anyway, that takes us now on to General Council Report, Section 1, the Economy. Delegates we now are going to take the section on Climate Change and the environment, from page 18 and I now wish to explain how I intend to take the Climate Change debate this afternoon.

I will start by taking Composite Motion 2, Climate Change and a just transition, then Motion 6, Securing UK green jobs as one debate. First of all, I will call the mover, seconder, and supporters of Composite Motion 2, followed by the mover, seconder, of Motion 6. Then I will open the debate up to other speakers who have indicated they wish to speak. After that the mover of Composite 2 and the mover of Motion 6 will have the right to reply in that order. We will then vote on Composite 2 and Motion 6 in that order. Everybody clear? Ready to go? Okay, so I now call Composite Motion 2, Climate crisis and a just transition. The General Council supports the composite motion so can the following people be ready to speak, it is moved by Unite, seconded by UCU, then supported by the NEU, Prospect, ASLEF, and AUE. I will take them first. So, Unite to move Composite Motion 2.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Section 1 The economy

Climate crisis and a just transition

Steve Turner (*Unite the Union*) moved Composite Motion 2. *He said:* What an inspiring speech that was. Follow that, as they say. Colleagues, I intend to do that. Congress, a challenging climate is one of the biggest challenges facing humanity. We are close to irreversibly passing those tipping points in our ecosystems where devastating and extreme weather patterns have become increasingly frequent, parts of our planet are at growing risk of destructive flooding while others face scorching droughts. We are being battered by hurricanes and tropical storms. Freak weather is becoming so frequent it is now no longer freakish. The Bahamas have been devastated, and the heart-rending pictures of carnage caused by Hurricane Dorian are touching us all. Colleagues, the lungs of our ecosystem in the Amazon are ablaze, a deliberate and politically inspired inferno raging and a shameful indictment of our constant craving for more.

Congress, climate change is a trade union issue because it is a class issue and while the rich and the powerful continue to reap the rewards that their destruction of our environment provides them, it is trade unions that must be central to the fight to ensure that it is not working people, here or around the globe, that are left to pay the price. We need to meet this challenge in a progressive way. We need a new economy and an integrated industrial strategy to underpin the social and industrial transformation we demand towards a sustainable future. That will only be delivered, only be delivered, by a progressive Labour government seizing the opportunities of this challenge. No part of society will be untouched by the transformation required, energy, transport, our heavy industries, or our homes. Our way of life and how we re-engage with our planet is going to rapidly and radically change.

Of course, there are creative and thoughtful discussions taking place in our Movement about how we transition. This composite sets out the work done so far in establishing principles that need to run through this transformation so that workers are its leaders and not its victims. We have a very simple demand, “Nothing about us without us”.

Comrades, climate change is about us. It is about the here and now. It is not a fight for our kids but a fight for us all. As trade unionists we are at the centre of the debate on just transitioning, energy generation, our auto industry from the combustion engine to hybrid, full battery and hydrogen, and our ceramics, steel, and construction industries, from heavy pollutants to sustainable long-term low carbon producers. In that debate we must make sure and we will ensure that our members are up-skilled or re-skilled and transition to new sustainable local jobs with no loss of pay or undermining of terms and conditions, supporting them, their families, and our wider communities.

Congress, how proud can we be of our children knowing that it is their future at stake, taking to the streets just as they did in 2010 in the fight against austerity, to demand the urgent action that is so desperately needed? As trade unionists, as socialists seeking that better, fairer world it is our duty to stand proudly alongside them in this fight.

That is why this composite includes the demand and we take whatever solidarity action we can on 20th September, the day of the next school strike. If we do not, we will be seen as irrelevant, not as their allies in their fight and certainly not as an integral part of their future. Congress, let’s make no mistake, the stakes are high. Our country is facing a choice that in this and in so many other areas will have global

ramifications. It was Jeremy Corbyn who moved in Parliament that we recognise we are living in a climate emergency. It is only the election of Jeremy Corbyn as prime minister that represents our best chance of securing the industrial and political transformation we need with the collective voice of working people at its heart. The alternative is too dire to think about.

Congress, let's get active in the fight, busy on the doorsteps, and secure the Labour victory we and our planet so desperately deserve. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, Steve. I now call Jo Grady on behalf of the UCU to second the composite and can I congratulate you, Jo, on your recent election as UCU General Secretary. (*Applause*)

Jo Grady (*University and College Union*) seconded Composite Motion 2. *She said:* It is my pleasure to second this motion on behalf of UCU. This motion represents an opportunity which we cannot afford to pass up. The Youth Climate Strike Movement is one of the most important and impressive examples of coordinated mass action that the world has seen in recent years. UCU has called for 30 minutes of action by trade unionists in solidarity with the strikes planned on 20th September.

The original text of our motion for which I would like to thank comrades in FE, and Peter and Sean, it calls for a 30-minute workplace stoppage and so far as our union is concerned this is the least that we can do to show solidarity with current and future students.

Employers in the sectors that we cover are already starting to fall in line and endorse the kind of action that we are calling for. For example, the University of Bristol has promised to allow its staff to walk out with no repercussions on the 20th and so have several further education colleges. They depend on students as much as students depend on them. This is an issue and ours is an industry where students and staff have real leverage.

Other sectors may not be able to take the same sorts of action but we have to do whatever we can. We are at a pivotal moment. It is now or never. How will young people forgive us if we let them down precisely when they are building such a serious and concerted movement for change. So let's use this moment to remind them what the wider public and trade unions should know and understand better than anybody else, climate change shows that capitalism is not working for us. It has no future to offer. Let's start to build an appetite in our Movement for the kind of direct solidarity action that has long been inhibited by this country's anti-trade union legislation. We are not in a position yet to call the kind of general climate strike that Greta Thunberg called for but we need to take action and we need to start from somewhere. Whichever sector we work in we have to do what we can on the 20th. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Jo. I call the NEU and then Prospect.

Sally Kincaid (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2.

She said: Congress, President, you have all been so good I thought I had best tell you a story. The story starts: Once upon a time a little girl shouted, "The Emperor is wearing no clothes and the earth is on fire." In the beginning no one listened until someone in Australia shouted, "No, she is right. The Emperor is wearing no clothes

and the earth is on fire.” Others joined in and suddenly classrooms were empty all around the world. Then the children said, “We need to ask the adults for help, help on 20th September.” Some of the adults said, “What about our jobs?” The children replied, “You are clever people and my granddad found a document “Building a Chieftan Tank” as the alternative that he sent to his friends ages ago so I am sure we can work it out.” Then the adults had ideas. The bakers said, “We will bring cake, we will bring pasties.” The teachers said, “We will teach the truth. We will have processing skills. We will change the curriculum for the day and maybe we will even get to walk out.” The universities said, “We will march to you. We will join your protests.” Somebody said, “Why don’t we set the fire alarms off all around the country?” So some places are setting fire alarms off because the world is on fire. Sheffield Council, and all the other councils should join in because the world is on fire. So the prison officers said, “What should we do?” The children said, “Can you lock up the Emperor?” They said, “No, we can’t do that.” The children said, “Actually, we do need help because we are too small to steward our rally for the police so we have to have someone to do it.” The prison officers said, “Yes, we can do that,” and other people said, “Yes, we can do that too.”

The children need the adults there and the adults need to work with children. We need to be demanding. We know this is not a fairy tale. We know it is not a happy ever after unless we do something. Colleagues, I have worked out it is two minutes and 20 seconds you get to go on Twitter with your whole speech so my final thing to say is, do the maximum you can do, do something, encourage your workmates to do the same, we can build the trades union Movement and save the earth at the same time and maybe lock up a couple of emperors on the way. Think big, work with others, do what you do best and organise, and since I am a teacher those of you who plan the

best are going to get certificates and badges at the end but I do not have enough for all of you. We only have a world to save so there is no pressure, so let's just get on with it. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you very much, Sally. I call Prospect. Can ASLEF be ready next.

Steve Nicholson (*Prospect*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2. *He said:* As a union representing climate scientists as well as energy and environmental workers we know that the climate change is real and requires urgent action from government and business to tackle this. We also know that this transition to a low carbon future must work for workers and not lead to further deindustrialisation and unemployment. That is why Prospect has been working alongside our colleagues in GMB, Unite, and UNISON, to promote a just transition for some time now.

As a proud nuclear worker I was delighted that Paul Novak, and Sue Ferns, our Senior Deputy General Secretary, agreed to come to Sellafield, which allowed representatives of all the unions on site, GMB, Unite, and Prospect, senior leaders of our organisations to give their views on what a just transition means to the 15,000 employed on the most complex nuclear site in Europe.

The nuclear sector throughout the UK provides highly paid, highly skilled jobs with sound reputation and has a crucial part to play in decarbonising our economy.

Sellafield Limited employs over 11,000 highly skilled nuclear professionals and expertise that is second to none in the nuclear industry worldwide with a direct wage

bill of £830m each year being spent in that community, which is one of the most remote in the UK.

If we believe in decarbonisation and we believe in a just transition, then nuclear new build must be back on the agenda. As we strive for a green economy with a low carbon future and the prospect of 40,000 new well paid skilled jobs the slow progression of nuclear new build in recent years has been a blow to the sector and our hopes of hitting our carbon targets.

We must campaign for the progress of nuclear new build at sites that will bring thousands of jobs to areas like Cumbria, north Wales, and Suffolk. Having a low carbon energy policy with nuclear playing an important role, alongside the renewables and other technologies, lies at the heart of any economic development strategy for the short and long-term post-Brexit in whatever form that takes. The real consultation and partnership by the TUC taking forward transition into the nuclear communities is an excellent one that must be the foundation of any attempt to a successful transition. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Steve. I now call ASLEF and then the Artists' Union England, and then we move on to Motion 6.

Mark Prenter (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2. *He said:* Climate change is a real and present danger to working people. We can no longer consider climate change as a matter of a trade-off between jobs and an abstract notion of a greener planet. Climate change will affect every living being on our planet but you can be sure it is affecting working

people and the vulnerable first, but in looking at one of the most important questions of our time we can find big bold answers.

We must heed the call of Greta Thunberg and the younger generation. For too long we have been told the younger generation are not politically active, that they do not care about politics or the world around them. All the wonderful young workers we have in this room and the amazing work of the climate activists dispels that nonsense out of hand. Our Movement has done huge amounts in the fight against climate change but there is always more to do.

Jobs will change, the way we work will change, but our struggle for fair pay, job security, and decent conditions will not. A just transition to a low carbon economy must have trade unions at its heart to ensure working people are not left behind but are at the forefront of new industries, training for the new industries that technological advancements will bring, investment and planning focused on the communities that face the biggest threats to their industries, the planning of an industrial strategy centred on a green efficient infrastructure, including transport. We need electrification of the railway. At present I drive a diesel train that is so inefficient it only runs approximately six miles per gallon per engine.

Climate change has been one of the free market's biggest failures. Dealing with it must be one of the trade unions' biggest successes. Let's make it so. Congress, please support this composite. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Mark. I call the Artists' Union England.

Jill Eastland (*Artists' Union England*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2. *She said:* I am a first time delegate and speaker. (*Applause*) We fully support climate justice and the commitment to a just transition. I want to focus, however, on asking you all to think about how you will support the request from Greta Thunberg, a new strike for climate for adults to join them in mass action on September 20th. They said, “We feel a lot of adults have not quite understood that we young people will not hold off the climate crisis ourselves. Sorry if this is inconvenient for you but this is not a single generation job. It is humanity’s job.”

Young people have been demonstrating their concern and commitment here at Congress and coming to talk to us outside this building. Climate change is a frightening and urgent issue for them and should be to us. This is an important issue for all workers. As Jeremy Corbyn said earlier, the destruction of the climate is also a class issue. We have learnt from the shock doctrine that when a community or country faces a crisis such as an extreme weather event, it is the poorest and ordinary workers who are hit the hardest and their crisis is used as an excuse for exploitation, for the richest to become richer and for inequality to grow.

Scientists are unanimously telling us that this is imminent on an unprecedented scale and that we need to act urgently now. Our young people have given us this opportunity to step up and support them now and to show them that trade unions matter and can act effectively. We have collectively put their futures in danger and we need to act collectively now to support them. We need to be courageous and imaginative in thinking of ways to support them, to turn the agreement of this motion into something bolder in the ways in which we work with it and disseminate it in our unions and our workplaces. We do not want to be left in the position where we are

merely participating in something like an online survey that we could do any other day of the year. We want to be visible and strong, and proud, in the support of our young people who are leading the way. We have only ever won anything through bold and courageous actions. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, Jill. We are now as I explained going to move to the movers of Motion 6, and the seconder, that is the GMB, seconded by UCU, and then I will call UNISON and PCS, and then I am going to move to the votes. Tim.

Securing UK green jobs

Tim Roache (*GMB*) moved Motion 6. *He said:* I do not need to tell you, Congress, that we live in uncertain political times. As school children strike, workers occupy their failing yards, and people take to the streets, we see that failure writ large across all communities, regions, and nations of the UK on energy and climate change.

It is a tale of the economic elite ignoring all moral imperatives in the interests of a broken economic system, not people or the planet. It is a story of wilful neglect of communities that once drove the economy of our country. It is a chronicle of economic mismanagement, missed opportunities, and a fundamental lack of a principal vision that means the much touted green jobs revolution has passed working class communities by.

Congress, it should not be seen as controversial to want nor is it beyond our collective ability to deliver an energy solution that reduces emissions, creates decent jobs, keeps the lights on and the economy moving, and does not fleece the average bill payer.

Instead, we see an energy and supply chain track record dominated by overseas companies, poorly paid casualised employment, a UK offshore wind industry carved up by Far East finance, Saudi sovereign wealth funds, and state-backed European competitors. All the while other countries bend the rules to keep their work contracts on their shores we bend over backwards to send jobs overseas and not just on energy but on shipbuilding too. If these rules cannot be made to work for our workers in the UK, then we need new rules.

I will give you one example, Congress. Fife, a proud area which once supported 20,000 manufacturing jobs during the North Sea oil and gas boom, now sees yards laying empty and workers laid off as the community begs for the scraps from the table of a £2bn EDF project. The bulk of the wind jackets our members will see from their living room windows will be manufactured in Indonesia, for an Italian contractor, and transferred 7,000 miles on dirty diesel-burning ships back to the Fife coast where local people pay for them through their hiked up electricity bills. Congress, this strategy is negligent at best, vindictive and cruel at its worst.

The communities decimated by Thatcher, and since blighted by the explosion of insecure work and the Amazon economy, are crying out for the chance to make things again, to once again feel the pride of being the engine room of the nation, to lead the green industry revolution. Good sustainable energy jobs are a solution to so many of the different challenges we face in the modern world. We have a proud energy union like the GMB that will remain a proud energy union for the next 130 years just as we have for the last. Retrofitting insulation of people's homes reduces emissions, lowers bills, and can create skilled unionised jobs. New nuclear energy would bring down bills, reduce our carbon footprint, and create thousands of good construction and steel

jobs, and crucially underpinned by a standard rate for the job finally ending the undercutting and exploitation of migrant labour. Investment in green gases like hydrogen would help decarbonisation of the gas system while preserving the infrastructure and securing gas jobs for the next generation, and a progressive tax system that funds the transition to net zero ending the regressive green poll tax the poorest pay through their energy bills.

At present the reality for our members looks very different. We see Harland & Wolff, we see BIPAK, we see Appledore, we see Cammell Laird, yards closing, jobs going, skills we will never ever see return. These things do not happen by accident, Congress. They are a product of a lack of political will and a political class that has let down working people time and time again.

Congress, the potential exists now to unite green new deals and the labour movement around the economic and just climate necessities of tackling climate change. This debate matters to each and every one of us, to every worker, to every home, to every classroom and to every community. I am a dad who wants the planet in a fit shape for my kids and their kids, too. I am a general secretary who wants proud energy workers to have safe, secure, and skilled work. Congress, support this motion and we can have both. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tim. I call on UCU to second.

Jo Grady (*University and College Union*) seconded Motion 6. *She said:* I am proud to say that for years UCU has been leading the way on climate change. We helped found the Greener Jobs Alliance and the trade union Cleaner Air Network. Our

policy opposes fracking and airport expansion. We know the effects of climate change on the UK economy. It reinforces the inequalities that already exist. Dealing with climate change requires planning and concerted action, not short-sighted competition or exploitation. Just as we understand and realise that the rotten neoliberal economic model ruins our sectors, we also see that it ruins our planet. That is why today I call for a green new deal for the UK economy.

I am the daughter of a former miner. When I was born in 1984 he was on strike. I know firsthand the kind of damage that is done when extractive industries are attacked and dismantled without any planning to help the workers in them. Right-wing politicians and big corporations have despoiled the economy in exactly the same way they despoiled the environment, but we are already seeing things done the right way in other countries. In Spain, coalminers unions have agreed a settlement with the Spanish government whereby inefficient mines will be closed but the investment will be put into ensuring work needed to make mines safe will go to former miners. There will also be new jobs created in infrastructure and sustainable energy that again will go to former miners.

When we take action on the 20th, we should not just be calling for governments and corporations to sit up and take notice. We should be naming the enemies and obstacles that stand in our way, exactly as my comrade from the GMB has just done, and we should be making ambitious robust demands for a new system, and that is why I am seconding this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Jo. I am now going to call Unison and PCS, and then we move to the votes.

Tracey Wainwright (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2. *She said:* I am an energy worker. Congress, let's be clear, we do not need any persuading that climate change is real, dangerous, and destructive. We know that there are no jobs on a dead planet. If the transition to net zero is not just, it is its workers and their families who will most likely suffer the worst consequences. It is for that reason that we in Unison, alongside our sister energy unions, have worked so hard to come up with solutions that will deliver net zero by 2050, solutions that are achievable in a democratic society, solutions that can work and solutions that will not jeopardise the very progress we need to achieve. We fully support those who raise awareness of climate change but at the same time we need practical solutions.

Congress, energy workers do not want charity and they do not need charity. We know that we will have to harness the skills of every energy worker and many thousands more in the future if we are to get anywhere near net zero. Group planning which takes account of the national interest and sound investment in the right areas should ensure no energy workers are left stranded by efforts to decarbonise energy.

Our members want productive work and want to be in the forefront of decarbonising energy. We want the guarantees and substance, not good intentions and aspirations. We have been clear that a strategy to achieve net zero by 2050 is required urgently and we recognise that it is required both in the industry and the wider economy on an almost war-like footing such is the magnitude of change needed.

Congress, please do not underestimate the 2050 target. Getting to net zero by 2050 is not by any means certain and we are already falling behind the necessary trajectory. It is a huge undertaking that will impact on citizens and workers across the UK.

People we need to keep on board are not persuaded by argument of the right wing that climate change is imagined.

Congress, we have been calling for three things to happen, which need to begin with immediate effect and allow us to get to net zero. Congress, we can hit net zero and we can do it in such a way to keep our members fully engaged and employed. We can do it by keeping the public on board and delivering the changes in a positive and supportive way. We can make the transition just and we can lead this debate. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tracey. PCS.

Gordon Rowntree (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2. *He said:* In June this year PCS declared a climate emergency on behalf of our members. This was made in recognition of last year's report by the intergovernmental panel on climate change, which called for rapid and radical transformation of our economies and also because we were inspired by rebellion and the student strikers. Now, if Trump and the other climate change deniers were not convinced by the student strikers, they only need to look at what has been happening around the world this year. I think as Steve mentioned earlier on it is not just something freakish now, it is something that happens very regular.

The summer of 2019 has been beset by broken records on temperatures. We have had the hottest July on record, we have had an unprecedented number of wild fires, not just in California and places like Australia, but in the Arctic, with the most severe in Alaska, and Siberia, along with flooding there as well. Only last week we saw the

devastating impact of Hurricane Dorian on the Bahamas which was made bigger, wetter, and more deadlier by global warming.

The burning of the Amazon rain forest was the most graphic and violent display of the corporate greed that is fuelling climate change. Comrades, the Brazilian Trade Union Federation said this attack on the Amazon and the environmental policies that help protect it by the Bolsonaro government is clearly linked to the interests of Brazilian mining companies and large agricultural businesses.

Comrades, tackling climate change is not about political will, it is ideological. The same policies that have led to stagnant wages, zero-hours contracts, food banks and extreme inequality, are the same that has prevented serious action on climate change, profits for the few, generated by privatisation, liberalisation, and deregulation policies. Capitalists look to the market to solve all their problems but the idea that market signals will somehow lead us out of this crisis is total fantasy. We need a national plan across the whole economy coupled with a just transformative transition for all workers to rapidly decarbonise our economy by 2030. Some may say it is not achievable. We believe it is not an option. School students have clearly said, as has been mentioned earlier, that they are in fear of their future and it will be them and the generations after them that will have to deal with the consequences of any further inaction by ourselves.

They are now reaching out to the labour movement to join them on the streets on 20th September in the biggest mobilisation yet on climate change. They recognise the difficulties for us as trade unions to take action but we currently are looking in PCS at what we have planned in things across the union. In London, for example, we will be

joining our members that were in yesterday in BEIS, the very department that is charged with looking after workers' rights and the environment.

The President: Can you wind up, please?

Gordon Rowntree: Congress, climate change is a trade union social issue. The free market economy, Trump and the Tories, and big business they put their faith in, do nothing to address the problem. We believe it is, therefore, incumbent on us to take the lead and make it a case for radical action to avoid the impending catastrophe for working class people now and in the future. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Gordon. Can I thank all those speakers. That was an excellent debate. I am now going to move to the vote. First of all, I call the vote on Composite Motion 2. All those in favour of Composite Motion 2 please show. Thank you. Any Against? That is unanimously carried.

* *Composite Motion 2 was CARRIED*

The President: Now Motion 6, all those in favour of Motion 6. Thank you. Any against? That is overwhelmingly carried.

* *Motion 6 was CARRIED*

The President: Thank you very much, Congress. Colleagues, that was a really powerful debate on a very real and immediate issue. I want to draw Congress's attention to a campaign called *The Truth about Zane*, and Zane's dad is with us at

Congress this week. Zane was killed as a result of an environmental mismanagement when a water supply to his house was poisoned by toxins from a nearby landfill during a flood. Zane Gbangbola died tragically at the age of 7. I would like to urge everybody to support *The Truth about Zane* campaign because in such a tragic way it tells us what is at stake. Solidarity to Zane's dad who sits at the front. Can we show him our support? (*Applause*)

Okay, we are now going to move to Motion 8 and paragraph 1.8, Public ownership of energy, and just before I call the mover and speakers can I tell you, Congress, I have just personally received an email from the BEIS Department. They have just emailed me to say they have now conceded that the London living wage is going to be paid to all our strikers. (*Applause*) We are in talks with them now but Andrea Leadsom has put out a press release saying it was a priority for her to sort this dispute out. I just want to make it clear that that dispute has been won by those brave women and men that you saw on the platform earlier this week. If they can win the London living wage as support workers by going out on strike, it should really give us all hope that we can win this dispute for everyone, in particular to our health strikers up there and our Harland & Wolff strikers. Congratulations, and thanks to Congress for all the support you have shown. (*Applause*)

We now move to Public ownership of energy, which is Motion 8. The General Council supports the motion and I will be calling Sue Ferns from the General Council during the debate to explain the General Council's position. I now want to ask the BFAWU to move the motion, to be seconded by the FBU. I will then call Sue Ferns from the General Council, and Prospect have also indicated that they wish to speak, so if they can all get ready. I move to the Bakers' Union to move Motion 8.

Ronnie Draper (*Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union*) moved

Motion 8. *He said:* Along with other unions here in the UK and internationally, the BFAWU gives its 100% support to the rising levels of protest and activism led by school students concerned about climate change. My union also agrees with all the sentiments that have been expressed in the past motions regarding the climate crisis and the need for just transition.

The Bakers, Food and allied Workers' Union acknowledges that unions in the energy sector have a number of concerns about the direction and impact of energy policy and this resolution, we believe, addresses those concerns. We also support the Labour Party's commitment to bring energy transmission and distribution networks back into public ownership and to set up a National Energy Agency.

For years, we were told that privatisation and liberalisation of energy markets would clear the way for an energy transition to renewable energy like wind and solar. EU policy is explicit in this respect. The need to protect climate decarbonisation has been used like a political water cannon to break up and flush away public energy systems, but it is becoming increasingly clear that the current approach to energy and climate policy is just as shambolic. First of all, it is failing workers and communities. As the BiFab struggle in Fife clearly illustrates, jobs in the renewables sector have mostly failed to materialise. The offshore wind industry is dominated by non-UK companies who enjoy generous subsidies, but who perform most of the work outside of the UK.

Second, the current policy is also failing to reduce emissions fast enough. The UK and the EU are struggling to meet the 2020 targets and without a major shift in policy,

the 2030 targets will not be met. Since 2012, governments have turned away from the generous fees and tariffs subsidies systems towards more competitive bidding regimes where the winner takes all. This bidding process has driven down contract prices. Investors then see diminishing profit margins and they lose interest.

Today, even middle-of-the-road policy experts have come to accept that the current climate targets and high-risk energy markets are simply not compatible with each other. By 2025, all of the UK's coal-fired power stations are expected to be closed, eliminating 13.5 gigawatts of generation capacity. Another 9.5 gigawatts of nuclear capacity is expected to be taken offline by 2030 and the rest of the nuclear industry by 2035. These are massive cuts to our generating capacity.

Under private ownership, ensuring this massive growth in generating capacity will mean higher costs, more and more subsidies and further erosion of our domestic manufacturing capacity. Research from Public Services International Research Unit, the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam and Trade Unions for Energy Democracy in New York have shown that public renewable power is less expensive than private, which not only faces higher interest rates and other costs, but also relies on various subsidies and long-term power purchase agreements in order to guarantee profitable investors.

Public ownership not only eliminates those unnecessary costs and provides cheaper power for users, but also allows us to address domestic skills deficits. Under public ownership and a planned approach, we can make use of the skills we have at present while we develop the new skills we need for a vibrant, thriving sector in the future.

Labour's current commitment to reclaiming transmission and distribution is an important step, but it cannot be seen as a policy endgame. A comprehensive reclaiming of energy into public control and a planned integrated approach to energy transition under democratic control will allow us to achieve the scale of change required in the time that we have available. Such an approach can also make good on the efforts of energy unions and the TUC to make just transition a reality for workers in energy-intensive industries and to ensure union protections for workers in the green economy. I move. (*Applause*)

Ben Selby (*Fire Brigades Union*) seconded Motion 8. *He said:* The FBU is proud to support and second the Bakers Union motion on the public ownership of energy. Our union believe that public ownership of wide sectors of the economy is essential in preventing dangerous climate change. This also needs to be coupled with the repealing of all anti-trade union laws so that workers can rightly defend our planet.

We fought for decades to preserve our own industry as a publicly-owned, publicly-run fire and rescue service against those who have promoted privatisation. In 2012, the FBU successfully brought a motion to this conference for public ownership of the banks, part of our answer to the economic downturn and to austerity. Taking over the banks also has a climate dimension. Finance will be necessary for the kind of infrastructure to provide the low-carbon energy and transport systems we need.

In 2014, the FBU published a pamphlet on the energy sector, again calling for public ownership and democratic control. We were trying to make the key argument. We cannot leave the decisions about our energy system in the hands of private profiteers who have no reason to switch to low-carbon energy if they can still make a profit

from pollution.

Switching to renewables needs decision-making in the hands of the state to oversee it and in the hands of the workers who know the industry best and can push it in a more climate-friendly direction. A similar case can be made for transport. There are dozens of reasons to nationalise the railways -- the cost of travel, the delays, the lack of planning and the profiteering from our misery -- but an integrated publicly-owned transport system will also be more environmentally friendly.

Congress, this year, climate change has rightly come back on the political agenda after years of being in the long grass. Sisters and brothers, the school student and Extinction Rebellion protests have forced climate change on to the public stage once again and, as trade unionists, we should be proud of that fact.

Another reason is that the science is only getting clearer. The Westminster Government's UK Climate Projections in 2018 found solid evidence for climate change in the UK. The average temperature over the most recent decade has risen 0.8 degrees and is warmer by 0.8 degrees than what it was in 1960. Nine of the ten warmest years have occurred since 2002 and during that time, firefighters have been out dealing with floods and wildfires right across the UK.

Congress, for these reasons, we want the TUC to support action on climate change, which means bringing the main energy firms under public ownership and democratic control. I support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you. I now call Sue Ferns, on behalf of the General Council,

to explain our position.

Sue Ferns (*General Council*): The General Council's position on Motion 8 is to support with an explanation. As we agreed at Congress in 2017, the General Council believes that public ownership of energy could have an important part to play in delivering our future energy needs. It could certainly help in delivering the infrastructure investment we need to deliver the growth in low carbon and renewables that we all want to see.

However, as we affirmed at Congress last year, we have always been clear that decisions about public ownership must be taken in full and with proper consultation with workers and unions in the sector. What we want to achieve is a safe, reliable, decarbonised energy system that provides good unionised jobs. There is no doubt that greater state intervention will help, but it will not in itself be sufficient to deliver this outcome.

Energy is a complex sector and the growth of renewables, welcome as it is, makes it even more technically demanding, yet there is already a workforce crisis caused by a combination of skill shortages, an aging workforce and a chronic lack of diversity. This must be addressed as a matter of urgency. It should also be noted that all retail and customer service operations are under tremendous pressure and that although the big six do honour their obligations to vulnerable customers, many of the new entrants do not.

Congress, let us not assume that so-called green employers are all good employers. Right now, many of them do not even recognise unions. So there is a bigger picture

to consider

and, as ever, the next steps in energy transition must be informed by our industrial expertise. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Sue, for explaining our position.

Craig Marshall (*Prospect*) spoke in support of Motion 8 and welcomed the General Council's statement. *He said:* Prospect has generally avoided taking a direct position on the question of renationalisation of the electricity supply industry. We have acknowledged that the current market arrangements are not working and have also been critical of the level of profit made in some parts of the industry, particularly within networks and parts of the renewables sector.

Along with Unite, GMB and Unison, we co-authored a submission to the energy regulator, Ofgem, in April 2018, which was highly critical of both liberalised energy markets and the existing framework for network regulation. At the same time, Prospect members within the industry have been ambivalent about the idea of renationalisation. The most recent comprehensive survey of members' views was run in 2017 and the results showed that whilst more than half the correspondents supported more state intervention, only about one-third supported outright renationalisation. In line with this, at our 2018 Prospect National Conference, delegates passed an energy motion calling for a stronger role for the state in UK energy markets whilst leaving open the question of what that should be.

In general, the public position we have taken is to argue that the outcomes are more important than the questions of ownership. What matters is that we achieve safe,

reliable and decarbonised energy systems, which provide high-quality employment opportunities and meet the needs of customers.

Public ownership may well be one way to achieve this, but it also may be possible to achieve this under a privatised system that is better regulated.

Public ownership should not automatically be seen as a panacea for all the problems facing the energy industry. We should resist the temptation to automatically see renationalisation as the answer every time an issue occurs in the sector. There are huge investment and workforce challenges to be dealt with that renationalisation will not by itself solve.

Congress, please support the motion with what the General Council have said in their statement. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Craig. There has been no opposition so I am going to move straight to the vote. Can I ask all those in favour of Motion 8 to show? Thank you. Any against? I think that is unanimous. Thank you very much, Congress.

Presentation of Congress awards

The President: Congress, it is now time to celebrate the work and achievements of all those who bring the benefits of trade unionism to tens of thousands of workers each day of the year, our workplace union representatives. First, we are going to watch a short video that celebrates their work before the General Secretary will then present the winners with their awards.

Video and presentation of Congress awards

The President: Congress, continuing now with Section 3 of the General Council Report, Respect and a voice at work, we now turn to the equalities section. This is from page 34. It is my intention, in this section, wherever I can, to call all of the speakers because of the importance of the subject. Therefore, to get it all in, I will ask everyone to respect the timings of their speeches if they can.

I now call Motion 37, Smashing the gender pay gap: a vague sense of shame is not enough. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by UNISON, seconded by the FDA, and I intend to call the CWU and the UCU. If those people can be ready at the front, can I ask UNISON to now move Motion 37.

Smashing the gender pay gap: a vague sense of shame is not enough

Lilian Macer (*UNISON*) moved Motion 37. *She said:* Working women have waited far too long for fairness in pay and equality at work. 50 years from the Equal Pay Act, it is an injustice that women in the UK continue to suffer a gender pay gap of almost 15%. It is therefore both necessary and just that we, in this room, campaign to ensure mandatory publication of action plans that make a real difference in eradicating this appalling injustice.

We need a gender pay gap action plan that considers all aspects of the world of work from pre-employment to retirement and the role of education and skills, employment services support and social security. However, Congress, UNISON believes that this on its own will not be enough to address the years of gender discrimination. It does not do enough to ensure that we address the imbalance of power which means that

women continue to be discriminated against.

Comrades, the sad reality is that women remain heavily represented in occupations which tend to be low-paid and undervalued. More than one in three women work in low-paid occupations such as cleaning, catering, admin, retail and care compared with one in five men. Women are more likely to have caring responsibilities and are more likely to work in part-time employment. Four in ten women work part-time compared to one in ten men.

Part-time work remains poorly paid and is associated with in-work poverty, particularly from lone parents. Women are also more likely to be in zero hours contracts, temporary contracts and are more likely to feel that their job is insecure. On top of that, women are twice as likely to be subject to bullying and harassment. Over half of all women have experienced some forms of sexual harassment at work and that number rises to nearly two-thirds of women aged between 18 and 24.

If that were not bleak enough as a picture, there continues to be a severe motherhood penalty across our labour market. A staggering one in nine mothers experience pregnancy and maternity discrimination, resulting in them having to leave their jobs. Poor employment practice, poor paternal leave policies and unequal pay means taking time out of the workplace to have children remains a significant driver in the pay gap.

While there are a number of factors that influence the gender pay gap, it must be recognised that undervaluation of women's work is at its heart. Closing the gap must therefore involve increasing the pay of these low-paid female-dominated occupations. It is a simple point, but one that gets too little attention in the debate around equal

pay. So I will say it again: raising women's pay closes the gender pay gap.

This motion rightly recognises the Dagenham Ford machinists of 50 years ago and I want to pay tribute to more recent times. As we heard in the organising award from Lyn Marie, this year, Glasgow women had the settlement of their equal pay campaign that they launched a number of years ago. They fought hard, they fought long, but they took to the streets and as convenor in UNISON in Scotland, I was proud to walk beside Lyn Marie and her colleagues, 8,000 Glasgow women standing up for their rights and winning. *(Applause)*

Congress, with trade union members earning 22% more than women who are not in a trade union, organising women should be our priority. Raising women's pay reduces the pay gap and unions raise pay. Congress, it is that simple. We need to extend the collective sectoral bargaining arrangements for public sector workers to the private and third sector and we need to improve the terms and conditions of many women in our membership now.

Ultimately, the gender pay gap will only be reduced when we, the trades union Movement, organise and make demands. As the Glasgow women's strike shows, when women come together and take action, we win. I move. Please support.
(Cheers and support)

Fiona Eadie (*FDA*) moved the *FDA* amendment and seconded Motion 37. *She said:* The gender pay gap is a scandal. It is especially shameful if you are a BME woman, an LGBT+ woman or a disabled woman. The pay gap you face is even more significant than that of your white, cisgender, heterosexual or able-bodied peers. The

FDA wants employers to report pay gaps for black and ethnic minority workers, LGBT+ workers and disabled workers. This data will allow for better targeted campaigning to reduce wage inequality across the country. Our members are senior public servants who work in the civil service, the health service and in social care.

In the NHS in particular, almost 80% of the workforce is female, but yet representation of women, and particularly of BME women, at senior levels remains not at all representative of the workforce as a whole or of the communities in which they are anchored. Basic targets like 50/50 representation of women at board level by 2020 will not only not be met, but in some organisations, barely one percentage point of improvement has been made. Decisions by boards can affect tens of thousands of people and entire communities. They should reflect the places in which they are situated and the staff who work there yet this is rarely the case.

Recent civil service evidence suggests that the BME pay gap is even worse than the gender pay gap and the senior civil service still has significant improvements ahead if it truly wishes to reflect the country it serves. MIP will therefore continue to work jointly with the FDA to ensure that public servants of all kinds achieve gender parity and pay equality across the board. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Michelle Reid-Hay (*Communication Workers Union*) supported Motion 37. *She said:* I would like to just share a little bit of my employment history with you. I used to work in the oil industry in the 1990s when it was really quite affluent and good at the time but, as you know, it is not at the moment. I used to work for an oil company. In that oil company, you used to get a little bit of a bonus every year from the employer that you worked for. Now, that bonus was either a golf trip to the Algarve

or to watch rugby to follow Scotland.

Now, for about two years, I wondered why I did not get invited to these two things. I was the only female within the financial department that I worked for. After two years, I sat in a board meeting and said, "I will be staying at The Balmoral in Edinburgh for two nights with some spending money while you guys go to Gleneagles this year." I got silence and a few words, although not spoken directly at me, but my boss suddenly turned round and said, "Michelle, which weekend would suit you?"

I would just like to say that the reason why I am sharing this with you is because I spoke up for myself. I think that if Monica or Annette or Mary gets together with the rest of their females and has a meeting with their manager and asks just one question, "Why do I not get paid the same as [Dave, Bob, John, Sadiq, whoever]?", he may not give you an answer, but at least it is actually in his head and he knows that you are getting paid slightly differently.

Now, the reason I am mentioning this is because in the motion, it says that publishing pay gaps will not be enough on its own to bring about real change, but you can bring about real change. I would like you to support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Victoria Showunmi (*University and College Union*) supported the motion. *She said:* 50 years have passed since the Dagenham Ford machinists went on strike. Many of us know about the point in history that took place due to the women making a stand. It has, however, been 43 years since the Grunwick dispute, which was led by a group of Asian women who were demanding respect and support for a wage rise. They

were at different points in history, but both were wanting change on gender and pay.

Ask yourself the reason: why is it easier to remember one and not the other? It is because the voice of black women is indeed invisible in the context of gender. Most people, including us as union colleagues, see all the women as white, all the blacks as men and the rest of us as brave. You can see that as a quote from a book which came out in the late 1970s.

We speak about narrowing the pay gap between women and men. However, the narrowing is based on stats on white women. The situation for black women is not good. Black women are at the bottom of the pay ladder and the gap is vast -- 19% less than white workers.

Members taking action as part of their pay dispute to end the abuse of casual contracts that contribute to the gender pay gap have been making gains. Discrimination in the workplace is rife. Black women have to navigate explicit and passive bullying, clumsy stereotyping and implement strategies at speed just to cope.

We must address this through the intersectional lens of gender, race and class to ensure that change happens. Improvements are not possible unless there is a fundamental shift in how race and racism are understood. Talent and ambition must not be thwarted by discrimination. We do need to demand the end of the gender pay gap, which includes casualisation, hence our strike ballot that opened for higher education yesterday. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Victoria, and all our speakers in this debate. I now move

to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 37 please show? Thank you. Any against?
Thank you. That is carried unanimously.

* *Composite motion 37 was CARRIED*

ILO Convention on workplace sexual harassment.

The President: I now call Composite Motion 10, ILO convention on workplace sexual harassment. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by CSP, seconded by NASUWT and supported by the UCU. I also intend to call Equity and the CWU so if all speakers could be ready, that would be great. I call on CSP to move.

Jill Taylor (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) moved Composite Motion 10. *She said:* Sexual harassment has no place in the workplace, but every day, people across the UK are sexually harassed at work. One in two women have been sexually harassed at work and two in three LGBT+ workers have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. For staff employed in healthcare, this is a regular occurrence.

The UNISON "It's Never Okay" report showed that nearly one in ten healthcare workers reported being sexually harassed in 2018. This includes verbal abuse, offensive banter, suggestive gestures and being leered at. Almost a quarter of healthcare staff reporting harassment said that they had been sexually assaulted with some having been the victim of a criminal offence such as rape, upskirting, indecent exposure or inappropriate touching. Nearly a third of those who had been sexually

harassed said that it had occurred on a regular basis and more than one-in-10 weekly or daily.

Over 50% of the acts of sexual harassment were reported as being committed by immediate colleagues. This has resulted in healthcare workers isolating themselves from colleagues, self-harming or contemplating suicide whilst others have been driven to leave their jobs, but shockingly, at the moment, there is no legal duty on the employers to take proactive action to prevent this from happening. Our current laws rely on the individuals reporting incidents.

The figures show that putting the onus on victims to report does not work. Of those workers who reported being victims of harassment, more than a quarter kept quiet about it and only one in five reported it to human resources or their managers. Reasons for not reporting included the belief that nothing would be done, that they would be dismissed as oversensitive or that the perpetrator would retaliate.

Therefore, the CSP welcomes the TUC's ThisIsNotWorking campaign and we are proud to put our name to it. This campaign demands a new, easily-enforceable legal duty requiring employers to take all reasonable steps to protect workers from sexual harassment and victimisation. It should not be down to the individual to prevent and manage their harassment alone. In the same way that health and safety measures protect us from risks at work, employers need to protect us from harassment whether it comes from a colleague or a third party such as a customer, client or patient.

Congress, the world is waking up to the need to tackle violence and harassment in the workplace. In June, in its centenary year, the ILO passed the new convention on

violence and harassment in the world of work. This is the first new convention agreed by the International Labour Conference for eight years, showing the international recognition of the urgent need to tackle violence and harassment in the workplace. Shockingly, more than one in three countries do not have specific laws against workplace sexual harassment. Therefore, the convention is to be welcomed and it requires governments, including our own, to take measures to protect workers from violence and harassment, especially women.

We now need to get the UK Government to ratify the convention and put the standards and protections into practice so that we create better, safer, decent working environments for all workers despite gender. We have a responsibility to hold the Government to account and put pressure on them to ratify the convention as soon as possible.

Congress, harassment should not be a fact of working life. It is time that our Government did something about it. Let us work together to get the Government to introduce a new duty on reporting and to ratify and implement the new ILO convention. Please, I urge you, support this motion. *(Applause)*

Patrick Roache (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) seconded the motion. *He said:* I am very proud to be seconding Composite Motion 10 on the ILO convention on workplace sexual harassment.

Congress, the right to go to work without fear of sexual harassment or sexual violence and abuse is a fundamental right, but in the centenary year of the ILO, ending workplace sexual harassment still remains one of the biggest challenges faced by our

trades union Movement. NASUWT research indicates that in schools and colleges, women teachers regularly experience sexual harassment by colleagues, managers, parents and pupils, yet there is widespread reluctance to report harassment for fear of reprisal or being ostracised and victimised.

Brothers and sisters, we know the problem and we know that it is down to us to demand change to the culture of workplaces and to bring an end to these unacceptable practices. Congress, this is an issue for all our unions and for all our members, women and men, and I am proud of the action of our trades union Movement in championing equality. I am also proud of the work of the NASUWT in making schools and colleges safer places for women teachers, including the NASUWT's legal victory this year against the outrageous and deplorable practice of upskirting, where a former pupil was convicted for taking and distributing sexual images of teachers. I am proud of our continuing campaign to change the law to bring an end to this vile and degrading form of abuse in schools. *(Applause)*

Whilst such victories are important, we also need a legal framework that secures the right to go to work free from sexual harassment and for employers to be proactive in this area. Congress, it was our trades union Movement that fought for and won action to outlaw discrimination at work and it is our trades union Movement that must now lead the fight for and win action to outlaw sexual harassment, abuse and sexual violence in the workplace.

So let us commit to ensuring that ending sexual harassment does not take another 100 years and commit to concerted campaigning during the ILO's 16 days of activism against gender-based violence by campaigning together between 25th November and

10th December. Let us redouble our determination to ensure we have a government that will guarantee the full implementation of the ILO convention to end workplace sexual harassment and gender-based violence for good.

Congress, please support. I second. (*Applause*)

Vicky Blake (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of the amendment forming part of Composite Motion 10. *She said:* If I was subject to a non-disclosure agreement, it would mean this: it would mean I could not tell you about the most serious sexual harassment to which I have been subjected in the workplace. I might hesitate to tell a professional who could help. I would be unable to accurately explain disruption to my career path or to my studies. It would silence me.

I am not subject to an NDA. I did not get that far because their widespread use also contributes to, and sustains, the culture which did silence me for a long time. I feel nervous about even alluding to it here. There should not be one person in this room who is unaware that sexual harassment happens in workplaces everywhere, that widely-respected people are capable of abuse and bullying. It is no surprise to us. We are the reps and case workers and we know.

Non-disclosure agreements silence victims and protect perpetrators of sexual harassment. They allow toxic workplace culture to go unchecked and they are designed to prevent cases from reaching court. This means less case law which might help further victims and the extent of harassment and abuse in the workplace goes severely underreported.

We might discuss room for ethical confidentiality clauses and settlement agreements where they would only be used in a clear and appropriate principled way. We can protect individuals' rights to enter into confidentiality agreements or to require that from their employer only if we are clear. It is only okay where individuals freely and willingly choose it and here is the problem: how can an NDA be ethical if the alternative is the prospect of further abuse, harassment, the loss of your job or even your career? This is corporate coercion and an abdication of responsibility to keep workers safe.

The impact of such a stacked choice on victims of abuse cannot be underestimated. One of our members, Professor Anahid Kassabian, recently broke an NDA initiated by the University of Liverpool, which was supposed to bind her to silence over her case of bullying, which she describes as having forced her from her job whilst suffering from cancer and other health conditions. Her case exposes and gives voice to much which is hidden by NDAs.

A BBC FOI request this year found that £87 million was spent by 96 universities in two years on 4,000 settlements, including a gagging clause, but we cannot be more specific about what they were about as the NDAs conveniently prevent employers from commenting. In no circumstances should NDAs be used to gag staff experiencing workplace sexual misconduct, bullying or discrimination. Time is up, abusers, and time is up complicit silences. Thank you. Please support. (*Applause*)

Maureen Beattie (*Equity*) spoke in support of the motion. *She said:* President, Congress, the ILO convention has come at a very important moment in our collective efforts to end sexual harassment at work. For far too long in the entertainment

industry, we tolerated bad behaviour and harassment as just a part of our business. The incredibly brave testimonies that followed in the wake of the Weinstein allegations gave us the opportunity to change this once and for all. It was our, frankly, amazing general secretary, Christine Payne, who recognised and harnessed the power of these testimonies to begin the eradication of this kind of behaviour in the entertainment industry. As some of you will know, Christine missed Congress last year due to her own battle with ill-health, but thanks once again to the magnificent staff of our NHS, she is back with us once more, all guns blazing, more formidable than ever. (*Applause*)

Through our subsequent Agenda for Change, our Safe Spaces campaign and our affirmation, which is read aloud at the start of each new project, we have been present in members' workplaces, in rehearsal rooms, in theatres, on television and film sets, in nightclubs and circus tents, and on the streets, where the line between the performer and the character that they are portraying can be especially blurred.

We have been encouraging the victims of bullying and harassment and those who witness it to come forward and know that if they do, they will be believed and Equity will be there to support them. We have seen a shift in perception among our members in recognising bad behaviour and harassment for what it is and in our resolve, as an industry, not to tolerate it.

This year, we have an opportunity to push forward with achieving some of the legislative changes we so urgently need to protect and empower workers, changes that were set out in Composite Motion 5 that I was proud to move last year and which received unanimous support. Equity is very pleased to be part of the TUC's

ThisIsNotWorking campaign, which calls for a new legal duty on employers to proactively prevent harassment at work. For far too long, the burden of holding harassers and employers to account has rested with the individual.

We hope that affiliates can mobilise further support around this important campaign as well as engaging with the Government's consultation. We must make sure that those who spoke out about the sexual abuse and harassment they experienced did not do so in vain and that we seize this moment to further shift workplace culture. No one should be literally "up for grabs". Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Rebecca Hufton (*Commercial Workers Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 10. *She said:* Sexual harassment in the workplace is something that we know takes place and something that we need to collectively stop. It is something that is caused by inequality, discrimination and the perpetrator's lack of respect for those around them, let alone for themselves.

The TUC's research on this is both shocking and crucial to highlighting the issue and helping us tackle it effectively. As their report "Still just a bit of banter?" says, sexual harassment is too often dismissed as a joke or even a compliment, but for victims, it is undermining, humiliating and sometimes terrifying.

It is outrageous that over half of the women in this country have been affected by unwanted sexual behaviours at work and that seven-out-of-10 of those in the LGBT+ community suffer from sexual harassment. In France, 54% of black women aged between 18 and 44 and 40% of homosexual and bisexual men have been subjected to degrading language and behaviour.

Article 31, "Fair and just working conditions", states:

"1. Every worker has the right to working conditions which respect his or her health, safety and dignity." Congress, this is a basic right for those within Europe under the charter of basic human rights. We need to advocate for this now more than ever.

If we look at Lebanon, we see an average of two deaths of domestic workers per week. That is 104 working people a year, 10,400 working people in the 100 years of the ILO. It is alarming that one in three countries do not have laws against sexual harassment and violence in the workplace, leaving an estimated 235 million people unprotected. It is unacceptable and it is unforgivable.

The CWU, among other trade unions both here in the UK and around the world, fully support the groundbreaking convention from the ILO. Our job does not end there. We need to implement this convention. We need to force the responsibilities on our employers and on our Government. It is time to eliminate sexual violence and harassment from workplaces, from the homes of workers that we represent and from our communities. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

Venda Premkumar (*National Education Union*) supported the motion. *She said:* I am a first-time delegate and speaker. (*Applause*) President, Congress, we should celebrate the ILO's Convention on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. It did not happen by chance. It took years of hard campaigning within the trades union Movement, which came together with the voice of the women's movement and civil society. It is a giant step, but unless the Government ratifies the convention, none of the safeguards and protections against sexual harassment and violence in the

workplace will apply to us or our members. If the Government does not ratify, it will not have to review and improve its laws and employers will not have to protect their workers in the way that the convention requires. Whilst France and Canada are in a race with each other to be the first country to ratify this convention, we know that this Government will be in no hurry to do so. Therefore, it is up to us then to continue the fight and to campaign to force this Government to ratify it.

The implementation of this convention can be truly transformative. Let me give you an example. Congress, imagine you are working with a highly-accomplished exemplary female colleague who takes immense pride in her work, but she has a secret that she is ashamed of. She is the victim of domestic violence. Her abusive partner decides not only to torment her at home, but follows her to work and extends his abuse to her workplace too.

Under current laws, the employer has no responsibility towards your colleague. That may not surprise you. However, if we ratify the convention, it would be a different story. It would be the duty of the employer to take action to protect your colleague from the threat of domestic violence. The employer, for example, could provide time off for this colleague and implement other strategies to protect her and her workplace can be the sanctuary that it should be.

This convention offers other protections too, to which other speakers before me have alluded. Congress, let us remind ourselves, with real-life examples, why these things are important. Remember the Presidential candidate, Donald Trump, and his bragging about being able to grab women by the pussy because he could get away with it.

What was the justice for these women? Trump went on to win the Presidential

election. Remember Harvey Weinstein and his unusual interview techniques. Remember the floodgates that opened subsequently with the Me Too movement and the voices of women who had been silenced, sometimes for decades.

Brothers and sisters, unfortunately predators like these plague our workplaces too. There are far too many silenced workers still who are too afraid to demand justice in our schools, hospitals, restaurants and call centres. We can make this convention a reality. Let us campaign to ratify it. Let us give power to the workers. Thank you.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Venda, and all our speakers. I will now move to the vote on Composite Motion 10. All those in favour, please show? Thank you. Are there any against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Composite Motion 10 was CARRIED*

The President: I now move to Composite Motion 11, Mental health and wellbeing. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by USDAW, seconded by the PFA, and I intend to call the CWU, CSP and Equity, who are all covered in the composite, and, if time allows, PCS and UNISON. I am now going to ask USDAW to move Composite Motion 11 and for the other speakers to be ready.

Mental health and wellbeing

Paddy Lillis (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) moved Composite Motion 11. *He said:* Congress, mental health is a trade union issue and it is good to

see such a broad range of unions involved in this motion today. From the supermarket to the postal sorting office, from the football pitch to the theatre, workers across the country are facing a mental health crisis.

USDAW, alongside many other unions, is campaigning to end that crisis. Trade unions are helping workers to speak out without fear of stigma or reprisal. USDAW organises workers in a number of low-paid sectors where jobs and the workers' contribution to society are frequently not taken seriously, where people assume that they are just working for a bit of extra cash or as a stop gap on the way to something better. Sometimes, even in the trades union Movement, we hear comments like, "For that money, they might as well be stacking shelves in a supermarket." Congress, I understand that those comments are borne out of real frustrations about people being undervalued in their own jobs, but they are also based on a false perception about the nature of retail work.

Congress, retail workers have physically demanding, target-driven, people-focused jobs. Modern technology puts them under constant surveillance and the threat of performance management and they have to deal with rude and abusive customers, not just now and again, but every single day. Congress, last year, on average, over 280 shop workers were assaulted every single day. Over 70% of female shop workers, surveyed by USDAW, experienced sexual harassment at work.

It is not only the incidents of abuse or harassment that cause stress, anxiety and depression. It is also the constant threat that the next attack is just around the corner. These factors of feeling undervalued, under pressure and under threat are creating a toxic work environment for millions of retail workers across the country.

When you add in the difficulties of balancing work with caring responsibilities, it gets even tougher. You have inadequate family-friendly rights, contracts that fail to guarantee enough hours from one week to the next and poverty pay that is just not enough to feed a family and pay your bills. USDAW's Time For Better Pay campaign has shown that two-thirds of low-paid workers believe that financial worries are impacting on their mental health. The way an employer operates and how they treat their staff has a direct impact on the mental health and wellbeing of their workforce, but the law is not on the side of workers. Employers do not need to make reasonable adjustments until after a worker has developed a disability. This is simply not acceptable.

Where an employer's policy creates a real risk to mental health, whether it is understaffing, unreasonable targets, low pay or short-hours contracts, the employer should be under a legal duty to remove that risk before harm is caused and not after. Just as we protect physical health and safety with the requirements for personal protective equipment, we need to mirror this for mental health. When employers fail to make these reasonable adjustments, they need to feel the full weight of the law.

Congress, trade unions need to highlight and campaign over mental health in the workplace. For those reasons, USDAW is promoting World Mental Health Day on 10th October. We want to see healthy workplaces and that means risks to workers' mental health being tackled. We would like to see the whole trades union Movement backing World Mental Health Day. It is an opportunity to highlight the risks to mental health that workers face on a daily basis.

On behalf of USDAW, I move the composite. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Nick Cusack (*Professional Footballers' Association*) seconded Composite Motion

11. *He said:* Becoming a professional footballer takes years of hard work and dedication. Players often begin this journey as young as nine years of age and by the time they sign their first professional contract at 17, most of their teammates are out of the game.

In order to succeed, you need natural ability, discipline and a ferocious determination to beat almost impossible odds. The players that make it into the professional ranks are the lucky ones, but that is just the start of their footballing journey. What happens during their career is far from easy with highs and lows and a life that is often very detached from most people's experiences. The profession is fraught with uncertainty and the constant pressure to perform and keep delivering is challenging and often very stressful.

Congress, the stark reality is that the average length of a footballer's career is only eight years and the day of reckoning, when a footballer must find a normal job in the real world, is always at the back of every player's mind. Indeed, this could come sooner than you think as a bad tackle or loss of form could land you on the footballing scrap heap before you have reached your mid twenties.

This is not lost on the PFA and we have worked tremendously hard as a union to try and ease some of the difficulties inherent in our profession. This has taken the form of funding and support towards the training and education of players to meet the demands of life after football. We also provide considerable financial assistance to players who experience hardship post football through our benevolent fund. These

benefits have helped thousands of players over the years and have been critical in supporting them during the difficult transition to life away from the dressing room. However, that still leaves countless members requiring much greater help and assistance at what is for some a very traumatic time and this can involve medical and clinical intervention.

With this in mind, the PFA has put in place provision to tackle some of the difficult and intractable problems that our members face. We provide residential care and expert treatment for players experiencing difficulties with addiction and have established a 24-hour helpline and a nationwide network of qualified counsellors to be on hand when players are finding it hard to cope. This has culminated in a big increase in our members coming forward to talk about their problems and hopefully our initiatives will add impetus to other unions who I know do vital work in this area.

Congress, a big shift has been necessary because in the past, mental health was overlooked within football and often players were left to suffer in silence. My union has ensured that this is no longer the case and is fully committed to doing everything possible to ensure that mental health is regarded as highly as physical health within our profession.

Finally, with TUC support and sharing best practice with other unions, I hope that this movement can lead the way in this critical area and, as we have done throughout our proud history, provide our members with the best support and help when they need it most. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: I call the CWU.

Tony Kearns (*Communication Workers Union*) spoke in support of the composite. *He said:* Congress, in supporting the composite, I want to draw attention to paragraphs (iv) and (v) on the issue of suicides. The World Health Organisation produced a report, last week I think it was, said: “Suicide is a global health issue”. More than 800,000 people die by suicide every year. Yet only 38 countries across the globe have a suicide prevention strategy. With every death being a tragedy, the World Health Organisation said that there is a dire need for prevention strategies to be incorporated into the National Health and education strategies.

The story in the UK is that more than 6,000 people take their lives each year. Of course, what we have seen through austerity, insecure work, a drop in living standards and a rise in personal debt means that we are creating the conditions that lead to depression and despair.

The Office for National Statistics says that suicide is the leading cause of death in adults in this country below the age of 50. Last year, the mental health charity, MIND, did an extensive survey of more than 44,000 people. The result was that more than 50% of those responding that they had mental health problems associated with their current job. So we know that work-related issues lead to suicide. But — this is the important issue — these cases remain invisible, because work-related suicide in the UK is not recognised in legislation. In those countries where work-related suicides are recorded across the globe — in the United States, Australia, Japan and India — they all show in recent years an extremely steep rise in the number of people

taking their lives. In France and Japan, not only have they taken recordings, but it is the employers' responsibility to tackle these issues. So the CWU believes that there is a clear link between work and mental health. A key to reducing this situation is to get employers to help, to introduce measures that prevent, to not pressurise individuals and to encourage health and support. While we are there, we need to check our language. The phrases "Man up", "Get a grip" and "Pull yourself together" should have no part in dealing with these issues.

So we need to campaign to change the law, and as part of that campaign we need to carry out what we agreed with Motion 63 at last year's congress, which was a one-day conference to deal with this issue. We need to change the law. Suicides and their attempts need to be investigated as work-related. But, more important, the burden of proof should rest with the employer to prove that they were not responsible. Coincidentally, today is World Suicide Prevention Day. On such a day, I think the TUC has an opportunity to say "We want to enshrine this in law", so we end the scourge of work-related suicide. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tony. I will take CSP, Equity, PCS, UNISON and then we will be moving to the vote.

Robert Davies (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) spoke in support of Motion 39. *He said:* Congress, as previously mentioned by the CWU, today is World Suicide Prevention Day. Last year, 6,507 people died in the UK as a result of suicide. The latest statistics from the World Health Organisation show that globally one person dies as a result of a suicide every 40 seconds. This means that by the time all

speakers finish speaking on this motion at least 25 individuals will have taken their own lives.

In the TUC — this is the Year of the Young Worker — it is also important to highlight that suicide is the second leading cause of death amongst 15 to 29 year-olds after road traffic collisions. Another alarming statistic is that for each person who dies by suicide a further 25 make a suicide attempt. Conference, suicides are not inevitable but preventable.

One in four people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year and one in six report a common mental health problem, such as anxiety or depression, in any given week. Yet mental health remains the poor relation in the NHS. Despite recent Prime Ministerial promises of a legal requirement for parity of esteem between physical and mental health, lengthy waiting times for psychological therapy are common and many people receive care miles from home and family because services are not available locally.

You may have seen or heard about Jeremy Hunt's tweet about how he hoped that mental health services received a share of the cash injection promised by the Chancellor, but perhaps he has forgotten about the damaging real terms cuts to mental health funding that he oversaw whilst he was in office.

The ONS has reported that the risk of suicide in female health care workers is 24% higher than the national average. Additionally, research carried out by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives found that the risk of suicide amongst

male paramedics was 75% higher than that of the average population. As someone with a brother-in-law who is a paramedic and under the age of 30, that terrifies me.

Congress, the current situation is not sustainable. It is no exaggeration to say that we are facing a mental health crisis not only in the NHS but in social care. Therefore, we support this motion and call on the Government to address the funding crisis in mental health services, to have real parity of esteem between mental and physical health and for there to be a legal duty on employers to measure the impact of the workplace on their staff's mental health and act upon the findings.

Finally, Congress, just remember that it is okay not to be okay. Thank you.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Robert. Equity.

Sam Swann (*Equity*): Congress, I am a long-time fan and first-time delegate and speaker. *(Applause)* President and Congress, the conditions that come with working in the entertainment industry present real challenges to mental wellbeing. The financial insecurity and precariousness of our working lives can take their toll, with work in the sector characterised by insecure and short-term contracts as well as low pay, with 67% of Equity members earning less than £10,000 a year from their work in the industry. It can be incredibly difficult to navigate frequent rejection and periods of unemployment and uncertainty about where the next job will come or if it will come at all.

As Tony Kearns and Robert Davies have already pointed out, it is World Suicide Prevention Day today. I think it is really important to highlight the fact that suicide is elevated in our profession. It is 69% higher for women than the female average and 20% higher for men. After a clutch of suicides in our industry, an extensive survey conducted by Equity to understand the scale of mental health issues found that the two most common factors contributing to poor mental health were — surprise, surprise — financial issues and lack of work. One respondent told us, “I was out of pocket and my employer was late in paying me, which was the last straw. I didn’t know if they would, and with the financial pressure I was under I had a breakdown”.

From our survey our union co-created www.artsminds.co.uk to support those in the industry dealing with emotional stress and the relentless stress from debt and financial worries. One comment that has stuck with me is from the actor Danny Holligan, who said: “Outside of doing a show, you have a constant feeling that you’re failing”. This reminded me of an article called *Good for Nothing* by the late, great working-class writer and cultural theorist, Mark Fischer, who said: “One of the most successful tactics of the ruling class has been responsabilisation. Each individual member of the subordinate class is encouraged into feeling that our poverty, our lack of opportunities and our unemployment is our fault and our fault alone”.

For too long work places and working conditions have been causing mental health problems but then pushing the problem back on to the worker to solve as if the whole problem was solely a lack of resilience. But a mindfulness class, a bit of meditation or downloading some app is not going to solve this collective mental health crisis. We need collective action. As well as ensuring that all workers suffering with mental health issues receive the expert support they need. We need employers to recognise

and act on their responsibilities for safeguarding mental health and wellbeing, to tackle this issue collectively rather than individually as a health and safety problem, by assessing risks that are likely to cause harm and to take action to control that risk. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Sam. PCS and then UNISON.

Steven Swainston (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 11. *He said:* Congress, mental health issues are a growing concern nationally and it is clear that they are far more prevalent in low-paid work. More than 10 years of pay erosion and years of cutbacks in the civil service have affected the working conditions of our members and, as a result, stress and mental health issues in the workplace are on the increase. Being a civil servant nowadays means low pay, unmanageable workloads, job insecurity and a lack of career prospects. Steps taken by the civil service to raise awareness of mental health issues are welcome but they don't address the underlying issues of why there is a problem in the first place. I can tell you that 27% of civil service absences are related to mental health illnesses, 45% are currently or have recently suffered from stress, 11% of civil servants experience bullying and harassment at work and this is a statistic that has not changed since 2009.

The cost-of-living pressures outside of work are further compounded by low pay, reducing workers' ability to live a healthy lifestyle, free from worry and debt. Many of our members are actually claiming universal credit in order to be able to afford to support their families. Growing numbers are in receipt of the minimum wage in my department, the Department for Work & Pensions, and pressure on staff to perform

are manifested in discriminatory performance-management systems and targets, with draconian sickness-absence policies, which mean that the staff come back to work ill, worrying about work, deadlines, sick warnings or even dismissals. All of these are exacerbated by years of pay restraint and attack on terms and conditions, on pensions and retirement age.

PCS has been developing and rolling out mental health awareness training for our reps and our reps are inundated with personal cases related to the mental ill-health of our members. We agree in PCS that the need to campaign for employers to be under a legal duty to assess the impacts of their policies, practices and procedures, including pay and conditions and their effect on the mental health of our workers. We believe that this issue needs cross-union campaigning, the challenges of modern-day working conditions and to support reps and members to challenge employers when they are failing. We need to reverse the cuts in the Health and Safety Executive and to reverse the cuts in mental health support services, which are undermining the safeguarding of workers.

Ultimately, the best way to challenge low pay, bad working conditions and an attack on mental health problems is to build a strong, visible, serious union workforce that campaigns effectively to end low pay and to challenge the toxic cultures in the workplace, which brings all of our members together in an alliance that fosters, dignity, respect and equality for all. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Steve. UNISON.

Sian Stockham (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 11. *She said:* Congress, work-related stress now accounts for more than 50 million working days being lost each year, which is more than half of all days lost. Nearly 600,000 people report suffering from work-related stress, depression and anxiety.

Since the advent of Tory austerity in 2010, we have seen cases of stress, depression and anxiety steadily increasing. Overwork, bullying and job insecurity are the messages we hear from our members. Many of the public services that this country cherishes most, from hospitals to schools, from social care to policing services, are provided by these very workers whose pay and terms of conditions are amongst the worst in the country. Low pay, long hours, zero-hour contracts and job insecurity these are all too often a day-to-day part of the life of public service workers. In addition, some workers such as home-care workers are often isolated and alone. Were it not for the efforts of their union, they would have little knowledge of what limited rights they have.

Congress, the relationship between poverty and mental health may be complex, but the truth is that the poorer you are the more likely your mental health will also be poor. UNISON has been at the forefront of the fight against this Government's rush to turn Britain into a low-wage economy, to slash workers' rights and to cut public services. Congress, this race to the bottom is the reason why Boris Johnson is so keen for Britain to leave the EU without a deal. The fight against low pay is part of the fight for better mental health. That is why UNISON launched initiatives such as the Ethical Care Charter in homecare. Nearly 50 employers have signed up to it.

UNISON is also involved in initiatives to protect apprentices through local apprenticeship agreements and the safety of worker through the End Violence at Work Charter.

Congress, stress-related ill-health should be treated like any other workplace hazard, yet despite employers being legally obliged to protect health and safety workers, all too often the mental health of workers is ignored. That is why UNISON is committed to campaigning to get the Government to treat stress like any other hazard and to make illness resulting from work-related stress reportable as an industrial injury. It is time we redoubled our efforts to fight for better mental health but we can't do that without also fighting against low pay. Thank you, Congress. Please support.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Sian, and for all those excellent contributions in that debate. I move to the vote on Composite Motion 11. All those in favour? All those against? That is carried.

* *Composite Motion 11 was CARRIED.*

The President: Congress, let me give you just a quick update. There are four motions left. They are all in the equalities section. I have indicated that I am minded to bring in everyone who has asked to speak because I don't want to turn anybody down, but that mean we will not get all of these four items in before the close of business. We are either going to take all the speakers, in which case anything we don't take this afternoon will be picked up tomorrow. If you are on the list and your union decides that it wants to withdraw, let us know. Otherwise, I intend to take everybody. In that spirit, I am now moving to Motion 41.

Tackling racist ideologies

The President: Motion 41 is on Tackling racist ideologies. It is to be moved by the EIS, seconded by RMT and then I am going to call Unite, FBU and NASUWT. Will speakers, please, stick to time because we want to get through as much as we can. So can I have EIS to move Motion 41.

Bill Ramsey (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) moved amended Motion 41. *He said:* President, sisters and brothers, anyone employed as a teacher in the public sector in Scotland, and from next year in the private sector, too, has to be registered with the General Teaching Council of Scotland, the GTCS. Consequently, there is a requirement to abide by a set of professional standards, including values and professional commitment. So there is a duty — I repeat, a duty — to teach social justice in Scottish schools, which means that to do anything other than support this motion would be to reject the standards that we Scottish teachers are obliged to uphold.

The following is a direct quote from the GTCS website: “GTCS maintains a set of professional standards which are underpinned by the themes of values, sustainability and leadership, professional values which are at the core of the standards”. This means that in Scotland if you are teaching young people, teaching how to tackle racist ideologies, is part of the job. This means that tackling racist ideologies sits alongside, not below, teaching how to read, teaching how to write and teaching how to count.

Sisters and brothers, right-wing populism and corrosive iterations of nationalism are on the rise here, on the rise in Europe and, as graphically illustrated on the front page of the *Searchlight* magazine that was in our conference packs, which is a really good illustration. As stated a few weeks at the Educational International Congress, this is the position across the globe as well. As our ideological battle with the racists develops, so, too, should our resources and our collective response. As Max Levitas would tell us — see our Obituary section from Sunday — the essentials have not changed one wit. However, brothers and sisters, due to the advent of social media, those established economic drivers are being weaponised, used and deployed in ways which the baseball bat and more, which Frances referred to yesterday, This means that the terrain of this table of ideas has been transformed. That is why we need the extra resources that this motion calls for.

More than that, the Scottish National Party Government in Scotland as well as the Labour Administration in Wales, we need resources from them and we need them now. Of course, we need resources from the UK Government, but I wouldn't hold my breath with the current iteration, whose last four iterations have got worse, worse and worse again, regressing into what rather than who occupies a basement in No. 10 today. Like in the climate change emergency, this racism emergency has no safe havens. The racist ideological upsurge has a potential to impact everywhere; in classrooms, in workplaces; in communities and in every institutional construct you care to think of. The racist challenge is not over the horizon, Congress. The racist challenge is on the march. It is in the forward slopes of the public discourse. Brothers and sisters, it is now at point blank range, and we need the ammunition. So, please, support the motion. (*Applause*)

Glen Hart (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Motion 41. *He said:* Congress, I am a first-time speaker at Congress. (*Applause*) As many of you will know, RMT activists and officials were attacked by fascists and members of the far right. Our senior Assistant General Secretary, Steve Hedley, myself, other activists and supporters were attacked after a counter demo against Tommy Robinson. RMT members and supporters were injured and forced to defend themselves and to defend other vulnerable anti-fascist protesters. We were grateful for the widespread message of solidarity at the time, including from Labour Leader, Jeremy Corbyn. But, as we know, the threat of the far right is escalating.

In January of this year, far right protesters abused RMT picket lines in Manchester, including using racist abuse. Congress, the response from the trade union and anti-fascist movement was magnificent, with solidarity protests the following weekend in defence of RMT pickets.

We know that individual unions will be doing what they can to beat the far right, but we, as a collective movement, must be doing far more to combat this threat of the far right, and that is what this motion and amendment is calling for. As a reminder, Congress, our proposal for the TUC was to call a special conference to plan a trade union response to the far right, and that was passed unanimously. That has not happened yet, and we would urge the General Council to make sure that it does happen. Fighting racism is, of course, in our DNA. We know that hundreds of thousands of trade unionists died resisting the Nazis in Germany and across occupied Europe, and thousands more joined the International Brigade to fight Franco's armies in Spain. We fought them then and we fight them now because the fascists are the

opposite of everything we stand for, which is equality and justice for all, regardless of race, gender, faith or sexuality. Please support. (*Applause*)

Susan Matthews (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 41. *She said:* Congress, racism is an ideology and it is a common thread within all forms of discrimination. We are witnessing politicians saying as they please and have their ideology on race. It is common across Europe and it is growing globally. I would describe this as an important shift with the agenda to promote discrimination and racism. We have all seen with horror the growth of the far right in this country.

We now have a Prime Minister who comes to office wearing a double masquerade, who is promoting casual racism as well as keeping the racist policies of previous governments. With the increase in racism, we are seeing more insults and negative stereotypes based on prejudice and racism being used, including by our own Prime Minister. He is determined to go along with the US President, who has an agenda of promoting the far right around the world.

We know that there has been an increase in hate crime, and our black, Asian and ethnic minority trade union members are having to deal with more racism in the workplace than ever before. Racism has an impact. It marginalises individuals. Let us build courage and stop the flood of fear from these politicians.

In Unite we have been doing our unity over division work, expanding our education work and talking to reps and members about how racism has no place in our movement, workplaces or community, and how the far right have no answers for working-class people. We support the work of *Show Racism the Red Card*, using a

football as a way to speak to our children about how to end racism and celebrate our diversity. We call on all to take action and to take stand up against racism by affiliating to *Show Racism the Red Card*. I want you to encourage all those in unions and in the wider community to participate, on 18th October 2019, by wearing red for the day and also affiliate to *Show Racism the Red Card*. We will not let racism divide us or erase our proud history of black and Asian trade unionism in this country.

Before I finish, I want to put my twist to this. I give you a message from Martin Luther King. This is also for the Government. This is a pre-warning. “A riot is a language of the unheard”. Basically, we are saying that if this Government is not hearing or listening to what working-class people are saying, then that means we have trouble ahead of us. This is a message far and wide. Thank you very much.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you very much, Susan. I call the FBU.

Cameron Matthews (*Fire Brigades Union*) spoke in support of Motion 41. *He said:* Congress, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year our members are out *there* risking their lives to save the lives of others. They save lives regardless of race, regardless of religion, regardless of gender or sexual orientation and regardless of any protected characteristic. We protect those in our communities. (Applause) Why do we do this? Because the Fire & Rescue Service is a humanitarian service, a service that helps people in our communities when they are at their most vulnerable. The Fire Brigades Union is an extension of those principles. That is why we oppose anyone

who attempts to divide our communities. We oppose anyone who spreads hate and fear.

Comrades, we face a real and present danger represented by the shadow and menace of the nationalist far right. We see outcomes in mass murder after mass murder of innocent people from minority communities, murdered at the hands of far-right terrorists radicalised by hate speech, spewed in the media, on-line and in platforms around the world. There is a very real rise in populism across the globe threatening our safety. That is why we must pose a very real response.

Trump, Johnson, Farage, Yaxley-Lennon and many other anti-union, anti-worker far-right elitists disgracefully use racism, dog-whistle politics, racist tropes and scapegoating to other minority communities. So we, the trade union Movement, must be the voice and body of opposition to them in very tangible terms and not just words.

I know what you are all thinking, Congress. Can a fire-engine pump pump 1,800 litres of strawberry milkshake at 7 bar pressure? (*Laughter and applause*) I don't know the answer to that but maybe it is time that we found out. We must tackle this hatred every single day. We must tackle it on our streets, in our workplaces, in Parliament, and if it does arise, with the rotten little apples in our trade unions, then we need to tackle them as well. Anywhere the nationalist far right attempts to raise its ugly head, it will be met by principled trade unionists.

The working-class trade union Movement must be the united front and force for good to fight this hate-filled ideology. Together we can be the frontline response. Together we can safeguard all the people in our communities from this dangerous and sinister

threat of far-right nationalism. Support your comrades, support your communities and support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Fantastic. Thank you, Cameron. Finally, NASUWT.

Andrea Welter (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Motion 41.

She said: Congress, I am from the NASUWT, the teachers' union, and I am a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I am speaking in support of Motion 41 on tackling racist ideologies. The NASUWT welcomes and fully supports this motion. As our research has shown, racism and racist ideologies are rife and continue to blight the lives of many in our workplaces and in society in general. Tackling racism is, therefore, fundamental to the NASUWT campaigning, bargaining and organising agenda.

The NASUWT has long been concerned by the persistent nature of racial injustice and discrimination and has worked tirelessly over many years on strategies for eliminating racial discrimination and advancing racial equality. We continue to challenge situations where BAME teachers face prejudice, marginalisation, hatred and abuse because of their ethnicity, nationality or religious belief through casework policies as well as campaigning and bargaining.

NASUWT research has shown that experiencing racism at work is part of every-day life for many BAME teachers, and that this racism takes many forms. Often it is hidden but it is abundantly clear in the disproportionate numbers of BAME teachers who fail to obtain leadership positions and the fact that BAME teachers are nearly twice as likely as their counterparts to have been threatened with capability procedures or have been put on a support plan. This lack of support is forcing BAME

teachers to question their future in a profession that is failing to support them and needs them. It is for this reason that the NASUWT is actively strengthening its Act for Racial Justice campaign, a campaign built on the foundations of workplace and community organising.

Congress, we know what happens in society is also played out in schools and other educational establishments. We must continue to challenge the rise in populism and anti-immigrant rhetoric, which is evident throughout the UK, wider Europe and beyond. No one is born racist or with racist ideologies, so where do they come from? One would assume that this issue would not affect primary school children but it does, as what they see or hear they repeat and act out. Currently, there are children who think it is acceptable to tell other children, who they are friends with, to go back home, call them names or disrespect their identity, culture or religion.

Congress, we cannot allow the current political instability to overshadow this much-needed action against racist ideology. Anti-racism work must remain a priority for the TUC and all its affiliates. As Ruby Bridges highlighted: “Racism is a grown-up disease and we must stop using our children to spread it”. Please support.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Andrea, and to all those fantastic contributions. We will move to the vote on Motion 41. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 41 was CARRIED.*

Period poverty

The President: I now move to Motion 42 on Period poverty. This is going to be moved by Tracey Fussey on behalf of the TUC Women's Conference and seconded by ASLEF. Then can PCS, CoP, Unite, NEU and RMT be ready as we want to try and get through as much as we can. I ask Tracey to move Motion 42.

Tracey Fussey (*Communication Workers Union, TUC Women's Committee*) moved Motion 42. *She said:* Congress, women in the UK throughout their lifetime spend an average of £18,450 on their periods. That's more than a year's salary for someone on the national minimum wage. During the course of a single year, the cost is nearly £500, simply not affordable for most people on low incomes.

Ten years ago the union Movement was campaigning to support organisations that helped to provide sanitary products in the developing world, but now in 2019, thanks to nine years of Tory austerity and the explosion of low-paid and insecure work, period poverty is on the rise here in the UK. In one of the wealthiest nations in the world and the fifth largest economy, it is deeply shameful that more than 137,000 girls have missed school because of period poverty, taking time off simply to avoid embarrassment and indignity. It is a disgrace that unsuitable, non-sanitary materials are being used simply to enable people to get on with their lives. It is a shocking fact that many have to choose between food or sanitary wear. It is a complete tragedy that families, many of them working all hours to make ends meet, are forced to turn to food banks for sanitary products.

The rollout of universal credit has made things even more difficult for those struggling on a tight budget, something that will never be fixed under a Boris Johnson Government. No one should face a period without the products they need and no one should suffer any financial detriment because of this natural biological function. This is not just an issue of income inequality. It is also a human rights issue. That is why access to sanitary products should be universally free and VAT abolished for all sanitary provisions. It is, surely, not right that tampons and sanitary towels continue to be taxed as luxury, non-essential items in the UK. These are not luxury items. They are a necessity.

In our national campaign, the CWU has been working with the Red Box Project and Parliamentarians forcing the Government to go further with its pledge to provide sanitary products in schools and colleges. We have also sent a joint letter signed by more than 70 MPs to the Chancellor demanding that access to sanitary products are universal and free, and we continue to support the Bill by Monica Lennon MSP in Scotland and the expansion of this initiative into Wales.

Supporters of our campaign, including Jeremy Corbyn, who wore our “Make Period Products Free” campaign sticker during Prime Minister’s Questions, have helped to raise awareness about the lack of progress on this issue in England. But more needs to be done politically and industrially to make sure that period poverty is eradicated throughout the whole of the UK.

Congress, the debate about sanitary products is moving forward and it is absolutely right that everyone has access to the essentials of life. Setting benchmarks, the CWU, as an employer, has started providing free sanitary products in the toilets of our

buildings, and we have begun discussions with the major employers that we have relationships with and recognition agreements, encouraging them to do the same.

Congress, support the motion. Go back to your workplaces, engage with your employers and lobby your MPs. Let's all get behind the campaign. Let's make sanitary products universally free and tax free for all. I move. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tracey. I call the NEU to second.

Heather McKenzie (*National Education Union, TUC Women's Committee*) seconded Motion 42. *She said:* Congress, I am proud to second Motion 42, seeing period poverty go to period dignity, hopefully, at this conference. I am proud to say that I have always seen the trade union Movement and our brothers supporting us all through our lives with this issue. For me, personally, it was my dad, as a shop steward and an engineering in the 1960s and 1970s, who was the person who took me for my first bra and bought me my first Dr Whites Sanitary Belt, as it was called then. He did this while regaling the assistant, with much embarrassment on her behalf, of his mother's shame, as a single parent in Glasgow in the 1930s, trying to provide similar for herself and her sister without the means or a welfare system to support her. For many, sadly, this situation has not changed. It is now all our legacy and our responsibility to challenge this debilitating, isolating and shaming situation, to make period products — towels, tampons, moon cups and the like — free for everyone at the point of need. We must prioritise this campaign and include maternity and menopause as a workplace issue through the Women's Committee, the Council of the Isles and here today, once and for all, to banish our monthly friend and embrace our normal bodily functions, to be liberated, so that our menstrual, emotional, physical

and social wellbeing are part of conversations and policies in our workplaces and our lives.

Menstruation, maternity and menopause are political issues for everyone woman in this room and in our movement. We must remain central to co-ordinating this within our labour movement if we are to achieve the success of our Scottish sisters and brothers and as outlined in the objectives of this motion.

We welcome free products and we welcome the £10 million pledged from Labour, too, but we must continue to campaign for policy and change, and to quash, once and for all, this hidden inequality. We need to educate, agitate and organise, as we do on everything. The time is now, for school girls, for the growing number of homeless women, for asylum seekers and for refugees to smash this financial poverty trap. Let's make sure that the Kerrys of this world, who gave up the chance to use their own sanitary products because she had to pay an electricity bill and to feed her children, who remembered being at school 30 years earlier and missing school because she was too frightened to go to school, do not have to suffer any more. That is happening in our society today and it should not be happening.

As mentioned, period products are not discretionary or luxury items. They are our human right for 50% of the workforce and the world. We have to make sure that that goes through. We have to make sure that everybody today believes it is our duty to ensure that free sanitary products are available for all. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Heather. I call ASLEF.

Simon Weller (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) spoke in support of Motion 42. *He said:* “Congress, for those who don’t know, ASLEF is the union for train drivers, and it is a particularly male-dominated industry with only 5% of train drivers being women.

In 2017 an international report found that one-in-10 girls and women in the UK had been unable to afford sanitary protection, while one-in-seven said that they had struggled to afford it at all. Union reps are seeing first hand the impact that period poverty has. Being unable to afford menstruation protection means that girls may miss out on their school, women may not be able to attend shifts and it can impact mental health, confidence and limit their ability to take part in day-to-day activities. So as trade unionists, what can we do? We need to educate and organise. We need to organise in our workplaces, in our schools, in our hospitals and in our communities so that everyone has period dignity, able to access menstruation products freely available to all at the point of need, wherever they are.

Then we need to educate where menstruation equality is more than an issue of access. We need to remove the stigmatisation of periods. We need to inform and empower. As trade unionists, we are perfectly positioned to do this. It is our bread and butter work. Importantly, it must also be the male reps who will be highlighting these issues and delivering the change that we need.

The TUC Women’s Committee and our Young Workers’ Committee have had an ambitious programme of work to start doing this, and we need to tackle the root cause of why some women and girls are unable to afford these products. We need to organise against poverty and the gender nature of poverty. Women are

disproportionately more likely to experience poverty because of entrenched and endemic structural inequality. More than one-fifth of women — 22% — have a persistent low income compared with approximately 14% of men. Living in persistent poverty denies women the opportunity to build up savings and assets to fall back on in times of hardship. After a decade of austerity, women and those with disabilities and BAME communities have been hit hardest by the changes to our tax and benefits system and public services, leaving the poorest families having lost the most. That is why the trade union Movement is pushing back against the disastrous universal credit system. We are organising for a true living wage, one that women and their families can live on. We are campaigning for a day-one right to flexible work, not just a right to request. We will continue to put gender equality and women’s reproductive health — menstruation, maternity and menopause — at the top of the collective bargaining agenda. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Simon. I call PCS and then CoP.

Louise Kowalska (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 42. *She said:* Congress, “The communists are in the hat”, “The English have landed” and “I am with Andrew who visits every month”. These are not my predictions for Sunday’s newspaper headlines but alleged euphemisms for a person experiencing menstruation. Amusing they may be, but language transformation is necessary in reducing the current stigma and negative culture to menstruation in the workplace and society. Such language disempowers women and needs to be confined to the history books.

There exist excellent campaigns to effect change and alleviate period poverty, including “Bloody good period” and “On the ball”, which are superb examples by three exceptional young women lobbying Celtic Football Club to provide free period products to fans. The initiative has now spread to more than one hundred other football clubs and it is inspirational in the true tradition of Mary Barber, the Glasgow girls and the Glasgow equal pay campaigners.

Whilst not in the motion, I do have to ask Congress itself to consider taking the lead and providing free period products for the use of delegates, exhibitors and workers at Congress in 2020. I estimate that the cost would be the same as providing caterers for fringe events. (*Applause*) Together with its sister union, PCS is campaigning in workplaces, negotiating with the Cabinet Office, with a view to supplying free products in reserved Government departments.

The motion outlines the initiatives that the Scottish and Welsh Governments have made. PCS believes that governments as employers should be exemplars. The Westminster Government have fallen short on this issue.

PCS always campaigns in schools under the “Period Dignity” banner. We have period warriors, leaving period products in toilets and organising Wear Red days. Negotiations are currently underway with the Scottish Government to provide eco-friendly and reusable products. It is estimated that a woman will dispose of 11,400 tampons in their lifetime, an ecological disaster.

My own branch, Edinburgh, took direct action, creating a donation point for products for all staff to use, with excess donations passed to a local women’s refuge. Further, I

proposed a motion for free provision for Scottish Government employees at our group conference. Serendipity, it may have been, but the very next day the permanent secretary announced that the Scottish Government were to go ahead. I expect great things for tomorrow. This is a non-contested issue. We all support the fight against period poverty. I urge you to support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Louise. CoP.

Katie Collins (*The College of Podiatry*) spoke in support of Motion 42. *She said:* With 76% of our membership being female, The College of Podiatry has been doing a lot of work utilising the TUC's resources on the menopause and period poverties, with them fully adopted by our organisation and being actively rolled out to our members, encouraging them to have these policies in their practices.

When this motion came through the Women's TUC, we were shocked and saddened to hear how there was so much inaccessibility to sanitary items to women and girls in this country still today, with delegate after delegate getting up explaining how children in their schools were having to be provided with these products because it was either a choice between these or food. This is a terrible consequence of this Government's austerity regime, but it is also a condemnation of society in general, where women's health is still not being taken seriously.

I was born with a deformed heart and I have been in and out of hospital all of my life with multiple heart surgeries, but not once have I ever been offered sanitary products or seen anyone else being offered sanitary products. Yet men are routinely offered shaving kits. Whilst, of course, it helps male patients to fresh and clean to have a

shave, it is not a health risk to have a 5 o'clock shadow, whereas if a woman does not change her sanitary products on a regular basis it can put her at risk of serious health conditions and, in the most serious cases, even death. This is why The College of Podiatry is educating our members about period poverty and are actively encouraging our members to provide access to free sanitary products in their practices so we can do our bit to help tackle this appalling situation. The College has free products for all our staff as well in the college offices. So we wholeheartedly support this motion and we ask you to do so, too. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Katie. I am going to take Unite and the RMT. If we are fairly swift, we will get another motion in.

Bridie McCreesh (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 42. *She said:* I work for Newry, Mourne & Down District Council. I bullied and harassed them to bring in the period dignity provision for young girls in my council. After months and months of fighting it out with them, they gradually said, "Okay, we will do it". So it was for the period dignity. Let me tell you now just what my council classes as period dignity. First, they have asked all of the staff to donate sanitary products to this pink bin in the council's offices so it can be for the young girls. Not a problem. Then what they have decided to do is, on the back of the toilet doors — they are only doing in the leisure centre, which is one place — in the leisure centre. We went down to take a look at what they were doing. So you imagine a young girl, maybe 12 or 13, in the changing room of the leisure centre and she starts her period suddenly. What does she have to do? Well, my council, Newry, Mourne & Down District Council, has decided that they have to get dressed, they have to go to the back of the door, pick a little black dot sticker off the door and do the walk of shame up a long corridor to go

to reception in order to hand this sticker over only for somebody to hand them a sanitary product. Seriously, is that in any way dignity in this day and age? No, it is not.

So I had a go at them. I said that sanitary products should be in the changing rooms. They should be in the toilets free of charge for the kids. I was told, “Well, they might steal them”. I said, “Well, tell me something. Do you steal a toilet roll when you come out of the male toilets?” (*Applause*) Then he turned round and said to me, “Oh, maybe that would go against the contract that we have with Canon Hygiene”. Bullshit! I swear to God. I have never in my life heard anything like it. So I was told, “These kids are coming to the leisure centre. If they can come to the leisure centre and they can afford to go for a swim, they can afford to buy sanitary products”. This is a man with kids of his own. Okay? I actually told him: “Do you know what? These kids come to the leisure centre from the schools. They get free swimming lessons at schools. So, no, they don’t pay to come into the leisure centre because they can’t afford to”.

I have to get this bit right. I must put my glasses on because, otherwise, I can’t see anything. I am asking Congress, please, to let every ignorant, backward, Stone Age employer, be put on notice here and now that we will name and shame each and every one of them. So, Congress, can you, please, support women’s dignity, support young girls’ dignity and support this motion. Thank you. (*Cheers and applause*)

The President: Thank you, Bridie. That was fantastic. RMT.

Jannette Hacini (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) spoke in support of Motion 41. *She said:* Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, the issue is not only of affordability but accessibility. In 2017 there was some sort of press coverage over the fact that in Glasgow Central Station, my own place of work, there was no access to any sanitary products at all in the station toilets. In Edinburgh Waverley Station the cost of a pack of four sanitary towels was as much as £3 in the toilets. As was said before, Monica Lennon, a Member of the Scottish Parliament, wrote to the managing director of ScotRail Alliance. She asked them to take action to provide free products in these stations. Network Rail responded by saying it would be delighted to support her request. Despite those encouraging words, no such support has ever taken place.

Simple access has been an on-going issue, an issue that was raised by the RMT with Cal-Mac Ferries, highlighting for both the travelling public and the staff working there, there was no access to any products at all on any of the ferries. This is an issue, I am pleased to say, that Cal-Mac has resolved by providing free sanitary products to all on all of its services. This goes to show you what can happen when people work together. (*Applause*)

Congress, the RMT has written to all train operating companies, Network Rail and Transport for London urging them to provide free sanitary products to all, not only at stations but also on on-board services travelling up and down the country. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, Jannette, and for all those fantastic contributions in that debate. I am going to move to the vote on Motion 42. All those in favour? All those against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 42 was CARRIED.*

End discrimination in state reciprocal pension arrangements

The President: We are now going to take Motion 43. I call on Gloria Mills on behalf of the TUC Black Workers Conference, seconded by the NASUWT. This is: End discrimination in state reciprocal pension arrangements.

Gloria Mills (*UNISON, TUC Black Workers Conference*) moved Motion 43. *She said:* Good afternoon, Conference. I am Chair of the TUC Race Relations Committee. I am moving Motion 43 on behalf of the TUC Black Workers Conference.

President and Congress, I am pleased to be moving this motion to end discrimination in the state reciprocal pension arrangements. For years people worked knowing that at the end of their working life their state pension was guaranteed, but not any more. Politicians and the Government have taken it upon themselves to change our pension provision. Whenever they make a mess of the economy or they make a mess of the country, they impose austerity measures and they increase the state pension retirement age. But not only that, they have targeted the poorest in our country and the poorest in our communities. Congress, when it comes to the state pension, women and black people are hit the hardest. This is a class issue. It is penalising poor working-class

people who are dependent on their state pension. Ask the 3.8 million women born in the 1950s who have been denied their state pension at the age of 60 without notice until it was too late, and a Chancellor who said it was the easiest £5 billion a year that he has saved from denying women their state pension. Women born in the 1950s not only do not have a state pension, or one of the most miserly state pensions in the developed world, yet now they are reliant on food banks, zero-hour contracts and being sanctioned by the Department for Work & Pensions for not being able to continue working at age 67 or 68. Now the Tories are planning to raise the state pension age to 75!

The so-called Centre for Social Justice — you can't make it up — the same cabal of people who came up with universal credit, are now talking about increasing the state pension age to 75. But they are not looking at taxing their rich friends who are not paying their fair share of tax and who are involved in some of the most appalling tax-dodging schemes we have in this country. So they know nothing about social justice. But if you are a British national and you dream of retiring abroad, you will soon discover the horror of having your state pension frozen at the date you retire. Not only that, the Government will veto which country you decide to live in in terms of whether or not you get your pension increase and up-rating every year.

This situation is absolutely disgraceful. So you can't decide to retire to a country anywhere in the world and have your state pension paid at the same rate as if you lived in the UK because the Government will veto and stop your state pension being increased. I tell you this. If we do leave this European Union with a no-deal Brexit, this will happen to British people living in EU countries. They will have their state pension frozen and it will not be up-rated in line with inflation. It is really an

appalling state when we have a government deciding to pay people and up-rate their pension on where they choose to live. It has nothing to do with the state. The role of the state is to pay your full state pension wherever you choose to live, whether you choose to live in the UK or you choose to live in Timbuktu. You should have your state pension paid. It is blatant discrimination. It is treating British people less equal than others and we should stop it.

Finally, Conference, I also want to say that we must support the women born in the 1950s who are campaigning for full restitution of their state pension to be paid at the age of 60. (*Applause*) And we must use the temporary special measure to pay full restitution to the women born in the 1950s. Conference, I ask you to fight for justice and pension justice for women and black workers but also we should stop the Government from breaching their promise to pay our state pension wherever we choose to live. I move. Thank you. (*Applause and cheers*)

The President: Thank you very much for that, Gloria. I call on the NASUWT to second.

Andrea Welter (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) seconded Motion 43: End discrimination in state reciprocal pension arrangements. *She said:* Congress, the NASUWT strongly supports and welcomes this motion from the TUC Black Workers Conference. The motion states the key issues succinctly and clearly that working people who have paid national insurance and taxes throughout their working lives to the UK Government but who wish to retire abroad may not receive the same state pension as other working people who have paid national insurance and taxes for their working lives, but who retire in Britain, the European Economic Area or countries

with a reciprocal agreement with the UK Government to up-rate pensions, the largest of which is the United States.

Working people who decide to retire abroad are subject to a lottery as to whether their state pension will be up-rated every year to keep its value or whether it will be frozen at the level at which they first took it.

The NASUWT understands the circumstances which have led to this historical anomaly but this does not make the anomaly fair. It is fundamentally unjust and it is also fundamentally unjust that this Government have refused to consider any new reciprocal arrangements, despite the failure to do so impacting primarily on working people with a Commonwealth heritage. We must not forget the debacle over the treatment of people from *The Windrush* generation that is still carrying on today. The discriminatory treatment of black and minority ethnic British citizens who have worked. Lived and contributed over decades to securing world-class standards in education, the National Health Service and other public services must not spill over into pension arrangements, too. In too many cases, their lifelong contributions and hard work have been treated with contempt in the form of a threat of deportation, loss of employment, access to education and healthcare. The fact that many black and minority ethnic British citizens have already been deported or lost to the system and have even died before achieving justice is a national disgrace.

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Frozen British Pensions has put the case for the partial up-rating of state pensions for those pensioners whose pension benefits are frozen, meaning that they would be up-rated going forward from their current rate. This would have a up-front cost to the UK Government of £37 million, a relatively

small amount for the Treasury. While the NASUWT does not present this as any kind of solution, it is deplorable that the Government have ruled out a measure which would at least ensure that the pensions of UK working people who have retired abroad receive some annual up-rating. The Black Workers Conference is right to highlight the injustice of this situation, and the NASUWT urges support for the motion from you, our brothers and sisters. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: There are no other speakers so I am going to put Motion 43 to the vote. All those in favour? Thank you. All those against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 43 was CARRIED.*

The President: Congress, just to update you, we have reached the end of scheduled business. We have one motion left, a very important one, from the LGBT+ Conference on homophobic and transphobic hate crime. There are six people who want to speak on that motion and it would not be right to try to squeeze that in at the end of conference business. So we are going to pick that motion up tomorrow to ensure that everyone who wants to speak on it will be able to speak. I see a point of order.

Julia Neal (*National Education Union*): On a point of order, I am the proposer of Motion 44, which we now learn will be held tomorrow. This motion was brought by the TUC Equality Conference. This represents a marginalised group, and not prioritising it is further marginalising it, in my opinion — (*Applause*) — and, indeed, that is the opinion of people I have spoken to from the committee representing the

conference. This is a composite motion from four different unions, chosen nearly unanimously at the LGBT Conference. We all think — it is not my motion but everybody's — that the content of the motion is vital. It is politically relevant and it will get more important as time goes on.

President, I have two asks. Could you, if you are not able to hear it now, consider taking it tomorrow morning at the beginning so that we keep it together with all the equality motions before everybody, perhaps, feels that they need to go for an early train — I am not saying you will — and I have some thoughts about this which I will not share now but could we make sure that this situation does not happen again? *(Applause)* Thank you.

The President: Thanks, Julia. I know this discussion has been going on this afternoon, but we have had 30 contributions in the equality section, and I have given people all opportunity, if they did not want to speak this afternoon, to try and get all the business in. It is precisely because we want to prioritise allowing everyone to speak — there are six people who want to speak and we want to do this debate justice — that we don't want to try and do it at the end of the day. I will take advice from the GPC about when I can take it tomorrow and I will come back to you on that in the morning. I want to be clear that the General Council, absolutely, wants to hear this debate, but we also want everyone to have the chance to speak. Thanks for your point of order. I will take advice and I will come back to that in the morning.

Delegates, we have now closed the conference but in finishing we did ask and we agreed this morning that we would now raise our posters on *Show Racism the Red Card*. We did carry the motion on racism unanimously earlier on. If people can do

that. I take the opportunity now to thank everybody for those fantastic speeches this afternoon. I will take advice on the point raised by Julia. If you can all hold your cards up loud and proud — *Show Racism the Red Card* — we will take some pictures. Thank you.

(Congress concluded for the day)

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