

Congress Report 2008

The 140th annual Trades Union Congress
8-11 September, Brighton

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General Council Members 2008 – 2009

Bob Abberley
UNISON

Jonathan Baume
FDA

Sheila Bearcroft (Chair)
GMB

Mary Bousted
Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Tony Burke
Unite

Jane Carolan
UNISON

Gail Cartmail
Unite

Brian Caton
Prison Officers' Association

Jeremy Dear
National Union of Journalists

Gerry Doherty
Transport Salaried Staffs Association

Maria Exall
Communication Workers Union

Sue Ferns
Prospect

Mark Fysh
UNISON

Gerry Gallagher
UNISON

Allan Garley
GMB

Janice Godrich
Public and Commercial Services Union

Anita Halpin
National Union of Journalists

John Hannett
Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

Dave Harvey
National Union of Teachers

Billy Hayes
Communication Workers Union

Sally Hunt
University and College Union

Tony Kearns
Communication Workers Union

Chris Keates
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

Paul Kenny
GMB

Michael Leahy OBE
Community

Leslie Manasseh MBE
Connect

Martin Mayer
Unite

Len McCluskey
Unite

Lesley Mercer
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Gloria Mills CBE
UNISON

Ged Nichols
Accord

Paul Noon
Prospect

Brian Orrell OBE
Nautilus UK

Christine Payne
Equity

Tim Poil
Nationwide Group Staff Union

Dave Prentis
UNISON

Alan Ritchie
Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

Sue Rogers
*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of
Women Teachers*

Dougie Rooney
Unite

Mark Serwotka
Public and Commercial Services Union

Alison Shepherd
UNISON

Derek Simpson
Unite

Eleanor Smith
UNISON

John Smith
Musicians' Union

Liz Snape MBE
UNISON

Patricia Stuart
Unite

Mohammed Taj
Unite

Paul Talbot
Unite

John Walsh
Unite

Fiona Wilson
Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

Tony Woodhouse
Unite

Tony Woodley
Unite

Matt Wrack
Fire Brigades Union

Brendan Barber *General Secretary*

Section 1

Congress Decisions

Listed below are the decisions taken by the 2008 Trades Union Congress on the motions and amendments submitted by unions. The numbers given to resolutions and motions refer to their number in the Final Agenda, or to that of the Composite or Emergency Motion.

Part 1

Resolutions Carried

7 Attacks on trade union rights

Congress again calls for the repeal of the anti-trade union laws.

Congress is appalled that the recent Viking, Laval and Ruffert judgments in the European Court of Justice are a fundamental attack on collective bargaining and the right to strike, representing the most serious attack on trade unions since Taff Vale.

The unelected judges of the EU, using the 'free movement' provisions, have disembowelled the concept of social Europe and undermined the ability of unions to protect workers. The Lisbon Treaty would exacerbate these attacks by handing greater powers to the ECJ to interpret disputes concerning the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

In the UK these rulings add to the restraints of thirty years of anti-trade union laws, which have massively reduced collective bargaining coverage and, in turn, have contributed to dramatic increases in inequality.

Congress believes there is an urgent need to campaign strenuously for restoration of the fundamental human right to strike, recognised but overridden in the ECJ cases, and for the introduction of the Trade Union Freedom Bill.

Congress welcomes the General Council's support for the United Campaign's Westminster rally last year and requests it to continue to support United Campaign initiatives with the above objectives.

Congress also demands that the General Council:

- i) organise a day of action, demonstration and lobby of Parliament;
- ii) facilitate meetings of affiliates to promote the campaign;
- iii) campaign for all ILO Conventions to be included in any new UK Bill of Rights; and
- iv) call for a European-wide day of action.

National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

Insert new paragraph 5:

'Congress is further concerned that consideration was given to the use of powers under the Civil Contingencies Act against striking tanker drivers and that the same legislation has been used to justify the planning of privatised strike-breaking in the fire and rescue service under the proposals for Project Fireguard.'

Fire Brigades' Union

10 The protection of seafarers' employment in the EU shortsea trades

Congress notes with concern the continuing decline in the number of British and other EU seafarers. Congress also notes the increasing use of poorly paid crews from low-cost labour supplying areas on board many of the ships that operate in British and EU waters. Congress deplores the failure of the ship owners to agree on the proposed terms of an EU directive to regulate employment conditions in the European ferry sector. Congress therefore calls on the General Council to:

- i) support seafarer union campaigns against the exploitation of foreign seafarers in EU waters;

- ii) support the initiatives to create a 'sector of excellence' in the European shortsea trades;
- iii) support efforts to safeguard UK and EU seafarer employment and to revitalise training;
- iv) support measures to encourage operators to compete on the basis of quality rather than low cost; and
- v) lobby the UK Government and the European Commission for further measures to prevent unfair competition through discrimination on the pay and conditions of foreign seafarers.

Nautilus UK

13 Civil liberties

Congress expresses its concern at the steady erosion of civil liberties in the UK and in particular the negative impact such attacks have on members' working lives.

Congress congratulates unions who have resisted the imposition of draconian measures in the workplace and unions who have worked with civil liberty campaigners to expose the wider threat posed to civil liberties, including plans for ID cards, 42-day detention and limits on the right to protest.

Congress also expresses its grave concern at the threats to independent journalism posed by the Terrorism Act and other recent legislation. In particular, Congress condemns the threat to jail journalists such as Shiv Malik and Robin Ackroyd for protecting journalistic sources.

Congress recognises the importance of a free media in a democratic society, the essential function fulfilled by whistleblowers and the vital public interest in upholding journalists' rights not to reveal their sources.

Congress condemns attempts to use the Contempt of Court Act, Terrorism Act and other legislation to compel journalists to betray confidential sources in breach of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Congress urges the General Council to take a lead and work with affiliates to support legal and industrial challenges to defend civil liberties and the right of members to work free from such threats.

National Union of Journalists

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

In paragraph 3, line 2, after 'journalism' insert 'and academic freedom'.

At end of paragraph 3 add:

'Congress also condemns the use of the Terrorism Act to restrict the rights of academics and students to research and study terrorist tactics (as occurred at the University of Nottingham in May).'

Insert new paragraph 5:

'Congress also recognises the importance of academic freedom in guaranteeing a robust democracy.'

University and College Union

17 Appointment of Joel Edwards

Congress condemns Joel Edward's appointment as Commissioner to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Mr Edwards, General Director of the Evangelical Alliance (EA), describes gay sex and same sex partnerships as 'sinful'.

Congress is appalled that the Chair of the EHRC, Trevor Philips, took part in the selection process. The EHRC states that 'all Commissioners are appointed on the basis of their experience or knowledge of discrimination and human rights.' This statement is incongruous with Mr Edward's position. On numerous occasions Joel Edwards has made homophobic statements and continues to do so. The EA has opposed

recent legislative steps towards equality for LGBT people.

Under the direction of Mr Edwards, the EA has issued public claims such as 'homosexual practice is morally wrong' and 'a behaviour choice', in submissions to House of Commons Committees.

Congress affirms that by appointing Mr Edwards as a Commissioner, any confidence that the EHRC will promote further equality for LGBT people has been deeply undermined.

Congress calls on the General Council to condemn the appointment of Mr Edwards and campaign for his immediate removal from the board of the EHRC. Congress notes that 'all (EHRC) Commissioners have a collective responsibility clause in their Code of Conduct' and calls on the General Council to ensure that Mr Edwards and his fellow Commissioners adhere to the code.

TUC Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Conference

18 Improving maternity pay

Congress welcomes the Government's continued support for pregnant women and working parents.

The introduction and extension of statutory rights for new parents has given trade unions a platform from which to negotiate improvements with employers.

Congress believes there continues to be an urgent case for more union, employer and government action to ensure women on maternity leave, and returning to work from maternity leave, are better protected and supported.

Congress recognises that:

- i) the flat rate of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is still too low;
- ii) too many women are missing out on SMP because of the way in which entitlement is calculated. SMP is based on average earnings during a very specific eight-week period and not on contractual salary. This means women fail to qualify or qualify for a reduced amount where they have been off sick or taken unpaid or parental leave; and
- iii) women who take up their entitlement to Additional Maternity Leave have a less robust right to return to the same job as those who return at the end of Ordinary Maternity Leave.

Congress resolves to:

- a) support affiliates in negotiating improvements to company pay and leave policies for new parents;
- b) assist affiliates to make the case to the Government for improvements to maternity pay and leave regulations to ensure pregnant women and new mothers are better supported; and
- c) circulate examples of best practice where unions and employers have agreed improvements to maternity, paternity and adoption pay and leave for working parents.

Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

19 Abortion rights

Congress believes that a woman's right to choose with regards to abortion is a fundamental right. Congress believes abortion should be legally available at the request of the woman and the requirement that two doctors agree to her decision should be ended.

Congress notes that the 1967 Abortion Act has saved the lives and health of thousands of women. Congress notes that research shows that 27 per cent of PCTs have delays beyond three weeks for abortion services due to under-funding in the NHS. Congress also notes that the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill currently in Parliament is subject to anti-abortion amendments to

reduce the abortion time limit from 24 weeks and to impose a 'cooling off' period and compulsory counselling. Congress believes such measures would have appalling consequences for women seeking abortion and assume women are not capable of making their own decision.

Congress re-affirms its support for a woman's right to choose, and believes that the debate on abortion is dominated by sensationalist reporting in the media. Congress recognises that control over whether to have children, and when and how many, is crucial to every other aspect of a woman's life, and that three quarters of people in Britain support a woman's right to make her own decision. Congress believes the law should be modernised to allow women, not doctors, to make the abortion decision, like every other medical procedure.

Congress, therefore, opposes any attempt to restrict existing legal rights, and calls on the TUC Women's Committee to:

- i) campaign amongst affiliates, and with the Irish, Scottish and Welsh Women's Committees, to defend the current legal upper limit of 24 weeks and oppose any mandatory 'cooling-off' period and compulsory counselling;
- ii) work closely with Abortion Rights UK to defend the 24-week time limit and ensure pro-choice amendments are put forward to liberalise the current legislation;
- iii) campaign for the right of workers in sexual health and abortion services to be free to work without fear of abuse or attack;
- iv) call for the extension of the 1967 Act to Northern Ireland;
- v) call for any review of current provision to recognise the need for better access to family planning services, and for improved sex education in schools; and
- vi) publish guidance and support for trade unions on workplace issues relating to access to abortion and time off for treatment.

TUC Women's Conference

20 Reclaim the Night

Congress notes the London Feminist Network organises an annual march against rape and male violence named Reclaim the Night, the existence of which dates back to the 1970s. Reclaim the Night demands that women should have the right to use public spaces without fear, and demands justice for rape survivors.

A 2005 survey found that 95 per cent of women feel unsafe on the streets at night, 73 per cent worry about being raped and almost half say they sometimes don't want to go out because they fear for their own safety.

Many female workers, including musicians, must assess whether working at night is safe. Performers, often carrying valuable musical instruments, are required to travel back to their hotel or home by foot or by public transport after the performance, and are particularly vulnerable. In many cases, a female performer may turn down work due to the possibility or fear of assault because of the time of day that they have to work.

Congress is concerned that such women find themselves at a disadvantage and resolves to support Reclaim the Night's campaign. It asks the General Council to encourage affiliates to provide opportunities for all women workers, perhaps through unionlearn, to train in self-defence.

Musicians' Union

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

Paragraph 3, line 1, after 'musicians' insert 'performers and other entertainment workers'

Add new final paragraph:

'Congress further calls on the General Council to support the availability of safe and affordable

transport at all times, particularly for women workers travelling to and from a range of different workplaces, including live entertainment venues.'

Equity

21 Closing the ethnic minority employment gap

Congress welcomes the report from the National Employment Panel on race equality in the workplace published in October 2007 - see www.nationalemploymentpanel.gov.uk/work/buscom.htm. Congress notes, in particular, the conclusion that discrimination by employers accounts for between one third and half of the ethnic minority employment gap. This means that around 250,000 black workers have been denied a job because of their colour.

Congress also welcomes the proposal to encourage employers to change their behaviour using a mix of public procurement policy and the Equality and Human Rights Commission reviews, backed up by the possibility of legislation if a voluntary approach has not clearly led to improvements in race equality in the workplace by 2012.

Congress recognises the vital and unique role that trade unions can play in challenging and eliminating discrimination in employment and urges all affiliates to review their bargaining work and priorities to reflect the urgent need to close the ethnic minority employment gap.

TUC Black Workers' Conference

23 Asylum seekers and employment

Congress continues to recognise the full range of benefits brought about by the presence of migrant workers, including refugees and asylum seekers, in our society and welcomes the diversity which they bring to this country.

Congress commends the work of the TUC General Council in recent years in providing assistance, advice and support to asylum seekers and refugees, particularly in relation to the provision of English as an Additional Language (EAL) courses and other courses aimed at providing some basic information about the world of work and the role of trade unions in the workplace. Further, Congress recognises the need to maintain and enhance levels of support, particularly in relation to the provision of EAL, for all migrant families including asylum seekers and refugees.

Congress, therefore, resolves that asylum seekers should have the right to seek employment while their application for refugee status is considered and instructs the General Council to organise a campaign to secure this objective.

The Educational Institute of Scotland

24 Access to work

Congress notes the Government's consultation paper Improving Specialist Employment Services. However, the Government's current proposals will mean that in future public sector employers will no longer be able to access central funding for the costs of paying for reasonable adjustments under the Access to Work Scheme. Transferring funding liability direct to public sector employers may create an unacceptable 'postcode lottery' where special adjustment outcomes for disabled people depend too much on the individual employer's financial security. For example, in the NHS, the proposals may generate unfortunate choices where the interests of the disabled worker are pitted against budget needs for medical expenditure.

Congress is concerned that such a move will therefore reduce disabled people's employment opportunities in the public sector.

Congress:

- i) calls on public sector unions to continue to work with the TUC to monitor the impact of these changes where they have already occurred in the central government ministries and assess their likely impact if extended to cover all public sector employers; ii) calls upon the TUC Disability Committee to co-ordinate a national campaign to defend Access to Work, to be launched at Congress 2008 and to include a lobby of Parliament;
- iii) urges all affiliates to publicise the disastrous consequences for the employment of disabled people should Access to Work be removed from the public sector; and
- iv) reminds affiliates of the importance of monitoring the level of compliance among public sector employers with their disability equality duties to remove the barriers to employment opportunities for disabled people and assist the TUC's lobbying.

Congress instructs the General Council to:

- a) highlight to Government that small public sector employers are less able than large private sector ones to fund necessary adjustments; and
- b) campaign to ensure that public service job opportunities are not denied to disabled people through lack of Access to Work funding.

TUC Disability Conference

25 The economy

Congress notes with concern the impact on working people of high energy, food and housing costs brought about by rising global commodity prices and reckless actions over past years by the global financial sector. Congress notes that working people bear the consequences whilst those responsible in the finance sector continue to receive obscene payoffs and oil and energy companies benefit from huge profits.

Congress rejects the idea that the most vulnerable in society should pay for the failings of corporate greed and re-asserts its determination to support fair rewards in both the private and public sectors.

The extended wealth gap presided over by a Labour government cannot be morally justified whilst child poverty, low pay and inequality remain prevalent across our society. City bonuses leading to short-termism and risk have been a major contributor to the credit crunch, which has fuelled the expanding wealth gap.

Congress demands that the General Council should campaign to bring about changes to the economic strategy of the Government based on the following principles:

- i) increased regulation and transparency of all financial institutions including private equity firms;
- ii) a windfall tax on the huge profits of energy companies;
- iii) a progressive taxation regime;
- iv) the protection of income of low and middle income earners; and
- v) a strategic policy to bring about a redistribution of wealth.

Unite

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

In paragraph 2, line 3, after 'and' insert:

'inefficiency, as demonstrated by billion of pounds wasted by the Tube PPP and the collapse of Northern Rock, and'

Add new sub-paragraph vi):

'(vi) the economic, social and environmental case for public ownership of utilities and services, including water, gas, electricity, coal, oil and the transport sector, and a massive extension of council housing provision.'

RMT

26 Tax justice

Congress welcomes the publication of the TUC pamphlet *The Missing Billions*, which reveals that many companies and wealthy individuals are manipulating the tax system to avoid paying £25bn in tax each year.

Congress believes this undermines the development of a more equal society, both in the UK and globally, supported by properly resourced public services.

Congress agrees that the capacity of government to collect the taxes needed to fund our public services is being eroded by arbitrary staffing cuts and office closures across Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Congress condemns the Government for presiding over a tax system that enables many rich individuals and multinational companies to avoid paying their fair share while poverty and inequality increases.

Congress instructs the General Council to:

- i) develop a campaign strategy to publicise and implement those measures outlined in the pamphlet which will contribute to closing the tax gap, including supporting a public meeting that will take place at the House of Commons later this year;
- ii) make clear in campaigning that a fair and effective taxation system requires adequate staffing and resources and that this is being undermined by the Government's current cuts programme in HMRC, and to give full support to those unions campaigning against the cuts in HMRC; and
- iii) support action to make multinational companies pay in full the taxes they owe on profits made around the world - including consideration of new taxes on foreign currency dealings to raise additional money for development, since 'global problems require public solutions'.

Public and Commercial Services Union

27 Greener pastures? Poverty and social exclusion in rural areas

Congress notes that tackling poverty has been among the Government's stated core priorities for nearly a decade and that educational qualifications are a key requirement for an individual's route out of poverty.

Congress also notes that government initiatives aimed at breaking the link between poverty and low educational outcomes are targeted at urban areas with high concentrations of deprived households. Research has shown, however, that these initiatives have had only a moderate impact, that the Government is not meeting its targets and that poverty is currently increasing.

Whilst poverty and deprivation are more prevalent and visible in urban areas, Congress recognises that one in five rural households in the UK, including 700,000 children, live below the official poverty line.

The isolation and invisibility of poor rural households is compounded by the Government's excessive focus on the social exclusion of individuals and families rather than on poverty as a result of structural discrimination based on social class.

Congress calls on the TUC and its affiliated unions to:

- i) press the Government to develop coherent and all-inclusive anti-poverty policies based on a focus on social class; and
- ii) lobby the Government to conduct a rigorous rural impact assessment of all its educational policies and initiatives.

Association of Teachers and Lecturers

28 Child poverty

Congress affirms that 'children are the aspiration of the world' and applauds the Government's target to reduce child poverty by 50 per cent by 2010. Congress

notes that child poverty is a significant barrier to the cognitive, physical, emotional and social development of children. These barriers to development prevent many children from achieving by significantly reducing their life chances and by excluding them from opportunities open to others. Where pockets of child and family poverty exist, this has a further pervasive effect on children's and societal development and can lead to the creation of whole pockets of communities and society being excluded from the mainstream of social development and opportunity.

Congress also notes the recent evidence that suggests the Government may fail to reach its target for child poverty and other evidence that indicates there is a widening gap between the richest and poorest in our society. This is directly contrary to the aspirations of improving outcomes for children contained in the Government's strategy, *Every Child Matters*. Congress requests the General Council to engage in early discussions with the Government about measures to address the levels of child poverty in Britain.

Congress supports measures to tackle child poverty that will include:

- i) a review of direct and indirect taxation;
- ii) a revision of departmental spending priorities;
- iii) an obligation on local authorities to target their resources to areas of specific child poverty and need; and
- iv) development of social and learning opportunities to be available to those families living in poverty.

Association of Educational Psychologists

31 Science and engineering skills

Congress welcomes the TUC's report *Hybrid Cars and Shooting Stars*, and it endorses the report's conclusion that the trade union voice on the future of science must be heard more strongly.

Congress recognises that science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills will have a key role in addressing economic and societal challenges. Priorities include combating illness and disease, responding to global warming, and ensuring adequate food supplies for a growing world population.

Congress celebrates the success of the UK's scientists and engineers to date, but is concerned that national capability is being lost as a result of funding cuts, workload pressures, and continuing barriers to the engagement of women and minority groups. For example:

- i) hundreds of jobs at the Science and Technology Facilities Council remain under threat;
- ii) career progression for young scientists often depends on working long hours of unpaid overtime;
- iii) three quarters of women who achieve STEM qualifications do not go into a STEM job;
- iv) yet 27 engineering occupations have been added to the national shortage list for work permits.

Congress calls on the General Council to lobby the Government to:

- a) ensure greater cross-departmental coherence on policies and decisions affecting investment in skills;
- b) call a halt to cost-driven proposals to cut research programmes and require future proposals to include a science impact assessment and full consultation with stakeholders; and
- c) work with unions to encourage greater take up of STEM courses at school and university and make science careers more attractive.

Prospect

35 Floodings

Congress notes the publication of the Pitt report into the major floods experienced in various parts of the country in 2007. These floods caused major damage to communities across large areas of Britain, from which many have still not recovered. The report addresses all aspects of flood management.

Although such individual events cannot be directly linked to climate change, extreme weather events such as the 2007 floods appear to be ever more likely according to climate change models. It is therefore essential that planning for such challenges is developed as part of a process of adaptation to a changing environment.

Congress notes the concerns raised within the Pitt review regarding the emergency response to the floods, in particular:

- i) a lack of clarity over responsibility for emergency response;
- ii) a lack of adequate equipment and training for responding to incidents on such a scale; and
- iii) the continued lack of adequate preparation one year after the 2007 floods.

Congress believes that these issues must be addressed as a matter of urgency and calls on the Government to put in place a fully funded national capability for flood rescue with fire and rescue services playing a leading role. This should be supported by placing a statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities to plan for such events. Any such development of responsibility must be backed by adequate and long-term adjustment to funding arrangements.

Fire Brigades' Union

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

Add at end of paragraph 2:

', and that key organisations, including the Environment Agency and Met Office, are fully resourced to carry out these functions.'

Add new paragraph at end:

'Congress also calls on the Government to work with the companies providing critical public services, such as electricity and water, to do more to protect these services from the consequences of flooding.'

Prospect

39 Defence expenditure

Congress is concerned that UK defence capability is at breaking point, with grave consequences for the armed forces and members working in the UK defence sector. Underfunding is driving the MoD to make flawed decisions damaging both the civil service and private sector manufacturing and support services. The promise of the Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS) has given way to uncertainty with companies unable to maintain capacity, so destroying our future capability as skills and plant disappear.

Congress believes that unless this issue is addressed urgently, the damage will be irreversible. The DIS identified the vital contribution made by the private sector in meeting defence needs, but also that adequate resources were key to the MoD being an intelligent customer and undertaking activity that must remain in public control. On current plans, the MOD will, by 2011, employ 20,000 fewer staff than it did in 2005. Congress believes this puts UK defence capability 'from factory to foxhole' at risk as vital specialist and support functions are contracted out or cease altogether. In parallel, decision-making delays and blinkered cost cutting are eroding the assets and skills essential to private sector manufacturing, with inevitable impact on the quantity and quality of defence equipment. Without a government strategy that values 'onshore' capacity, the defence industrial

base faces more devastating cuts once the current equipment programmes are completed.

Congress calls upon the General Council to raise this with the Government and to mount a public, high profile campaign to ensure a coherent strategy and adequate resources for defence.

Prospect

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

In existing final paragraph, line 3, after 'campaign' insert: "to oppose job cuts and privatisation and"

Add new final paragraph:

"Congress condemns the arbitrary cuts of 20,000 civil service jobs since 2004. This has had a devastating impact on morale. Privatisation of thousands more jobs has worsened services and wasted billions of pounds."

Public and Commercial Services Union

43 Transportation of musical instruments on planes

Congress notes that understandably, due to the continuing terrorist threat, all travellers face a high level of security checks, particularly when travelling by air. After evidence was uncovered of a new terrorist threat involving liquids being carried on board planes, a number of additional restrictions were imposed on hand baggage. Many of these have now been relaxed, but despite the Musicians' Union reaching agreement with the Department for Transport over the transportation by air of musical instruments, difficulties remain when taking a musical instrument into the cabin as hand baggage. This is partly because airlines appear to set their own rules arbitrarily and there is no cohesive policy across the aviation industry. Congress requests that the General Council lobby BAA, IATA and other appropriate aviation bodies with the intention of relaxing restrictions put upon the carrying of instruments as hand baggage and adhering to the agreed MU/Department for Transport guidelines.

Musicians' Union

44 Maritime security and shore leave/access for seafarers

Congress condemns the discrimination, persecution and hardship suffered by many seafarers as a result of the increasingly hardline approach being taken by many countries on maritime security issues. Congress notes with concern the new restrictions on seafarers' movements being introduced by countries such as the US and Australia, and the associated problems faced by maritime union officials and welfare representatives in gaining access to ships in many ports. Congress notes the International Labour Organisation's Convention 185 on Seafarers' Identity Documents, which was intended to address many of these problems and to create a globally applicable maritime security system that maintains seafarers' rights to shore leave. Congress further notes that this convention has so far fallen far short of the support it needs to come into effect. Congress therefore calls upon the TUC to work at international level to promote the adoption of the Convention and to press the UK Government to ratify the measure at the earliest possible opportunity.

Nautilus UK

45 National Identity Scheme

Congress notes that the Government proposes to require workers in aviation to enrol in the National Identity Scheme in 2009. Congress has deep concerns about the implications of the National Identity Scheme in general and the coercion of aviation workers into the scheme in particular. Congress sees absolutely no value in the scheme or in improvements to security that might flow from this exercise and feels that aviation

workers are being used as pawns in a politically led process which might lead to individuals being denied the right to work because they are not registered or chose not to register in the scheme.

Congress pledges to resist this scheme with all means at its disposal, including consideration of legal action to uphold civil liberties.

British Air Line Pilots' Association

64 Regular foot health screening in schools

Congress believes that the provision of foot health education is of great importance to the entire population of the UK. Regular foot checks keep the public mobile and are a vital element in the assessment of good health.

Congress agrees that the foot health of children must be a fundamental part of school health assessment and care. In this respect Congress calls for a dedicated programme of regular foot health screening to be introduced in schools, delivered by registered podiatrists, to carry out annual foot checks and foot health education.

Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists

67 Royal Mail

Congress notes the renewed threats to the privatisation of Royal Mail arising from submissions by Postcomm and Royal Mail management to the Hooper review on the liberalisation of Royal Mail.

Congress registers that the Labour Government's 2005 election manifesto ruled out the privatisation of Royal Mail. Congress therefore believes that it is vital that the Government delivers on its promise made to the electorate.

Congress recognises that liberalisation has severely unbalanced Royal Mail, and the Hooper review of postal liberalisation acknowledges that competition has worsened service provision for millions of business and domestic users, stifled product and service innovation and created a financial crisis for Royal Mail which has raised serious questions about the company's long-term commercial future and its ability to sustain the universal service.

Congress opposes the continued cut-back in the Post Office branch network, and the continued franchising of Crown Offices. A comprehensive system of Post Office branches is vital to provide the universal service, and to create community cohesion.

Congress views with alarm proposals made to the Hooper review to franchise out, split up, and separate parts of Royal Mail. Congress believes the integrity of Royal Mail is crucial in the delivery of an economic and efficient universal service.

Congress deplores the failure of Royal Mail to negotiate a pensions settlement which guarantees the final salary scheme, and supports the efforts of the affiliates to resolve the future of the pensions scheme.

Congress agrees to support the initiatives of the affiliated unions on these matters.

Communication Workers' Union

68 Ownership of news

Congress welcomes the House of Lords' report Ownership of the News which concludes that current media ownership rules have failed to ensure investment in newsgathering and the maintenance of a range of voices and high quality news provision. In the UK four companies control over 70 per cent of regional newspaper circulation. Just three companies produce all national television news. One company controls 35 per cent of the national newspaper market.

Congress believes public service broadcasting - at BBC, C4 and ITV - is central to ensuring high quality news.

Congress welcomes the report's opposition to top-slicing the licence fee and ITV's plans to reduce its local and regional programming. Congress shares concerns expressed at the fact that media companies have cut newsgathering resources so much they are often no longer able to provide quality news services. Congress reiterates its support for the NUJ's Journalism Matters campaign.

In particular, Congress welcomes the proposal that rules on media mergers should be changed to ensure the impact on newsgathering should be explicitly considered as part of a new public interest test, that the needs of citizens be put ahead of the needs of consumers and that Ofcom should monitor and check the resourcing of all commercial public service broadcasters to ensure they can maintain high quality news provision.

Congress urges the General Council to work with affiliates to lobby the Government for changes to media ownership rules to ensure a diversity of media voices, space for alternative and community media and a defence of public service broadcasting.

National Union of Journalists

69 Review of public service broadcasting

Congress notes that the six-year BBC licence fee settlement introduced in 2007 broke the longstanding link between the licence fee and inflation and has already resulted in significant budget reductions and job losses at the Corporation. Congress further notes that commercial public service broadcasting (PSB) - especially ITV and Channel 4 - faces a growing funding crisis in the face of increasing competition from non-PSB digital channels and that there are growing calls for this to be resolved by top-slicing or redistributing the BBC licence fee to commercial broadcasters.

Congress believes that the current PSB review being conducted by Ofcom and the subsequent policy debate in government and Parliament provide a platform for significant changes in broadcasting policy.

Congress therefore calls on the General Council to defend public service broadcasting in the UK by campaigning vigorously:

- i) for a review of BBC licence fee settlement with a view to achieving a necessary increase in BBC funding;
- ii) against any proposal to top-slice the BBC licence fee and redistribute licence fee funding to commercial broadcasters; and
- iii) for much-needed alternative funding measures for commercial PSB, such as a levy on non-PSB broadcasters, gifted spectrum and revenue from extra advertising minutage.

Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union

70 Protecting the nation's film heritage

Congress notes that the nation's film heritage is held in a range of British film archives that preserve and restore filmed material from throughout the audiovisual history of the UK and without which such material would be lost or decay beyond recovery.

Congress is concerned at the lack of long-term and consistent public funding for our film archives - including not only the specialist buildings and equipment but also the skilled labour force engaged in archiving and film preservation. Congress believes that funding is too often dependent on private philanthropic sources or on uncertain lottery awards, and furthermore that commercial archives may be financially induced to sell off parts of their collections.

Congress therefore calls on the General Council to campaign for significant and designated long-term public funding for our film archives as part of a strategy for protecting, preserving and making available our unique film heritage for the benefit of future generations.

Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union

71 Trade union recognition by the Co-operative Group

Congress condemns the board of the Co-operative Group for its anti-trade union actions in derecognising the GMB union and withdrawing from the collective bargaining and recognition agreement held with the GMB within the funeral care business of the Co-operative Group.

Congress recognises that trade union derecognition goes against all the values and principles of our movement and denies employees their fundamental right to be represented by an independent trade union.

Congress condemns the victimisation and harassment of GMB shop stewards working in Co-operative Funeral Care.

Congress applauds the decision taken by the South West TUC to refuse sponsorship and participation by the Co-operative Group at the recent Tolpuddle Martyrs festival.

Congress instructs the General Council to campaign for the re-recognition of the GMB in Co-operative Funeral Care, and instructs the TUC General Council to:

- i) call meetings involving all unions with a membership interest with the British co-operative movement to organise representation to the Board and Directors of the Co-operative Group;
- ii) invite all affiliates and trade councils to examine their financial arrangements with the Co-operative Bank and to alert their members to the current situation through their magazines or special mailings; and
- iii) request shareholders in Unity Bank to meet to discuss the future involvement of the Co-operative Group within the bank.

Furthermore, Congress agrees to impose a bar on all sponsorship or involvement by the Co-operative Group with TUC activities until such time as they re-recognise the GMB within Funeral Services.

GMB

72 Protection of employees in the betting industry

Congress recognises the wealth being generated by the betting industry in the UK and the thousands of jobs it creates. Congress is concerned about the negative effects that problem gambling and its associated anti-social behaviour can have on both betting shop employees and the wider community.

Congress draws attention to the continuing failure of employers in the industry to accept their responsibilities to protect their employees effectively in regard to shop safety, security and welfare, risks to which staff are exposed on a daily basis and the refusal of the employers to enter into meaningful dialogue on these issues with trade unions.

Congress calls on the UK Government to set enforceable, minimum standards to ensure every employee can work in an environment free from physical or verbal abuse and urges the provision of effective training for frontline staff in cash-handling, conflict management and managing problem gambling.

Community

76 Miami Five

Congress deplores the continued imprisonment of the Miami Five in the USA and notes the 2008 Amnesty International Report's condemnation of the appeal process and the denial of the human right of visitation rights to the families of the Miami Five.

The Miami Five are Cuban men who are in a US prison, serving four life sentences and 75 years collectively, after being wrongly convicted in a US federal court in Miami on 8 June 2001. The Five were involved in monitoring the actions of Miami-based terrorist groups, in order to prevent terrorist attacks on their country of Cuba and never directed action at the US government. For 40 years, anti-Cuba terrorist organisations based in Miami have engaged in terrorist activities against Cuba, resulting in more than 3,000 deaths of Cubans, with the knowledge and support of the FBI and CIA.

Congress acknowledges the work of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in its defence of the Miami Five, urges support and calls for:

- i) a prompt retrial of the Five in any venue other than Miami;
- ii) full visiting rights for all of the families in the meanwhile; and
- iii) work with US unions to bring further pressure on the US administration.

Congress further calls on the General Council to support:

- a) an autumn campaign of action, to include national press adverts calling for freedom for the Five, to mark the 10th anniversary of their imprisonment.

Unite

77 Cuba

2009 marks the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and its achievements, including eradicating illiteracy, free education, plus greatly reduced infant mortality rates and increased life expectancy.

Congress expresses support for the right of Cuba to choose its own economic, social and political path and opposes the USA's illegal economic blockade. Congress applauds the 16th annual vote of the United Nations condemning the US trade embargo.

Congress recognises Cuba's international solidarity, with 37,000 Cuban medical professionals working for free in 79 countries; emergency aid in countries like Peru, Indonesia and Pakistan; Cuban medics restoring sight to a million Latin Americans previously suffering from cataracts; and the provision of 30,000 free scholarships to students from 21 countries to study in Cuba.

Congress agrees to support the proposal of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC) to celebrate Cuba's achievements and agrees to provide publicity and support for events organised under the Cuba50 banner.

Congress agrees to:

- i) encourage affiliation to CSC; and
- ii) invite a CTC speaker to Congress 2009.

Congress calls upon the General Council to lobby the UK Government to:

- a) end its complicity with the US blockade and move to an independent policy respecting Cuban sovereignty;
- b) improve trade and bilateral relations with Cuba; and
- c) oppose all US extraterritorial threats against UK-based companies.

Congress further calls on the UK Government to send a high level delegation to Cuba, and invite a Parliamentary Ministerial delegation from Cuba to the UK to strengthen links and trade between our countries.

Fire Brigades' Union

78 European legislation

Congress recognises the many benefits to working people that have resulted from legislation developed by the European Parliament and Commission.

Congress also applauds the work of the ETUC in influencing economic and social policy making at the highest level, working with the EU Presidency, Council, Commission and Parliament.

However, Congress believes that insufficient attention is paid to partnership working in formulating new directives and legislation. Directives that reach approval for implementation without full appreciation of the wider implications are regrettable. They serve to undermine the good standing of the European legislative process and give fuel to anti-Europe apologists.

The Society of Radiographers, in partnership with clinical colleagues, medical charities and patient groups across Europe, highlights the EU Physical Agents Directive (Electromagnetic Fields) as an example of legislation that benefits the health and safety of workers in diverse industries but which, though a failure to consult widely during drafting, threatens to curtail vital magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) services across Europe.

Congress believes the health of hundreds of thousands of ordinary people is under threat from a directive that otherwise deserves the wholehearted support of all.

As the postponed implementation allows work to re-shape this directive, Congress calls upon the General Council to reinforce its stated position that the clinical MRI element should be dealt with separately.

Congress also calls on the General Council and the ETUC to seek more robust partnership working across all sectors so that future directives are fully informed and so that the progress of good legislation is not delayed.

Society of Radiographers

79 Apprentices

Congress notes that traditional craft-based apprenticeships are the most effective form of vocational training for many young workers.

Congress welcomes the Government's renewed commitment to ensure that apprenticeships are a key plank of skills training, which is underlined by their target of 500,000 apprenticeships being offered a year.

Unfortunately in many industries such as construction, employers have failed to value the training of apprentices and have failed to provide apprenticeships, despite the industry experiencing problems of an ageing workforce and growing skills gaps.

Congress welcomes the Government's stance that classroom-based programme-led apprentices are not an adequate alternative to craft apprenticeships and will not be counted in the target of 500,000 apprenticeships.

Congress further notes that the Government has a key strategic role in increasing the number of apprentices through procurement and could play a more proactive role in ensuring that high quality training occurs in many different industrial sectors.

Congress therefore calls upon the General Council to campaign:

- i) to ensure that all Government contracts include contract compliance clauses requiring the successful contractor to provide craft-based apprenticeships;
- ii) for the devolved administrations and local authorities to also provide contract compliance clauses for apprenticeships when awarding contracts;

iii) to put further pressure on the Government to phase out programme-led apprentices, as they are an inferior form of training; and

iv) to redress the existing imbalance of a far higher number of apprentices being offered in Northern England and Scotland compared to London and the South East.

Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

84 Paid time off for health screening

Congress supports the Government, the NHS and its staff, together with all those organisations and charities, in their continued endeavours to improve health services, as Congress is committed to maintaining and improving the health of workers.

Congress asks all unions to urge employers to provide paid time off for employees to attend screening appointments and to ensure that employees who are diagnosed with illnesses are fully supported during their treatment, and where appropriate, their return to work.

Accord

The following AMENDMENT was accepted

Add at end of paragraph 1:

'Congress also welcomes the work of unions in improving workers' health by tackling such issues as drug and alcohol misuse.'

Paragraph 2, line 2, after 'screening' insert 'or counselling'

Community

87 Participation of the Trades Union Councils' Conference at annual Congress

Congress notes the status, role and purpose of TUC-registered trades union councils, county trades councils and county associations are recognised under rules, including:

- i) bringing together local union branches to campaign around issues affecting working people;
- ii) following the programme of the Trades Union Councils' Joint Consultative Committee (TUCJCC), such as assisting in building local union membership;
- iii) being represented on the appropriate TUC Regional Council and at the TUCJCC and the Trades Union Councils' Conference; and
- iv) the Trades Union Councils' Conference can submit motions for consideration by the TUC General Council which are in line with existing TUC policy and be represented at annual Congress by a fraternal/sororal representative.

Congress also notes trades councils in Scotland and Wales are entitled to send motions and delegates to their respective national Congress.

Congress further notes the 2008 Trades Union Councils' Conference passed a motion calling for the trades council movement to be given the right to send delegates and resolutions to annual Congress.

Congress believes trades councils should have a greater voice at annual Congress and therefore instructs the General Council, in consultation with the TUCJCC, to implement a rule change which will have the effect of allowing the Trades Union Councils' Conference to submit one motion to annual Congress in similar way to the arrangements that exist for the equalities conferences.

Congress requests that this rule change take effect so that the Trades Union Councils' Conference will be able to submit a motion to the 2009 annual Congress.

National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

Composite 1 Vulnerable workers

Congress welcomes improvements in employment rights for vulnerable workers such as the tripartite agreement on agency workers, the National Minimum Wage and the increase in the statutory holiday entitlement. However, without effective enforcement, new employment rights will fail to deliver for all workers.

Congress applauds the work of the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority and believes its remit should be extended to cover all agency labour providers.

Congress believes the work of the National Minimum Wage compliance officers and the Health and Safety Executive has been essential in enforcing the National Minimum Wage and health and safety regulations.

Workers and their trade union representatives have no enforcement route for many employment rights except by making an application to an employment tribunal or County Court.

Congress believes that strengthening employment rights' enforcement mechanisms should be a major priority for the trade union movement in the run up to the next general election.

Congress welcomes a number of the measures in the Government's Employment Bill to improve enforcement of the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and employment agency standards, including the introduction of penalties and greater powers for enforcement officers. However, the framework for supporting enforcement of employment rights is still deficient in a number of key areas.

Exploitation of workers must be tackled across all industries, including highly competitive and popular professions such as the media and performing arts, where bogus work experience and unpaid work is often offered to a vulnerable workforce.

Congress also supports efforts to tackle exploitation of workers in entertainment and modelling, which are the only sectors where agencies can still charge fees upfront to a workseeker, often reducing earnings to significantly less than the NMW.

Congress asks the General Council to support the following additional measures to support enforcement of employment rights and tackle exploitation.

Congress calls on the General Council to lobby for:

- i) a better resourced and more extensive pro-active enforcement strategy;
- ii) co-ordinated enforcement allowing the various enforcement agencies to share findings and work closely with each other;
- iii) a greater role for trade unions in the enforcement process;
- iv) a major government awareness and publicity campaign targeted at Britain's most vulnerable workers;
- v) a Fair Employment Commission to be established alongside existing enforcement agencies to provide for coordination of employment rights enforcement, as recommended by the TUC Commission on Vulnerable Employment;
- vi) measures to enable third parties, such as trade unions, to take an employer to an employment tribunal on behalf of a worker for breaches of the NMW Act, without the need to identify individual vulnerable workers;
- vii) a ban on agents charging workers upfront fees, so that all workers receive at least the NMW; and
- viii) clearer guidance for employers emphasising the limited exceptions to the NMW, including a reference to the fact that performers and television contestants may be classed as workers for these purposes.

Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

Secunder: Equity**Composite 2 Employment rights**

Congress notes the steps proposed by the Government to increase the effectiveness of enforcement against employers who fail to apply existing individual and collective employment rights. However, Congress is dismayed by government comments expressing no need for further employment legislation. Congress notes that there remains on the statute book anti-trade union legislation from the 1980s and reiterates its calls for the restoration of trade union freedoms and workers rights to be restored.

This must include legislative provisions to ensure that lawful industrial action is not prevented on technical grounds where the majority of workers vote in favour, and that the right to take action will include supportive action across related employers and where disputes arise over the terms and conditions offered by future employers. Furthermore, Congress calls for a strengthening of legislation that protects from dismissal workers who take part in industrial action.

Congress also notes current balloting regulations for union recognition, which hold unions back from negotiating in new areas. Congress calls on the General Council to campaign against the provision for a 40 per cent minimum level of participation in a bargaining unit, which employers are increasingly prepared to exploit to prevent union recognition.

Congress also notes that workers whose terms and conditions and job security are undermined following takeovers by private equity firms are offered no protection under existing TUPE provisions. Congress calls for a full revision of the TUPE regulations, to include protection for workers employed or taken over by private equity companies by way of shared ownership or transfer of controlling influence. This will include all terms of employment including pensions.

Congress notes that trade unions remain the most restricted and regulated organisations in the UK. Congress recognises, once and for all, that until current anti-trade union legislation is removed from the statute book, there will be a continuation of the decline in active trade unionism - in other words, workers fighting for better working conditions for themselves and each other.

The passage of the Trade Union Freedom Bill is an essential first step towards enabling unions to advance the basic interests of our members.

Congress urges the General Council to provide greater support behind the campaign to repeal the current anti-trade union legislation.

Mover: Unite

Secunder: United Road Transport Union

Supporter: Communication Workers' Union

Composite 3 European Court of Justice decisions on collective bargaining and industrial action rights

Congress notes with dismay the decisions of the European Court of Justice in the cases of Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg. These decisions have created a new approach to EU law subjugating fundamental collective rights, including collective bargaining and to take industrial action, to the rights of employers and business. Further, the Court held that collective action by trade unions may violate these provisions.

The decisions in the European Court of Justice are contrary to ILO conventions on free collective bargaining and will encourage employers to reduce wages and increase working hours. By putting market freedom above social and employment rights, these decisions could fundamentally weaken the rights of unions to defend their members' working conditions.

Whereas Congress welcomes the recent progress made on the Temporary Agency Workers Directive, Congress believes there is a danger that ECJ decisions will push the EU into a position where the market trumps social rights. Congress notes that, with the exception of the ECJ, other EU institutions' intention was that the operation of the single market and movement of goods and services should not affect the exercise of fundamental human rights and freedoms and collective rights as recognised in member states. The European trade union movement is actively pursuing strategies at EU level to remedy the consequences of the European Court's decisions. Congress resolves to work with the ETUC to ensure that the living standards of working people in the EU are not eroded.

Whilst the European Court of Justice declared that EC law protected the fundamental right to strike, as a strike conflicts with the economic freedom of employers its exercise requires justification. Action is justified only where there is a serious threat to jobs and conditions of employment but this is subject to a criterion of 'proportionality'. The uncertain criterion of 'proportionality' has caused great concern to trade unions. The ECJ's decisions appear to give employers' transnational economic freedoms priority over the fundamental right to collective action.

The matter is thus extremely serious. Employers are exploiting the uncertainty of EC law to raise the spectre of litigation in the British courts so that collective action becomes a huge risk. What is crucially needed is action at national level to prevent employers exploiting the uncertainty of EC law to undermine British industrial relations by resort to the courts.

Congress believes that every effort must be made to reverse the effects of these decisions and establish fundamental human rights for workers throughout the EU.

Congress calls for current EU treaties, directives and regulations to be revised and improved to ensure comprehensive protection for workers. Congress asserts that trade union rights and the equal treatment of migrant and posted workers must be comparable with those in the host nation.

Therefore, Congress calls on the General Council to:

- i) develop a strategy and take action to counter the impact of these decisions;
- ii) take urgent steps to meet with UK government ministers to obtain their support for legislative changes which ensure more comprehensive protection for social rights in Europe;
- iii) work with the ETUC to maintain pressure on the EU to bring about legislative change; and
- iv) organise a mass lobby of MEPs to secure support for legislative change.

Mover: Unite

Secunder: British Air Line Pilots' Association

Supporter: Nationwide Group Staff Union

Composite 4 Redundancy consultation and pay

Congress believes the current requirement on employers to consult unions in the event of redundancies is inadequate. Congress notes employers are often able to carry out redundancies before unions are able to complete a lawful ballot. Congress calls on the General Council to campaign to extend statutory minimum time limits.

Congress notes the redundancies at Lyndale Foods in June 2008 without consultation with unions and the loss of over 600 jobs. Congress deplores the practice of employers using security firms to escort workers off premises without a minute's warning. This policy of an employer declaring insolvency on the basis of business reconstruction and restarting trading with the same

directors, whilst avoiding their liabilities, and making workers redundant and passing redundancy and pension loss cost on to the taxpayer, is unacceptable in modern Britain. Such practices clearly show the weakness of protective legislation in the UK where workers are left vulnerable to such disgraceful employer tactics.

Congress calls upon the General Council to press the Government to close this loophole in the law that allows employers to evade their legal and moral duties to consult, and to abandon their financial responsibilities to their staff and pass on their liabilities to the taxpayer in this way.

Congress believes that levels of statutory redundancy pay and levels of tribunal awards for unfair dismissal do not compensate sufficiently employees who lose their jobs.

Congress further believes that the statutory limits on payments used to calculate redundancy pay and awards for unfair dismissal are an underlying cause of this low level of compensation.

Congress therefore calls on the General Council to campaign for statutory limits on payments to be removed or, where appropriate, set at levels that fairly reflect an employee's actual wage rather than being capped at an arbitrary level.

Congress further believes that, in addition to lobbying for a substantial increase in Statutory Redundancy Pay, the General Council should also campaign for a review and increase in the level of the cap on preferential debts paid to employees after their company becomes insolvent.

Mover: Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union

Secunder: Association For College Management

Supporters: Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

National Union of Journalists

Composite 5 Young members

Congress reaffirms its belief in the importance of trade unionism as part of civic society but notes that most young people have little understanding of their employment rights or of the role of trade unions.

Congress notes that democratic participation among young people has also been in decline and that trade unions play an important role in engaging members with the political process. Congress also notes that in an era of falling union density and increasing disaffection among young people with the political process, some unions have been able to buck this trend through extending benefits and support mechanisms to some of the youngest workers in today's labour market.

Congress believes that support for young members is crucial to the future of the trade union movement. Addressing the lack of understanding of the role that trade unions play is vital if young people are to be properly protected at work. Following the report to the 2007 Congress, *Organising for the Future: Young Members and the Trade Union Movement*, which found that only a minority of unions had targeted recruitment activity towards young workers, Congress encourages unions to promote much greater recruitment and retention of young members by providing representation, benefits and initiatives that resonate far more coherently with young workers, thereby ensuring a lifelong trade union allegiance. Membership of the PFA for instance is not only strong but also universal amongst all professional footballers, the PFA is therefore able to retain the support and backing of every footballer by consistently meeting their needs and requirements for life.

Congress supports the work of the TUC to raise the profile of trade unions among young people with its

training and support materials for speakers in schools through the TUC trade unionists in the classroom programme. Congress also notes that, through the NUS-TUC Protocol, a number of unions have developed initiatives to support working students.

Congress recognises that a consequence of the 14-19 education and training reforms is more young people undertaking their learning in settings outside schools, including in the workplace. Congress, therefore, welcomes the TUC's Diploma Voice initiative, which aims to foster young people's active engagement in workplace trade union activity.

Congress therefore:

- i) calls on the Government to increase opportunities to learn about trade unionism within the national curriculum, including specific reference to our contribution to the development of a civilised society and to all the improvements to the working conditions for millions of workers over past decades;
- ii) agrees to review delivery and structure of the trade unionists in the classroom programme to identify where best practice exists, and to promote its adoption throughout the TUC and its regions and affiliates;
- iii) agrees actively to explore the possibilities for employer and government support for trade union speakers going into schools and colleges to deliver the programme;
- iv) calls on the General Council, through the Young Members Forum, to see how unions' experience of engaging young people can be best used for the benefit of the movement as a whole; and
- v) agrees to publish a report on activity on the work undertaken in this area by Congress 2009.

Mover: Communication Workers' Union

Seconders: Professional Footballers' Association

Supporters: National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

Connect

Composite 6 The Equality Bill

Congress notes the publication, in June 2008, of proposals for an Equality Bill and the Government's commitment to work closely with stakeholders moving towards its publication.

Congress is, however, concerned at some aspects of the proposals, such as the concentration on the more traditional areas of sex, race and age at the expense of newer equality strands such as those protecting against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, transgender status and religion and belief, and the proposal that the new Equality Duty should only be apply in the public sector. Congress is also concerned that despite almost 40 years of equal pay legislation the gender pay gap continues to exist.

Congress therefore instructs the General Council, in co-operation with affiliated unions and other interested parties, to lobby the Government to ensure:

- i) the Equality Duty is extended to the private and voluntary sector;
- ii) all strands of equality protection are given equal status and that there is no hierarchy in which newer and more controversial strands such as sexual orientation, transgender status and religion and belief are given less weight;
- iii) the legislation places employers under a positive duty to conduct mandatory equal pay audits in all areas;
- iv) the gender pay gap is addressed through adequate public sector funding, changed legal processes to allow for trade union representative actions, hypothetical comparators and ending the artificial divide between contractual and non-contractual issues; and

v) the resulting legislation is vigorously enforced.

Congress further instructs the TUC to support affiliates in ensuring:

- a) trade union involvement in the design of employer equality schemes;
- b) the introduction of meaningful equality impact assessments; and
- c) that employers provide leadership and top level commitment and training for employees in complying with equality duties.

Mover: FDA

Seconders: UNISON

Supporters: Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Composite 7 Community cohesion

Congress believes that a commitment to equality and diversity is the hallmark of civil society.

Congress recognises the value of community cohesion for the maintenance of democracy and social inclusion.

Congress welcomes evidence that demonstrates that the greatest barriers to a cohesive society are poverty, inequality and discrimination. Congress welcomes the Government's commitment to ending child poverty. However, Congress believes that a national target and concerted action are needed to root out all forms of inequality and unlawful discrimination in economic and political life.

Congress deplores the right-wing political and media agenda that presents minority communities as a threat to the British way of life. Congress is dismayed by the Government's claim that so-called 'Islamist extremism' represents the biggest threat to British people. Congress believes that the agenda of preventing violent extremism plays into the hands of the BNP and other racists and fascists bent on attacking Britain's racial and religious minorities.

Congress calls on the General Council to lead a broad based campaign, involving Searchlight and other appropriate anti-fascist organisations, to tackle division and deprivation and build greater understanding within local communities. Congress believes that such activity should not be based solely around elections, but should be long term and sustainable.

Congress calls upon the Government to:

- i) extend statutory duty on schools for the promotion of community cohesion to all public bodies and any other organisations that provide a public service;
- ii) work with the TUC to develop a national strategy to tackle all forms of extremism, including racist and fascist extremism;
- iii) prohibit members of racist and fascist organisations from holding public office;
- iv) set targets for eliminating discrimination and inequality in access to employment and the political system;
- v) implement strategies to ensure compliance with statutory provisions relating to equality, diversity and community cohesion; and
- vi) act to counter racist myths and stereotypes and to tackle hate websites such as Redwatch, which target anti-racist and minority communities and seek to promote division and violence.

Mover: National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

Seconders: UNISON

Supporter: National Union of Journalists

Composite 8 Tax exempt mileage allowances

Congress notes that many unions have members who have to use their private car while travelling on official business, and members of all of our unions have been badly affected by the recent sharp rises in the cost of petrol and diesel.

However, the Government has maintained the rate of mileage allowance which is not subject to tax at 40p per mile since 2002. The cost of owning and operating a car has increased significantly in recent years, not only because of the recent severe rises in the price of fuel but also increases in road tax, insurance and servicing. The consequence of the Government's current approach is that union members are, in effect, subsidising their employers by undertaking official duties in a private vehicle.

Congress also notes that the problem is exacerbated in the civil service because although departments may have the flexibility to pay rates above 40p per mile, they do not do so, given what they regard as the administrative burden of handling the taxable element that would be paid if the allowance is more than 40p.

Congress therefore calls on the General Council to raise this problem as a matter of urgency with the Government and HM Revenue & Customs, with a view to seeking a rise in the taxable allowance on mileage rates. Congress rejects the argument that the Government's refusal to raise the rate has environmental benefits given that these journeys are undertaken to fulfil the business requirements of the employer.

The continuing increase in the cost of petrol has a high financial impact on district nurses.

Congress believes CDNA members have no option but to subsidise the NHS to ensure patient care is not put at risk. Mileage allowances have remained unchanged since 2000 and only increased slightly this summer, even though petrol prices have increased dangerously, and nurses have to bear the brunt of this while carrying out their daily nursing duties.

Congress asks the TUC and affiliates to join the CDNA in urging the Government to recognise and address the financial impact this is having on all nurses working in the community.

Mover: FDA

Seconders: Community and District Nursing Association

Composite 9 Climate change

Congress welcomes the positive contribution of the recent TUC conference, A Just Transition, and its emphasis on the fairness to all workers involved in this transition to a low-carbon economy.

To provide for this, Congress urges further government policy in this area. In particular the UK Government should take the lead within the European Union to promote the development and implementation of an EU-wide import adjustment system for energy intensive industries that are exposed to international competition, thus avoiding the problem of 'carbon leakage' and the negative impact that foreseeable EU climate change mitigation policies, such as ETS in its current form, could have on the competitiveness of UK and EU industry.

Furthermore Congress supports the current UNFCCC discussion to move ETS to a 'sectoral approach' constructed around a 'benchmark' system of achievable targets for global industries and sectors, and requests the UK Government prioritise its adoption.

This would create a fairer and more equitable system of burden-sharing and would also assist in maintaining a sustainable UK and EU industrial base.

Congress also believes the role of trade union environmental reps would be essential for the success of any benchmarking system and urges the UK Government to take immediate steps to legislate for trade union environmental reps.

Thus the UK will be demonstrating its further commitment to the TUC 'just transition' model, to reducing global CO2 emissions, and to the protection and promotion of decent jobs and to greening the workplace.

Congress congratulates the TUC on the excellent Just Transition conference. Congress recognises that trade unions can play a major role in educating everyone about the causes of climate change, the likely impact and the need for a planned and just transition to a low-carbon economy that will see substantial changes from the nature and type of employment that currently exists.

Much remains to be done to ensure everyone understands the causes of climate change and the scale of changes that are required if we are to be able to grapple with it. High oil prices and an economic downturn underline the importance of investing in clean, renewable energy alternatives, energy use reduction measures and green transport. While this is an opportunity, the transition to a low-carbon economy must be managed in a just and equitable way, not simply left to the market.

Congress recognises that trade unions can play a major role in educating everyone about the causes of climate change, the likely impact and the need for a planned and just transition to a low-carbon economy that will see substantial changes from the nature and type of employment that currently exists.

Experience suggests that pursuing a green agenda within local workplaces engages a wider and different group of people, developing environment reps and bringing new opportunities for local organising campaigns and activities.

Congress notes the growing importance of the green agenda within our community. Domestically, individuals and families have begun to recognise the need to participate at local level through local authority schemes to recycle waste.

However it appears that within the NHS there is little national direction, and it is left up to individual NHS organisations to develop local initiatives. This lack of direction has resulted in great differences in the way the green agenda is prioritised at local level.

Congress believes that central government should be giving a lead, not only to the public sector but also the private sector, and should actively promote a green friendly environment within workplaces across the UK.

Congress believes this best achieved in partnership with the trade union movement and in this respect Congress calls on the General Council to lobby the Government for the introduction of workplace environmental reps who should have the same statutory rights as those currently enjoyed by accredited staff side reps, health and safety reps, and union learning reps.

Congress calls upon the Government to:

- i) establish a framework to involve all relevant stakeholders in developing a just transition strategy based on the principle of social justice;
- ii) increase massively the incentives to invest in clean energy production (including a renewable energy tariff in the Energy Bill), low energy housing and green transport;
- iii) make climate change mitigation and adaptation a statutory requirement for all public sector building projects;
- iv) develop with the TUC and affiliates a green jobs strategy across all industries, with appropriate funding for training and retraining CWU that gives real

protection to workers during a prolonged period of transition;

v) give statutory rights to workplace environment reps; and

vi) develop and introduce with the TU movement and workers a coherent national strategy to substantially reduce workplace CO2 emissions.

Mover: Community

Secunder: Connect

Supporters: Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists

National Union of Teachers

Communication Workers' Union

Composite 10 Security of energy supply

Congress demands that the General Council meet as a matter of urgency with the Labour Government to discuss the ever-increasing dependency on imported energy into the UK.

Congress shares the Government's energy objectives as set out in the May 2006 Energy White Paper (EWP): to secure sufficient energy from diverse sources on a sustainable basis and at an acceptable cost.

Congress agrees that the Coal Forum, established under the EWP, has undertaken robust and credible analysis of the likely need for new coal generating capacity as the plant which has not opted into the European Union's Large Combustion Plant Directive (LCPD) is decommissioned.

Congress has engaged with this work through its Clean Coal Task Group. Congress recognises the excellent work carried out by the TUC and affiliated unions in producing documentation, reports, technical data and evidence in support of the urgent need for indigenous clean coal power generation in the UK and in particular the CCTG document Clean Coal in the UK and European Electricity Mix Report established last March.

The report highlights real concern that there has been insufficient work done to ensure that such plants are built in time for the gap in generation anticipated in 2015/2016. It is now urgent that the key recommendations of this report are acted upon. This includes developing clean coal technologies, such as Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC) and Oxyfuel firing. In addition, investment is needed to build the pipeline infrastructure to deliver captured carbon to offshore gas and oil wells. Congress is asked to continue to press these issues with the Government.

Congress notes that global and domestic coal burn is on the increase. Almost 40 per cent of the world's electricity and at times 50 per cent of UK electricity is generated by coal burn. World energy analysts project a huge shortfall in generating capacity of around 11GW between 2008 and 2016 and provision must be made to bridge that alarming gap.

Carbon capture and storage can have a massive impact on reducing CO2 levels into the atmosphere. Current CCS power plants are capable of reducing the emission levels by 85 to 95 per cent, yet little if any serious progress is being made by the Government, with one very small demonstration plant scheduled to be operating within the next seven years. While paying lip service to the UK coal industry, the Government has made little progress in the development of various types of CCS plants in the UK.

The UK has been blessed with massive indigenous energy reserves and it is time they were exploited by the people for the people of our nation. The continuing plan to import large amounts of gas, coal and oil from politically unstable countries places the UK in a very dangerous and unstable position in terms of security of supply. Geographically the UK is the last in

the complex energy supply network leading from Europe and across the world.

Common sense suggests that a balanced, secure, diverse mixed energy policy should be a priority of this Government with our indigenous resources being exploited to the maximum. A clear commitment is required by the Government on the entire future of the UK coal industry.

Congress calls on the UK Government to act as a matter of urgency to secure the nation's energy needs for the future. This involves bringing forward detailed plans on the replacement plant required to avoid an energy meltdown.

Congress agrees that a more proactive approach to maintain and develop a skilled workforce is also critical to ensuring security of supply. This requires clear political leadership, effective coordination by the Commission for Employment and Skills, and a regulatory framework that gives due priority to investment in skills and safety.

Mover: National Union of Mineworkers

Secunder: British Association of Colliery Management - Technical, Energy and Administrative Management

Supporter: Prospect

Composite 11 Rail transport

Congress is appalled by the massive fare increases facing rail passengers, which demonstrates the impracticability of private ownership in a transport system where profit takes precedence over investment. The Government's failure to address the underlying problems of ownership and fragmentation mean that the rail industry continues to be prevented from fulfilling its full social, economic and environmental potential.

Congress criticises the Government for actively encouraging above-inflation price increases for rail passengers that not only penalise the travelling public but, by discouraging rail use, act as an inducement to growing road and air travel with consequent environmental degradation, while also filling shareholders' pockets. Congress calls on the Government to oblige train operating companies to adopt a more transparent approach to the availability of the cheapest advertised rail fares which customers regularly struggle to purchase. Congress also calls on the Government to extend free concessionary travel for disabled people. Congress reiterates its support for a publicly owned and accountable railway.

Congress welcomes the completion of the high speed rail link between London St Pancras and the Channel Tunnel, but believes this compares adversely with other European countries such as Spain and calls for publicly owned and publicly accountable high speed links to be developed in the UK with an affordable fares structure to promote high usage.

Congress notes that:

- i) in the past ten years rail freight has grown by 66 per cent;
- ii) the average freight train can take 50 HGVs off the road with an aggregate train removing 120 HGVs;
- iii) per tonne carried, rail produces between five and ten times less emissions than road transport; and
- iv) congestion currently costs transport users and operators about £15 billion a year and this could double over the next decade.

Congress believes that:

- a) in the UK's struggle to reduce its carbon emissions, moving freight on to rail is an important tool;
- b) putting freight on to the rail system will not only help defeat global warming but will also reduce road congestion, which has economic benefits;

- c) in the current economic climate, the greater oil efficiency offered by rail makes it far more cost-efficient;
- d) in order to facilitate the movement of goods on to the railways, there must be substantial investment in rail freight infrastructure, including rail terminals at airports and ports nationwide; and
- e) only a fully integrated freight transport system can maximise the transportation of goods whilst lowering carbon emissions.

Congress notes that:

- 1) after negative reaction in the 2007 White Paper *Delivering a Sustainable Railway*, the Government now says it 'sees great potential for a rolling programme of electrification';
- 2) the UK came 24th out of 33 in terms of percentage of European track that was electrified at the end of 2005;
- 3) oil is believed to have already reached its peak production; and many experts believe oil will have run out completely 40 years from now; and
- 4) operators do not hold franchises long enough to invest for the long-term.

Congress believes that electrification of rail in the UK would:

- A) make for a railway that is cleaner for both driver and passenger;
- B) radically reduce emissions that cause global warming;
- C) by cutting reliance on oil, ensure a rail network will exist in the future; and
- D) bring long term savings - because there are fewer moving parts, train maintenance becomes simpler and cheaper, and because the vehicles vibrate less, electric traction trains have longer operational lives.

Further, Congress is convinced that the introduction of change on the scale it envisages will mean funding from central government. Congress therefore instructs the General Council to:

- i) support, publicise and lobby on behalf of the electrification of rail, seeking the broadest support from passengers, trade unionists, environmentalists and government; and
- ii) argue that nuclear power is not the best way to deliver the additional electricity that needs to be generated and call for a full government review of all alternatives.

Congress instructs the General Council to:

- a) support the construction of freight terminals to help the development of a fully integrated freight network;
- b) support the campaign to put more goods on the rail freight network in order to reduce the UK's carbon emissions and relieve road congestion; and
- c) examine the construction of freight-only railway lines to make transportation more efficient.

Congress welcomes recent announcements in respect of high-speed rail lines and rail electrification, but notes from Spain that long-term planning, public funding and political will are all prerequisites in delivering such projects. Congress calls on the Government to recognise the urgent need for these ingredients in the UK.

Mover: Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

Secunder: Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen

Supporter: Community

Composite 12 Performance management systems

Congress notes that increasing numbers of our members are subject to performance management systems that determine their pay, job security and career prospects. Congress is concerned at the growing evidence that these systems are being abused in a way that lowers morale and commitment. Rather than improve performance, they are being used increasingly to drive down pay costs or drive employees out. The use of pay budgets which are set too low, forced distributions of performance markings and quotas for so-called underperformers mean that for too many employees, performance management systems work to their disadvantage. Moreover, the way that performance is managed puts individuals under pressure to work longer hours to avoid low performance assessments.

Properly applied, such systems can contribute positively to career development when used for appraisals in personal development planning. There is a link between good appraisals, personal development and job satisfaction.

There is also growing evidence of bias within performance markings on grounds of ethnicity, disability, part-time worker status and being lower in the organisational hierarchy. In other words, the higher you are in the organisation the higher your assessed level of performance. Where there is a link to pay these patterns of bias also contribute to the gender pay gap. Congress also notes the misapplication of LEAN methodology and other process management tools in the public sector, as crude means of cutting jobs, deskilling and demotivating workers.

Congress urges the General Council to:

- i) highlight the way performance management systems are being corrupted by the use of restricted pay budgets and performance quotas;
- ii) highlight the need for greater transparency and openness in the way they operate;
- iii) convene a meeting of unions and other experts to encourage and share best practice in identifying and eliminating bias focusing in addition on the impact of process management tools such as LEAN; and
- iv) provide guidance to affiliates on personal development planning, including ensuring that performance management systems are subject to equality impact assessment.

Mover: Connect

Secunder: Public and Commercial Services Union

Supporter: FDA

Composite 13 Pension policy

Congress notes the many steps that have been taken by the Government in recent years in response to consistent campaigning from trade unions. However, there is still a long way to go before everyone can be confident of living with dignity and decency in retirement.

Congress further notes that many employers are rapidly moving to reduce benefits or close defined benefit occupational pension schemes to active members in respect of future accrual.

Congress calls on the General Council to campaign for government action to:

- i) immediately increase the basic state pension to at least £151.00, with indexation to the higher of average earnings or RPI;
- ii) remove limitations on National Insurance buy-back to allow people to buy back all their missing periods of National Insurance contributions;

- iii) bring pensions into the list of core issues for collective bargaining;
- iv) compel trust-based schemes to incorporate 50 per cent member-nominated trustees;
- v) introduce legislation to guarantee member involvement in the governance of contract-based occupational pension schemes;
- vi) make necessary regulatory reforms to ensure member involvement analogous to trustees in statutory pension schemes;
- vii) ensure that all employees working on public sector contracts have access to public sector pension schemes irrespective of employer;
- viii) ensure the pension protection on transfer is genuinely equivalent to the TUPE protections that apply to other terms and conditions by requiring transferors to provide employees with access to actuarially equivalent pension provision;
- ix) extend TUPE and pension-related legislation to cover share transfers and other changes in company control that negatively affect workers' remuneration, terms and conditions;
- x) review urgently the pension buy-out market that threatens to undermine occupational pension security;
- xi) ensure all falsely self-employed workers are automatically enrolled in the new personal pension accounts to be introduced in 2012 and for their 'employer' to be required to contribute towards their pension contributions;
- xii) provide active support and encouragement for defined benefit provision as the major vehicle for combating poverty in retirement, and provide greater protection for defined benefit schemes threatened by unilateral action by employers including closure or reduction/withdrawal of funding, with employers being made fully responsible for any additional costs attributable to such actions; and
- xiii) restore provisions to enable occupational pension schemes to be made a condition of service.

Mover: GMB

Seconder: Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

**Supporters: Transport Salaried Staffs' Association
Connect**

Composite 14 Public services

Congress deplores the Government's continued privatisation of our public services and the increasing restrictions on spending and investment that are damaging staff morale and undermining service quality.

Congress condemns the cuts in public services which have arisen as a consequence of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review and which have affected both the devolved administrations and local authorities among other areas of provision within the public sector. Congress believes that these budget cuts will have a damaging impact on all public services including:

- i) job losses (including compulsory redundancies);
- ii) the erosion of employment opportunities;
- iii) cuts in staffing standards;
- iv) reductions in core funding for key public services; and
- v) diminution in quality service provision.

The day-to-day reality for too many public service workers is one of underfunding and understaffing, made worse by the increasing resort to private employers offering to cut costs by evading public sector standards of employment, accountability, and service quality.

Too often the Government has seemed more interested in responding to the demands of the 'public services industry' for more business, or pressure from the City for lower taxes, than listening to staff or meeting the needs of the public for essential services.

Congress notes that the market model of public service reform has led to degeneration in the quality of, and access to, public services for users, worsening employment conditions and the erosion of the public service ethos.

Congress rejects shared services models that further jeopardise public provision. Congress also condemns Government proposals of 10 June 2008 to threaten 638 secondary schools with closure and replacement by academies and trusts if they do not meet an arbitrary, one-size-fits-all exam target.

Congress rejects:

- a) top-up fees in higher education, cuts to entitlement and overall levels of provision in adult education and the conversion of education service users into paying customers;
- b) the conversion of government into a commissioning agent for a 'diverse provider base' that effectively promotes private sector providers and allows employers to control the level, content and form of educational provision;
- c) the overt privatisation of support services and, increasingly, core educational provision;
- d) the restructuring of funding which promotes an unstable, damaging, competitive environment, leading to the erosion of capacity, deskilling, casualisation, discrimination, redundancy and constant restructuring of staff. Specific examples include equivalent and lower qualifications funding, offender education and ESOL provision, where often the most vulnerable are put at risk; and
- e) the argument that the UK cannot afford further investment in public services. The recent TUC pamphlet *The Missing Billions* highlights significant sources of potential funding for our public services.

Congress recognises that this is why the TUC needs to re-double its efforts to defend the principles of the public sector.

Congress, therefore, calls on the General Council to campaign through the Public Services Liaison Group and the Public Services Forum to put pressure on the Government to:

- 1) bring privatised services back in-house and rebuild the role of the public sector as a guarantor and leading provider of innovative, responsive, high quality public services;
- 2) review the effect of 'efficiency' programmes on the quality and availability of services to the public, act to secure adequate funding to meet individual and social needs, and a moratorium on further cuts in public services;
- 3) inform and involve public service workers, trade unions and communities in all service reviews, efficiency programmes, commissioning and procurement processes;
- 4) take steps necessary to fulfil its commitment to eradicate the two-tier workforce, ensure provision of adequate staffing standards to maintain the quality of public service provision, and that the outsourcing of services is not at the expense of staff terms and conditions;
- 5) commit to provide sufficient core funding to protect all public services;
- 6) increase investment in the skills of public sector workers;
- 7) set up an independent review to examine whether there is any true value for money delivered by the reported £130bn+ of taxpayers' money spent buying

goods and services from the private sector and to examine the scope to save money by providing the services in-house; and

8) ensure a more progressive and equitable tax system that also addresses the current widespread practice of tax avoidance and evasion.

Congress welcomes the TUC's Speak Up for Public Services campaign and the work of the PSLG in providing positive alternatives to the Government's attempts to privatise public services. Congress congratulates the TUC on the publication of its public value pamphlet.

Congress believes it is vital to promote the benefits of union membership to existing members, potential members and employers and commends those employers who recognise the value that unions bring to their organisations, including the growing skills dividend from the work of union learning reps and the ground-breaking partnerships with learning providers brokered by unions.

Congress believes further that it is vital for the TUC and its affiliates to support industrial action by, and show solidarity with, workers in public services who are threatened with a change of employer, closure of provision or with punitive inspections.

Congress strongly opposes private sponsorship of public education services and deplores those sponsors of academies that have refused to recognise unions. Congress welcomes the approach by affiliates under which unions jointly apply for recognition in academies and set the agenda for bargaining on terms and conditions in such establishments.

Congress believes that there is insufficient control over which private organisations are involved in delivering public services and that any such organisations should meet a 'fit and proper' standard. Congress strongly condemns any employers who resort to so-called 'union-busting' techniques to bully and frighten members and potential members from participating in union activities.

Congress calls on the General Council to monitor and defeat any growth in the use of these anti-union techniques and calls upon the Government to ensure that all organisations that deliver public services, whether privately or publicly owned, recognise independent trade unions.

Congress notes that increasingly the activities of local authorities and other public sector bodies are being directed to becoming commissioners and inspectors of commissioned services rather than providers of services. This year proposals have been put in place to make commissioning the key activity of Children's Trusts. Explicit in those proposals are the extension of the activities of the voluntary sector and implicitly the move to a business unit concept for local authority services - essentially a backdoor privatisation of the work of local authorities.

Congress notes that commissioning of services has been taken forward with undue enthusiasm by some local authorities, such as Manchester City Council, where the process of commissioning appears to take precedence over the most effective delivery of services to children. One effect of this exuberant race to change is that the continuation of equitable educational psychology services to children in that authority are seriously threatened and are unlikely to be able to respond efficiently to needs of the city's most vulnerable children.

Commissioning as a blanket approach creates values that operate directly against the declared governmental policy, for example joined-up work based on responding to need. Commissioning specifically threatens small services within local authorities that provide developmental and cross-authority initiatives.

Congress recognises that it is vital that the TUC gives the highest priority to campaigning to protect public services, particularly in the run-up to the next general election.

Accordingly, Congress instructs the General Council to:

- A) construct a publicly accessible campaign to protect our services from privatisation;
- B) develop a strategy for engagement with all members of TUC-affiliated unions and parliamentary parties in promoting its campaign;
- C) convene a representative group of affiliates, including affiliates on the PSLG, to advise on the direction of the campaign;
- D) continue the research on public value, including further research and action on developing democratic models of delivery with public sector unions, employees and users in local communities;
- E) publish new 'best practice guidance' on campaigning and bargaining to halt and reverse marketisation;
- F) research the effects of commissioning across all local authority services and children's services;
- G) support trade unions in their effort to defend and develop local services and to campaign actively against commissioning models that increase private sector involvement;
- H) highlight the resulting democratic deficit from private sector involvement;
- I) organise a high profile public conference which develops and affirms a vision of education as a public service, free and accessible to all; and
- J) affiliate to the Anti-Academies Alliance.

Mover: UNISON

Seconded: National Union of Teachers

Supporters: Association of Teachers and Lecturers

University and College Union

Educational Institute of Scotland

Association of Educational Psychologists

GMB

Fire Brigades' Union

Composite 15 Public sector pay

Congress reaffirms its support and respect for all public sector workers in health, education, transport, security, local government, civil service, justice and the emergency services. Our members make Britain work.

Congress condemns the Government's continued pursuit of a pay policy across the public sector of 2 per cent annual rises, within a tight spending review to 2010, despite rapidly rising inflation.

Congress notes that this is based on a false premise that public sector pay drives inflation. Evidence shows that inflationary pressures are linked to the global slowdown and rising food, energy and housing costs. Cuts in public sector pay mean cuts in living standards, causing more fuel poverty and housing difficulties, and further contract the economy. Congress welcomes the fact that the view of successive governments that public sector pay restraint can be used as a measure to control inflation has now been discredited.

Congress notes that since declaring its opposition to the Government's 2 per cent limit on public sector pay increases in 2007, matters have got worse.

Inflation has risen dramatically despite this limit, leading to a significant fall in public sector workers' living standards - they are the victims, not the cause, of inflation. This has a particular impact on BME, disabled and women workers who are disproportionately represented in the lower grades of the public sector workforce. Current government policy will undermine

attempts to address the gender pay gap across the economy.

Congress believes that the attempts to restrict public sector pay awards at levels below the rate of inflation are unfair, based on questionable assumptions and must be revised urgently. Continuous, real-term cuts in public sector pay undermine the quality of public services and damage the morale and motivation of public sector workers.

This restrictive pay policy is unfair and unjust and is penalising workers already suffering from economic uncertainty and rising prices. Congress therefore believes that the recent attempts by the Treasury to impose an arbitrary limit on public sector pay increases are unacceptable, counterproductive and impede the effective delivery of essential public services. Congress further asserts that a continuation of these policies is having a detrimental effect on recruitment, retention and morale of key public service workers.

Congress believes public sector workers are entitled to pay and conditions that adequately reflect their contribution to society and should not be used to pay the price for economic policies over which they have no control.

Congress also rejects the use of the Consumer Prices Index, which specifically excludes housing costs, as the Government's preferred measure of inflation. Congress further deplores the Government's reliance on the Consumer Prices Index to justify its 2 per cent pay policy, while at the same time using the Index of Retail Prices to determine the rate on interest payable on student loans, thus cutting still further the real income of young teachers and other recent and newly qualified graduates. Congress asserts that the use of the Consumer Prices Index as an inflationary measure further disadvantages low-paid public service workers and increases the pay differentials between the public and private sector. Congress reaffirms that RPI is a better measure of workers' cost of living increases than CPI, and calls upon the Government to recognise this.

Congress recognises that incremental pay scales are common in the public sector, that increments represent commitments given to staff in recognition of increased experience in post, and that they should not therefore be considered as part of any cost of living increase. Congress further recognises that civil service bonuses represent money stolen from junior staff salaries in order to boost the earnings of the most senior.

Congress calls upon the Government to recognise and address the fundamental incompatibility of its commitment to high quality public services and its imposition of below-inflation pay increases upon public sector workers which has:

- i) cut their living standards;
- ii) reduced their real and relative pay; and
- iii) damaged the ability of vital services, on which the whole population depends, to recruit, retain and motivate staff.

Congress calls upon the Government to engage in constructive dialogue with the General Council to:

- a) review the key worker housing scheme;
- b) examine the merits of multi-year pay awards as part of a package of improvements in pay and conditions of service;
- c) secure effective re-opener mechanisms to maintain confidence in multi-year awards; and
- d) consider the impact of independent review bodies on pay levels.

The Government's steadfast refusal to tackle boardroom greed and spiralling city bonuses further exacerbates the unfairness. Congress notes that there is no restriction on boardroom pay or share dividends.

Congress believes that the Bank of England has concentrated too narrowly on inflation, and neglects

employment at its peril. Congress believes that a change in Government economic priorities is necessary and action must be taken to implement them.

Congress believes that with sufficient political will funds can be found to protect living standards and pay public sector workers fairly. The TUC report *The Missing Billions* illustrates how this can be achieved.

Congress notes the continued attacks on public sector workers, and the increased cost of living; we believe that the attacks on the ethos of public work through privatisation, marketisation and hardline industrial relations make mutual support regardless of sector or job or union essential.

Congress condemns the below-inflation pay policy of government and employers and re-affirms its support for workers seeking a fair wage. Congress applauds those unions and members who have taken action on pay.

Congress congratulates the General Council on organising the 9 June rally and lobby of Parliament and for supporting unions campaigning for fair pay across the public sector, including equality in the workplace.

Congress instructs the General Council to coordinate a major campaign on public sector pay. Congress demands that the General Council:

- 1) prioritises its Speak Up for Public Services campaign;
- 2) co-ordinates the public sector unions on pay;
- 3) encourages local, regional and national joint campaigning coordinating industrial action amongst those unions in dispute over pay, and giving full support to such action;
- 4) opposes costly and wasteful reliance upon flawed and failed private sector 'solutions';
- 5) campaigns to ensure all political parties are committed to properly government-funded - not privatised or marketised - public services;
- 6) continues to make a robust case for fairer and more equitable taxation solutions and campaign for a fairer, progressive system of taxation to fund public services;
- 7) support unions when 're-opener clauses' clauses in multi-year deals are reneged upon, to provide safeguards against rising inflation;
- 8) assist unions engaged in campaigning on behalf of their members through the production of appropriate briefing materials, promoting the union case to both government and the media, and supporting joint union activity; and
- 9) organises days of action including a major national demonstration against the Government's pay policy.

Mover: UNISON

Secunder: Public and Commercial Services Union

Supporters: National Union of Teachers

National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

University and College Union

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Unite

The following AMENDMENT was lost following a card vote

In sub-paragraph 9), after 'of' insert 'strike'.

POA

Composite 16 The National Health Service

Congress calls on all affiliates to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the NHS and the enormous benefits to the health of the population that have been seen during this time, delivered through the hard work and dedication of its staff.

Congress recognises that political devolution means the NHS at 60 is now effectively four separate systems.

Congress believes that NHS core values of equity, universality and care free at the point of need must not be compromised and that our staff uphold these values.

Major reforms currently underway in the NHS will have a long-term impact on service users and staff. These include the Darzi Next Stage review, the Carol Black review of the health of the working age population, and the introduction of an NHS constitution to name but a few.

There is much to welcome within these reforms. However, Congress is mindful of the importance of ensuring that the NHS keeps faith with its core principle of being free at the point of need, and does not jeopardise its future through fragmentation and privatisation of services.

Congress recognises the many continuing dangers from the Darzi reform agenda, including:

- i) the introduction of multinationals to the primary care sector;
- ii) the extension of market incentives through expanded patient choice and the continuation of the payment by results system;
- iii) greater encouragement for staff to break away from the NHS to form social enterprises; and
- iv) the adoption of personal budget pilots which could be a first step towards bringing means-testing to the NHS.

Congress notes that meaningful trade union engagement secured positive outcomes in education and training and in the NHS constitution which should ensure the future of the service.

Congress recognises issues around the EU directive on cross-border healthcare that would increase inequality and potentially mean the UK NHS paying for private treatment abroad.

Further, Congress recognises the challenges presented by the review into co-payments.

Congress calls on the General Council to:

- a) campaign for reforms to be underpinned by robust protective regulation on all employment rights;
- b) continue opposing marketisation;
- c) call for a proper analysis of the impact of personal budgets on the NHS before extending it;
- d) resist any future initiatives around co-payments that would damage NHS values;
- e) resist the imposition of European plans for healthcare;
- f) support affiliated health unions in their efforts to ensure that members working in the NHS are able to contribute their expertise and be genuinely involved in future decisions on healthcare delivery, through effective partnership working at national, regional and local level; and
- g) stimulate a debate among the wider trade union movement about what the latest reforms will mean for the health of workers and their families, with the aim of producing an authoritative TUC position paper on the NHS, to be published as part of the TUC's current series of Touchstone pamphlets.

Mover: UNISON

Secunder: Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Composite 17 The prison system and imprisonment

Congress recognises the effects of crime on society in general and demands that the justice system address the needs of those directly affected by crime. Society as a whole must have confidence in the system to ensure that offenders are not only caught, but punished

appropriately and then rehabilitated to reduce the risk of re-offending.

With the prison population expected to reach 100,000 Congress expresses grave concern at the failures of the Government in their approach to crime, punishment and imprisonment. Congress views with great concern the Government's stated commitment to a significant growth in the prison estate. The United Kingdom already has the highest prison population in the European Union. Even though the Government has accepted the serious underlying issues surrounding crime they have failed to deliver real end-to-end justice in which society as a whole can have confidence.

The Government is committing this country to the building of huge privatised 'Titan' prisons, whose record in other countries is, at best, debatable. These human warehouses are to be located in three regions, drawing their inmates from large catchment areas. The plan to extend this folly is both economic madness and completely illogical in the face of Government evidence of falling crime rates.

Congress accepts that prison officers are at the sharp end when the failures of the current policy result in custodial sentences.

The Government itself acknowledges that ideally, prisoners should be located locally so as to maintain community ties and enhance employment and accommodation prospects - all of which are the factors most strongly linked to reduction in potential re-offending rates. Congress further recognises the importance to rehabilitation of providing from public funds a properly resourced and professionally staffed offender learning service and notes the recent failures in privatised provision. Congress celebrates the work of prison educators in reducing re-offending.

Congress supports the need for all key stakeholders to be engaged in establishing policies that are fully resourced and deliver a system that society can trust and in which the workers are paid accordingly for the work they perform, and commits to campaign against inappropriate imprisonment with the aim of reducing the prison population to a humane and manageable level over the next five years.

Mover: POA

Secunder: Napo

Supporter: University and College Union

Composite 18 Human rights

Congress notes that in the 60th anniversary year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the abuse of human rights continues to be widespread.

Congress notes that the UDHR includes social, cultural and economic rights that are indivisible from civil and political rights.

Congress recognises the role that unions can play in helping build strong institutions of civil society and in promoting participation in governance and citizenship, as well as in community life, giving voice to people's needs and concerns and giving people the confidence to exercise fully their human rights.

Congress notes that trade unionists are often in the frontline of the defence of human rights and are, therefore, also often particularly at risk from despotic regimes or discriminatory employers. Congress notes that ILO core labour standards (including the right to join a trade union and bargain collectively) are human rights too.

Congress re-affirms its commitment to the human rights of workers nationally and internationally. Respect for human rights must begin with basic labour standards and conditions.

The human rights of workers must also incorporate freedom of expression, including the inalienable right to freedom of artistic expression. Artistic freedom in

the media and live performance can enrich communities and cultures, while the freedom to perform in their chosen profession provides artists and performers with employment and income.

Yet professional performers and artists from around the world often face severe restrictions on their freedom to carry out their work, which can lead to censorship, exile, persecution, imprisonment, torture or even death because of the nature of their work and the response of authoritarian regimes.

Congress applauds the work of Amnesty International to campaign for and defend all the human rights contained in the UDHR.

Congress welcomes the growing collaboration between Amnesty International and the ITUC and the Global Unions and welcomes the decision of Amnesty in the UK to expand significantly its activism, engagement and campaigning with union branches, trades councils and with the TUC regions.

Congress supports the work of Amnesty International, Liberty and International PEN and similar organisations in defending freedom of expression. It also commends the work of Equity's International Committee for Artists' Freedom in working with these bodies to highlight the plight of artists, performers and creative workers whose human rights are curtailed and abused in this way.

Congress calls on the General Council to continue to work closely with these and other external bodies, so the TUC is able to act as an effective link between dedicated human rights organisations and the relevant occupational areas of the trade union movement.

Congress further calls on affiliated trade unions, trades councils and union members to:

- i) continue to place the struggle for human rights at the heart of solidarity work;
- ii) recognise that human rights need to be won and defended at home as well as abroad; and
- iii) work with Amnesty International to advance and support the full range of rights contained within the UDHR.

Congress further calls on the General Council to intensify its collaboration with Amnesty on shared human rights objectives.

Mover: Equity

Secunder: Accord

Supporters: FDA

Composite 19 Colombia

Congress is outraged by the 89 per cent increase in assassinations of trade unionists in Colombia during the first period of 2008 and notes that Colombia remains the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist.

Congress deplores violence, illegality and kidnapping; the Colombian Government's disrespect for its ILO obligations, including the 2006 tripartite accord; and the impunity that allows the killers of trade unionists to escape punishment.

Congress remains concerned by the refusal of the UK Government to acknowledge the responsibility of the Colombian state in carrying out systematic human rights abuses against trade unionists and others in Colombia and is appalled by the UK Government's ongoing political, diplomatic and military support for such an abusive regime. More specifically, Congress is angered that the UK continues to provide military aid to Colombian army units that assassinate trade unionists whilst at the same time providing no visible support for a Humanitarian Exchange.

Congress applauds the work of Justice for Colombia (JFC) to raise awareness about the situation in Colombia and to provide concrete support to trade

unions in Colombia that are operating in such a harsh environment.

Congress calls on the General Council to:

- i) strongly oppose ongoing UK military aid to Colombia;
- ii) pressure the Government to use resources currently devoted to the Colombian security forces instead for social development, human rights and other projects that would benefit the Colombian people;
- iii) continue to support the Colombian trade union movement's calls for the development of social justice and collective bargaining;
- iv) call on the Government to follow the example of other countries such as France in making clear their support for a Humanitarian Exchange in Colombia as a first step towards a negotiated settlement;
- v) commit to continuing financial and political support for the work of JFC; and
- vi) organise, in co-operation with JFC, a major international conference designed to raise awareness of the situation in Colombia.

Mover: Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

Secunder: Unite

Supporter: Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Composite 20 Training in the public sector and machinery of government

Congress notes with concern that cuts in public sector funding arising from the current Comprehensive Spending Review are undermining the Government's commitment to the Leitch Review recommendations to enable the UK to become a world leader in skills by 2020.

Congress notes that despite the increased skills required in many public sector areas such as the probation service, training provisions are under threat along with threats to jobs, pay and professional standards.

Congress notes that one of the characteristics of societies with successful post-16 education and training provision, such as Finland, is the stability of the national and sub-national infrastructure which supports this service. Yet in England we seem to be in a constant state of flux in this regard, and this uncertainty inevitably distracts colleges and providers from their core work of educating young people and adults.

Congress agrees to:

- i) support union campaigns to oppose attempts to reduce the quality of training and professional development and to campaign for the provision of higher skills for all staff; and
- ii) call on the Government to create effective, transparent and workable arrangements fit for a long-term settlement for post-16 education and training in England.

Mover: Napo

Secunder: Association for College Management

Composite 21 Health and safety at work

Congress notes that 228 people were killed at work in 2007/08. Congress further notes that prosecutions by the Health and Safety Executive dropped by 43 per cent since 2001/02, immediate prohibition notices decreased by 31 per cent and enforcement notices fell by 27 per cent during this time.

Since 2002 the HSE has experienced year-on-year real term budget cuts and it faces further cuts in future. The cuts have led to fewer inspectors and inspections.

Congress notes the inquiry into death in the construction industry proposed by the Government and

reasserts that only when statutory health and safety duties are placed on individual directors will this catastrophic level of deaths be reduced.

Congress notes with dismay that the HSE has adopted the discredited policy of self-regulation and the belief that business must regulate itself. This policy has been an abject failure and has needlessly endangered the lives of workers, particularly in safety-critical industries such as construction and agriculture.

Congress believes that only by introducing a high profile regime of regular inspections, supported by the maximum level of enforcement action, will workplace deaths be reduced.

Congress calls upon the General Council to mount a vigorous campaign to:

- i) transform the ethos of the HSE from an organisation that offers advice to an organisation that maximises its resources in conducting inspections and prosecuting companies that break health and safety laws;
- ii) replace the existing members of the HSE board who remain wedded to the failed theory of self-regulation;
- iii) lobby the Government to increase dramatically the funding of the HSE with additional monies spent on frontline services;
- iv) ensure the HSE recognises that a culture of transparency and openness is paramount when reducing fatalities in the workplace;

and for:

- v) statutory health and safety duties for company directors;
- vi) legislation reversing the House of Lords Pleural Plaques decision and funding for compensation at pre-2007 levels;
- vii) dedicated research on asbestos-related conditions; and
- viii) statutory requirements upon employers to provide risk assessment findings, and to respond formally to safety representatives.

Mover: Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

Seconder: Unite

Supporter: GMB

Composite 22 Workers' Memorial Day

Congress notes with regret that, since 1999, when the TUC first adopted Workers' Memorial Day on 28th April, over 2,000 workers have been killed at work and tens of thousands have been seriously injured.

Congress agrees to lobby the Government to commemorate Workers' Memorial Day and to lobby for an October bank holiday identified to encourage volunteering and community service.

Mover: Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union

Seconder: Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

Supporter: Association of Educational Psychologists

Composite 23 Violence at work

Congress recognises the legal duty that employers have to provide a safe place of work and notes the vital role trade unions provide in supporting their members to improve workplace design and facilities.

Congress acknowledges that official figures from the British Crime Survey suggest that violence at work has fallen in recent years and while Congress welcomes this fall it needs to appreciate that surveys in the public sector demonstrate that this is still very much a key issue that continues to affect thousands of workers and members.

While Congress acknowledges that health and safety legislation offers some protection from violence for workers it is saddened that there continues to be no legal prohibition on lone working.

Current guidance reinforces the need to prevent violence happening in the first place by having good staffing levels and systems to alert staff to potential threats, but in the NHS union members continue to work alone without support or contact with someone for long periods of time. Similarly, workers in transport industries are regularly rostered to work alone, especially at night, in stations or on trains and buses, where they are extremely vulnerable to - and frequently suffer from - physical and verbal attack.

Congress recognises the potential danger faced by community and district nursing staff when making patient visits alone.

Although there is a focus on safety for such high profile areas as accident and emergency departments, the CDNA's concern is for its members.

Community and district nurses are providing nursing care 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. While out on their travels they make visits alone within inner cities, urban and rural areas and many of our members' cars have been damaged whilst on visits. Although modern technology provides mobile phones a clear signal is not always guaranteed, which is no good should they need to raise an alarm.

Congress asks that the TUC and fellow affiliates support the CDNA in urging NHS Trusts to address the safety of union members before any further tragedies happen.

Congress values the safety of members and the service they provide, and it calls upon individual employers and the Public Service Forum to insist that this issue remains high on the health and safety agenda to reduce violence at work and introduce legal safeguards to protect members.

Congress calls on the General Council to campaign for the adoption of a 'passport scheme' for staff training in conflict management, similar to that in Wales, and also for robust ring-fencing of the £97m announced by the Secretary of State to be injected into the NHS for staff protection.

Mover: Society of Radiographers

Seconder: Community and District Nursing Association

**Supporters: Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Transport Salaried Staffs' Association**

Composite 24 Education workforce development

Congress recognises the commitment and achievements of the education sector, at all levels, and the continuing importance of ongoing professional learning to the education sector workforce itself, and appreciates the growing body of available research evidence underlining the significance of this factor to overall educational advance. This evidence includes the work of such internationally respected educationalists as Professor Michael Fullan in promoting the continuing professional development of education professionals at the national level, local authority and individual school levels. Educational improvement and the future prosperity of the UK economy require a well-educated and increasingly skilled national labour force.

Congress recognises that the development of a highly skilled education team is essential to meeting the needs of every child and young person. Congress therefore welcomes the renewed attention to the issue of teachers' professional development in England now emerging within broader government educational improvement policies. Congress urges the Government

to act on the current English National Curriculum testing system. Congress acknowledges the value of evaluation that supports, not damages, school communities, children's learning and staff morale.

Congress also supports efforts to improve access for school support staff to high quality training and career development opportunities. It further notes the contribution of the school workforce social partnership to this agenda through revised performance management arrangements which require a discussion of continuing professional development (CPD) needs and its detailed work with the Training and Development Agency on the supply of CPD. Congress believes that future high-quality CPD should be an entitlement across the entire sector for all teaching and education professionals, including those in management or support roles, and should be:

- i) enabling and formative in nature;
- ii) supported by appropriate staff facilities and sabbaticals to ensure effective participation;
- iii) duly co-ordinated by local authorities to secure consistency of quality within local provision;
- iv) accompanied by dedicated funding provision; and
- v) recognised and accepted throughout the UK.

Mover: Association of Professionals in Education and Children's Trusts

Secunder: National Union of Teachers

Supporters: National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Association for College Management

Emergency 1 Welfare Green Paper

Congress notes with alarm the Green Paper on welfare reform, published on 21 July, consultation on which ends on 22 October.

The Green Paper, which was welcomed by both the Conservative front bench and UKIP, implements all the proposals made by David Freud in 2007. Congress reaffirms its support for the TUC's key points, made at the time in opposing Freud's proposals:

- i) The vast majority of people excluded from the labour market are victims of economic forces beyond their control - they need support to get jobs, not penalties.
- ii) There is no need for privatisation or contracting out. We need a strong and compassionate public employment service to help those who find it difficult to get jobs.

Congress also opposes the proposals for:

- a) abolition of income support;
- b) introducing obligations to work benefits;
- c) compulsory training;
- d) contractors' 'right to bid';
- e) cutting benefits to single parents and those with long-term illness;
- f) requiring all parents of young children to seek work; and
- g) privatisation of the employment service.

Congress therefore instructs the General Council to respond to consultation in the strongest possible terms, opposing these elements of the Green Paper's proposals, and to support PCS' campaign against privatisation of existing Jobcentre staff's work.

Congress also instructs the General Council to organise the widest possible opposition to the Green Paper, with affiliated unions, campaign and user groups. The campaign should include a national conference, lobby of parliament, and rallies against the proposals in every TUC region.

Mover: Public and Commercial Services Union

Secunder: GMB

Emergency 2 The failing energy market

Congress notes that the Prime Minister, in his speech of 4 September, ruled out financial assistance for households struggling to meet their energy bills, in favour of help with home insulation. Congress believes this is an inadequate response to the current energy crisis.

Congress also notes that the 'big six' energy suppliers had profits last year of £1.635 billion, whilst the average household fuel bill has risen by 42 per cent in 2008. Congress condemns the actions of these suppliers, and the phony competition between the energy companies.

Congress further condemns the failure of the Government and Ofgem to take any action to properly regulate the energy market, and curb the excessive price rises being imposed on hard-pressed consumers. Congress considers Ofgem to be inadequate, more concerned with raiding workers' pension schemes than tackling the greedy utilities companies or standing up for consumers.

Congress believes that 'heating or eating' is not a choice which the poor and elderly should be forced to make. Congress calls upon the Government to take urgent action on rising fuel bills by levying a windfall tax on energy companies and use this revenue to provide financial assistance to the neediest households. In addition a coherent energy policy with Government rather than market control is required.

Mover: GMB

Secunder: National Union of Mineworkers

Emergency 3 Associated Train Crew Union

Congress notes that on 4 September 2008, Tube Lines, the London Underground maintenance company, was formally approached by the non-TUC affiliated Associated Train Crew Union (ATCU) to seek recognition with the company.

Congress further notes that ATCU is a breakaway union that represents a divisive attempt to undermine the efforts of the recognised rail unions to protect and advance the interests of rail workers.

Congress further notes that ATCU has publicly stated its aspiration to affiliate to the TUC and Congress requests that the General Council must refuse any request from ATCU for affiliation to the TUC.

Mover: Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen

Secunder: National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

Supporter: Transport Salaried Staffs' Association

Part 2

Motion lost

5 Trade union freedom

Congress recognises the level of work carried out by the General Council in an attempt to progress the Congress resolutions that called for a more modern, fair and appropriate approach to trades union rights in our country.

Further, Congress places on record its appreciation to all those academic lawyers and MPs who sought to take the Trade Union Freedom Bill through the Parliamentary process, but expresses its disbelief at the Labour Government which chose to talk the Bill out of time, in order to ensure that the Bill fell. This act of 'political sabotage' is unworthy of any Government, but particularly a Labour Government.

Congress recognises that the actions of the TUC and affiliated unions have had no success to date in persuading the Government to amend legislation to return the fundamental rights of all workers. In fact, Government has taken even more draconian legislative action to stifle trade unions.

Therefore, Congress instructs the TUC to organise a series of one-day general strikes until such time as the Government removes the restrictive anti-trade union legislation from statute.

POA

Part 3

Motion withdrawn

46 Transport

Congress urges the General Council to convene a meeting urgently with government ministers to press home the need to address the widespread flouting of legislation, designed to improve health and safety, in relation to working time for mobile workers and the use of 'periods of availability' to circumvent the legally permissible maximum working hours per week.

Despite written requests from the TUC to address this lacuna in the legislation, through a meeting with government ministers, its requests have simply been ignored, without even the courtesy of a response. Over 80 deaths of professional drivers occurred on United Kingdom roads during 2007. Congress believes this is unacceptable. Anything that can reduce this shameful loss of life must be grasped.

Restricting the use of 'periods of availability' to extend the working week will, Congress suggests, result in a concomitant reduction in accidents involving professional LGV drivers. Such mortality figures would not be acceptable to society on the railway, at sea or in aviation. Why should it therefore be acceptable on the roads of the United Kingdom?

United Road Transport Union

The following AMENDMENT fell

In paragraph 3, line 4, after 'drivers.' insert:

'To achieve this will require the proper funding of the Vehicle and Operators Services Agency so that there are sufficient inspectors to enforce the existing legislation.'

Unite

Part 4

General Council statement

Congress adopted the following statement:

General Council statement on the economy

The world economy is in a downturn. The roots of the crisis do not lie in the UK, but we are not immune. Ordinary working people are already paying higher energy and food prices, suffering from growing job insecurity and finding their wages are not keeping up with the cost of living.

The Government's top priority must be to mitigate the impact of the worldwide slowdown. This means giving priority to growth and maintaining confidence in the future of the economy so that we do not talk ourselves into a downturn deeper than necessary.

There are two main causes for this slowdown.

First the lack of proper regulation of the finance sector has had the inevitable consequence of an unsustainable boom and subsequent bust. This has led to the world-wide credit crunch in which banks no longer trust even each other. The Government itself has acknowledged this problem through its current review of financial sector regulation and the TUC looks forward to rigorous and comprehensive proposals arising from this.

Second the growth of demand for oil and other natural resources, possibly aided by speculation, has led to substantial price rises particularly for everyday essentials.

It is important to understand this inflationary threat. Getting this wrong will lead to policy errors that will make the slowdown longer and deeper.

Trade unions are not soft on inflation. We do not want to see hard-won pay settlements wiped out by price rises. Living standards are already being eroded by inflation, and inflation rates are higher for those on low and middle incomes as essentials such as food and energy make up a greater proportion of their household bills. High petrol and diesel prices, in particular, are significantly raising the cost of getting to and from work. Those who use their vehicles for work are finding this price rise particularly difficult to accommodate.

But current inflationary pressures are external. Most experts expect them to ease over the next two years. Depressing the UK economy needlessly to eliminate non-existent domestic inflationary pressures would be economic masochism.

In particular, there is no evidence that UK pay increases are driving UK inflation. There are no signs of a damaging wage/price spiral. Indeed neither public nor private sector pay rises are keeping up with the cost of living, and the consequent depressed demand will do nothing to counter the downturn.

The Government's two per cent target for public sector pay increases does not help deal with inflation. Public sector pay is not driving inflation, nor will holding it back reduce it. Forcing a nurse in Bradford or a driving test examiner in Swansea to suffer a cut in their standard of living will not reduce the price of a barrel of oil, but will slow the economy at a time that we need growth. In addition, public sector pay restraint is leading to a widening gap between private and public sector earnings while damaging recruitment, retention and staff morale. The policy threatens relations between the Government, staff and trade unions,

impairs the independence of pay review bodies and prevents constructive negotiations on pay awards and pay structures. It is important to respect the integrity of pay determination machinery, including the need to pay proper attention to equalities and the need for realistic pay structures. These should provide for appropriate recognition and reward as set out in the public sector pay principles agreed between the Government and unions through the Public Services Forum.

Low inflation is undoubtedly desirable, but so is growth and employment. Attempting the impossible - dampening external inflation by driving the UK economy into recession - would be an approach driven by economic dogma, not today's economic imperatives.

While we cannot insulate ourselves from the world economy, the major challenge for the Government must be to show that it is on the side of ordinary working people by ensuring the costs of the slowdown are borne by those who can most afford it. This is a fundamental test of the Government's commitment to fairness. It must protect those least able to bear the costs of the slowdown. And it must make those who have done best from the boom years make a fair contribution to the cost of recovery from a downturn at least partly caused by the bonus-driven risk taking that lies behind the credit crunch.

We therefore need a new economic programme from Government and economic policy makers. It needs to be made up of short, medium and long term elements that provide immediate help to those most affected by the downturn, action to ensure the slowdown is no deeper or longer than necessary and helps to build the future strength of the UK economy.

In the short term we need a package to help those facing most difficulty from the downturn - particularly the growing numbers facing fuel poverty, including pensioners, and those suffering from the difficulties in the housing market and construction sectors.

The TUC calls for the following.

- Mandatory social tariffs for energy providers - it cannot be right that the poorest, who pay for their energy via pre-pay meters are faced with higher bills than those who can afford to pay by direct debit.
- An increase in the Winter Fuel Allowance to bring it up to one third of the average fuel bill, as was the case when it was first introduced. This and other measures to help those facing fuel poverty can be funded through an immediate windfall tax on the huge profits being generated in the gas, electricity and oil industries. Making such profits at a time when household energy bills are being raised so rapidly and forcing thousands into fuel poverty is unjustifiable. The Government must step in and ensure that these profits are used for long-term investment in skills and energy infrastructure and to help those most at need rather than being directed into the pockets of shareholders through higher dividends.
- Ministers to scrap the arbitrary public sector pay target which is imposing real terms pay cuts on millions of low and middle income workers delivering vital public services. The TUC calls for genuine dialogue to secure fair pay and good employment conditions for all public sector staff.
- The Government and Financial Services Authority to ensure that repossessions are kept to an absolute minimum.
- A significant cut in VAT on property renovation to boost the home improvement market and provide greater job opportunities for those facing job loss in the construction sector.

In the medium term the Government needs a determinedly pro-growth strategy which should be reinforced by the Bank of England in line with its mandate to 'support the Government's economic

objectives including those for growth and employment'.

1. A smart fiscal package

With ordinary working people facing cuts in their living standards there is a need to put more money into peoples' pockets to stimulate economic activity and growth. This will be best achieved by rebalancing the tax system to help low and middle income tax-payers while making the super-rich and big companies pay a fairer share. This requires cutting down on the tax avoidance that the TUC has already exposed. The tax system has become less and less progressive in recent years and it is time once again to make the case for fair taxation.

There are various ways to help ordinary people through targeted tax cuts. The key way would be to cut income tax by reducing rates at the bottom or by raising allowances so that the low paid and middle earners receive a greater part of their pay tax free. There is also a case for targeted reductions in VAT on goods and services that are essential to ordinary life such as energy - possibly time limited or replaced with a gradual phasing in of a more environmentally sensitive energy tax regime. Indirect taxes are the least progressive element in the tax system. Cuts in VAT have the added benefit of reducing prices and thus reducing inflation. However, the potential for cuts in VAT are seriously constrained by European Union rules which require a standard rate of 15 per cent with relatively few exceptions. As such, this may be the time for the Government to open an EU-wide debate about whether these rules should be temporarily loosened.

We note that the Government has already made some moves towards fiscal stimulus in the wake of the abolition of the 10p tax rate. This will amount to an extra £120 for those earning between £6,035 and £40,835 over the next six months. However, compared to the fiscal stimulus package announced in the United States which provided between £160 and £1,000 (or more for those with more than two children) in the form of a one-off rebate cheque to taxpayers, this is unlikely to act as a sufficient stimulus. It is notable that growth figures for the last quarter in the USA were much healthier than had been expected.

TUC research shows that very considerable funds are available to the Treasury to pay for such a package, and the short-term measures outlined above, through a comprehensive crackdown on tax avoidance, tax evasion and excessive tax planning by the wealthiest individuals and corporations. That is why we call for a minimum tax rate for earnings over £100,000 to pay for such a package. The current effective rate for earnings above that level is now only 30.8 per cent, as opposed to the actual 40 per cent rate which usually applies, once the wide use of allowances and reliefs is taken into account. A minimum tax rate of 32 per cent for earnings over £100,000, 37 per cent over £150,000 and 40 per cent over £200,000 would raise approximately £5 billion of extra revenue for the Treasury.

If some of the package of measures presented in this section and throughout the paper also needs to be funded through a short-term increase in government borrowing, then so be it. It is precisely at times of economic slowdown that governments should borrow to stimulate the economy, and if applied effectively will result in greater economic growth and tax income that can be used to reduce that borrowing as can further long-term measures to end tax avoidance and evasion. In this context, we welcome the Government's decision to review its fiscal rules which have limited borrowing to no more than 40 per cent of GDP.

2. Lower interest rates

The Bank's remit is to limit inflation, but it is supposed to achieve this commensurate with healthy growth and employment and support the Government's wider economic policy objectives. But the danger is always

that the Bank will err on the side of caution and set interest rates that are unnecessarily high, particularly at a time when inflationary pressures are external and not domestic. It is clear that the MPC is holding rates at their current comparatively high level to dampen inflationary expectations, not with any belief that they will reduce current inflation levels. The Bank says these will remain high until the higher oil and commodity prices begin to weaken in response to the global economic slowdown.

This is why the Bank should recognise that there are no significant signs of inflation taking off in the UK and that the real danger is the growing recessionary expectations that threaten to push the UK economy into a deeper and more prolonged slowdown than needed. Of course the Bank must keep a weather eye on domestic inflation, but a steady series of cuts in interest rates would help boost confidence. Lower interest rates would also ease the financial burden on those struggling to meet increased mortgage payments imposed on them through no fault of their own as a result of the credit crunch.

The Bank must remain aware that a severe drop in growth and employment would not only cause serious damage to the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of British people and the future of the UK economy but could also lead to a new problem of deflation rather than inflation.

3. Regulation of the energy industry

As was stated above, a windfall tax on the profits of the energy industry is justified as a measure to address those facing fuel poverty in the short term. However, the TUC does not believe that a windfall tax alone will address the long-term problems caused for consumers by the energy market in the UK. Government action is required to ensure that the long-term public interest predominates over short term business priorities in this sector which is so crucial to domestic households and the success of the UK economy. It is vital that the Government and the regulator work together to bring order to this market by developing more effective regulation to provide affordable, sustainable and secure energy for domestic and individual consumers. In addition, a detailed Government review of the way the energy market and Ofgem operates and their capacity to deliver consumer satisfaction, meet the public interest and help limit climate change is overdue. This should be done in close consultation with the TUC, industry and other stakeholders.

The Government should also undertake an urgent inquiry into speculation within the oil industry to understand the extent to which this has driven up energy prices and caused damage to the UK economy and to bring forward proposals to limit such activity.

For those who claim that the energy industry is being unfairly targeted and that investment in the sector will be damaged by a windfall tax, it should be kept in mind that the energy industry is due to enjoy a further £9 billion effective windfall hand-out between 2008 and 2012 as a result of the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme. Energy companies will make vast profits by passing the cost of having to pay for the right to emit carbon on to the consumer. However, they will not take into account the fact that a fair proportion of their carbon allocation will be given to them for free.

4. International co-operation on the global economy

The TUC believes that the response to the economic crisis needs to be co-ordinated at an international level. The slowdown is affecting every major European economy as well as the United States. There can be little optimism for the UK economy if its main trading partners fail to grow. The British Government must work closely with European Union and G8 members to identify policies that can be used to restart growth

across the world and ensure that current EU agreements on growth and stability do not impede economic recovery. This is particularly important to ensure that the close economic ties developed over recent years are not undermined by a retreat into isolation and protectionism as governments seek to respond to their economic problems.

Furthermore, given that this crisis has its origins in irresponsible practices on the global capital markets and the banking sector, the time is ripe for the advanced economies to develop a co-ordinated response for the regulation of these markets to ensure that the world does not find itself in the same situation again some years hence.

There is also a very strong case for much greater international action to combat tax haven abuse and 'tax competition' where business places pressure on governments to reduce business taxes under threat that they will relocate to lower tax territories if their demands are not met. These activities continue to weaken tax revenues across the world including in the UK and the developing world and make it harder for governments to respond to economic downturns or to grow their economies. However, no government can act alone on this: challenging tax competition and ending haven abuse will require concerted multilateral action.

The TUC believes the British Government has a crucial role to play in such action as one of the largest economies, as one of the leading centres of financial trading and expertise, and as a country with close constitutional links to some of the most active tax havens.

5. Early response rescue for 'at risk' workers

A rise in unemployment will damage the economy and act as an untimely drain on public finances. The Government should ensure that employment and training services are fit to respond rapidly and fully to support employees who have lost their job or are at risk of losing their job. This will mean ensuring that adequate resources are in place to allow these services to take urgent action to support individual workers and groups of workers as necessary.

6. Help for construction and housing

The UK housing market undoubtedly overheated in the years of easy credit. While there was significantly less sub-prime lending than in the US, there was undoubtedly some irresponsible lending. Not enough houses have been built - particularly ones that low and medium income households can afford to rent or buy. This asset inflation has also encouraged speculation in property - often with undesirable effects on local communities that end up with high proportions of buy-to-let housing. The result has been house prices beyond the reach of first-time buyers, and now an inevitable burst of the bubble with a particular impact on those who have bought recently.

The credit crunch has further led to a severe shortage of available mortgage finance making it extremely difficult for first time buyers to take advantage of more realistic property prices.

Given these conditions, the TUC warmly welcomes the package recently announced by the Government to help those at risk of repossession. In addition, the Financial Services Authority should ensure that all lenders are abiding by the Mortgage Conduct of Business rules to prevent lenders moving to court action without giving the borrower a fair chance to pay their arrears.

The decision to bring forward the plans for social housing construction is also important given the long-term problems of supply in the housing market which has affected those on low and middle incomes particularly hard. The Government needs to take all necessary steps to ensure that all those involved in the construction sector, including developers and builders,

are actively supporting the target of three million new homes by 2020. Given the current problems, achievement of this target may require a very considerable expansion of social and council housing.

The extra help announced for first time buyers is also welcome but the TUC believes the Government should, as a matter of urgency, work with local authorities to make it easier for them to provide mortgage finance at a competitive rate and to build new council homes.

The General Council notes that the Chancellor is considering options for reviving the mortgage lending market. The TUC does not believe that measures which risk creating a new asset price bubble in the housing market are beneficial. There is a need for house prices to return to levels that first time buyers can afford. The Government should take measures designed to make mortgages more easily available on a responsible basis, such as encouraging local authorities to lend and through measures that may be included in Sir James Crosby's review to underwrite lenders. But such help should avoid any attempt to prop up unrealistic house prices and should be accompanied by a tighter regulatory environment for mortgage marketing and provision.

In the long term the Government must do more to build the strength of the UK economy. This will require it to intensify some of its existing activities such as investment in skills, but also rethink some other aspects of its economic approach.

The UK has privileged City financial institutions at the expense of the rest of the economy through a lenient tax regime and light regulation. Yet we cannot rely on the next City or asset bubble to drive growth. As a recent Financial Times editorial noted: 'investment banking has occupied an outsized role in western economies in the past decade ... its tendency to make losses every few years, make it an unreliable financial partner'. Current events show the truth of this observation which is reflected in the extent to which our economy has been left dangerously exposed by the reliance on the City.

Instead, the Government must identify the sectors, whether in manufacturing, services or other parts of the economy, that are able to generate growth in the next decade. These will be the sectors that will lift us out of the current slowdown in a sustainable fashion, in every sense of that word. The Government's role is to provide the right policy and legislative framework and the right incentives and supports to allow those sectors to flourish. In particular, the Government must learn from countries such as Germany and Denmark where environmental enterprise has been positively encouraged leading the 'green economy' in those nations to become highly profitable sectors that employ thousands massively outstripping the UK's much smaller efforts in this area.

The TUC will produce two detailed reports on this proactive approach to generating growth in the autumn.

This is not an old-fashioned attempt to pick winning companies and favour those over others, but a sensible assessment of the sectors in which the UK already does well but could do better. Yet even this common sense approach remains anathema to the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and it is increasingly clear that the creation of this new department with its distinctive built-in neo-liberal approach was a substantial mistake. Far from the dangers of excessive regulation, the world economy is facing a damaging downturn because of a lack of effective regulation.

After a decade of economic success in which the UK economy has proved more resilient than many to external shocks, we now face very different circumstances and require a different kind of response from the Government. If it is to show that it is on the side of ordinary working people and committed to

fairness it needs to adopt the kind of realistic pro-growth strategy detailed here. This will ensure that the downturn is no deeper nor longer than necessary and that the UK emerges as a stronger and fairer country.

Adopted 9 September 2008.

Section 2

Verbatim report of congress proceedings

The following pages give a full verbatim report of the proceedings of the 140th annual Trades Union Congress, which met in Brighton from Monday 8 September to Thursday 11 September with Dave Prentis presiding.

Congress decisions are marked with a *

**FIRST DAY: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8
MORNING SESSION**

(Congress assembled at 10.00 a.m.)

The President (Dave Prentis): Good morning, delegates. I call Congress to order. The programme of music this week has been put together by Music for Youth, a great organisation. On behalf of everyone in this hall this morning, I would like to thank the Hampshire Award Flutes who have been playing for us this morning. *(Applause)*

Congress, I have great pleasure in opening, the TUC's 140th Congress. I warmly welcome all delegates and visitors to Brighton.

Appointment of tellers and scrutineers

The President: The formal item of business is to ask Congress to approve the tellers and scrutineers as set out on page 10 of the General Purposes Committee Report booklet. Is that agreed? *(Agreed)*

May I remind all delegates to switch off their mobile phones. You should also find on your seats details of the emergency procedures, so please, could you familiarise yourselves with them. Should there be an emergency, I will give you further instructions. If any delegates require first aid, the first aid station is situated by the food servery in the east bar, the doors of which are to my left, your right.

Welcome to Sororal and Fraternal Delegates

The President: Congress, I now come to the introduction of the sororal and fraternal delegates and visitors who are seated behind me on my right. As you would expect from the British section of an international trade union movement, we have a number of trade unionists with us from outside the country this week, some of whom will be addressing Congress, others will be taking part in fringe events and some are here to network, to visit old friends in the British trade union movement and, hopefully, to make new ones. I am sure you will make them all welcome at our Congress. Our international guests with us this morning are the ETUC General Secretary, John Monks; Tarsicio Mora Godoy, the new President of the Colombia TUC, who will be addressing Congress on Wednesday; Tarsicio's colleague, Bethea Rey Castelblanco from the Teachers' Union; Ronaldo Valdes Grillo and Manuel Montero Bistilleiro of the C.T.C. in Cuba and Akiko Okubo from the Japanese Trade Union Confederation Rengo. We have also with us a close friend, Abdullah Muhsim, from the Iraqi trade union movement and Avital Shapirow from the Histadrut, the Israeli TUC. To our international guests this morning, I would like to say that you are really welcome at our Congress. Other international guests will be joining us later in the week, including Arlene Holt Baker, the AFL/CIO Sororal guest; John Evans from the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the OECD; Dan Cunnian and Dan Smith from the ILO in Geneva; Patricia McKeown and Peter Bunting from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Fathy Nasser from the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions, and Guy Ryder from the International Trade Union Confederation. There will be a number of other representations from global union federations, individual union representatives and foreign visitors here this week. They are all most welcome. I hope delegates will take the opportunity to meet them and discuss the issues which bring us altogether as a global union family.

This year's fraternal delegate from the Trades Union Councils' Conference is Peter Spalding. Congress, we are expecting other guests during the week. As they arrive, I will introduce them to you.

TUC achievements 2008-9 video presentation

The President: Colleagues, we begin the business of Congress with an opening address by our General Secretary, but before Brendan speaks let us remind ourselves of some of the events and the achievements of the trade union Movement during the past year.

Presentation of a video of union and TUC achievements and campaigns

The President: Congress, having seen that video, perhaps we should celebrate our achievements more often than we do. I now invite the General Secretary to give his Address to Congress.

Sasha Callaghan (University and College Union): On a point of Order, Chair. I am very sorry, Congress, to do this, particularly before this very important address, but I have to say that for the blind and visually impaired delegates here today that was completely inaccessible. I hope you will forgive my anger. I hope that if we are going to have other presentations like this that they are going to be a little bit more inclusive than the first one. Blind and visually impaired delegates would like to have shared in the fantastic moments from last year. Unfortunately, we were denied that opportunity. I have to say, for myself, I feel extremely angry at this moment.

The President: On behalf of the General Council, we will take that point of order on board. We will discuss the implications of it at our next General Council meeting.

I now invite our General Secretary to give his address to Congress.

General Secretary's Address

Brendan Barber (General Secretary): Good morning, Congress and President. I think it's right that we start our week by celebrating some of the tremendous successes since we last met, and I hope that short film gives just a flavour of some of those victories.

While the past year has had its problems for sure, by working together and campaigning together we have made real progress on the issues that matter most to the people we represent. We have won a historic agreement on agency workers, removing one of the worst injustices from our labour market, so never again can Britain's army of temporary workers be treated as second-class citizens in the workplace. We should also thank John Monks and his ETUC colleagues for the hugely important role they played in taking our message to every capital of Europe to ensure that we won that deal.

We have put the issue of vulnerable workers firmly in the public spotlight, highlighting the overwhelming case for action in a way that government, business and the public simply cannot ignore.

We have won a major pensions' reform, so that in the future every employer will have to contribute to their workers' pensions, and what better way for us to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the Old Age Pensions Act, which was won through the campaigning of previous generations of trade unionists?

Think too about those achievements that rarely make the headlines – the record number of workers accessing learning opportunities through their union, the tougher penalties for Scrooge employers who refuse to pay the national minimum wage and the new law on corporate killing that came into effect earlier this year. There is more still to do to hold reckless employers to account, but this is a vital step forward.

In the past year we have also become stronger as a movement. We have recorded a welcome 65,000 increase in our membership. We have reached out to migrant workers in every corner of the UK. And we have signed a new protocol with our American sisters and brothers to combat the disgraceful activities of the union busters on both sides of the Atlantic, helping deliver for workers that most fundamental of collective rights: the right to organise. We want no pitbulls here, with or without lipstick.

So there is much for us to be proud of. Congress, I've never been prouder to be part of this movement. I am proud that once again we led the fight against the far right in communities across Britain, ensuring that the vast majority of our towns and cities remain free from the poisonous embrace of the BNP; proud that we stood shoulder to shoulder with our comrades in Zimbabwe, and let us salute those South African trade unionists – ordinary dockworkers in Durban – who refused to unload arms destined to prop-up the Mugabe regime. *(Applause)* I am proud too that we played our part in helping to shape a breakthrough agreement between the trade union movements of Israel and Palestine so that the PGFTU can secure the income that is justly theirs in respect of Palestinian workers working in Israel.

Trade unionists, despite all the difficulties, have been able to reach agreement across the divides of that bitter conflict. Let us hope that they have carved a path that political leaders can now follow.

Congress, it would be right, too, to put on record a tribute to Guy Ryder, the General Secretary of the ITUC, who worked so tirelessly to deliver that agreement.

And I am proud too that we have spoken with one voice to demand fair pay for public servants and, in a year when we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the NHS, an end to the reckless privatisation of our public domain. Together we have spoken up for public services in a way the Government cannot ignore. We have shown that you cannot create worldclass services with a workforce battered and bruised by change, sapped of morale by a thousand reorganisations, and crippled by pay awards that do not begin to reflect the true cost of living.

And do not let anyone else tell us that the Government cannot afford fair pay for public servants. If it can spend billions on consultants, billions on tax breaks for UK plcs, then surely it can find the money to give Britain's teachers, prison officers, civil servants and local government workers the fair pay they deserve.

Let's be clear. I may not be the only one to make this point this week. Working people are not the cause of inflation; they are the victims of it. *(Applause)*

Congress, this campaign and so many of our other battles for justice throughout the world lost a great champion with the terrible loss of Steve Sinnott. His death in April shocked everyone in our movement and beyond. Steve was not just a great trade unionist and a wonderful friend, he was also an outstanding advocate for teachers, for young people and for state education and a true internationalist who was an inspiration to us all. None of us will ever forget the huge contribution that he made. *(Applause)*

Congress, what unites all of our campaigns from public services through to Zimbabwe and agency workers is one simple principle: fairness.

During the past year we have led the debate on fairness, exposing the huge inequalities that now disfigure our country. The argument I want to make today is that our country more than ever desperately needs to become fairer, because gone are the comfortable realities of the past decade that the economy can be taken for granted, that prices will

remain stable and that the Tories are a spent political force.

With the credit crunch biting, with incomes being squeezed by rising food, fuel and energy costs, and with the gap between the super-rich and the rest of us now a yawning chasm, the British people are crying out for fairness – and I believe the case for action is compelling.

Fairness is not some nebulous concept; it is the glue that holds our society together, the foundation on which any economic progress is going to be built. Too much of contemporary Britain simply isn't fair. It's not fair that employees are facing a fall in their living standards while top bosses see their pay packets go up by 20 or even 30 percent. It's not fair that workers pay proportionately more tax on their earnings than people who earn a hundred or even a thousand times more. It's also not fair that pensioners and low-income families are living in fear of a cold winter while energy companies post huge profits and speculators rake it in.

Economists have been debating whether and when the UK economy will be in a recession – two quarter of what they quaintly call negative growth. Well, let me tell them this today. Millions of households in Britain are already in recession as wages fail to keep up with energy and food costs. I don't call that negative growth – but a cut in living standards. *(Applause)*

So it's when times are tough that fairness really counts.

Of course, we know that this economic downturn was not made here in Britain. Greedy bankers, particularly in the United States, and higher world demand for goods must take the lion's share of the blame. And in this globalised world we cannot avoid the downturn. We can't say "Stop the world, we want to get off".

But let's also be clear that the credit crunch is no random act of God but inevitable; inevitable because governments listened to those preaching the cult of deregulation; inevitable because bankers worked out that they could make huge amounts of money by irresponsible lending and selling on the debts, and inevitable because property bubbles always burst.

But in some ways the credit crunch has done us all a favour because it has stripped bare some of the workings of the modern finance industry and shown just how wrong it has been to put it on the pedestal as the engine of economic growth.

As the Economic Statement we published yesterday makes clear, we need a fundamental change of direction. We need policies that stimulate growth as well as control inflation; policies that promote real engineering as well as regulate financial engineering, and policies which curtail excess as well as encourage enterprise. In other words, we need a decisive break from the neoliberal orthodoxy of the past quarter of a century. Because what we have seen in the past year, from the credit crunch through to spiralling energy prices and the loss of confidence in the banking system, is market failure on a colossal scale. And it is ordinary people, our members, ordinary taxpayers, who are now footing the bill.

Delegates, I encourage you all to read the Touchstone pamphlet that we have published just this weekend showing the scale of inequality in today's Britain. Recent years have indeed been a golden age for the rich. Billions have been paid out in City bonuses. In 2000 a typical FTSE 100 Chief Executive was paid 39 times the national average. Now in only eight years it has gone up to 100 times. According to accountants Grant Thornton in 2006 the 54 billionaires living in Britain paid £14.7 million in tax on their £126 billion combined fortunes. In other words, their tax rate is 1/10th of one per cent.

Congress, the grotesque inequality we see now is a scar on our country, and I have to say that when I hear Ministers talking about celebrating more millionaires, I cringe!

You know the world has gone mad when an Abu Dhabi corporation pays £200 million to buy the City – and it's not even London. It's Manchester. (*Laughter*)

With three-quarters of us saying the gap between rich and poor is too wide, now is the time for decisive action, not just to curb greed at the top – we desperately need reform of our tax system – but also to address desperate conditions at the bottom. Because at the other end of the spectrum, away from the champagne bars of the Square Mile, life is very different. Two million workers in Britain today face exploitation, maltreatment and pitiful working conditions, and often quite legally. I am talking about people like 54-year-old Julie, who had to give up her job to care for a child who had learning difficulties, and for the past 20 years has worked at home making Christmas crackers. She is paid £35-£40 for every batch she produces, even though each one takes around 40 hours to make, which translates into an effective pay rate of less than £1 an hour. She is not entitled to sick pay, holiday pay or pension, and has never been given a payslip. Or think about 52-year-old Paula, an agency worker cleaning cabins on the ferries. She starts work at 5.30 in the morning and, after a five hour rest in the middle of the day, finishes at 11.30 at night. She has to do that for 14 days in a row, again without holiday pay, sick pay or pension rights. When she complained that her permanent colleagues received better treatment, she was suspended by her agency for six weeks. Finally, I ask you to think about Robert, a coal miner for 18 years until the Tories closed his pit. Since the early 1990s he has worked – supposedly, self-employed – as a car valet. With his company recommending a 6am start, he clocks up 60 hours a week. He is paid a piece rate for each car washed. He also has to fork out for his own cleaning materials and damage insurance. At the end of an average month, after expenses, Robert takes home around £250.

Congress, this is happening here and now, in Britain in 2008, and it is a scandal that shames our country. So what are the answers? How do we make Britain a fairer place for all? What can government do to turn fairness from a political slogan into a practical reality? Well, let me offer ministers just three simple suggestions. First, remove once and for all the worst injustices from our labour market. Follow up the agreement on agency workers by ending bogus self-employment and delivering equal rights for homeworkers. Make enforcement of the current law much more effective, especially in those sectors and businesses where the risks are greatest. And introduce a new Fair Employment Commission to lead the fight against vulnerable working and raise awareness where it matters most.

Secondly, meet the public's desire for tax justice. Make our tax system more progressive, with low earners taken out of tax altogether and a new minimum rate introduced for those on £100,000 or more. Pursue those tax avoiders in the City and among the super-rich with the same determination as you pursue so-called benefits cheats. And close the loopholes that cost the public purse £25 billion a year, because three-quarters of the public think it's too easy for the rich to get away not paying their share.

Thirdly, and perhaps most crucially, inspire again the imagination of ordinary people, showing what a Labour Government is for. Meet the massive demand for council housing and give our construction industry the boost it so desperately needs. From healthcare to transport, criminal justice to education, show just a little less faith in market mechanisms and a little more belief in public provision. Yes, introduce a windfall tax

on the excessive profits of the energy companies to the poorest and most disadvantaged sections of our society. (*Applause*)

Congress, I believe that the case for fairness is as relevant now as it has ever been, and I am convinced that the argument for employment, fair tax and a fair distribution of wealth and opportunity is not just morally compelling, but it is also the way to economic and electoral success.

So this week we will be pressing for change, asserting what for us is a core value. Make no mistake: throughout our history, fairness has been the lifeblood of the labour movement. Fairness is what inspired trade unionists, socialists and progressive reformers to campaign for a universal old age pension a century ago. Fairness is what drove Aneurin Bevan to create our NHS 60 years ago, delivering free healthcare for all despite bitter opposition from the conservative establishment.

And fairness is what motivated ordinary people the world over to march together, to campaign together and stand together to help defeat the obscenity of apartheid.

Now, in the first decade of the 21st Century, our duty is to write the next chapter in that story, because only by being fairer can Britain be stronger; and only by being stronger can Britain make the world fairer. If we can win that argument, if we can win the hearts and minds of politicians and public alike, then I believe we can win a better future for all of our people. Thanks for listening. (*Applause*)

Report of the General Purposes Committee

The President: Congress, I call upon Annette Mansell-Green, the Chair of the General Purposes Committee, to report to us on the progress of business and other Congress arrangements.

Annette Mansell-Green (General Purposes Committee): Good morning, Congress. The General Purposes Committee has approved Composite Motions 1–23, which are set out in the *GPC Report and Composite Motions* booklet, which you have all received. Also in the booklet is the General Council's *Statement on the Economy*. I can also report that agreement has been reached on a composite of Motion 63 and amendments on education workforce development. This has been approved as Composite 24 and will be distributed around delegates' seats during the lunch break. This composite is scheduled to be debated tomorrow morning.

On behalf of the GPC, I would like to thank all those unions who have co-operated and worked together to reach agreement on the composite motions. In addition, the GPC has approved Emergency Motion 1 on the Welfare Green Paper to be moved by PCS and seconded by the GMB, which is also contained in your booklet. The President will indicate when it is hoped that the emergency motion will be taken. You will see that the printed GPC Report indicates where the movers of motions have agreed to accept amendments to their motions.

Congress, I can report that in the list of Unite nominations for section A of the General Council, shown on page 52 of the *Final Agenda*, Tony Dubbins has now been replaced by Graham Goddard.

I can also report that paragraph 2.17, originally scheduled to be taken on Thursday morning, will now be taken in the Organising debate on Wednesday morning, and that paragraph 2.3, originally scheduled for Monday morning, will now be taken in the Employment Rights debate on Thursday morning.

In order to ensure that we do not fall behind with Congress business, could I, as usual, remind delegates to be ready to come to the rostrum quickly if you are scheduled to speak. Reserved seats are at the front of the hall for those who wish to speak.

It is very important also that you respect speaking times which, unless reduced, are five minutes for moving a motion and three minutes for second or for all other supporting speakers.

Finally, could I remind all delegates and visitors to keep their mobile phones and any other portable ringing devices or, for that matter, vibrating devices switched off. You will need your Congress credentials and other photo identification with you at all times.

I will report further to you on progress of business and other GP decisions as necessary throughout Congress. Have a good day, delegates.

The President: Congress, I now invite you formally to receive the GPC's Report. Can we agree? Thank you. *(Agreed)*

Congress, I may be able to take Emergency Motion 1, referred to by Annette, on the Welfare Reform Green Paper, after the debate on public services on Tuesday morning. That depends on progress of business. However, it is more likely that it will be taken during the Wednesday morning session or later. I will make a further announcement in due course.

Obituary

The President: In leading in Chapter 11 of the General Council Report, he said: Colleagues, we now come to the Obituary section of the Report when we remember our trade union colleagues who have died during the past year. We list those most closely associated with the TUC in Chapter 11 of the Report on pages 187 and 188.

Since the Report went to press, we have also learned of the death of Ken Thomas, who served on the General Council from 1977 to 1982, and Professor Brian Bercusson, who held the Chair of European Social and Labour Law at Kings College London, and founder of the ETUC Legal Officers network.

Prior to asking you to stand, I would like to read out for you the names of those who have died who are referred to in the pages of the Report. They are John Baldwin, Billy Blease, Tom Burlison, Chris Childs, Dilwyn Davies, Janek Kuezkiewicz, Bert Lyons, Steve Sinnott, Darren Spencer, Albert Williams and Herb Weiner.

In asking you to stand in memory of these former colleagues, I also ask you to remember the trade union colleagues who have died in the past year both here and around the world. As it is customary at this time, let us re-commit ourselves to the cause of world peace. Please stand now for a moment's silence. *(Congress stood in tribute as photographs of those referred to were shown and solemn music played)*

Public sector pay

The President: Delegates, we now turn to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report and the debate on public sector pay. I will now explain how I intend to handle the debate. First, I will call the mover and seconder of Composite Motion 15, followed by the mover and seconder of the POA amendment to Composite Motion 15. Then I will call the supporters of Composite 15. I will then call the General Secretary to explain the General Council's attitude, which is to support the composite and oppose the amendment, before opening the debate to the floor. I will take the vote on the amendment first and then move to the vote on the composite.

Keith Sonnett (UNISON) moved Composite Motion 15 and opposed the amendment from the POA.

He said: Congress, we do so, because we believe, as is stated in Composite 15, that the TUC should be co-ordinating, supporting and assisting unions in dispute and not itself seeking to organise strike action.

In this first debate of this Annual Congress we need to send out a very clear message to the Cabinet meeting today in Birmingham that we demand fair pay for public servants. We demand it! We also expect our Government, a Labour government, to get its act together, to stop squabbling over the leadership and instead to address, seriously, the problems of working people, people who, quite frankly, feel let down. Nowhere is this more apparent than amongst public service workers, who are fed-up with being marketised, outsourced and privatised, fed-up with seeing huge hykes in oil and energy prices whilst nothing is done about the windfall profits and huge dividend payouts and fed-up with being told to moderate pay demands whilst nothing is done about boardroom greed and obscene City bonuses. Inflation has soared. The RPI is up 5 percent. The CPI is up 4.4 percent and rising. Petrol prices have risen by over 22 per cent; fuel bills 15 per cent; food prices over 10 per cent, bread 20 per cent and milk 17 per cent! As we know, these increases impact even harder on those with low incomes, and public service workers, in the main, are low paid. Very low paid! Many earn little more than the minimum wage and more than 80 per cent of UNISON members in local government, for example, who are in dispute, earn less than £16,000 a year. The majority are women, who are low paid by any measure. They have seen below inflation pay increases year after year after year. Let us not forget the fact that the gender pay gap of some 40 per cent in the earnings of part-time women workers.

Congress, public service workers do not cause inflation. As Brendan said, public service workers are the victims. They are the casualties of inflation, struggling to make ends meet, struggling to look after their families. They are the nurses, the hospital workers, the teachers, the teaching assistants, Civil Servants, librarians, care workers, home carers, nursing staff, cleaners and many more. They deserve better than the shabby treatment that many are getting from a government which appears to listen more to voices of their fair weather business friends and the CBI than it does to those of its core supporters. Public service workers have had enough. They have been saying very loudly and very clearly during the past year that they will not accept the imposition of a 2 per cent pay policy; not this year, not next year nor the year after that. It is a policy of pay cuts for some of our most vulnerable workers. Where deals have been struck with 're-opener clauses', such as in the NHS, we will not hesitate to go back in future years to protect our members' living standards.

Public service workers do not accept that they have to bear the brunt of a global housing and credit crunch caused not by them but by the pursuit of greed and a failed government policy of a de-regulated financial service industry.

So today, Congress, we must salute those workers who have been struggling to get acceptable pay deals. I am referring to the POA for refusing, like the police, to accept a staging of their independent pay award last year and for expressing their opposition so forcibly. I am also referring to the teachers and the Ofsted members, both in UNISON and PCS for standing up and taking strike action; to the Coastguards, immigration officers, passport staff, driving examiners, jobcentre staff, the members of UNISON and Unite in local government in England and Wales, who took two days strike action in July, and those in Scotland, with the GMB, who took strike action in August and have announced that they will do so again later this month.

These are the people, the trade unionists, who make our movement strong. They are hardworking public servants. They and all other trade unionists in this dispute, whether they have to take industrial action or not, deserve the support of this Trades Union Congress and this trade union movement. They must not and will not stand alone fighting for acceptable pay increases and in seeking to protect their families. We demand fair pay for public servants. I move.

Mark Serwotka (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded the composite motion. He said: President and Congress, I second the resolution and fully endorse the comments of Keith Sonnett in moving the composite motion, but stress that I want to concentrate my remarks less on what is just about our case, because Keith has made that point, but how we must move on to ensure that we can win this issue and deliver real increases for our members. Congress, this policy is one of the clearer signs, in our view, that the Government have totally lost the plot. It is completely hypocritical for a political party, when in opposition, to celebrate public sector workers and then to attack them when it is in office. We should say, loud and clear, that any policy which treats minimum waged workers and people on poverty pay the same as fat-cat chief executives and people on six figure salaries is morally bankrupt. Congress, we should also say to John Hutton and the rest of the Cabinet that now is the time to spend less time talking to millionaires and more time talking to real people delivering real public services.

Let me invite those who have yet to visit to the PCS stall to see the DVD that we are running entitled *Real Members, Real Stories, Real Hardship*. I challenge anyone not to be moved by the sight of lone parents in tears as they explain that on £15,000 a year they cannot afford even to buy birthday presents for their children and they are at their wits' end. They have to take second jobs, do not have holidays, cannot pay the bills and are worried about where they are going in the run-up to Christmas.

We also have to say that in the civil service this policy is even worse for our members because, uniquely, in the public sector, our incremental progression is taken out of our members' cost of living. It means for members like ours in the DWP it was a zero per cent consolidated increase in 2008. Congress, I hope that every single one of us in this hall agrees that this is a disgraceful policy and we need to challenge it. We now need to concentrate on what we do. I hope we can unite in saying that it is no longer good enough for individual unions to heroically fight on their own. We need to co-ordinate our activities. We need days of action organised by the TUC, we need co-ordinated industrial action across the public sector and we need a national demonstration. We need to get tens and hundreds of thousand of people on the streets showing how angry they are.

That is why at this Congress PCS announced yesterday that it is about to ballot all our members, 270,000 public sector members, for a programme of three months of industrial action to put maximum pressure on the employers. We are already talking to the NUT and the UCU about trying to co-ordinate those strikes and we want to talk to others as well.

So in conclusion, remember our case is just. Remember the money is there. I am talking about £25 billion in uncollected tax evaded by the rich and those who should be paying. Billions are wasted on consultants and billions made in obscene profits. So we know the money is there and we know the cause is just. We have now got to unify in our tactics.

I leave you with this warning, Congress. We have already been blamed by being told that our members

cause inflation when they do not: they are the victims. Now we will be told that this is a return to 1979 and we will let in the Tories. But let's be clear, Congress. The fault for this situation lies with Gordon Brown and the Labour Government. If they refuse to do something now, we should unite to challenge them. If the Tories win the election, if industrial strife breaks out, the Government have themselves to blame. We have a just case. Let's unite and force the Government to see sense.

Brian Caton (*POA-UK*) moved the amendment to Composite Motion 15.

He said: Congress, I am seeking to move an amendment to mean what we say and not just to say what we mean. Congress, along with you, I watched a TUC video that celebrated the work we have done. I applaud that. I applaud every single trade unionist in this country who is trying to roll back the oppression of a Labour Government that really should know better.

I would also like to thank the TUC for the biggest cue cards I have ever seen, because when I look up and see flags of 'Decency', 'Rights', 'Dignity', 'Respect', 'Together', 'Safety', 'Unity', 'Equality', 'Jobs', 'Skills', 'Fairness' and a 'Voice', I have to say that the POA have been stripped of all that. So when people ask me why we stand in anger at this rostrum, I will tell them that this Labour Government has lied and lied and lied again to us. When we say that public sector pay is at the heart of everything we do in the POA, perhaps you will understand why we are asking for an amendment and why we are asking, probably unusually certainly strangely, according to a lot of people, that this Congress and this organisation begins to pull together. We can show throughout the rest of the civilised world that we can do things by acting together and we will support all the campaigns.

However, we go a little bit further because we do not think that this Labour Government will listen and we do not think that this Labour Government is for turning. The reason we think as we do is because Gordon Brown constantly says it and his predecessor constantly said it. That is why we are saying that this organisation should do exactly that; they should organise us and make sure that the Government actually listens.

The Government gave us an Independent Pay Review Body. The Government gave us a right to be heard and a compensatory arrangement. There is no compensation at all because, as soon as that independent body says that prison officers should be paid more, the Government bang in with its broad brush approach to public sector pay and say, "No, they are not going to get it; we are going to restrict what the Independent Pay Review Body said prison officers should get." Angry? Indeed we are.

I do not believe that it is good enough to campaign. My union will continue to support all comrades when we campaign together, but we do not think that goes far enough because there are the blue sails on the horizon. The Tories are coming. If we are weak when they arrive, you will all end up like the POA today stripped of your rights and stripped of the right to take action to support those rights.

Congress, many of you will have a particular position on our amendment, but I say this: I will leave this Congress and look in the eyes of my members and say, "I did what I know is right." Congress, I want you to be able to do that as well. I want you to be able to look squarely in your members' eyes and say that you did what you know is right. What we are asking you to do is to pull together. Let us show the Government exactly what we mean. Yes, let us campaign; yes, let us lobby; yes, let us march around London, let us wave the flag and blow the whistle, but let us hurt them because

that is the only way we will get what we truly deserve in the public sector, and that is fair pay for some of the most difficult jobs done on behalf of our society and we are here to represent them. Please support this amendment. *(Applause)*

John Leach (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded the amendment.

He said: I am very proud to second the amendment. I am asking you to give your wholehearted support to the amendment that Brian Caton has so eloquently just moved on behalf of the POA. We would not disagree with a word of what this composite motion says nor with what it says in the one word amendment. Who could, at the end of the day? This is the Trades Union Congress and we are here to deal with matters which affect every single member whom we represent. We condemn the Government's continued pursuit of a pay policy. Indeed, the General Secretary in his speech told us why we should do so. We believe, obviously, that public sector workers are entitled to more, rather than having the door slammed in their faces by Gordon Brown when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. However, let us consider what we can do about it. I commend, and am heartened to hear, what Mark Serwotka has told us about the action plan of the Public and Commercial Services Union as to how they propose going about it.

However, it is time for us all to do more than just talk about a demonstration and allow the unions to go about it alone and in a singular fashion. We need a coherent strategy and we need to tell this Government at their cabinet meeting today when we look into the whites of their eyes that we mean business. That means if they do not deliver, we do. We deliver our members in direct opposition to this Government's pay policy and then, Brian is absolutely right, we can look all of our members squarely in the eyes and say, "We are delivering what you want", which is real improvements for our members. If that means we have to take on the Government, so be it. That is why my union is proud to support this amendment and vote for the composite. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Christine Blower (*National Union of Teachers*) supported Composite Motion 15.

She said: President, delegates and colleagues, I am very pleased to speak in support of this composite motion which properly condemns the Government's two per cent public sector pay policy. This time last year I was delighted to second a previous motion which also condemned the two per cent pay limit, but since then nothing has improved. In fact, as it says in the composite, matters have worsened. Inflation, even as measured by the Consumer Price Index, is now at 4.4 per cent and, of course, as we all know, the real measure of inflation is 5 per cent and rising. Yet teachers and other public sector workers are being told that their wages are to be pegged at half that figure.

Earlier this year, as colleagues and delegates know, we, in the National Union of Teachers, decided that the issue of pay was serious enough that we had to ballot our members for strike action. For the first time in 21 years, there was a national strike held by the NUT, co-ordinated with our colleagues in the Public and Commercial Services Union and the University and College Union. As Brendan told our magnificent London rally, a Retail Price Index at 4.3 per cent, as it was then, and a pay award at 2.45 per cent represents a pay cut in anybody's money, and he was right.

We continue to call on the Government to address the basic incompatibility of its commitment to high quality public services and the imposition of below inflation pay awards. We know that pay cuts have damaged our members' living standards. Many young teachers are

burdened with huge debt and often having to take second jobs in order to support themselves.

This composite motion is about fair pay in the public sector in contrast to huge city bonuses that we know about. But, for the NUT, it is also about recruitment to teaching. Year on year pay cuts since 2004 mean that there is now a real problem with getting graduates into teaching. Applications for places are down across a whole range of subjects. As the Secretary of State told us, in terms of the people who come in, we have a significant wastage rate amongst newly qualified teachers that means people leaving, colleagues, and, as he went on to say, we are losing talent we cannot afford to lose. We know that, Ed; we know that in our classrooms; we know that in staff rooms. The question is: what is the Government going to do about it?

We know, in the NUT, what we are going to do about it. We are going to ballot our members this term for further industrial action. We support all the points at the end of the composite motion. We will be very happy to look at all possible campaigning activities, such as days of action. We will be absolutely delighted to be involved in a major national demonstration against the Government's policy, but we too will ballot our members this term for strike action.

We want to campaign with all unions in the public sector to co-ordinate action, strike action, if a compelling case has been made, and non-strike action, to win for our members and for all those who need and deserve quality public services. Colleagues, speak up for public services and fair pay in the public sector. *(Applause)*

Chris Keates (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*) supported Composite Motion 15.

She said: Congress, what is the hallmark of a civilised society? The hallmark of a civilised society is high quality, fully funded and democratically accountable public services. We are all united in the struggle for justice and equity for workers who are dedicated to providing these universal services which are the backbone of the economy.

During the last five years, we have managed to secure, and have been fortunate to secure, some significant improvements in teachers' pay. We have started to address the gross inequities of boom and bust of the past. During an eight year period we have seen rises in teachers' salaries of 15 per cent, head teachers of 26 per cent and a newly qualified teacher who started on a salary of just over £12,500 is now starting at over £20,500. I believe to achieve these gains for a predominantly female workforce is particularly gratifying.

This month we have had another success in getting a national standardised pay formula for part time teachers to remove the grossly unfair system of local pay determination. Our pay review body broke through the 2 per cent barrier and it was honoured in full, but we are now locked in a major struggle to maintain and enhance those gains as soaring inflation and the spiralling cost of living takes its toll. We now have a guaranteed review of our current three-year pay award. That review is about to begin. It is for this reason that our members have told us that industrial action at this stage is not necessary. However, we are acutely aware that the gains for teachers have not been enjoyed by other members of the school workforce nor, indeed, by many other low paid workers in public services. These are disgraceful examples of poor treatment in pay and such inequity is not acceptable.

We have now to move forward to secure fair pay for all. We have already started successfully to discredit the claim that public sector pay levels drive inflation. It

is unacceptable for the Government to continue that flawed policy and arbitrary percentage limits on pay. We need a sensible and informed debate. We need to establish a fair mechanism for determining public sector pay which will reward, motivate, retain and recruit public sector workers. We must have a measure of inflation which reflects the true cost of living, including food, housing, fuel and energy. We must make sure that there is recognition that labour market trends cannot alone be the overriding factor in determining pay. Those actually in and doing the job must be paid for the demands made upon them.

Colleagues, if trade unions and a Labour Government, which are traditionally the champions and guardians of public services, cannot resolve this issue, the future of public services and, indeed, for the workers who deliver them is bleak. (*Applause*)

Sally Hunt (*University and College Union*) supported Composite Motion 15.

She said: I am very proud to stand here today representing further and higher education members who have taken more than 130 days of action short of a strike and national strike action, since 2006 in pursuit of better pay and a decent wage for the members we represent.

Congress, we all know that it is our members in the public sector who make Britain work in health, education, transport, security, local government, the civil service, justice and the emergency services. Millions rely on their skill and professionalism every single day; so why does the Government see the public sector as a problem to be solved rather than an asset that should be valued, celebrated and treasured?

Our members are attacked as greedy when they protest about pay rises which reduce their real earnings. They are accused of causing inflation when they dare to challenge the trickle down economics of the current administration. This week we can bet that the public sector unions will be blamed for rocking the boat and giving the Tories a political advantage.

I do not know about you, but the members we represent are fed up with being scapegoats for the problems caused by others because you know, I know and every teacher, doctor, nurse and civil servant knows the problem. The problem is not the people affected by the decisions; it is the people making the decisions who are the problem.

Our government has always placed great pride on presentation and spin, but those who teach our kids, treat our sick and keep us safe are voters too. They get the message when money can be found to bail out the banks, yet the piggy bank is always empty when it comes to rewarding hard working public sector staff. Our members deserve better.

The University and College Union wants more co-ordination between unions and more unity to win a better deal for all our members. Comrades, we have to see a campaign on public sector pay that goes on 52 weeks a year, not just in the weeks running up to Congress. We have to broaden our campaigning base to defend our members in the community and against other attacks on public services, particularly through the creeping marketisation of core functions. That is why we have to build on the successes so far of the co-ordinated strike action by the Public and Commercial Services Union, the National Union of Teachers and the University and College Union and enable all the unions to share in the support of public sector workers in supporting our members and making sure that their work is placed at the centre of our agenda for the coming year.

Congress, it is time to have united action. UCU believes our members deserve nothing less. We ask you to give

wholehearted support to the composite motion and to every member for whom it speaks. (*Applause*)

Phil Hulse (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) said: I am pleased to speak in support of Composite Motion 15 and against the amended motion on this vital issue for public sector workers. We support this motion because of the evidence that public sector pay causes inflation is at best weak. The Pre Budget Report last year stated that inflation has been boosted by increased energy prices and higher food price inflation.

We have witnessed in recent weeks massive increases in the bills we pay for gas and electricity. The Bank of England has made similar comments on the causes behind rising inflation which today stands at 5 per cent. Neither the Bank of England nor the Budget Report mentioned pay as the prime reason for high inflation, nor did they comment on the increases in city bonuses, nor shareholder dividends, which, presumably, must have a similar impact on inflation. Despite this, the Prime Minister and the Chancellor maintain their view that there is a link between inflation, interest rates and public sector pay.

Unfortunately for them, experts disagree. Stephen Nicholl, the head of Nuffield College and a specialist in labour economics, has stated that public sector pay rises have nothing to do with inflation. The Teachers' Pay Review Body Report earlier this year also rejects the assertion that public sector pay is a major cause of inflation. Public sector workers are the victims, not the cause, of inflation as they struggle with high energy bills, rising food costs and increases in their rent and mortgages. The Consumer Prices Index, which is used by the Government as its preferred measure of inflation, is not a true reflection of the real level of inflation.

Government interference in the pay review body process undermines its integrity and independence and erodes any collective or partnership approach to pay modernisation which is a key plank of government policy in the public sector. Below-inflation pay increases will compound the existing trend for public sector earnings to fall below those in the private sector. This, in turn, will compound poor morale and motivation, damage service quality and lead to a boom/bust approach to workforce planning. Below-inflation pay increases will also widen the gender pay gap because of the high proportion of women who work in the public sector and exacerbate the increasing gap between wealth in the north and south of the country.

The present government pay policy is unclear, unfair and unnecessary. The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy opposed the amended motion because such action would be illegal and would not be supported by our members; so please support the composite motion and oppose the amendment. (*Applause*)

Joyce Still (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 15.

She said: This year the Government's pay award for health workers is a miserly 7.99 per cent over three years, which is likely to be 50 per cent below the expected inflation rate. This position has been mirrored in many other public sector pay awards. We call upon the Government to honour their re opening clause to provide safeguards against rising inflation for low paid public sector workers.

The situation with spiralling energy and food costs will produce a serious drop in the real living standards of all public sector workers. There are major concerns about the way in which the Government's statistics reflect the inflation rate and many respected economists feel that real inflation is very much understated. I have many colleagues in all sectors of public service who feel they are being targeted for pay

restraints as part of an incomes policy by stealth. We all know about the credit crunch, but many of us can also remember the era of stagflation in the 1970s when the UK economy was buffeted by high inflation and a downturn in economic activity. I would urge the Government not to repeat the same mistake and strategy of imposing pay restraints on the public sector which is likely to produce a more pronounced recession.

Politically, the public sector will be a key battle ground at the next General Election. If 5.84 million people feel that they have a fair level of pay, they will be in a better position to provide the level of service expected and deserved by the country. This recent round of public sector pay awards is seen by many public sector workers as a betrayal of their trust and faith in our Labour Government. We have a position where the Government is asking public sector workers to accept lower real wages whilst at the same time expecting them to deliver a range of measures to improve the state of the nation.

With regard to the delivery of public service, such as social services, policing, education, health and local authorities, it must be remembered that morale is already at a low ebb with workers often having to cope with a rising tide of violence and abuse. These pay awards will produce more disillusionment and more vacancies at a time when the role of public sector workers has never been more important in keeping the country together and helping to secure a fourth term Labour Government. Please support. *(Applause)*

Matt Wrack (*Fire Brigades' Union*) supported Composite Motion 15.

He said: At various times during this week we have various Government Ministers attending Congress and I think it is unfortunate that they are not here this morning to hear the anger that exists among public sector workers with regard to their policies. *(Applause)*

In the Fire and Rescue Service it is dressed up under the jargon of 'modernisation'. A recent survey of our members demonstrated very clearly that overwhelmingly Fire and Rescue Service workers feel unvalued and undervalued by this Government, and that is an absolute disgrace. We have endless targets driving policy within our service as in other public sector services; not targets that focus on training or on safety, but narrow targets so that politicians can deliver soundbites to the media. There is growing anger and frustration amongst fire fighters that is reflected elsewhere in the public sector. This debate reflects that growing anger over pay. We have a government that says it is still committed to halving child poverty by 2010. Well, I ask, "How the hell can you do that when you pay your own civil servants poverty pay?" *(Applause)*

We are told that this is about squeezing inflation out of the system. It has been said many times, but we need to hammer it home to the Government: public sector workers do not cause price rises nor do they cause increased food costs or energy bills. We are indeed the victims of inflation rather than the creators of it.

What really angers me is that this story is a very, very old one because we are being told time and again to tighten our belts, but there is no pay restraint at the top; there is no pay restraint in the board rooms of Britain today. *(Applause)* I remember being told in one phrase "We are intensely relaxed about people getting filthy rich". It may have been a soundbite at the time, but, unfortunately, it seems to lie behind much policy during the past 10 years.

In March this year Brendan made reference to it, but I think it is worth quoting in detail the Minister for Business and Enterprise said: "Rather than questioning

whether huge salaries are morally justified, we should celebrate the fact that people can be enormously successful in this country." This brought to my mind a book I have read a couple of times entitled *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, which took its title from the fact that certain of the workers, characters in the book, celebrated the fact that while their families struggled, at least there were some people at the top of society who were better off. We may not be wearing ragged trousers today, but it does seem to me that we are being told to celebrate ever growing inequality and to be thankful for the opportunity that we have and that our people have to make other people ever and ever more obscenely rich. It needs to be challenged. It is a disgrace at the heart of British politics today. *(Applause)*

David Watts (*FDA*) spoke to Composite Motion 15.

He said: I am a senior civil servant and I represent senior civil servants. That is what my union is about. My members are affected by the Government's pay policies like other public sector workers. We agree with a lot of what has been said at this rostrum today, but, Congress, I want to take this opportunity to put the record straight in one respect. If you look at the composite with care, you will see that the tenth paragraph concludes: "Congress further recognises that civil service bonuses represent money stolen from junior staff salaries in order to boost the earnings of the most senior."

My colleagues would say that is misleading. I say it is downright wrong and this is why. Bonuses for senior civil servants were introduced in 1996 under the last Conservative Government. The FDA was against them then; the FDA is against them now. Their purpose is to save the Treasury money, so they are carefully separated from the money available for junior staff. What is more, there has been a deliberate policy on the part of the Government and the so called Independent Pay Review Body to build up this separate bonus pot. That has no effect on the money available to junior staff, but it is bad news for my members. That is because the money in the bonus pot comes from holding down the level of consolidated and pensionable pay increases year after year after year. A bonus is a one off payment at the expense of an increase in base pay and it does not count towards the pension.

I do not seek a bonus, but any bonus I get is not stolen from junior staff. It is stolen from my pension! All of this is well known to the Public and Commercial Services Union and we very much regret that they have been unwilling to remove this passage from the composite motion.

All of us in the public sector are facing similar issues on pay. We may not always agree on the best way of addressing them, but we in the FDA believe it is not right to create artificial distinctions between junior staff and their managers or to set union against union.

Congress, the FDA rejects the false claims I have outlined. For that reason, we have considered abstaining on this important motion, but we also believe that it is important that all public sector workers, whatever their role, have a common cause. Therefore, I ask you to support this motion in that spirit. *(Applause)*

The President: I now call on our General Secretary, Brendan Barber, following which we will be asking if UNISON wish to exercise their right of reply. Then we will move straight to the vote.

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*): Congress, this is clearly one of the most important debates of the week,

and I think it is rather disappointing that we have a point of division.

The General Council is firmly supporting the composite motion that is before you. It underlines the strength of feeling among public servants and their total disillusionment at the Government's rigid and unjustified pay policy. It makes it clear that the failure to deliver fair pay will have a devastating impact on the services Britain relies on. It sets out an imaginative, joined up, hard-hitting programme of action that commands the backing of all public sector unions, building on the momentum we have established through the unprecedented 'Speak up for public services' campaign. That sense of unity amongst public servants and their unions was vividly demonstrated at our rally and lobby of Parliament on 9th June.

So, Congress, the composite motion establishes a clear way forward. It makes it clear too that the General Council will, if necessary, co-ordinate industrial action among unions in disputes over pay and it gives its full support to such action.

However, the General Council cannot support the amendment's call for our planned days of action to become days of strike action. Congress, our aim is always to build maximum unity, but we will not achieve that if there is an impression that unions are being asked to surrender their individual democratic decision making processes on industrial action to some co-ordinated TUC campaign. The reality is that there are countless separate negotiating groups across our public services dealing with different issues, different priorities and working to different timetables. Individual unions and their members have to make their own judgments on whether industrial action is the right response in the circumstances they face. Where they have reached that position and can co-ordinate that action with other unions, all well and good. You know, it is not easy building unity and, let us be honest with each other, in some key sectors different unions have reached different judgments.

Congress, we are winning the public argument and the economic argument that the Government's stance has been plain wrong and, incidentally, deeply counterproductive. Let us build the momentum of our campaign in ways that all unions can support. Support the composite but reject the amendment. *(Applause)*

A card vote was called on the Amendment to Composite Motion 15 the result of which was as follows:

For the amendment.....1,388,000.

Against the amendment.....2,957,000.

Majority against..... 1,569,000.

* *Amendment to Composite Motion 15 was LOST*

* *Composite Motion 15 was CARRIED*

Pensions

The President: I now call paragraph 4.11 and Composite Motion 13 on Pension Policy which the General Council support, but before I take that debate, Congress, I would like to welcome on your behalf our Remploy shop stewards who are in the balcony. They are visitors to our Congress today. *(Applause)*

Sheila Bearcroft (GMB) moved Composite Motion 13.

She said: We are at that time again, Congress, when we are all going to raise our hands in support of motions just like this one that calls for a decent state pension. In two weeks' time at the Labour Party Conference exactly the same thing will happen and yet the basic state pension is still held at the miserly rate of £90 a week. Somehow, one-in-three pensioners

continue to live without proper heating; somehow, 2.5 million pensioners are still today in the United Kingdom living in poverty and, somehow, this lacklustre Labour government thinks that pensioners can wait until 2012 before anything is done to resolve this situation.

Congress, the solution is simple, if the state pension was based at the same rate as the poverty level, at £150 per week, then pensioners would not have to live below the poverty line, giving them the dignity they deserve. The problems faced by today's pensioners are bad enough but the problems stored up for the next generation of pensioners, that is you, me, and all of our seven million members, are much worse. That is why the GMB is committed to fighting for the best occupational pension possible for all our members whatever the industry, whoever the employer.

The Tories, LibDems, and right-wing press will tell you that the solution is to worsen the good pension schemes so that everyone's retirement looks equally perilous. The public should be reminded that it was the Conservative government, who, with great enthusiasm, willingly severed the link between pensions and average earnings, plunging millions of low-paid workers without occupational pension schemes into poverty pensions in their retirement.

Unlike Cameron and Clegg, GMB does not want to make Britain fair by making Britons poor. We want good quality occupational pensions for all, not new generations of retirees reliant on the state because 40 or 50 years of saving in an occupational pension scheme was not worth the effort. There are some key questions that we need to ask these "race to the bottom" merchants. Who picks up the tab when private equity firms slash workers' retirement income by systematically dismantling pension schemes? Who pays the price for the poor quality pensions that do not produce enough for members to live on? Who has to fund the means-tested benefit that older pensioners end up having to claim because their pensions do not keep pace with inflation? The answer is the taxpayer, you and I. If workers cannot save enough for their retirement while they are working, they will be reliant on the state when they retire. The press and the 'politicals' will have us believe it is the public sector that is a burden on the taxpayer.

Congress, this motion builds on the sterling work the trades union movement has done to improve the retirement prospects of Britain's working people. Our demands of this Labour Government are very clear, stop the erosion of good quality occupational pensions by employers and politicians in the guise of deregulation and de-risking. Stop the undermining of public confidence in pension savings by increasing member participation in the running of their schemes. Stop the increase in pensioner poverty by addressing the needs of today's pensioners now. Let's stop the pensions rot. Why not protect workers' pensions when their employers change? Why not keep those working in public services in public sector pension schemes and encourage private schemes to be as good? Why not strive for a decent income in work and decent living in retirement? It is time this government showed what it is made of. Forget the pandering to the wants of the business sector. We, the traditional Labour Party supporters, want pension reform that benefits the pensioners of today, not tomorrow, and not in 2012. We want it now. They deserve it and they deserve it now. *(Applause)*

Tom Lannon (Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians) seconded Composite Motion 13.

He said: President, Congress, UCATT supports the arguments made by the previous speaker to improve pensions for hardworking people across the UK. We as

a union feel very passionate and concerned about this issue. We have been at the sharp end of this inside construction for many of our members are suffering from this particular issue. We agree that the government has to address the need to give workers adequate pension entitlements that affords dignity and respect throughout retirement. The divide between employees and those classified as self-employed is significant when considering pension entitlement. The lack of continuity of employment in times of industry slowdown means that many do not maintain Class 2 National Insurance contributions that give the right to a basic state pension.

This summer, for instance, we have witnessed a major slowdown in house-building where you will have seen many false self-employed workers laid off. They will miss contributions while out of work. In construction this is a regular occurrence and a significant amount of contributions are lost, more so than in the majority of UK industry. These bogus self-employed workers cannot register as unemployed to maintain these payments, they have no right to do so. They will have reduced state pensions even though they work the same as regular employees. The industry we represent, construction, has the largest incidence of bogus self-employment across all UK industries, 400,000. What an indictment against the society that we live in. Many of these people are not entitled to holiday pay and notice due to them being bogus self-employed.

The majority of these people/workers have no other pension entitlement other than the state pension. As the rules stand, they will not benefit from the government's new personal pension account set to launch in 2012. Construction workers are exactly the type of workers this scheme is aimed at, medium to low earners without an existing scheme, but the government has said that the scheme will not apply to self-employed. The bosses can avoid paying for a worker's security in retirement by making the workforce supposedly self-employed. This is not what I believe the government expects to happen by implementing a second state pension for employees. Ideally, we would like to see the specialist system of tax on construction workers through the construction industry scheme scrapped. However, in the meantime we would like this government to consider arrangements for self-employed workers in the construction industry. In finality, therefore, the TUC needs to meet the government to discuss unforeseen implications of the new pension scheme. We must eradicate bogus self-employed and eradicate it now. The new scheme must be allowed to further sharpen the retirement contrast between employees and those classified wrongly as self-employed in the construction industry. *(Applause)*

Amarjit Singh (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) supported Composite Motion 13.

He said: I will be addressing item 13 and 14 of the composite. In the railway pension schemes many employers are increasing funding to the scheme, which will be recognised and welcome. However, there is a real problem in that the funding is insufficient. Closed schemes are a problem in terms of cost as those left in the schemes are often faced with the need to increase contributions to fund the benefits of the scheme. The increase in cost is shared between employer and employee, although the decision to close the scheme lies with the employer alone. Most private sector defined benefits schemes are closed to new entrants and there is mounting evidence of closures affecting existing members. There are almost daily reports of employers looking for ways to cap their liabilities for the future, including selling off their schemes to outside organisations.

The Government can check this trend with changes to defined benefit schemes legislation. The Government needs to concentrate its attention on reforms that will generally promote good workplace pension provisions at all levels. If they do not, then it is likely that over the next few years the gulf in provision between those working in the private sector and public sector will continue to grow and will eventually become unsustainable. Making occupational pension schemes a condition of service would restore the provision which was previously applied on the railway where membership of the pension scheme was compulsory. This was lost with the introduction of the 1986 Social Security Act. Just to add, chair, the workers that retired 10 years ago from the railway are just making ends meet at the moment, those workers who retired 20 years ago are living in poverty, and those who retired more than 20 years ago are actually living in misery. Pensions must be just for people to have decent living standards. *(Applause)*

Adrian Askew (*Connect*) supported Composite Motion 13.

He said: Congress, like many others we welcome the positive steps that the Government has taken to improve pension provision in the UK over recent years but I would just like to focus for a moment, if I can, on the continuing retreat by employers from decent occupational pensions. We have all seen the assaults on defined benefit pension provision. Employers are not only denying entry to good quality pensions for new employees but are all too frequently closing schemes and reducing future benefits to existing members. This is a particularly worrying development because even those who have paid for their pensions throughout their working lives and who quite rightly believed that they had a reasonable level of pension provision, and that was in place for them and their families, are now discovering that their employers are moving the goalposts, or perhaps to continue the analogy, simply walking off the pitch and taking their ball home. We have a responsibility to our members and working people generally to fight to ensure that high-quality pension provision remains and that the employers do not simply pass on their responsibilities to the nation, or individual workers.

Then moving on, if I may, to employers' attempts to nationalise pensioner poverty, it is important to acknowledge that whilst increases to the state pension are most welcome, and as I say we strongly support calls for further increases to the state pension, that alone will not provide a reasonable standard of living in retirement. The state pension should in reality be a decent safety net but employers/business need to recognise their responsibility and not simply argue that increases to the minimum provisions provided by the state are adequate and somehow absolve them as employers of their obligations. That is why we call on the Government, and this Labour Government in particular, to provide active support and encouragement for DB provision as the major vehicle for combating poverty in retirement.

Congress, it is simply not acceptable for employers to dodge their responsibilities by refusing to pay their fair share towards providing for their employees in retirement. The Government must actively encourage DB provision as the best way to ensure that we do not have pensioners living in poverty and there is no reason today why any pensioners, workers that have contributed over many years, should be living in poverty. We will continue to campaign for improvements to pensions generally, both state and occupational. We can and we must continue to press for the best possible provision for all working people. However, as I say, we believe the way to provide a decent, fair, and dignified standard of living in

retirement will come through a return to sustained DB pension provision. Thank you, comrades. (Applause)

Gerard Gallagher (*UNISON*) said: I speak in support of Composite Motion 13. Colleagues in union members in the private and public sector have seen their pensions come under attack. Congress, in the last few days we have seen a flurry of reports and announcements from the financial advisers and the press about a slow motion car crash of a pensions crisis. It has been declared again that millions will be at risk of facing comparative poverty in old age and landing future taxpayers with an enormous public sector pensions bill. Their solution is to replace final salary packages with defined contribution schemes, the claim being that this would shift the burden from future generations. We have to ask ourselves, will this really solve everything? They suggest that public sector pensions should be less generous because it is unfair that such a difference between public sector and private sector pensions exists. We know why that is. Almost a million fewer employees are paying into private pension schemes because employers have changed the rules by reducing benefits and reducing access to pension schemes. Why should the difference between public and private be rectified by reducing public schemes? Why should it not be by improving the private sector schemes? It is clear that pension provision for new starters continues to decline and become inadequate and that the pressure on those lucky enough to be in a reasonable pension scheme will increase. There is a danger that when personal accounts come in, in 2012, the minimal 3 per cent mandatory employee contribution will not only be totally inadequate to provide a decent pension but will be used by many employers as a further excuse to dumb down their own provision to an inadequate level.

We have all, whether in the public or private sector, been fighting to protect our pensions over the last few years. It looks as if the fight is still on. In the world of the credit crunch it is likely to mean that we have to redouble our efforts to reverse what is an extremely serious situation for the workers of this country, not just to retain our schemes but to make sure that those schemes are working hard for us, and that we have a say in how these schemes are run, and that our money is not being used to bail out other financial shortfalls. Regulations to consult are of little value if employers do not listen. Pension provision must be a negotiation issue. Trustee boards must have at least 50 per cent member nominated trustees. It may not ensure the security of a pension scheme but it will allow its members' views on how they wish their money to be invested and confidence that monies are being properly managed. Everyone should be confident of living with dignity and decency in retirement; no one disagrees with this. There are an awful lot of people from government to employers who are currently doing little about ensuring it. So, it is even more important that defined benefit provision in occupational schemes is fought for and that there are provisions to enable that with schemes to be made a condition of service. Congress, this is not just a motion to support, it represents our future that we must fight for. Please support. Thank you.

* *Composite Motion 13 was CARRIED*

President's Address

The Vice President (*Alison Shepherd*): I would now like to call on this year's Chair of Congress and President of Congress, Dave Prentis, to address Congress.

The President: I have the red light already, by the look of it! Delegates, it is a great honour and privilege

to address you as President of Congress. What a year it has been. Twelve months ago things looked fine. Alan Milburn had long left the Government to spend more time with his new family, Pepsi Cola and Lloydspharmacy. Patricia Hewitt had gone as an adviser to Boots and BT. Others had jumped ship turning to their more profitable friends. For us a new era beckoned with Gordon Brown at the helm, the economy strong, employment high, inflation low, Flash Gordon fighting floods, fire, and pestilence, and actually winning, the Government riding high on the crest of a wave, real optimism in the air, and then, Congress, in September 2007 I became President of the TUC. (*Laughter*)

One year on and how things have changed: prices spiralling, unemployment rising, our Government struggling, our members too, many in the big tent long gone, fair weather friends, some now even working for Project Cameron. Digby Jones I am told is about to quit despite swearing allegiance to Gordon; with friends like him, who needs enemies. Others are desperate to make a comeback, to turn the clock back. Charles Clarke, now a paid consultant for KPMG and unlike KPMG now offering us *free* advice. The silent voices of the disaffected, the old squad, those people left out of the team, some now playing for the opposition desperate for revenge at whatever price.

Our government – our government – needs to start listening, listening to the people who need it, listening to the people who support it. It is tough for our people and it is getting worse. Our people do not really care if it is a credit crunch or a downturn, they do not really care whether it is the worst economic crisis in 20 years, or the worst economic crisis in 60 years; it is academic. They do not even want the Government to feel their pain. They want our Government to heal their pain. They want our Government to be bold. They want our Government to give them a chance, to give them a chance to live their lives, a chance without worrying themselves sick about putting food on the table, or paying the next gas bill, or even having their home repossessed.

Last week's announcement to help the deepening housing crisis was too little too late for our people. What is so wrong, Congress, with our Government taking the bold decision to build the tens of thousands of council houses we so desperately need? (*Applause*) What is so wrong with the windfall tax, sharing out the obscene profits of the energy companies, a proposal that would be popular, signal a determination, signal that our Government has not deserted its commitment to justice and to fairness? Why stop there? Our tax system is one of the most unfair in the European Union, the lowest top rate, apart from Luxembourg. Those at the top can and should pay more, pay more to help relieve the suffering of the very poorest in our society, a bold step to show whose side Labour is really on.

It is not for me to re-run the debate on public sector pay but I cannot let the opportunity go without saying a word about the members of my union and members of others unions, too, who provide public services. It has long been fashionable, far too long, to deride public services: 'private good, public bad', a mantra that is far too often heard in what passes for mainstream political debate. Of course the private sector has got its place, it always has had, but who would have believed 10 years ago that we would have gone this far. The enabling council rejected as too right wing for Thatcher is now the new model promoted by our Government. The commercialisation and break-up of our NHS, a no-go zone for the Tories, now Labour dogma. The discredited PFI still alive and kicking despite wasting billions, and public service workers rarely given the credit they deserve.

Congress, there is a public service ethos and it deserves to be acknowledged. People really do go to work not just for themselves, and certainly not to make a profit, but because they want to help others. It is time we acknowledged them and it is time that we paid them fairly. They deserve our thanks, they deserve our applause, and they deserve a decent wage. *(Applause)* The 2 per cent pay policy is iniquitous. It was bad enough last year but with rising prices it is now unbearable. With widespread action and rising anger this will not subside – and unless there is a change of heart on this unfair pay policy, millions of public service workers will desert their Labour.

There are big stakes in play but our Congress is not just about one campaign or about one union, it is all about trade unionists and it is about all of our unions, unions working together, fighting for justice, fighting for fairness, not with each other, working together through the TUC; never stronger than when we work together.

Who would have believed that after a century of fighting the general secretaries of the GMB and UNISON are now brothers in arms, Paul Kenny and me, the Little and Large of the trades union Movement *(Laughter)* and my good friends Tony and Derek, a marriage made in heaven. *(Laughter)* But how far have they come? Only last year I said to Derek, "What would you do if you saw Tony staggering down the road?" Derek replied, "I would reload." *(Laughter)*

Congress, we have already paid tribute to Steve Sinnott but I must add my own tribute. Our union offices are opposite each other, we often met for a chat, shared our thoughts, and for me Steve Sinnott epitomised everything that is good - his ability to work with others, to build bridges, and unity. He always saw the very, very best in people and that is the Steve I will remember. He will be greatly missed.

That unity we all strive for was there this year. It was there when our NHS Together campaign came together, all unions working together, there when we joined together to win those crucial rights for agency workers. Our work on vulnerable workers, on pensions, on work/life balance, ground-breaking work in Palestine, in Iraq, working in Zimbabwe and Colombia, the big unions and the smaller ones, the general unions and the professional ones, new and old all with so much to offer, all of us with so much to gain, our strength comes from our diversity. There is no single model, no size is perfect. We have our traditions. We have our ambitions. Our job is to share the best, the stronger supporting the weak, that is what our movement is all about. In a changing world and in difficult times, that unity, that strength and solidarity, is our future. It has no bounds and at this time more than ever we need to reassert our belief in the collective, the value of our movement, that in these rocky times the best place to be is in a union. Yes, it may be tough but we are still recruiting. Unions are still seen as relevant and that is a testimony to the work and profile we have all worked so hard to achieve.

I do want to thank on your behalf Brendan, Frances, Kay, and all the staff at Congress House, not only for the work that they do but for the support, professionalism, and friendship that they have extended to me and people in this hall over this past year. I thank you very much. *(Applause)*

My own family, so important to me: my wonderful daughters, Emma and Lauren, my touchstone with the real world. Our children can drive us all mad but they also keep us sane. My girls do just that and they often clear my wallet as well. *(Laughter)* They make and they shape my life and I would have it no other way. To Liz, my partner, a trade unionist in her own right: Liz is special, unique. We have been through so many good times but we have also faced some rather tough times,

times which have shaken us to our roots, and it is Liz with her strength, her determination, that pulled us through, proud of her roots, fearless, feisty, living proof that you can take the girl out of Liverpool but you cannot take Liverpool out of the girl. *(Applause)* Liz works tirelessly for our union, the hockey mum with lipstick, a fantastic mum and my soul mate.

To my extended family, UNISON, it is a union I helped to build, part of a team with my great friend Rodney Bickerstaffe, who is here today, one of the movement's greatest, and lay members of UNISON, officers, shaping and nurturing our future. Now we are a powerful, progressive force and with a million women members who am I to argue? *(Laughter)* To the UNISON members here today, you are my strength, you are my friends, you keep my feet firmly on the ground, and I will do anything for you; or almost anything, Norma! *(Laughter)*

Congress, like so many in this hall, I was senior official during the dark and dismal Tory years. I remember those years. The point I want to make strongly is that a period in opposition with David Cameron's Tories back in power might well entertain the chattering classes but it will do nothing for the people we represent. *(Applause)* So, Congress, this is our week to state our case, to set our agenda, an agenda to help families cope with rising prices, giving local authorities the resources to build houses, standing up for the vulnerable, giving UK workers the same rights as the rest of Europe, a government which fights for them, an agenda that turns our anger into aspiration, building hope, building confidence. Congress, it is right that we have ambition, it is right that we should want to change the world, ambitious, united, that is when we are at our strongest. So, have a great Congress, and thank you once again for the honour and privilege of being your President and thank you UNISON for giving me the honour of being your General Secretary. *(Applause)*

Vote of Thanks to the President

Rodney Bickerstaffe (UNISON) moved the vote of thanks. He said: President, General Secretary and Congress, it is a real pleasure to be here, not as a member of the General Council but to move a vote of thanks to your President. I shall be brief, not because there is nothing nice to say about Dave, but because it is so many years since I have been on this rostrum that I have probably forgotten what to do.

I am little surprised, of course, that with seven million trade unionists (at one point four million in UNISON) they had to ask an old, retired fellow to come out and say something nice about him. There is a question there, but there you go. The original call to me was, "Would you do me a favour?" and, within three hours, I had an email saying, "Just to confirm that your presence is required on September 8th in the Trades Union Congress hall." So, here I am. Dave, can I say that I did not think that there could be a nastier looking lot than I had in 1992, but I think on balance this crowd marginally has the edge. I do not know if you have had a bad night, but ...!

Dave Prentis was born and raised in Leeds. Leeds, by the way, is a sort of outer suburb of Doncaster, the centre of the known universe! Times were pretty hard. There was no silver spoon for him and there was not much around by way of spare cash. He has told me that his working-class neighbourhood was pretty tough and that his local 'greasy spoon' had a large printed notice on the wall saying, "Would clients please desist from drinking brown sauce directly from the bottle."

After getting in and out of grammar school, he appears to have hung about for a few years in several universities for rather longer than was absolutely necessary, picking up two or three degrees – I forget

how many – and doing anything rather than working. It was precisely with that, “How can I get by without actually doing anything?” attitude that he became a full-time NALGO official. (*Applause*) That is where his career began.

In the early 1970s, he took to the work like a duck to water. He undertook organisation and collective bargaining. He did the lot and he rose through the ranks, dagger in his hand. Eventually, he became Deputy General Secretary, fighting Thatcherism throughout the 1980s. In the early 1990s, he was deeply involved in the merger talks that led to UNISON in 1993. By 2000, the members had elected him as General Secretary.

As you might imagine, when I handed on the torch, I just naturally assumed that with me gone, things would slip. The money might dwindle – there are no aspersions here – membership would fall and causes would be forgotten and not challenged. Of course, the truth is the reverse. The membership of UNISON went up year on year and there is the income to prove it. UNISON is now 15 years old and has gone from strength to strength. It has spearheaded a huge range of policies: protections in marketised public services; the cause of temporary workers; equal pay for women; and a powerful position (more powerful than any other) against racism and the BNP. There have not been too many general secretaries or general councillors standing outside railway stations handing out leaflets, but that was Dave. I, for one, am very proud of him for doing that because if there is any group that we do not support, it is the BNP. (*Applause*)

Unlike me, he is not a foghorn. No, that is wrong. Unlike some, he is not a foghorn. Despite spin-doctoring against him at successive Labour Party conferences, he carried the argument against the platform and against the party opponents on both PFI and Health Service privatisation. He speaks truth to power and I am proud of that too.

He would be the first to say that it is not all down to him. It is the members who make the difference. However, his qualities are the key. He is a unifier. He is able to reach out and be admired by so many people. He is genuinely straightforward. He is not a blusterer and he is utterly loyal to his members. Of course, there is a steely side to him caused by years of working in the black arts, in the dungeons of the Congress General Purposes Committee and more especially – this is what he did not say and some of you may not know – because of the year 2000.

On May 21st, 2000, he was diagnosed with a cancerous tumour as big as my fist. He was told that it was between the stomach and the oesophagus if you are really interested. I am not – in fact I feel quite faint just thinking about it! He was told that he would not survive and that he should put his affairs in order, but he refused to do that. He refused to die, in fact, and he, Liz and his kids fought through months and months of chemotherapy and surgery. If at times this week you think that he does not have much of a heart, I can tell you that he does not have much of a stomach either! He is tenacious, ‘the come-back kid’, a survivor and nothing stops him.

During this Presidential year of the TUC, he is a supporter of big unions and little unions. He is a supporter of people who he does not even agree with. This is all in order to keep unity. I am told that in 48 hours, we are going to have Big Bang day, with a massive experiment in Switzerland to seek out the origins of the universe. Have you heard about this? Some think that it will create a black hole down which the whole planet will fall, including Congress. However, rest assured that when we are through the other side, the TUC’s 140th President will still be there doing his job loyally and effectively.

Dave, my friend, you have been through a lot. I hope you have a great Congress and, on behalf of all of us, I wish to move the vote of thanks. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

The Vice President, in seconding the vote of thanks, said: Thank you, Congress. I think that Rodney was a very hard act to follow, but I know Dave managed it. I am just formally seconding the vote of thanks. Dave, I have been very proud to work with you for many years as a lay activist. I hope the high regard in which you are held by the UNISON delegation is evident at Congress. Have a great Congress, Dave. You have been a fantastic President and a fantastic General Secretary. We wish you all the very best.

The President: Thank you. I would like to thank Alison and Rodney before we move on. Rodney is actually on his way to China in half-an-hour’s time so I am really glad he could make it. Thank you very much. Delegates, we now continue with Chapter 4 of the General Council’s Report.

Performance management systems

Denise Maguire (*Connect*) moved Composite Motion 12.

She said: It is a common feature of modern work that our managers judge our performance. We have moved on from the approach of keep, promote or sack and a whole industry has sprung up around performance management. There are many different systems, but a key feature is that your performance mark encapsulates how you are viewed by your employer so the marks get widely used across the organisation and influence many aspects of your working life.

These markings have a key impact on what happens to you and how you are treated. Your marking either gives you a passport to develop your career or a prison sentence, locking you in place and marking you out for punishment. With such pervasive systems comes abuse. Examples we have seen include forced distributions - only so many per performance category - and, for every top performer, you must put somebody in the lowest category.

There are performance quotas with members being told, “Well, I think you are very good, but we have too many people marked ‘Very good’ so I have had to mark you down.” We have relative rankings which set member against member with people having to show that, in some way, they are better than their colleagues.

There is also the issue of raising the bar. You might have broken the world record this year, but next year you will be treated as a poor performer until you break that record again. We have seen members nominated for training, and then being told that in order to go on that training course they had to be marked down because they obviously needed development. We see people under pressure to work longer and longer to avoid low marks.

These performance management systems can be used to bully people. Management say “10 per cent of your team must be marked down and put on a performance improvement plan (‘PIP’) and, if you do not do it, you will be put on a PIP.” As somebody said, “Gladys Knight would be well at home in our industry because there are plenty of PIPs.”

All these abuses destroy your relationship with your manager. A relationship where trust is vital is corrupted by a perverse desire to punish people at work rather than to work to people’s strengths and to build effective teams. From our surveys, we also see evidence of bias, discrimination on ethnicity and

disability as well as discrimination against part-time workers. That includes union representatives who are allowed time off for their union activities. They also get marked down.

There is also another bias. The higher you are in an organisation, the more likely you are to be marked as a high performer. It is not just a slight bias. In one company, people at the highest levels are actually twice as likely to get the best performance marks as people on the lowest grades. It is worth noting, like it or not, that performance management systems often determine pay and bonuses so you can see just how this sort of bias contributes to the gender pay gap. Indeed, when employers then restrict the pay budget, only the highest marked people get a pay increase and anybody who is merely good does not even keep pace with inflation.

These are not extreme workplaces, Congress. This is the norm in many organisations. We have members victimised for showing integrity, for sticking with their ratings for their teams. Some members have been put under so much pressure to mark people down that they were made ill and had to go off sick with stress. There needs to be a much greater transparency and openness in the way that performance management systems operate so that we can get rid of the discrimination, the bullying and the corruption. We would like the General Council to convene a meeting of experts to share best practice in identifying and eliminating the bias and corruption in performance management systems so that people at work are treated with dignity and respect and given the opportunity to develop themselves and their careers.

Congress, if employers insist on having performance management systems, let us make them positive for all and not a prison sentence. I move. *(Applause)*

Hugh Lanning (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Composite Motion 12. He said: Our amendment is on LEAN, the Toyota management system nicked, twisted and perverted by senior management and brought into the civil service. As you might be aware, the Government is our employer and, as such, we have a simple message for them: "Practise what you preach." You say that you want a highly-motivated, highly-skilled workforce which is world-class by 2020. In practice, you de-skill and you de-motivate. LEAN, as the system is known, takes a not very exciting task (processing tax forms), splits it up into little bits, makes everyone do continuous, repetitive tasks, makes it boring and then acts surprised when mistakes are made. They then say, "Let us measure them. Let us check every individual."

Performance management, including LEAN, is about command-and-control systems. This is not about being nice or nasty. As the FDA demonstrate, some of these people can be very nice. Command and control thinking systems see organisations as top-down hierarchies where management take decisions and use budgets, targets and standards with a variety of procedures, rules, specifications and inspection. Our members at the Health & Safety Commission and ACAS advocate to employers, on behalf of government, well-being at work - the healthy workplace. In negotiations, we say, "Wellbeing at work." The employer tends to say, "Managing sickness absence."

Some years ago, a major study of civil servants called 'Whitehall II' found that the lower paid one is, the more stress there is because there is less control. That is what LEAN introduces - less and less control over your work. It is a bad system, wrongly applied. The public sector is not a business; it is a service. We had a long dispute in Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

over the introduction of LEAN systems. In the end, we reached an agreement over individual monitoring.

These are wrong-headed ideas. They have been the foundation of public sector reform. This is dysfunctionality of a high order. Those are not my words, but those of John Seddon, a writer on management in the public sector. He describes the style of management it as 'deliverology' and 'control-freakery'.

Please support the motion. Let us make our public services driven by service and not misguided systems of management thinking. Thanks very much. *(Applause)*

Marissa Howes (*FDA*) supported Composite Motion 12. She said: I am speaking, in particular, to paragraph 2 of the composite, which gives a slightly more positive note around performance management systems. When they are properly applied, performance management systems can be beneficial. Indeed, performance reviews can actually protect staff from victimisation and bullying by establishing clear, agreed criteria against which individuals are assessed and provide an objective record of performance. That record of performance can be crucial when challenging victimisation and it has provided essential evidence in many personal cases for our members.

Research shows a strong connection between well-structured appraisals, job satisfaction and reduced workplace stress. Results from the 2007 NHS staff survey showed that staff who had received an appraisal were less likely to consider losing their jobs. Research carried out in the Health Service by Aston University showed a strong correlation between well-structured appraisals and improved health outcomes.

However, despite this evidence, many health workers are still not getting the personal development planning they need. The 2007 staff survey showed that over a third had not received an appraisal. The problem is not performance management; the problem is bad performance management or no performance management. A good appraisal system is clear, transparent and free from bias. It measures performance against agreed achievable objectives. It provides a written record of performance and training needs. It is an important part of personal development planning to enable staff to develop their skills.

We need to ensure that we have fair systems in place. In the public sector, we need to ensure that those systems are subject to equality impact assessments to ensure that they do not discriminate against any particular goods. Congress, please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Martin Kinnon (*Communication Workers' Union*) supported Composite 12. He said: Congress, the CWU fully understands why Connect has put this motion on the agenda. Without doubt, their members have suffered at the butt end of a nasty little HR management process. The CWU supports Connect in its fight against the use of performance-management processes, which have been used to force down the wages of their members.

In supporting Connect, the CWU would like to point out to Congress that performance management techniques affect ordinary workers differently to the way in which they affect management. Whereas companies are using techniques to force down managers' pay, they are using the same techniques as a proverbial big stick to beat the shop floor workers into working harder. Underpinning the whole process is the feeling that you may lose your job if you do not come up to scratch.

The informal use of performance improvement plans is bad enough and they put people under unbearable

pressure, but when the process moves to the formal stage, there is pressure to reach a higher level of performance or there are consequences. It can actually mean that someone who is being subjected to this process during a 12 to 14 week period can go from a worker thinking that he is doing a decent job to being sacked. There is no doubt, in my view, that this causes an increase in sick leave and also that there is a positive link between performance management techniques and the steep rise in mental health problems in the workplace today.

The use of performance management processes is an iron fist in a velvet glove. It is about trying to put round pegs into round holes and discarding those who do not meet the template. It is difficult for the CWU to see performance management in a positive light. We have a problem accepting that performance management processes actually contribute positively to career development. In fact, we believe that they have the opposite effect. They frighten the life out of the people who are being subjected to them. It is not a positive experience; it is punitive. It is punishment for not doing enough work.

We totally concur with Connect and their description of the abuse of performance management processes as described in paragraph 1 of the motion. They are morale-sapping. They reduce job satisfaction. They are designed to force people out of their jobs. People are disadvantages. Overall, it is a sickening process so, Congress, whereas we support our colleagues in Connect, we would ask the General Council to take into account the CWU's comments when they were processing this motion. I support. *(Applause)*

Alan Carr (*University and College Union*) supported the motion.

He said: This motion gives us very considerable difficulty. It is not the introductory parts of the motion which highlight the negative effects of performance management and performance-related pay. All of that is confirmed by recent academic studies which indicate very clearly that performance-related pay is demoralising, not just for the majority of people who do not receive it, but even for the minority who do receive a pittance in the form of a performance-related bonus instead of a properly consolidated and pensionable pay rise. We have no problem with highlighting the negative aspects of performance management and performance-related pay.

When this became the latest fad to hit the employment world some years ago, the near universal response from trade unions was to oppose it. Some of us have opposed it very successfully. In higher education, UCU has successfully defended a 20 year-old agreement on appraisal which makes it absolutely clear that there should be no linkage between appraisal and pay. In further education as well, our colleagues in UCU have successfully resisted the implementation of PRP.

Not all unions have been so successful. Some have had it imposed upon them. For those who have had it imposed upon them, I can very clearly understand the reason why they want to negotiate safeguards and to negotiate improvements. For that reason, we in UCU would be very reluctant to vote against this motion. However, at the same time, we cannot conceivably support a motion that appears to accept the legitimacy of performance-related pay. If we were to do so, we would be undermining our own negotiating position.

In an earlier debate, Brendan Barber correctly pointed out that unions operate in different negotiating environments and sometimes that requires the adoption of quite different negotiating tactics. I think that this is one clear case in point where there is no 'one size fits all' policy. UCU would therefore ask that this motion be remitted and that a proper policy be

developed in this area. I would make a plea to the movers of the motion to accept remittance. If you do not do so, I am afraid you will leave us with no alternative but to vote against this motion. Please accept remittance. *(Applause)*

The President: I am now moving to the vote on Composite 12. Does anyone want a right of reply before we do that?

Denise Maguire (*Connect*) speaking in reply, said:

I am sorry, Congress, I will be brief, but must to reply to the points that my colleague from the UCU raised.

The motion is not accepting the legitimacy of performance-related pay. It is specifically worded to avoid that. This motion talks about performance management and, as the Communication Workers' Union made clear, performance management can apply whether or not there is performance-related pay. On that basis, I would ask Congress to support the motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you. I will now take a vote on Composition Motion 12. The General Council supports the composite motion.

* *Composite Motion 12 was CARRIED*

The President: Delegates, fringe meetings are taking place at lunchtime. Details are displayed on the screens. They can also be found on pages 11 to 15 of the *Congress Guide* or the leaflet included in your Congress wallet. That completes the business for this morning. Congress is now adjourned until 2.15 this afternoon. Thank you very much.

(Congress adjourned until 2.15 p.m.)

MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress re-assembled at 2.15 p.m.)

The President: Congress, many thanks to Hampshire Award Flutes who have been playing for you this afternoon. *(Applause)*

Delegates, we start this afternoon by turning to Chapter 2 of the General Council's Report: Organising and rights at work. It involves the section on Employment Rights begins at page 22. I call Composite Motion 2, Employment Rights. The General Council supports the composite motion.

Employment rights

Derek Simpson (*Unite*): President, I understand that you made one or two remarks in your opening address about what would I do if I saw my good comrade, Tony, staggering down the road. Colleagues will probably remember that. I have always said, Dave, that in mergers you have got the easiest job. Who would need two shots at Paul Kenny? You couldn't miss if you tried. *(Calls of "Booh")*

This is a serious subject. Colleagues, I am not going to go through everything that is contained in the motion because you can read that. However, I think there is a deep concern that here we are, late in the third term of a Labour Government and still beset by the laws that Thatcher introduced which have caused so much difficulty for all of us in all those years since we got shot of Thatcher. So many things need to be put right and we need to pressurise the Government to undertake what they should have done some time ago. I want to relate one story as to why I think it is fair, in keeping with Brendan's opening comments, that certain things be amended in employment law. I reject utterly John Hutton's comments that there is no need

for change. Well, if John Hutton thinks there is no need for change, I know of one change that I would like to make.

Let me tell you one story about the question of secondary action. A member of our delegation is Dermot Finn, who is the convenor of Rolls Royce at Bootle. Rolls Royce at Bootle has announced its closure. Not only did it declare its closure but at the same time the chief executive said that Britain was closed for business as far as Rolls Royce was concerned and that other businesses would follow. In other words, follow abroad. We all know that Rolls Royce is a large combine. It has large plants in Derby, Bristol and in other parts of the country. So with all workers in those plants working for Rolls Royce under our present employment laws none are able to act in support of our colleagues at Bootle. That would be illegal secondary action. Where is the fairness with Rolls Royce, with all the might of its resources, taking on plant by plant, pushing through its wishes, forcing its will upon the workers, who have to stand idly on the sidelines, knowing that they may be next, not able to exercise the collective strength? That cannot be right. For all those pundits who talk about flying pickets and all the rest of it who stirred up emotions, as Tony Blair did at my first TULO gathering with Labour when I mentioned actually changing the law to save unions having to waste millions of pounds balloting in order to support Labour, he immediately went into a rant about flying pickets. That is paranoia. There is a difference between having actions that many of us would not necessarily agree with as opposed to allowing free trade unions to perform collective bargaining with their employer. So there is a clear case. I am talking about the technicalities which employers use to force re-ballots or to set aside industrial action ballots. I am also talking about the way that TUPE ought to cover more than it does to protect workers who are increasingly faced with threats, not least of all from these private equity companies.

So many things need to be done. We need to impress on the Government that whilst this is not headline stuff –it is near and dear to the hearts of trade unionists and their right to free collective bargaining and the right to be able to use their strength sensibly and properly when confronted with an attack by their own employer.

Colleagues, I am not going to bore you with the details. As I said, read it in the composite motion. It is well-worn territory, but it is well time that we should do something about it.

I move.

Robert Monks (*United Road Transport Union*):
Formally second.

Peter Keenlyside (*Communciation Workers Union*):
President and Congress, when it comes to employment rights we seem to have an awful lot of unfinished business with this current Government. The CWU would like, particularly, to draw your attention to that part of the composite which deals with the 40 per cent bar that we have to get over when it comes to participation levels in ballots on union recognition. It was not us who put this provision into the legislation but the employers, and they did it for one reason. They put it into the legislation to make life hard for us, and the experience of the CWU in the ballots that we have carried out, particularly in smaller companies, and no doubt this is the experience of in many other unions represented in this hall today, is that for the employers that legislation works. It works because in any ballot the employers do not have to convince their workers to vote against the union. All they have to do is to scare

the workers into not voting at all, and some employers do that very well. But there is an irony in this.

How many times during the past few years have government ministers come along and lectured us as unions about the need to organise in new and further sectors? Yet they are the very same people who refuse to remove what is probably one of the biggest obstacles that we have to organising in those sectors.

The CWU supports fully the Trade Union Freedom Bill. We support the calls in this composite for the TUC to step up the campaign against the anti-trade union legislation. That has to include making our supported MPs in Parliament table amendments to the current Employment Bill which is going through Parliament at the moment. The Unite campaign has a postcard which they are asking you to sign and which is available on their stall. Congress, time is running out on our chances of getting something out of the Government who are at least prepared to talk to us, even if, as often as not, they do not listen. Unless we stand up for our rights and fight for our rights now under a Labour Government. Then I am afraid that when it comes to a government of another hue we will not be taken very seriously when we have to defend those very same rights.

Congress, vote for this composite unanimously, but more importantly make sure the terms of the composite are fully carried out.

* *Composite 2 was CARRIED*

Trade union freedom

The President: We now move to Motion 5 on trade union freedom. The General Council oppose the motion. I will call the General Secretary to speak during the debate.

Brian Caton (*POA UK*) moved Motion 5. He said:
Congress, in moving Motion 5 I recognise that the previous composite covered much of what the POA think is appropriate and right. However, this motion asks for something else. I think we saw this morning a change in people's views. What I am going to be asking you to do is to re-express those views with this particular motion. It may be that people think the POA is being self-indulgent in asking you to support this motion. Many have said, both privately and publicly, that they have a great deal of sympathy for the POA and the plight that we are in, quite viciously stripped of our trade rights by the Tory Government. We had stripped from us in 1993 rights which we enjoyed since 1939. I believe that people have huge sympathy for us. I thank people for the sympathy and the support. I also thank the TUC for the support which they have shown. Let me tell you this. The POA has more sympathy for you; more sympathy for the working men and women, for the people who choose to be in a trade union movement in this country that is currently so oppressed, probably far more oppressed than anywhere in the western world. We have sympathy for you.

The trade union movement was born, we are told, out of struggle. Let me tell you that it is not just a struggle that you wave a flag at. In the past we did not do that. I have attended many Tolpuddle Festivals and listened where speaker after speaker, having come from both home and abroad, talks of how brave these people were to stand up and fight. They cite many others throughout history, people whose names, quite rightly, still echo in the traditions of the trade union movement. Yes, they had to jump through hoops but they had a way of doing it, because they stood straight and tall, and they said "We will not". That is why we are here today. Comrades, none of you would be here today protecting and promoting the people who elect

you if those brave men and women had not taken it upon themselves to withdraw their labour, to restrict their labour against huge oppression. Many of them have been locked up by my predecessors in my occupation. They went to gaol. They starved themselves to death for you to have the right to be here.

I am not going to say that you need to pass this motion just to honour people from the past, although I believe that is important, but I think we need to do something for those who are coming in the future. They are going to come into the trade union movement not facing this so-called 'comfort zone' with a Labour Government. They are going to need to have close at hand the same spirit that was shown in the foundation of the trade union movement in this country. Where will they get it from? I say not just in history books but now and for the future. That is what we should be doing. We should be giving those who come in the future a future to be proud of. The way that we can do that is, yes, have your rallies; yes, try and change the legislation, but let's show what we can do, whether it be a Labour Government or a Tory Government. Let's show them that we mean business. The way you do that is to restrict and withdraw your labour.

People say to me that it is impossible to pull all these unions together, that unions have their own way of doing things and unions have this and that. However, one thing is common, and that is we are getting kicked to bits by a government which promised the earth and has delivered nothing on trade union rights. Indeed, today I would say that we are worse off, probably, than at any time in our recent history. The reason why we are worse off is very simple. We expect the Tories to kick us to pieces; we expect the Tories to stop us taking action, but do we expect a Labour Government to do that? The point is we have got used to it now, haven't we? So let's look at what we are. This is not a matter of left or right. It is a matter of wrong or right.

Yes, I have a simple message to give to everyone. Laws are normally for society to serve society. These are bad laws! I am giving you a message. Choose freedom now and break bad laws. Pass this motion. Thank you.

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Motion 5.

He said: President and delegates, I am asking you to support the motion. This resolution is very similar to the one this morning on the basis of demonstrations and strike action. I am not standing here like the old programme 30 years ago, when Labour was in Government, with Woolfie Smith of the Tooting Popular Front, saying "Call a general strike" but I'm saying that if you keep on going over to the employer, as a convenor or shop steward, and the employer keeps on coming back and says, "You're not having it, you're not having it, you're not having it", don't you have a mass meeting with the workforce and say, "Are you prepared to put up or shut up?"? We should clearly put up after having near enough 29 years of anti-trade union legislation being put in both by the Tory Government and the Labour Government. Enough is enough!

How do you say to those Prison Officer Association members, who were promised the right to strike by Jack Straw, "You're not going to have it now"? They should have the right to strike. I differ slightly with Brendan Barber's position this morning when he praised the South African Dockworkers' & Harbour Union in Cape Town when missiles or arms were coming from China en-route to Zimbabwe. They stopped those weapons being landed in South Africa. I applaud the South African dockers. Let me tell you what they were doing. They were carrying out

secondary action. They never had a ballot in South Africa, so what's the difference with people in Britain having the same rights? (*Applause*)

Brothers and sisters, the bosses know about secondary action. Every time our guard members go on strike on some of the train operating companies they bring in managers from other departments and companies and they act as guards for the day. So the bosses understand secondary action as scabs. If it is good enough for the bosses to break a strike by using one employer from another company to break a strike against another company, then why can't workers say, "If you bring managers in from A to cover B, then our members in A are going to walk out at the same time as you"? What's wrong with that? Nothing at all. Nothing whatsoever.

We were built on solidarity action. If you read *The Guardian* newspaper on Saturday, you would have read that Brendan Barber praised Boris Johnson for the London living wage. I'll tell you what. I don't think it was Boris Johnson who brought the London living wage in. I'll tell you who, in my opinion, brought the London living wage in. It was RMT members and Unite members taking action on behalf of cleaners on low rates of pay who brought the London living wage in. (*Applause*)

All these anti-trade union laws which have been brought in have got nothing to do with democracy. You all saw the figure of 6.5 million members which appeared on the screen this morning. Before the Tories and New Labour came in, the TUC had 13 million members. When this recession starts to bite and the employers start using every argument in the book to cut people's pay and conditions, then you are going to need an even stronger trade union movement because that figure of 6.5 will rapidly go down and down and down.

We came out of solidarity. The only reason why the trade union movement is here is out of illegality. I am not saying that you should go out and break the laws, but I will tell you this. We must send a message to Boris Johnson and those other employers saying that if they try and stop Tube workers from taking strike action, which he is proposing, and if we break the law you will have to build a new Wembley Stadium to imprison our members, because we are not having it. I ask you to accept the motion from the POA.

Ian Lavery (*National Union of Mineworkers*) speaking in support of Motion 5 said: Congress, the Chartist leader, O'Brien, said: "Legislators always assume that the laws of each country are right and that those who violate them are always wrong". This, he said, is a rank falsehood. Laws are often more wrong than right. Consequently, those who disobey them are more sinned against than sinners. That is more relevant now than when it was said all those years ago. The view of the National Union of Mineworkers is simple in terms of the anti-trade union legislation. We believe that it should be at the top of the political agenda. We believe it should be at the top of the trade union agenda. We cannot have strike action without a secret ballot. This year is 2008. We cannot take solidarity action! We cannot support comrades in this room.

I believe that trade union rights, fundamentally, are human rights. Take away the right for us to support each other, then it violates the human rights which we should demand. We should actually stop believing that we are going to get something from the Government. We know we are not going to get anything at all from the Labour Government. Fine talking in Parliament, marches, rallies, campaigns and demonstrations are absolutely fantastic, but the fact of the matter is that we have not made any progress in 29 years. Comrades, how many times from this rostrum have speakers said,

"Is it not time we get off our knees". I am proud to support Motion 5 and I ask you to support it as well. Let's get off our knees and meet the aims and aspirations of the members who put us in place. Thank you.

Billy Hayes (*Communication Workers Union*): I am asking the POA to support the General Council's position in terms of remit/oppose. I am doing so on behalf of a union which has been involved in a lot of strike action: last year we were involved in a million days of strike action in our dispute with the Royal Mail. The legal ballot was challenged towards the end of the dispute. Not only that, but as a union we have had lots of involvement in strike action, both official and unofficial, which we repudiate, so we are not exactly unknown in terms of strike action. Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov Lenin said: "You should be one step ahead of the working class but only one step".

The reason why I am speaking on this motion is because we need to be honest with each other. We supported your motion this morning in terms of strike action around public sector pay but, leaving aside the legal ramifications, with the problems that we face with closures of Post Office counters and major sorting offices as well as pensions, we could not deliver at this particular time a series of one day strikes on trade union freedom. Does that mean that we do not think it is an absolute disgrace that Jack Straw will not give prison officers the right to strike? No, it does not. This Government gave back trade union rights to workers at GCHQ to protect our freedoms. Does that mean that this Government will give the same rights to prison officers? No, it does not. So we do this more in sorrow than in anger. We have been there in terms of unofficial action. We stood in the Strand and the best part of £1.5 million of our union's funds has been taken from us because of what we did.

But we have a responsibility as trade union leaders. Imagine if this was a local dispute or a national dispute. Every single general secretary and national leader would say, "Is this a credible position?" Regrettably and with a heavy heart we say "No". But that does not mean to say that if the prison officers engaged in strike action – I know the union itself would repudiate the action – the postal workers will do what they did the day you took strike action. We do not cross picket lines, employment law or no.

So, Brian, we have just got a unanimous position on employment law. I ask you, in the interest of unity, to withdraw the motion. If you will not, regrettably and honestly, I say to your face that we are unable to support this proposition. Thank you.

John McNally (*Public and Commercial Services Union*): On behalf of PCS, I, reluctantly, oppose the motion. We fully support the POA's right to defend its members, to effectively organise and for the right to take industrial action. We re-state our complete opposition to the anti-trade union laws, which were once described by Blair himself as 'the most repressive in Europe'. We know how Gordon Brown consciously humiliated the Labour affiliated unions by publicly ruling out any concessions on these laws even before the doors opened at Warwick. In the 11 years of a Labour Government these laws have been neither repealed nor amended. On the contrary, they have been sanctified and strengthened. The truth is that this Labour Government approves of and supports these laws. They see them as vital in driving through their big business agenda of cuts, privatisation, pay freezes and a flexible labour market. Nothing separates us from the POA in principle but we differ on the tactics. We believe that their motion, sincere as it is, will

ultimately fail in its purpose, building effective action against these laws.

PCS members, too, have been under sustained attack from the New Labour Government. We responded by building campaigns, including strike action, which have secured concessions and delivered settlements. While we have no doubt that the POA and the RMT could deliver as outlined in the motion, our honest judgement is that we could not, unless the question of challenging these laws was firmly linked to the concrete industrial issues of pay, privatisation or in the event of any sequestration. We also fear that there is a real danger that the defeat of this motion will simply encourage this Labour Government to increase its attacks, portraying the movement as divided and the POA as isolated. Yet the frustration of the POA stems in part from the failure of the TUC to effectively campaign against these laws. But it is absolutely vital that the message that comes from this Congress must, first of all, be support for the POA itself and opposition to the anti-trade union laws which have no place in any civilised country.

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*): President and Congress, I want to explain why the General Council is opposing Motion 5, but before I do that I want to make one point absolutely clear. All of us in this hall today are totally behind the goal of stronger trade union rights as called for in the motion. We have lobbied for fundamental improvements to our labour law, including the Trade Union Freedom Bill which would reverse the worst injustices of the Thatcher years and bring our law into line with ILO Conventions. Congress, that campaign for trade union justice goes on.

As all of us are aware, no other union is affected more by our restrictive labour law than the POA. Let me just put that into context. In recent years POA members, the professional men and women who do difficult, demanding and dangerous work at the sharp end of our criminal justice system, have faced a volatile cocktail of issues that would test the resolve of any union's membership; not just a series of pay awards that have failed to keep pace with inflation, not just a pay review body whose independence has been called into question, but the massive workload implications of a prison population that has doubled. Here is the rub. They have had to put up with this while being denied full trade union rights, with their union frequently dragged through the courts and threatened with financial ruin for trying to do its job.

It goes without saying that the POA can count on our solidarity and we stand with the POA in its demand for justice. But, Congress, it simply does not follow that the General Council can support the call in Motion 5 for a series of general strikes.

Congress, it is essential that we are clear on a number of points. First, a general strike in pursuit of political objectives, as proposed in this motion, would clearly be unlawful. As a consequence, the TUC itself would be at grave legal risk and, of course, every individual affiliate would be liable to legal challenge. If that legal restraint was ignored, then unions would become liable for damages on a massive scale potentially and sequestration. But let us also be honest on the not unimportant matter of what membership support would be forthcoming for industrial action on this issue of union rights. I think both CWU and PCS have been honest in their contributions.

The General Council's view is that there would be precious little membership support, and instead of demonstrating strength behind our cause, we would simply appear to be massively out of touch with our own members. At a time when ordinary members are being battered by rising prices and falling wages, with

many worried about their job security, seeking to stage a national stoppage to press for changes to labour law would, I fear, almost certainly be perceived as self-indulgent.

Congress, our case for trade union rights is justified and, particularly so for the POA. But in the democracy in which we live, we will only win that change through democratic means, and winning wider public and political support for change rather than through ineffectually seeking to flex industrial muscle.

The General Council can see no realistic political scenario in which seeking to organise a general strike on this issue would actively advance our objectives and urges Congress to reject this deeply ill-advised motion.

Brian Caton (POA UK): Congress, I have listened very carefully to what has been said. I thank Brendan and the other speakers for all that they have said about the POA's plight. I think I made it clear in opening this debate on Motion 5 that we feel sorry for you. I will tell you why. Whether this motion goes through or not, if the POA deem it necessary we will break these objectionable laws and we will break them again and again and again. (*Applause*) Will we survive it? They can never take away the heart and soul of my members. They might take away the money and they might sequester it, and it might look as though this is dis-unifying, but it is not. It is about reality. I think we can fight and I believe we can win otherwise I would not be standing in front of you today asking you to support this motion.

We have heard mention of the word 'unlawful'. I think it is damned unlawful for working men and women in this country to be treated in the way that they are by a Labour Government. I think that is unlawful. I think it is immoral.

I will say it again as I said this morning. Think very carefully. Can you go back and look into your activists' eyes and say, "Yes, I did vote to try and win back through industrial muscle the rights that we should have". That is what I am saying to you, because I can and I will.

Let me say this. People want me to withdraw this motion. One of my great heroes, a leader of the Miners' Union, Herbert Smith, once said to a Prime Minister when he was asked if he could go and talk to people: "Fine words do not butter parsnips". Well, I ain't buttering no bloody parsnips.

It was also said to him: "I'm sure, Mr. Smith, that you can put these things right with your members", and he looked him in the eyes and said: "Now't doing". That is what I am saying about withdrawing this motion. Please support.

The President: We now move to the vote on Motion 5, Trade union freedom. The General Council oppose the motion.

* *Motion 5 was LOST.*

Redundancy consultation and pay

The President: I now call paragraph 2.9 and Composite Motion no. 4 on Redundancy consultation and pay. The General Council supports the composite motion.

Ian Hodson (Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union) moved Composite Motion 4. He said: On 9th June of this year Lyndale Foods, without warning, made a decision which would impact on the lives on nearly a thousand employees and numerous others. Without notice and without consultation they put the company into administration. Five minutes later the

administrators agreed to sell back the profitable parts to the very same directors who now had a debt free new company. They trumpeted this manoeuvre as 'major restructuring', saving numerous jobs and, in my view, blaming everybody else for the mess that they were in but themselves. We now know that the new company was formed on 1st May, Mayday. It is quite ironic. I believe they should have been concentrating on making sure that Lyndale Foods was given the best opportunity to survive rather than salvaging the profitable parts to the detriment of so many employees and their family. Coincidentally, the directors of Lyndale Foods had recently rebranded the company's shops in February of this year as 'Sayers the bakers', four sites from Macey, especially as this was to be the name of the new company.

We have asked the administrators, BDO, to see if there was any coincidence that the newly named company was set up after some shops had been rebranded. People in the street may think it is more than a coincidence that the rebranded shops carried the name of the new company. BDO, the administrators, have asked us to provide evidence. It appears that the design of the newly refurbished shops in the style and the colours of the new company are obvious to any passerby on that evidence. They asked us to provide evidence that showed that this was planned. This is information that only a director or a board member can supply. We hope that the administrators look at this situation from a completely independent point of view but, there again, they say that a document which we provided needs an explanation of relevance. The particular document is a presentation from 2005 on the future strategy for the company where it outlines the company's intention to move to one site.

We look forward to BDO's honest assessment. The DTI has told us that BDO is independent and always acts with integrity. Yet we have a question for BDO, who have met with the directors of Lyndale Foods on several occasions in April and May of this year, according to BDO's report, to discuss the restructuring of the company. If they were acting independently and looking at ways of saving Lyndale Foods, why is it they felt compelled to look at only one plan? How can they be sure that the right decision was made by selling the profitable parts of the company back to the very people who had run it into the ground with such little regard for their employees? Working people should, rightly, expect integrity, honesty and transparency from their employers. Workers at Sayers, Hampsons and Peter Hunt feel let down. Workers need to know that they are protected. The BFAWU feels that the current law is a charter for directors to act with total disregard as long as they follow some basic procedural rules.

How can it be right that, at the very time they are supposed to be looking at saving the company, they are launching a direct competitor? I firmly believe that they had sought advice as to how, legally, to protect themselves to buy back the parts they wished to keep and to rid themselves of their debts and liabilities which they did not want. Yet their employees were escorted and, in some cases, manhandled off-site by security guards. Some employees had their contracts ripped up in front of them. No notice was given to these employees. These events were totally unexpected and, at least in one case, agents went into the wrong shop and sacked the wrong people. Such unethical actions in the 21st Century are an absolute disgrace.

Furthermore, deductions of wages from these employees were not necessarily being paid to the appropriate parties. Deductions to pay in the form of pensions, CSA payments, Credit Union healthcare monies and others were made. This money was deducted from people's pay packets and a purse had

been kept in the company's coffers. What did they do with their employees' money? That is another question that needs answering. To me this appears to be theft but the law does not appear to be able to do very much against such actions. The company and its directors are able to hide behind the corporate veil which, to me, appears to have been conceived for this very purpose. That is why there needs to be a review and changes to the law.

The Bakers, Food & Allied Workers' Union firmly believes that we should not make it easy for directors to pass the buck to taxpayers, but it certainly appears that they had the financial means to pay. If they had properly taken into account employees' interests and concentrated as much effort on saving Lyndale Foods as they appear to have in ridding themselves of their responsibilities and liabilities to pay their workers, perhaps nearly one thousand workers would still be employed and not having to claim benefits, some for the first time in their working lives. These are men and women who have given, in some instances, as much as 40 years' service only to be dumped by the heartless powers that be.

The BFAWU demands that the Government urgently reviews the legislation around directors' responsibility to make them consider not just in this case the individual shareholder's needs, which according to the report were the very same directors, but to ensure that directors have to consider their employees' interest to ensure that there is no easy option for them to dump their responsibilities.

Why is it that in the recent case of *Connectsave Limited v. Heinz* that the High Court ruled that substantial damages would be paid by three key employees -- note the word 'employees' -- who deliberately misled their employer with their intended resignations, thereby breaching their duty to serve the employer with good faith and fidelity. What were they guilty of? They were going to work for a competitor. (*Wind-up bell rings*) I ask what is the difference when a director sets up a new company but does not share the information with their employees during so-called consultation? It is wrong and far worse than going to work for a competitor. (*Wind-up bell rings*)

I will wind-up. The section of the Companies Act 1985 contains an obligation on directors that they have to regard the interests of employees of their company. However, this section is toothless. There is no penalty if the directors fail to do so. If there was a penalty (*Wind-up bell rings*) we might find the directors being more amenable to having regard to employees' interests. (*Wind-up bell rings*) The law would serve as a deterrent to unscrupulous directors and also ----

The President: Please finish, colleague.

Ian Hodson: ---- give employees a statutory remedy such as getting redundancy and compensation. Support the Lyndale workers. Support all workers. Support this resolution.

The President: Congress, that speech was over seven minutes long. It means that somebody at the end of the week who has prepared a speech will not be able to give it.

Peter Pendle (*Association of College Management*) seconded Composite Motion 4.

He said: I am speaking to the second part of the motion. The limits set on compensation for redundancy and unfair dismissal are totally outdated. We want to see them scrapped and replaced with something more suitable. Job security is something that we value, but

we face the prospect of increasing levels of redundancies this year and, quite probably, in the next. Yet the maximum compensation under the State Redundancy Payment Scheme that a worker can expect is just £9,900. To get that amount they have to be at least 60 and have 20 years continuous service with that employer. The reason for this paltry amount is the limit on a week's pay, which is currently set at £330. Yet more than half the working population earns more than this amount. Indeed, the average weekly earnings are now £436, some 32 per cent higher than the statutory limit.

If we look back to when the Redundancy Payment Scheme was introduced in 1965, the limit then was set at £40, twice the average wage of the day. If that figure had been updated in line with earnings, it would now stand at over £1,000 per week. But successive governments have allowed its value to drop and redundant workers have had to pay the price. So what should be done? Ideally, we would like to see the limit removed, but at the very least we need a more realistic level, something in the region of £500. Until then employers will continue to dismiss workers on the cheap.

Of course, there are other ways to dismiss those who are surplus to requirements, and this is perhaps evidenced by the growing number of workers making unfair dismissal claims before employment tribunals. There were some 44,000 in 2007. But what can those who are unfairly dismissed expect by way of compensation. In its last report covering 2006/7, the Employment Tribunal Service reported that half of all successful claimants were awarded under £3,800, and four out of every five were awarded less than £10,000. The reason for this was, firstly, the cap on the maximum award in unfair dismissal cases and, secondly, as I have already said, the limit on a week's pay is capped at £330. So these limits have got to go. Employers who unfairly dismiss workers should pay for it, and workers who have been made redundant or unfairly dismissed should be properly and fairly compensated. So please support the composite.

Paddy Lillis (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 4.

He said: Colleagues, this week's Congress theme is about supporting Britain's vulnerable workers, and this motion goes to the heart of it -- workers facing redundancy. It is devastating to be made redundant, but it is particularly galling to know that your employer can get out of paying collectively agreed redundancy pay and pass their liabilities on to the taxpayer. Yet this is still the case for many workers facing redundancy. Last year the supermarket chain QuickSave collapsed resulting in all the staff being made redundant. As the company went under, there were a series of redundancies over a period of several months. In the first wave of redundancies, those made redundant received their enhanced entitlements under the union/company agreed scheme. Yet four months later the company went into administration, those already under notice of redundancy, were left with just a statutory amount of redundancy pay. Needless to say, many of our members, who are overwhelmingly low paid workers, lost out on the higher entitlements they were previously entitled to. Colleagues, this cannot be right. The situation is similar regarding insolvency. Although a type of protection is available, workers are treated as preferential debtors, and the protection is woefully inadequate. It is the secured debtors of the bankers and the associate companies who receive the first call on assets with employees once again at the back of the line. Not only this, they can only receive a maximum of £800 for outstanding wages and holiday pay, regardless of how much they are owed. Other payments, such as enhanced redundancy

pay, are not included, and the £800 maximum is a figure that has not been increased since 1976. So we believe that a review of the cap on the preferential debt paid to employees at a time of insolvency is clearly long overdue, and we urge the General Council to campaign for this. We hope that such a review will not only update the figure to that which is much more relevant today, but focus on the redundancy payment process itself and lead to improvements, in particular all those made redundant, regardless of insolvency or administration, receive all and not part of what they should have been contractually entitled to. Please support.

Donnacha Delong (*National Union of Journalists*) spoke to the first part of Composite Motion 4.

He said: Congress, picture the scene. A company decides to make 50 workers redundant and the union decides to call for a strike, or rather the union decides to have a ballot for strike action. Thirty days later the workers are on the street. They are not on the street because it is picket, but they are on the street because the company is able to lay them off. Thus, all 50 workers are lost without the union being able to do anything about it. This is because the law currently allows companies, which are planning less than a hundred redundancies, to give only thirty days notice, and then they can make people redundant. This is not enough time to complete a ballot. We understand that the problems with this situation are the ballot and the anti-trade union laws which have been put in place and the obstacles facing workers. However, while the fight to remove these laws continues, our colleagues in the *Sheffield Star*, *The Scotsman* and the *Telegraph* newspapers are facing exactly this problem. As long as the Government insist on keeping the anti-trade union legislation in place, they must at least provide workers with the opportunity to fulfil all of its legal obligations so that they can take action. Please support.

* *Composite Motion 4 was CARRIED.*

Civil liberties

The President: I now call paragraph 2.15 and Motion 13, Civil liberties. The General Council supports the motion.

Jeremy Dear (*National Union of Journalists*) moved Motion 13.

He said: Comrades, if you log on to the BBC's website you can watch an excellent and dramatic picture gallery of Chinese police and soldiers physically restraining journalists and photographers, violently preventing them from working and accessing designated protest zones. We welcome such abuses being highlighted, but they do not just happen in China. If any of the media would like to see it, I have a film here which shows the abuses happening daily in the UK. In a society where protest is increasingly criminalised, where dissent is increasingly outlawed and where laws designed to tackle terrorism are increasingly used to undermine civil liberties, this film documents examples of the police abusing their powers, of arbitrary arrest and detention, of photographers being physically attacked, of stop and search, of data and equipment being confiscated, of journalists and camera crews under surveillance by anti-terror teams. These are examples of the forces of an authoritarian government and the abuse and misuse of the law. The point is that the terrorising of journalists is not just done by shadowy men in balaclavas, but also by governments and organisations who use the apparatus of the law or state authorities to suppress and distort the information they do not want the public to know. The use of terrorism and

SOCPA increasingly criminalise not just those who protest but those deemed to be giving the oxygen of publicity to such dissent. Journalists' material and sources are increasingly targeted by those who wish to pull a cloak of secrecy over their actions. So our NUJ member, Shif Malek, is woken by armed police, dragged to court, subjected to a production order and instructed to hand over his notes. His only crime? He dared to interview a former member of an alleged terrorist organisation, dared to get behind the spin and dared to serve the public by exposing the truth. For that he is criminalised.

Another NUJ member, Sally Murray, had her home bugged, her computer seized by police, she was arrested, dumped in a cell for 24 hours and then strip searched. She faces the potential of years in gaol. Her crime? Nothing more than talking to a contact in the police force who told her about a prisoner released early who boasted of becoming a suicide bomber. The real crime is that the police have spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on a malicious prosecution. If they win it will become a crime for journalists to report what a police officer or any other public official tells them without authorisation. If they lose, it will be a victory for free reporting and independent journalism.

Consider the photographers, covering the climate camp just a few weeks ago, including some of those who are at the front of the hall taking photographs at the moment. They were stopped and searched three times in one day and followed by officers from the Forward Intelligence Team, subjected to intimidation and arbitrary and intrusive surveillance. Their crime? Simply documenting the activities of environmental campaigners. This is not over-zealous policing. This is a co-ordinated and systematic abuse of media freedom. We must expose it, challenge it and act against those who undermine the rights of photographers, journalists and media workers. We must do so because if whistleblowers and sources fear speaking out, if photographers and journalists cannot probe the dark corners of business, politics or human rights, then the ability of the media, which is already under threat from a concentration of ownership and cost-cutting, to hold power to account, to expose wrong-doing and to provide the information on which citizens can make informed decisions about their lives, will be seriously compromised.

The Terrorism Act and SOCPA are not sophisticated security policies. They are the blunt instruments of an intolerant government. As if in some Orwellian nightmare, the Ministry of Freedom tells us that the price we must pay for peace and liberty at home is not just a war in Iraq, not just the billions spent on war, but in the wake of the London bombings, it is the finger printing of council workers, the covert surveillance of Marks & Spencer's workers, ID cards and 42 days detention, curbs on the right to protest, the Civil Contingencies Act and the extension of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, a snooper's charter, giving access to personal texts, email and internet use. Comrades, the price is too high. Less liberty does not imply greater security. It never has. Our Movement has been at the forefront of the great struggles for human and civil rights over the past century. In this age of intolerance, new struggles must be waged and we must lead that fight. Please support the motion.

Alastair Hunter (*University and College Union*) seconded Motion 13.

He said: I want, first, to thank the NUJ for accepting our amendment which arises from the belief that your members and ours are in professions dedicated to the uncovering of truth, however uncomfortable, and its dissemination, however embarrassing. But it is rooted also in an important principle. If we really want to tackle problems like violent extremism and terrorism,

we need to be safe to debate the issues without fear of arrest. Universities have traditionally encouraged debate, allowed students the space to broaden their horizons and challenged popular opinion. This inevitably leads, as it should, to radical conclusions. The arrest of a student and staff member at Nottingham University in May under the Terrorism Act highlighted the levels of confusion in universities around academic freedom and sensitive research. Iqam Yitsar and Riswam Sabir were arrested because Sabir had e-mailed Yitsar a declassified open source document called the *Al-Qaeda Training Manual*, a document he downloaded from a US Government website.

Despite Government assurances that it is, and I quote, "entirely acceptable and necessary for academics to seek to understand and explain what motivates violent extremists", it was the agencies of that same government that had a man locked up for a week for possessing a document downloaded from a US open website. Iqam Yitsar's account of how he doodled in the margins of books and compiled lists in his mind to stay sane as the toilet seat in his cell started to resemble a sinister beast really brings home how desperate the situation has become. If that is what it is like spending one week accused illegally of terrorist activities, think of those who have been banged up in Guantanamo Bay for years.

Academic freedom is a key tenet of any democracy, yet what happened at Nottingham focuses the current confusion and fear over the issue. The Government has to clarify the legal situation regarding research on terrorism and violent extremism and has to communicate that clearly to staff and students. Above all, research in controversial areas must continue without the fear of arrest for students or staff. Comrades, please support this motion. Thank you.

* *Motion 13 was CARRIED.*

Trade Union Recognition by the Co-operative Group

The President: Delegates, I now turn to Chapter 4 of the GC Report, Economic & Industrial Affairs, and I call Motion 71, Trade union recognition by the Co-Operative Group, to be moved by the GMB.

Paul Kenny (GMB) moved Motion 71. He said: I just make the point that the GMB has grown in membership terms for each of the last three years and we have just recorded 12 straight month on month increases in membership, nailing the lie, alongside many other unions in this hall, that trade unions are dying and are irrelevant: absolute cobblers. We are growing and we are bloody proud of what we do. *(Applause)*

Now, we have limited opportunities to nominate subjects for debate here at Congress and every union, including the GMB, thinks very carefully about the topics to highlight or seek policy progress on. This resolution seems on the surface to be about a simple dispute between an employer and an affiliate, and if that were only the case. The truth, I am afraid, is far more depressing. The employer in question, the Co-operative Group, have been considered a bedrock partner alongside our movement in fairness, equality, trade union rights, and respect; our values. Sadly, times seem to have changed.

The GMB has had membership and recognition for collective bargaining purposes within the Funeralcare Division of the Co-op for over 100 years (even longer than Brendan has been general secretary) until Chief Executive, David Hendry, took the decision to derecognise the GMB by, amongst other ways, a press release. There followed a campaign of intimidation

attacks on trade union reps and withdrawal of basic workplace facilities which rank the Co-op's attitude alongside the most aggressive bullying anti-union employers all done in the name of creating an environment where fewer unions are recognised within the Co-op, premeditated, planned, de-recognition.

This resolution sets out steps which we as a movement can begin to take to show the Co-op board that they have no privileged rights to attack trade unionists in their workforce whilst telling the public that they are a moral, ethically-based business brand. The GMB recognises how important it is to consider the views of other unions who have members within the Co-op Group before further escalation of our campaign against the Co-op. That is why we suggest the following: a meeting of all interested parties to try and provide a united voice, if possible, against the Co-op board.

We ask all affiliates to examine their financial arrangements with the Co-op Bank so that a better picture of affiliate options is available to the meeting and to evaluate the risk to other unions' members, and those Unity Trust shareholders who are trade unions take back control over Unity Bank from Co-op cartel and influence. The Co-op has 24 per cent of the shares in Unity but effectively runs the bank. They make all the major decisions on appointments and policy. It is a farce and an illusion and it derives out of the original concept when the bank was set up 25 years ago. What I say is, it is our bank, let's take it back. I pay a tribute to Dave Prentis, as Chair, TU side chair of the bank, who has done enormous things to try and bring a resolution to this dispute.

I am sorry that we find our way to Congress. Let's make it clear that we have no room for employers, whatever their pedigree, who derecognise trade unions. We call on Congress to support a bar on sponsorships and participation, involvement, in the Co-op in all future TUC activities. I understand that is not going to mean much at the moment because there are none planned but let's send a clear message: you are not welcome on platforms with us when you derecognise and attack trade unionists in your workforce.

Finally, I move Motion 71 with great reluctance and with a bit of a heavy heart but let's send a clear message. I know people are saying you would not need two shots to hit me. Let me tell the Co-op and a few other people that I have been shot at a lot and I have been wounded a few times, but it will take a bloody big elephant gun to put me down. *(Applause)*

Paddy Lillis (Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers) seconded Motion 71. He said: Congress, on behalf of USDAW I second this motion from the GMB on trade union recognition by the Co-op Group. The Co-op's de-recognition of the GMB in the Co-op Funerals is completely unacceptable. USDAW is the largest recognised union in the Co-op with a majority of Co-op Funeral staff in membership and we have a long track record of working together with the GMB, and have traditionally held joint pay negotiations for Funeralcare staff. Congress, USDAW recognises that GMB have an organised presence in the Co-op Funeralcare business and as such the GMB should have the right to represent and negotiate on behalf of their membership. It is important that where there is more than one union in a business we all move forward working together in the spirit of mutual respect for each other's position.

USDAW opposes the Co-op's de-recognition of the GMB and we believe that the Co-op should immediately reverse their decision to derecognise. Congress, we have made and will continue to make

approaches to the Co-op to urge them to re-recognise the GMB and we are also committed to working with the TUC in the trade union-wide approach to persuade the Co-op to re-think and reverse their de-recognition of the GMB. (Applause)

The President: There being no other speakers and with the right of reply waived, I go straight to the vote. The General Council support the motion.

* *Motion 71 was CARRIED.*

Ownership of News

Michelle Stanistreet (*National Union of Journalists*) moved Motion 68. She said: The findings of the House of Lords report, *Ownership of the News*, came as no surprise to members of the NUJ. All around editorial budgets are being relentlessly squeezed, departments are being outsourced, journalists are being made redundant, entire editions of newspapers are being axed, casual workers (even those who have worked for 12 months or more and have employment rights) are being told not to bother coming in to work any more.

The lack of investment in news gathering is a very real and growing threat to us as journalists but also to each and every one of us as citizens in a democratic society. Without meaningful investment in our newspapers and programming we cannot expect to produce quality products. Our members cannot come up with the quality journalism the public needs and desires. Increasingly, newspapers are controlled by an ever smaller group of wealthy companies motivated by profit and profit alone. If the result of that means journalism on the cheap, well, that is just tough. Just four companies control over 70 per cent of our regional newspapers. In national papers one company, and ultimately one man, you can guess who, controls 35 per cent of the market. In television the picture is the same, it is just as bad with three companies having a monopoly on national news at a time when public service broadcasting is facing unprecedented attacks with growing calls to top-slice the BBC licence fee and plans by ITV to slash its local and regional news programmes.

It is time the public interest for a well-resourced independent media, not profit, was put first. It simply is not healthy and it certainly is not desirable that the interests of a handful of men, and they pretty much are all men, whose only interest is in boosting profits by culling budgets, salaries, and jobs, should prevent us from having the properly funded diverse media any civilised society needs. But as the rules stand ownership of a newspaper group, for example, can change hands on the basis of a field bid; price alone determines who is handed control of titles that can wield enormous influence and power. There is no requirement for a potential purchaser to prove that they have a commitment to quality, independent journalism, or even to the future of the titles that they are buying.

Where is the public scrutiny, the transparency? The answer is that right now there is none. Take the *Telegraph*, were it not for a challenge by shareholders a few years ago, shareholders who felt short-changed, the Barclay Brothers, the group's current owners, nearly got away with snapping the company up for £250m from the previous owner, Conrad Black, now a convicted criminal who lives in rather less splendour and luxury than he was used to. In the end, the reclusive brothers forked out over £600m, a deal done in the boardroom with no public scrutiny, but their desire to save money has not stopped there and since they have been at the helm they have consistently ridden roughshod over journalists at the title. With the help of some hired guns brought in from the *Daily Mail* they have set about imposing a culture of cuts,

redundancies, and sackings, so much so that our members at the *Telegraph* have said enough is enough and are balloting right now for industrial action over the wholesale sackings of all the regular casual workers and the tearing up of work/life balance agreements the NUJ negotiated over the company's plans to impose 24/7 working. As we speak the writs are flying and the *Telegraph* management with a bit of help from the Queen's lawyers, no less, are doing their best to thwart our members legal and legitimate right to ballot for industrial action. I think our colleagues on the *Telegraph* deserve our wholehearted support; they certainly have it from colleagues at the NUJ. They are a real example of why this Government must be forced to act to change the rules on media ownership. The NUJ and its members will continue to fight for this, to stand up for journalism, and for journalists. Colleagues, please back this motion and join us in that battle. Thank you. (Applause)

Tony Burke (Unite) seconded Motion 68. He said: Congress, as Michelle has said it is becoming obvious that newspaper publishers in the UK are no longer interested in quality journalism or the accurate dissemination of information. Their prime concern today is their share price. Last month, Sly Bailey, the Chief Executive of Trinity Mirror Group, having made swingeing cutbacks last year, announced further cost-cutting measures which meant more job losses where they are already cut to the bone. The immediate effect was a 10 per cent increase in Trinity Mirror shares; as somebody once said, mission accomplished. The provision of good quality news and information to communities is no longer on their radar. However, Unite has other concerns.

Many of you will recall the battles the print unions faced 20 years ago at Wapping, fortress Wapping. Well, fortress Wapping is now closed. News International, part of the News Corporation Group, has invested an unprecedented £650m on 18 state-of-the-art presses which are now located from London to Glasgow. These presses run at 85,000 copies an hour and the company intends to run those 24 hours a day. We reckon that they are going to be able to produce between 25 and 30 million copies a day. The total run of all national newspapers at the moment in the UK is 10 to 11 million copies. We are looking at enormous over-capacity with this huge investment that News International has created. The only way that they can recoup that £650m is to run those presses 24 hours 7 days a week. They have already persuaded one national newspaper to print with them, that is, the *Telegraph*. We know that they have others being lined up.

Congress, Unite is of the view that in a matter of a few years the vast majority of national and major regional newspaper production could be in the hands of just one company, News International. Meanwhile, thousands of our newspaper members, in an industry where we were derecognised but we have got to the situation where we are almost re-recognised across the newspaper industry, are going to find it very difficult to compete against News International once they have cornered the market. I think, Congress, you will agree it is not healthy for democracy, it is not healthy for the nation, when huge chunks of private broadcasting and national newspaper publishing should be in a position to control the production of national and regional newspapers as well. That is why Unite has spoken out in support of the House of Lords report.

Congress, the power, the control, and the influence that News International potentially has are not in the interests of any country. Therefore, we ask you to support the motion in the hope that people will realise that this development is a very real threat and definitely not in the interests of democracy. (Applause)

The President: Thank you, Tony. We have no further speakers. The General Council policy is to support the motion.

* *Motion 68 was CARRIED.*

Review of public service broadcasting

Luke Crawley (*Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union*) moved Motion 69.

He said: Good afternoon, Congress, President, delegates. It is very pleasant to have the media debate so far up the agenda. I understand in previous years it has been kept until the last day, and I think it is important to shuffle things around and I think it is worth focusing on it. As you have heard from the previous speakers, there are serious things happening in the media and this proposition, review of public service broadcasting, is to alert you to some more problems that are arising.

The question that underlies it is what kind of television and radio do we want in this country and how are we going to fund it. There are problems facing BBC, ITV, and Channel 4. I will deal with the BBC first, but before I do I would just like to consider the answer to my first question: what kind of television and radio do we want? We are surrounded by commercial television and radio channels, Channel 5, Sky, Disney, Nickelodeon, and dozens, maybe even thousands, of shopping channels. What makes public service broadcasting different is that it tries to tell us about ourselves, our country, and our culture. One of the reasons for placing PSB obligations on commercial broadcasters is to ensure that the programmes they make, or some of the programmes they make, reflect Great Britain and the people who live and work here, and that those programmes should continue to be made. These programmes do not always draw the large audiences that enable commercial companies to sell advertising and make money off them, and they cost money to make. So, if they are going to continue to be made, it requires some kind of obligation.

The BBC is funded by the licence fee and is the cornerstone of PSB in this country. It is in danger of being eroded. It has had budget cuts and redundancies. The licence fee settlement in 2007 was the act of a government which was angry about the Andrew Gilligan affair and wanted to punish the BBC for the fallout from that. The Government deliberately broke the link with inflation and in 2006, taking the view that inflation would remain low for the foreseeable future, tied the BBC to an increase of 2 per cent per annum in the licence fee for several years. That 2 per cent figure must sound familiar to a lot of people in this room. Inflation has raced away and it is currently 5 per cent with no sign of an early fall. There were job cuts of 4,500 in 2005 and since the licence fee settlement was announced it made further cuts of 2,500, that is, nearly a quarter of the workforce has gone in the last three or four years.

Now, there is an additional threat that the licence fee itself may be top-sliced, which is to say that hundreds of millions of pounds would be taken from the licence fee and given to other broadcasters to allow them to make public service broadcasting programmes. Any such step would lead to further job cuts and a reduction in the quality of programmes made by the BBC. The theory is that the top-sliced money should be given to commercial broadcasters because at the moment they are having a difficult time, ITV particularly. However, at the moment ITV are obliged to make programmes because of the licence that they have to broadcast in a particular area. It is hard to see why they should be allowed to preserve their profits at the expense of the BBC licence fee. The outcome will surely be less money being spent on public service broadcasting as a whole in the UK.

We believe that there are alternative sources of funding for public service programming made by commercial broadcasters, and that brings me to ITV. As I have said already, when a TV company bought the licence to broadcast in a particular area, for example, Granada, Central, or London Weekend, they were obliged to make local news and some local programmes as part of the deal. Because it costs money to make local news, ITV feels that it ought not to have to make as many local news programmes as it does. ITV now owns the majority of those licences and it would rather cut the number of distinctive local news programmes from 17 to 9. This means that one TV region will stretch from Penzance to Tewkesbury - that is 230 miles, five hours of driving. It is hard to imagine what exactly local news would mean in an area so large and what the people of Tewkesbury, subject to flooding, for example, have in common with the people of Penzance. Similarly, you would have Southampton and Dover, 150 miles apart, in the same area, very different kinds of news stories, very different kinds of problems, and the difficulties of getting from one side to the other. No more local news, much more like regional news.

BECTU, NUJ, and Unite members in ITV have been campaigning against these cockeyed proposals. In Carlisle, Border TV, broadcast *Look Around*, the most watched news programme on the ITV network, is broadcast to Cumbria, south east Scotland, the Isle of Man, and North West England. If these proposals go through, the whole programme, currently 25 minutes, would be shoehorned into 12 minutes of a programme made on the other side of the Pennines in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. There are regional differences between those two which are quite deep and are heartfelt but I think what price local news then: a complete collapse of the quality of coverage.

How can those programmes be financed? There are lots of options and we think that one of them, the easiest one, is if ITV wants access to digital spectrum on the freeview platform, and at the current moment it is paying effectively for access to the analogue spectrum that is going to be turned off in 2012, then it should be told the price of getting that is to continue making truly local news. The second option may be to charge a levy on commercial broadcasters who choose not to make PSB programmes, Sky for example, and the income from the levy would be used to fund other broadcasters. There is also the possibility of allowing more minutes of advertising in the evening news programme which would generate more income. There are lots of possibilities. In short, there are solutions if the political will is there. We are calling on the General Council to campaign vigorously on these issues, the issues identified by this motion, and defend public service broadcasting. (*Applause*)

Peter Murray (*National Union of Journalists*) seconded Motion 69. He said: It is quite appropriate we should be debating this motion today. Only this morning the Scottish Broadcasting Commission published its report on its own 13-month investigation into the future of the industry north of the border. It may be a taste of what is to come, what we can expect from Ofcom. It contains much that is useful for us as trade unionists. For instance, there is in here a firm commitment to public service broadcasting. They say: "The Commission has proceeded on the basis that public service broadcasting has a clear and essential role in securing delivery of important forms of programming that will not result from a purely market-driven approach but which are desirable for nurturing and sustaining civic society and a participative democracy." That alone may be in contrast to the sort of soft touch approach that we have seen from Ofcom and ministers, who both sat back and watched dwindling levels of

revenue and cuts to local news programmes across ITV that Luke has just outlined.

There is more in the report. There is a firm recommendation that Scottish Enterprise, Creative Scotland, and Skills Development Agencies should take an active and direct role in training and skills development across the sector. That is interesting. Why is that important: because a number of recent reports, and the Prime Minister himself when he opened the new BBC building in Glasgow last year, predicted a growth in the entertainment and media sectors in the next five years. So, it is vital for a healthy democracy in the UK that public sector broadcasting finds ways of attracting their full share of that growth. The experience of the broadcasting unions over the last five years is that the ambition of so-called industry leaders on behalf of those who actually work in the industry is contracting, not expanding; investment in technology may be high but investment in staff is at a minimum. Comrades, new technology, falls in advertising revenue, and the BBC licence fee, are taken by the employers as an excuse to rack up staff cuts, pull down pay increases to the same kind of levels we are seeing across the public sector, and to pile tighter deadlines on producers and journalists with the effect of stripping out an entire generation of workers from the industry and piling up massive stress on those left behind.

It is our experience that industrial action and determined recruitment, union organisation in the workplace, is what has helped safeguard the future of public service broadcasting and that, for instance, is what forced the boss of BBC Scotland to come to the Scottish Parliament to try (and fail) to justify staff cuts in 2005. Luke will also remember that, he was there. So, that is what we must continue to do, to organise and recruit, and maintain the NUJ's policy that we will resist compulsory redundancies right across broadcasting and take industrial action where we have to, to protect jobs, programmes, and quality journalism. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Christine Payne (*Equity*) supported Motion 69.

She said: Equity strongly supports this motion. A healthy system of public service broadcasting is important to all of us in this room. This motion is about how we preserve and support public service broadcasting but to do that, and to succeed, we have to agree that public service broadcasting is important and that it must be preserved. This motion is not just about how much we pay for our TV licence, it is about what the TV licence pays for, what it gives us, it is about setting standards, it is about providing quality television and radio for audiences and citizens, and it is about providing programmes in our homes which serve public service obligations to entertain, inform, and educate us.

ITV and Channel 4, along with the BBC, have a public service obligation to us and despite the explosion of new television channels the vast majority of television made in this country comes from these three broadcasters. Sky and the other commercial broadcasters do not have a public service obligation and between them produce only 10 per cent of television made in the UK. So, try and imagine what our television would be like if we did not have the BBC. Ofcom has said that the BBC plays a central role; they are the cornerstone of public service broadcasting. It provides wide choice and diversity of high quality programmes, but it can only do this because it is supported by licence fee funding, and the BBC sells its programmes and formats all over the world. This generates income that is put back into programmes and not given to shareholders.

The challenge facing Ofcom and the Government is how to ensure that in a multi-channel digital world we continue to get high quality original television made in the UK without undermining the ability of the BBC to continue that important role. The digital channels and new technologies do have an important place but they have undermined the traditional model of funding for ITV and Channel 4 and we are now losing significant advertising revenue as audiences in greater numbers tune in to these other commercial channels. We believe that the broadest possible range of public service broadcasting is dependent on competition for quality. If Ofcom and the Government fail to act there is a real danger that we will lose the programmes we most highly value, one of which was mentioned by Bob Crow today, 'Citizen Smith'. However, proper investment in public service broadcasting means that we will continue to make some of the best programmes in the world. Reality makeover shows and imported programmes will also be part of the mix but they must not be the majority simply because they are cheaper to make. This motion suggests a way forward. We urge you to support it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

John Smith (*Musicians' Union*) supported Motion 69.

He said: I would just like to say a few words about radio. Often in the debate over public service broadcasting radio is forgotten. When we talk about the digital dividend we always think of television but the breadth of the BBC's radio stations is quite amazing. I saw some statistics recently that show the actual number of people that listen to the *Today* programme, and, you know, all the figures for the group viewing of the television stations are miniscule compared to the numbers that listen to radio and particularly the radio news.

For my members, the BBC radio stations are incredibly important. The wide coverage of music provided by the BBC is just amazing. Not only do we get the latest commercial music on Radio 1, we get an eclectic mix of pop, jazz, and folk, from Radio 2, and we get the highest quality classical music on Radio 3. These major radio stations do not just play wall-to-wall CDs, the BBC has a stated commitment to the sustained coverage of live music, whether it be studio recordings or relays of live events such as Glastonbury, the Cambridge Folk Festival, and of course the greatest musical festival in the world, the Proms.

The BBC employs five fulltime orchestras and it has a commitment to new music and a vast archive of some of the most exciting, historical broadcast performances across all genre of music. Much of this is being re-broadcast now on the digital station, BBC6 music. No other broadcaster gets anywhere near the BBC's coverage of music and the commitment to high quality music. We have to ensure that this is protected, nurtured, and developed. Ofcom in its review of PSB should not be allowed to jeopardise this quality output of the best broadcaster in the world. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you. I am now going to move to the vote. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Motion 69 was CARRIED.*

Protecting the nation's film heritage

Jack Amos (*Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union*) moved Motion 70.

He said: Brothers and sisters, film and television archives is as much part of our cultural heritage as art galleries, museums, and libraries. In many ways they are still poor relations to the others. A mere 22 years ago, the same year as the abolition of the GLC by the way and also the same year as the police rioting

outside fortress Wapping, I made my first speech to Congress. I was nervous then and I am nervous now. Nothing changes. However, I made it on behalf of the previous union of ours, ACTT, and it was on a very similar motion. I said then that this is not a motion by a small union based on parochial ideas of nostalgia but one that concerns all member unions. It is your history, your background, and indeed your future that is disappearing. The long-term public funding that is so badly needed because of the specialist buildings and equipment required has not materialised. The necessity for a skilled workforce is in jeopardy without proper training and so far as we know only the University of East Anglia has a course specifically designed in relation to film archiving. The ownership of archives is also of interest. The largest television archive in the world is owned by the BBC yet it has re-branded itself as BBC Motion Gallery because it feels that the word 'archive' is too old-fashioned. The ITN archive has transformed itself into ITN Source (-S-O-U-R-C-E). The idea that either of them is anything less than a source of revenue is an absurdity and in the case of the BBC the archive is treated as a separate entity. The national film & television archives are under the auspices of the British Film Institute receiving funding from the Film Council but although one of the world's largest archives of film and television it still needs more funding to keep up its national and international reputation. Commercial archives have long been little short of a casino economy with copyright being the imperative, constant changes of ownership by both multinational and venture capitalists whose only interest in history is today's stock market. The digital age may have done wonders for the manufacturers but in terms of our history what has really been achieved? The wholesale ditching of original paperwork from the newsreel libraries, from cameramen's dope sheets to the day-by-day diaries is nothing short of scandalous as these are not just there for the benefit of historians and academics but they help us all in our understanding of our past. Lottery awards have been used in some cases in the commercial arena as a way of making a quick buck. The ownership of many of our audio/video/visual collections is in foreign hands making access both difficult and expensive. For example, in 1958 the BBC bought one of the great films libraries in the Hulton Picture Archive. They sold it in 1988 to a cable TV entrepreneur called Brian Deutsch who in turn sold it to Ghatti Images in 1996. How can our visual heritage be bought and sold in such a fashion? There was a period of time when the film library at the Central Office of Information of all collections was put up for auction and really did go to an American-owned private company but now, luckily, it is back with the British Film Institute.

Where do we go from here? Our motion calls on the General Council to campaign for long-term public funding for our film archives. The motion that I moved in 1986 was passed unanimously. The intervening 20-odd years may have brought London its own government again, unfortunately now under new leadership, but the issue of our visual history remains unresolved. I will not be at the TUC in 22 years' time so can you do my union and me a favour and pass this, and do something about it this time round. Thank you. (Applause)

Graham Hamilton (*Equity*) seconded Motion 70.

He said: Equity is pleased that our colleagues in BECTU have raised this important issue because we strongly support the motion. There are clear reasons to do everything we can to preserve and restore our film heritage which is held in the nation's archives. These reasons are historical, social, and cultural, but there are also good economic and industrial reasons for doing so. It means we can build on the achievements of the

past and continue to punch above our weight in film and television production. It also means that a new generation can benefit from the experience of viewing part of our unique heritage and our creative economy can benefit from commercial arrangements for making this work available.

They say that a picture is worth a thousand words, so the images of films and television programmes kept in our film archives must speak volumes. This material tells us about the way life and attitudes have changed. It provides an historical record of our society and culture. It gives us an insight into a different time. Much of the archive also features unique and classic performances from some of our best known and most admired actors and performers. They include incredible and powerful stories, some of which changed the way we look at the world, made us laugh, cry, angry, upset, and entertained. For example, the British Film Institute's television archive holds a range of classics from 'athy Come Home to Steptoe & Son, and the works of Dennis Potter.

All human life and emotion is contained in these precious cans of film, therefore the protection and restoration of this material is essential. The skilled labour force referred to in the motion has a crucial role to play in the preservation and conservation of the archives. The collections can be fragile, expensive to make safe, and often subject to rapid decay. Therefore, stable funding and a clear strategy that recognises the importance of this work are vital. Despite the high value that the public places on these archives, the levels of investment are a fraction of that dedicated to other forms of archive material. New technology now means there are ways to provide instant access to just some of this material. This also provides the opportunity for performers to receive a modest income from the commercial use of their work. Many of these performers have no pension so they come to rely on the small but important payments for the use and exploitation of work that they created. Performers in classic British feature films like *The Great Escape* and *The Ladykillers*, often receive nothing more than their engagement fee under their contract many years ago. Therefore, the protection of the nation's film heritage provides clear benefits to the UK's creative economy, to our citizens and future generations, and to the elderly performers who featured in this material. I urge you all to vote for this motion. (Applause)

Alan Leighton (*Prospect*) supported Motion 70.

He said: Prospect represents more than 5,000 members employed in our national museums and galleries and in our other heritage organisations. In many of these bodies, our specialist members are responsible for archiving and conserving film and other historical records in various media, for example, sound records at the British Library and paper records at the National Archives. Our members at the Imperial War Museum are responsible for working with some of the oldest and most unstable film records that we have. There is an extensive digitalisation programme which requires serious investment. It is also important that access is made available to these resources and that the original film is conserved and safely stored. All of this is resource intensive but funding for heritage bodies from various governments has not kept up with programmes such as this and as a result pay has been squeezed and is not commensurate with the qualifications required. Jobs have been de-professionalized, and in many bodies staff working on activities such as these are paid below the minimum recommended by their professional bodies. For that to happen in national museums and galleries with our national archives is a scandal. As a result, there is a

danger that we will not have the skilled staff that we require in order to carry out these activities.

Many of you will have heard of the industrial action taken by staff in a number of the national museums and galleries earlier this year and indeed in some of those areas that action continues, and unfortunately it appears that we will be forced into taking further action in the near future. Please support those members who are looking to defend and improve their living standards but who are also determined to make sure that they can carry out the very important work that is described in the motion. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much. We now go to the vote on Motion 70. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Motion 70 was CARRIED.*

Appointment of Joel Edwards

James Doherty (*National Union of Journalists*) moved Motion 17. He said: I am speaking on behalf of the TUC LGBT Conference. Congress, the appointment of Joel Edwards to the Equality and Human Rights Commission was nothing short of a national disgrace. He is one of 14 members described as having, and I quote, "exceptional experience in the field of equality and human rights. Indeed, the commission's role is to achieve a fairer, more inclusive Britain." Congress, if that is the case, how on earth can the appointment of a man who believes that being gay is sinful be expected to fight for the rights of our LGBT colleagues? This is a man who said, and I quote, "Forgiveness, respect, hope and trust, are all rooted in Christian faith and they are the antidote to a culture that is being railroaded into an individualistic rights orientated mentality." Then, in a newsletter published in 2006, his organisation complained that the introduction of civil partnerships would inevitably undermine marriage and were part of a global campaign to impose a homosexual equality agenda on society. Is that what Trevor Phillips was looking for when he called for commissioners with exceptional experience in the field of equality and human rights? If so, then why does he not go the whole hog and invite Nick Griffin and the BNP to advise on race and religion? The Equality and Human Rights Commission's very purpose is to protect the human rights of each and every person, not to surrender them to those groups that wish to compromise them.

Joel Edwards and the Evangelical Alliance website states, "We do not accept that to reject homo-erotic sexual practice on biblical grounds is in itself homophobic." Not homophobic? Congress, the non-homophobic Evangelical Alliance goes on to say that they welcome gay people into their fold but only on the understanding that they are seeking to renounce same sex sexual relationships. I hear actually that the congregation in Brighton is not particularly strong!

Joel Edwards has not apologised to gay people, he has not repented for his intolerance of the LGBT community and, quite frankly, he is very unlikely to put human rights above those of his somewhat skewed evangelical ideals. It is nothing short of shameful that Trevor Phillips, backed by a Labour government, has given his stamp of approval to a man who has no respect for one of the six equality strands. It is indicative of the pernicious rise of the right slowly seeping back into the structures of our society that Joel Edwards can be endorsed in such an important post. Equality has to be for all or it is for none. Congress, I urge you to send a strong message that we will not stand for intolerance and will protect the human rights of all of our members. Another of his choice quotes, Joel Edwards' views on the BBC's Thought for the Day,

"I think in the sex obsession war gay and lesbian people will win hands down." Congress, let's send him a clear message, in the war for human rights and equal rights, go, and go now, we will not stand for your intolerance. (*Applause*)

Maria Exall (*Communication Workers Union*) seconded Motion 17.

She said: On behalf of the TUC LGBT Conference. Congress, the appointment of Joel Edwards to the Equality and Human Rights Commission is a profound insult to LGBT people in this country. It is not surprising that this was the motion that was chosen overwhelmingly by our conference to come to Congress today.

Joel Edwards is a director of the right-wing Evangelical Alliance. He has opposed every single piece of legislation on LGBT rights brought in by Labour since 1997. In the name of religious rights he has organised, he has lobbied, he has produced propaganda against all of them. So, how come he was appointed? LGBT trade unionists have concluded that when it comes to the Equality and Human Rights Commission our rights do not count. We cannot imagine an appointment of someone who had a similar track record of opposition on gender or race equality. Can you imagine Norman Tebbit as Race Commissioner or Jeremy Clarkson as Gender Commissioner? I do not think so. But if there is a logical explanation for the appointment it is one with a dangerous assumption that somehow LGBT rights can be balanced against religious freedom. It is this thinking that has led to the tribunal judgment on the Islington Registrar who can now refuse to conduct civil partnerships because she is a Christian.

But our civil rights cannot be subject to the conscience of others. That is not equality. Our human rights cannot be compromised by someone else's beliefs. That is not equal rights. Joel Edwards believes there should be mass exemptions for religious organisations from equality law, more opt outs on employment and on access to goods and services. If these are allowed, it would drive a cart and horses through the current legal protections. You can see how damaging these views are for an EHRC commissioner. Now consider his position under a government that is less sympathetic to LGBT equality.

Congress, it would be wrong for you to think that this motion is in any way hostile to religion. There are many religious people who support full civil rights for LGBT people but Joel Edwards is not one of them. There are many Christians who support full civil rights for LGBT people but Joel Edwards is not one of them. There are even evangelicals who support full civil rights for LGBT people but Joel Edwards is not one of them. Joel Edwards believes that LGBT people are second-class citizens. Joel Edwards should not have been appointed. Joel Edwards should be removed as a commissioner. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

Julia Neal (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) spoke in support of Motion 17.

She said: I am a member of the LGBT Committee and immediate past President of the ATL. When Joel Edwards, the General Director of the Evangelical Alliance, was appointed to the Equality and Human Rights Commission the government justified the appointment by saying that Joel brings a wealth of expertise, commitment, and a strong track record in dealing with equality issues. So what does this track record actually consist of, Congress? For a start, in February 2007 Joel Edwards wrote to the Government asking for exemptions from equality legislation in the provision of goods and services for lesbian and gay people. He asked specifically that Christian adoption agencies be allowed to opt out of dealing with gay

couples. Two months later he complained that our legislation around LGBT equality, which is by no means perfect, nor indeed sufficient, will undermine the right to live a Christian lifestyle. Essential to this Christian lifestyle, according to the Evangelical Alliance, is the belief that sexuality is a behaviour choice and that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people will come in due course to see that they need to change their lifestyle in accordance with biblical revelation.

What does the Evangelical Alliance cite as biblical revelation? That God has proscribed marriage other than that between a man and a woman for practical, sociological, and cultural reasons. Marriage between man and woman, so the Evangelical Alliance cites, is crucial for family life and the best context for children. "I believe homosexuality is sinful," says Edwards, and he goes on to defend himself by saying that in a liberal democracy this is really freedom of speech. So, there you go, Congress, that is Joel Edwards for you, champion of equality and human rights for everyone. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Tamsin Piper (*Unite*) said: As a member of the TUC LGBT Committee, Julia, Maria and Jamie have all made good points about the background, about what Joel Edwards has said and done. I want to talk about where his beliefs come from and then a little bit more. He is opposed to equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people, on the basis of Old Testament laws, particularly Leviticus 18:22, which says: "Man shall not lie down with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." So, let's look at Leviticus because it does not just cover sexual behaviour. Leviticus 21 concerns rules governing priests. The first line, priests must not cut their hair off the sides of the head or shave the sides of their beards. If you take a look at a photo of Joel Edwards, which is available on the Evangelical Alliance website, you will see that he cuts his hair short, very short, and shaves the side of his beard. He also wears glasses. Leviticus 21:16 prohibits any physical defect from being a priest, including anybody who has any eye defect. So, that is two counts against him. I do not know for certain but it is probably a safe bet that he also wears clothes that are made of mixed fibres, which are banned by Leviticus 19:19. I call him a hypocrite. You cannot take one part of the Old Testament to judge people and then insist that the other parts of it do not apply. I call him a hypocrite. I urge you to support the motion. (*Applause*)

Phyllis Opoku Gyimah (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 17. She said: PCS members are appalled that there is a homophobic person who has been appointed as a commissioner to the Equality and Human Rights Commission. I only have to mention the name Trevor Phillips and you probably think I am swearing at you and you will start to boo and hiss. What we have to do is ask ourselves why on earth does Mr Phillips continue to allow Joel Edwards to hold such a high-standing position that deals with equality and our basic human rights to be who we are without fear of being discriminated against.

Now, Joel Edwards has been a director for the Evangelical Alliance, he has been a probation officer, and also a minister. Why is he a man that is not compliant with the standards of behaviour and codes of conduct? He has clearly stated that same sex relationships are morally wrong and sinful. Now, the only sin that I see is Trevor Phillips and Joel Edwards still working in the EHRC. How on earth is Joel Edwards going to look at gay and lesbian issues if he has made a career out of opposing LGBT people? Can you imagine if Joel Edwards were to say that all women at work liked a little bit of slap and tickle every

now and again? He would be called a sexist. What if he said disabled people in wheelchairs are a hindrance to the workplace and he would not employ one for love nor money? He would be out. What about if he said all Muslims must convert to Christianity as their teachings are not good and the Koran is not fit for purpose? What if he said that we must make it really difficult for older people within the workplace because they stifle the growth and development of a productive workforce? Or, the latter, what if he said, "Don't bother with race impact assessments, or equality grouping on recruitment and selection because black and minority ethnic people if they are not getting the jobs it just means that they are thick and should not hold senior positions." If Joel Edwards was to say any of that, do you really think it would be tolerated? I do not think so. Let us not accept his homophobic statements either.

It saddens our PCS members who work within the EHRC with such a man. I urge you to support this motion and this campaign to remove him from the board because Joel Edwards' appointment has clearly distorted the concept of human rights. Let us not go backward and lose what we have stood and fought so hard for within this trades union movement, which is equality across the board. PCS supports this motion; so should you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you. We will now go to the vote. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Motion 17 was CARRIED.*

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights

Mary Page (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*) speaking to paragraph 3.8, said: I draw your attention to the last paragraph in 3.8, the section dealing with legislation in the UK and Europe. President, Congress, the trades union movement working with our friends in Parliament has done a great deal to resolve the pension inequalities which until recently were the lot of same sex couples. Four years ago in this conference hall I had the great honour of moving the motion which called for survivors' pension rights for such couples. Congress responded magnificently and gave overwhelming support for this just and reasonable demand. This was taken up by our supporters in Parliament, notably by Angela Eagle MP, and became law with the Civil Partnership Act, a great victory for the trades union movement united in support of meaningful equality issues, but there is still a gap which needs closing and once again we are calling for your help in doing this.

There are within the regulations which affect those in the seat of government and local government pensions rules which serve to codify discrimination on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation. To take the teaching profession, which I know best as an example, whereas widows of serving teachers receive pension benefits backdated to 1978, widowers and same sex partner benefits extend only to 1988, which is a 10-year discrepancy. Now, this is clearly unfair and discriminatory because we have paid the same contributions as our married male colleagues yet our surviving partners will receive substantially less in benefit. A recent judgment in the European Court seems to indicate that the UK Government is in fact acting unlawfully in allowing this discrimination to continue. Remedying this will not require huge sums of money, money which in any case could well be reduced by a lower uptake of state benefits. I am pleased that my union, NASUWT, will be calling upon affiliate unions to lobby parliament with the aim of rectifying this injustice and securing equal and fair pension rights for all regardless of gender or sexual orientation. We urge Congress to take such steps as

appropriate to bring pressure upon the Government to remove this discrimination and bring widowers and same sex partners survivor benefits into line with the surviving widows. You did it once. You can do it again. Please help. *(Applause)*

Improving maternity pay

Jeff Broome (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) moved Motion 18.

He said: Campaigning for equality at work is part of our everyday bread and butter work, crucial to the core mission of winning better rights for working people. Improving maternity rights for women workers is at the very heart of that mission. It is a high priority for USDAW, given the number of low-paid women workers we represent, and a high priority for this government, too, an effective weapon in the struggle for women's equality but also in the fight against child poverty.

Despite recent improvements, having a baby in the UK continues to put women in danger of losing their job, of moving into and remaining trapped in low-paid work and of getting into debt. The UK still ranks among the lowest in the EU for paid maternity leave. On average our women members who take their full entitlement to leave lose around £7,000 - £7,000! - at a time when they cannot afford to lose a penny.

We have made progress with employers negotiating improvements but employer provision is patchy. We want to see maternity pay tied more closely to earnings and we want to see better support for women workers, and their families, at a time when they need it the most. OK, it is ambitious, it is a big act, but so was the Government's target to end child poverty by 2020. Let's not forget those women who do not qualify for maternity pay who because of sickness, very often pregnancy related, do not earn enough during the relevant calculation period, that brief, very brief, eight-week window of opportunity, and it is not only sickness that affects this entitlement. Taking unpaid emergency time off or parental leave can, and does, mean women do not qualify and whilst they may qualify for maternity allowance instead, maternity allowance is not necessarily paid at a flat rate, it is often paid as a percentage of earnings. For our women members already on a low income it is just not enough.

It is not only maternity pay that matters to women workers, as crucial as that is, women need more protection from unfair treatment, they need security of knowing that after maternity leave they can return to their old job; as it stands, they do not have that security. We have evidence of employers pushing women too hard to fill vacancies when they return, relocating them to different stores miles away from their previous workplace, slashing their hours and downgrading them, and taking away responsibility.

There are those who will tell us that we are damaging women's job prospects by giving them stronger maternity rights and that we are making women unemployable. OK, in that case tell us who is going to sit behind the checkouts in supermarkets up and down the country? Tell us who is going to staff the NHS? Tell us who is going to teach our children and staff our nurseries? Who is going to step into the breach to prevent the entire economy collapsing round our ears? It is a myth and it is a myth of the worst order peddled by backward looking unscrupulous employers who want to be given free-range to discriminate and dismiss women at the drop of a hat. Men do not get pregnant. Every time we press for protection from discrimination, for fair and equal treatment, this myth is wheeled out. Well, we are not having it. Improving maternity rights and pay will stay at the very top of our agenda and we will continue to work to make sure it

occupies the number one spot on employer and government agendas, too. Please support.

Pat Donnelly (*Community*) seconded Motion 18.

He said: Community welcomes the opportunity to second this motion. This motion is about parents and family. When the Labour Government came to power they more than doubled the amount of statutory maternity pay, but it still stands at £117 per week. As we all know, £117 is not a lot to get by on when your life is transformed by the birth of a child. Too many working parents are trapped in a cycle of poverty.

The increase in statutory maternity pay was one of the many measures aimed at alleviating child poverty. To date, 600,000 children have been lifted out of that poverty. However, although great inroads have been made, we are too close to missing the target. Too many families are forced to choose between spending time with their newborn child and returning to work and the high cost of childcare adds to these pressures. Too many families are penalised by a system of calculating maternity pay. Why should a woman lose out on maternity pay if she has been off sick? Why should a woman lose out on maternity pay because she has taken unpaid parental leave? Why should a woman be penalised if she wants to take maternity leave for longer than six months because it is not guaranteed that she will return to the same job? This is what happens under the current system.

At the recent Labour Party National Policy Forum in Warwick, unions received a commitment from the Government that no parent would suffer detriment as a result of taking parental leave. This motion, with your support, can help ensure that the Government is held to this commitment. Congress, we must support all steps that are taken towards ending child poverty. This is one step. Support the motion. *(Applause)*

Margaret Gregg (*GMB*) supported the motion.

She said: Maternity pay is set at £112 per week. This amount is grossly unfair. How can you bring up a child, support a family and look after yourself on such a paltry sum, when struggling to afford the basics, food, clothing and a roof over your family's head? Increasing food and fuel prices add to the strain, especially with the recent increases. Many women are required to scrimp and save when they are planning a pregnancy. Others are dragged into poverty when they are on maternity leave.

A GMB member told me recently, "Financially, it has been a struggle for the first four weeks after my baby was born. I only ate once a day. That was all that I could afford on £112 per week. Having to pay the bills and buy everything for the baby it is a real struggle to make ends meet."

Mothers are at greater risk of poverty in the UK than in any other western European country. From the moment they conceive a child, women face immediate financial penalties. Thousands lose their jobs and many more face disadvantage and reduced opportunities in the workplace.

So what would be the benefits of increasing maternity pay and what are the advantages of providing decent maternity pay for new mothers? Mothers would be able to go back to work when they are ready. They could be off work longer so that they are able to recover and manage effectively the demands of bringing up a child. When they re-integrate into the workplace, they will be in a much better position to do so successfully.

In the longer term, women on maternity leave suffer a loss in income, increasing the pay differential between men and women. Increased maternity pay would create substantive benefits for a woman in the long

and short term and lead to a reduction in the equal pay gap.

Lower maternity reduces lifetime earnings and contributions made into pensions, penalising mothers in retirement. We believe that there is considerable merit in linking the level of maternity pay to salary. Congress, support the motion.

The President: Thank you very much. We will move straight to the vote. The General Council supports the motion.

* *Motion 18 was CARRIED*

Abortion rights

Lorene Fabian (*Unite*) moved Motion 19 on behalf of the TUC Women's Committee.

She said: Congress, 2008 has yet again seen another pivotal moment in the struggle for the right to choose. In May of this year, we had to mobilise and campaign against anti-abortion amendments in the House of Commons, designed to lower the upper time limit for abortion from 24 weeks and we should be proud that every anti-choice amendment tagged on to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill was defeated. We should congratulate those MPs who voted as the vast majority of the British public would have wished them to. A recent poll showed that a massive 83 per cent of the British public believe in a woman's right to choose. We overcame that attack in a magnificent manner, thanks in the main to the trade union movement, who used their influence with their MPs in the House. We, as trade unions, will attract women members by loudly standing up for their fundamental rights.

One in three women workers will have an abortion at some point in their life. The reality is that disproportionately we, as working-class women – the actual paying women members, comrades – are confronted with serious issues when trying to access an abortion. Many poorer women find it impossible to find the £450 plus private sector fee when their GP fobs them off or when they are put on a six-week waiting list. This is a common experience.

Before the 1967 Abortion Act thousands upon thousands of women lost their lives having backstreet abortions and, if we allow the legislation covering abortion to be eroded, women will resort to desperate and dangerous measures. There are many reasons why women need to be able to access an abortion and, in less than one per cent of cases, a late abortion. Late abortions are needed by women who did not know they were pregnant until later on because they were consistently using contraception or were nearing the menopause. Late abortions are needed for women delayed or lost in the system by the NHS. Some women face profound denial associated with trauma, such as rape and incest.

Congress, this fight, in many senses, has only just begun. The HF&E Bill goes into its Report Stage this autumn. Those opposed to a woman's right to choose have once again tabled amendments to drive back women's rights. These amendments must be vigorously opposed and defeated. These include amendments which would obstruct women's access to abortion services, impose compulsory counselling and cooling off periods, restrict the grounds for abortion and make later abortions even harder to access.

In addition, pro-choice MPs have tabled positive amendments calling for an end to the archaic rule that two doctors need to approve a woman's decision, a rule only applied elsewhere to people involuntarily treated under the Mental Health Act. What an insult! Positive amendments will remove the pretext for obstruction by anti-choice GPs and the weeks of delays in accessing services. They will allow nurses to

administer early abortion and outlaw deliberately misleading advertising by anti-abortion counselling services. Importantly, an amendment has been tabled by Diane Abbott MP to extend finally abortion rights to Northern Ireland, ending the historic injustice of forcing thousands of women to travel to Britain for safe legal services. This must be supported.

MPs must hear the strength of the pro-choice feeling ahead of the vote. Abortion rights and the national pro-choice campaign have all the briefing information and campaign materials you will need. Please go away from this Congress and contact your members with model lobbying letters, place articles in your journals, contact your local media, organise public meetings, support abortion rights public initiatives and protest ahead of the vote. On your chairs, many of you will see an informed newsletter called *Choice*. Please read that. It has all the information you need. In that, it also has an affiliation form so get your branches to affiliate.

We cannot allow the minority pro-life lobby to get away with its cynical, scaremongering campaign, aided and abetted by certain scurrilous areas of the media. Congress, I suspect there are some people here, just a few, from the trade union movement who are uncomfortable with this situation and we should respect their views. However, they, in turn, should respect our views and, more importantly, our policy. It is a policy, by the way, that did not just plop onto the agenda at branch meetings, regional councils, regional divisions, and regional or national conferences as if by magic, but was hard fought for through our equality structures. Attempts to highlight equality issues and positive rights must not fall off the bargaining agenda. We do not want lip service; we want action. Please support us. (*Applause*)

Marilyn Bater (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded Motion 19.

She said: The NUT is pleased to second this important motion and endorses it wholeheartedly, but I particularly want to focus on action point (v) on page 15 of your agenda, which calls for improved sex education in schools.

I would like to emphasise that the motion is not critical of the work of teachers when calling for this improvement. Rather, it draws attention to the need for proper sex and relationships education where both young women and your men get accurate, unbiased information and honest answers to deeply-felt concerns and questions at this formative time in their lives.

Our union believes that nothing less will do. Anything less does not deserve the name 'education'. Indeed, we believe that it is central to the pro-choice movement that young women are fully equipped to make informed choices. This is illustrated by the recent campaign of misinformation, lies and damn lies in the right wing media during the debates on the amendments to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill. For example, of '20 facts you should know about abortion', not one was actually a fact. Not one referred to the views of the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists or the Royal College of Nurses because they did not fit the anti-choice agenda being perpetrated.

Our young people deserve education, not information. To provide that education, teachers should be free from threats or intimidation from anti-choice groups or those who wish to perpetrate homophobia. Teachers need support to gain the skills and confidence to teach sex and relationships education and the space in our overcrowded and over-prescriptive curriculum if they

are to do this in a meaningful way. Congress, nothing less will do. *(Applause)*

Judy McKnight (*napo*), in supporting Motion 19, said:

Congress, I am pleased to speak in support of this motion, not only on behalf of NAPO, but also in my capacity as Chair of the TUC Women's Committee. The fact that the TUC Women's Conference in March voted overwhelmingly for this motion on abortion rights to be the motion which Conference sent to Congress is indicative of the strength of feeling on the importance attached to this fight by women delegates at that conference.

The mover and seconder of the motion have outlined the substantive issues at stake in terms of the ongoing campaign to defend abortion rights, rights in place since 1967 (except, of course, for our sisters in Northern Ireland) and rights which many of us women take for granted. This is the right to choose.

Let me quickly set out five lessons which I hope that delegates will take back from this Congress today. First, vigilance: the well-funded anti-abortion lobby will never give up its campaign to oppose and restrict abortion rights. We must never give up.

Secondly, campaigning: this is, working with bodies such as Abortion Rights, who work with MPs, trade unions, women's organisations and the medical and sexual health organisations to ensure that women's voices and scientific evidence is central in the debate and the campaign.

Thirdly, communicating: that is, using our structures in the trade union movement to get the facts out. As other speakers have said, it is to oppose the often emotive myths which have been peddled by the anti-abortionists. Let us get the facts out to our members. Let us give them the ammunition and the evidence to lobby MPs.

Fourthly, organise: ensuring within trade unions that we are organised to get that information understood. There is the importance of equality structures within trade unions to ensure that these issues can be aired to ensure that women's voices can be heard within trade unions.

Fifthly, we should affiliate to Abortion Rights. Abortion Rights is a critical body in this campaign. As Lorene said in moving the motion, it produces the sort of publications they have on choice. The anti-abortionists have the money. Abortion Rights needs our money and it needs the platforms that we can give them at our conferences and committee meetings.

So, please support this motion, but also take the campaign back to your unions, the fight that we will be carrying on in Parliament in the autumn. We must continue to defend our rights and our right to choose. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

Janet Cassidy (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) supported Motion 19.

She said: This year, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the enactment of the Abortion Act, a piece of legislation which effectively brought an end to backstreet abortions and saved thousands of women's lives. Yet, 40 years on, women continue to face unnecessary barriers to access.

As trade unionists, we have long recognised the immeasurable economic, educational and social importance to women of access to birth control and abortion. We have played a key role in defending women's rights to abortion when they have come under attack in the past. Abortions are carried out for different reasons and the decision is not taken lightly. The RMT is affiliated nationally to Abortion Rights, encouraging our branches and regional councils to do

likewise. Other unions need to do the same as Abortion Rights has done much campaigning work over the years and will continue to do so as long as there are sufficient resources. Let us support a women's right to choose, defend the current limit of 24 weeks and call for an extension to Northern Ireland. Congress, support this motion.

Cheryl Gadling (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 19.

She said: In PCS, we are tired of hearing the anti-abortionists call themselves 'pro-life', as if those of us who support a woman's right to choose somehow are not. We are all pro-life, but where we differ fundamentally from the anti-abortionists is that we are pro-choice. We support a woman's right to make fundamental choices about her own fertility safely and legally. We oppose any attacks on the legal right to abortion by those who would condemn women to continue a pregnancy to full term against their will, with all the physical and psychological harm that would bring, or to illegal backstreet abortions or to even worse measures.

We oppose those who would take us back 40 years, pre-1967, pre-contraception, when women knew their place. There can be no doubt that the 1967 Abortion Act is one of the most significant achievements for women in the 20th century. By allowing women, for the first time, to control their own fertility and to make family planning a reality rather than an aspiration, they were finally able to play a full part in social, economic and working life. It is all too easy today to take this for granted and to forget what life was like for women who had unwanted pregnancies before 1967.

However, there is no room for complacency, Congress. Despite poll after poll confirming that the vast majority of the public support a woman's right to access safe, legal abortion, despite support that crosses party political boundaries and includes the British Medical Association, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, a host of women's organisations, trade unions and the National Union of Students, and despite this broad consensus for choice which exists across the UK, we have to fight to defend the right to choose. We have to fight the sensationalist media coverage which demonises women as irresponsible and promiscuous, who use abortion as a contraceptive. We have to fight the myth that ending a pregnancy leads to a life sentence of trauma and guilt. We have to expose the lie that there have been any miraculous medical breakthroughs where emotive footage of foetuses supposedly walking and smiling in the womb is being used to justify calls for a reduction in the time limit, for cooling off periods and for compulsory counselling.

Also, we have to fight the anti-choice minority, who are very much in the minority but who are very well-funded, well-organised and vocal. They are applying the same tactics as in America, a relentless erosion of the legal right to abortion with the ultimate aim of removing it altogether.

Speaking of America, Sarah Palin, we have a newsflash for you. Our position is not anything to do with the fact you are a woman; it is because you are a gun-toting, evolution-denying, anti-abortionist. *(Applause)* It is because you are a member of Feminist for Life. It is because you have stated publicly that if your teenage daughter was impregnated by a rapist, you would deny her an abortion. It is impossible to conceive of a more grotesque betrayal of feminism than that!

Congress, it is incumbent upon us today, as trade unionists representing tens of thousands of women members right across the UK, to hear from women in this debate, to defend women and to ensure that

decisions about abortion are in the hands of those who are best able to make that decision - that is women themselves. *(Applause)*

Vicky Knight (*Fire Brigades Union*) supported Motion 19. She said: I am proudly supporting Motion 19 on abortion rights and thank Amicus-Unite and the PCS for bringing it to the TUC Women's Conference, ensuring that these assaults on women's rights and workers' rights do not pass under the radar without challenge.

With 50 per cent of the trade union workforce now being women and one in every three of those women workers going to have an abortion at some time in their lives, this situation absolutely makes abortion rights and women's right to choose a central trade union issue. The attacks on, and erosion of, women's rights has the obvious magnified impact on poorer working women, those without the funds to choose, constrained by poverty and the minimum wage, those who can ill afford safe legal abortion and yet find themselves tied by opinion and hope that conscientious objection does not feature in their struggle for a self-determined future.

Comrades, a right to choose is fundamental to women's autonomy and women's equality. Sisters and brothers, as Lorene said (and I only found out myself last night) there are only two procedures in this country which require the permission of two doctors: abortion and detention under the Mental Health Act. Draw from that your own conclusions!

On 20th May 2008, MPs defeated anti-abortion amendments to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill to lower the abortion time limits from 24 to 22 weeks. This was a huge victory for all women, but it was in effect a marathon run in order to stand still on progress. What did it do? It found the sensationalist media frenzy redoubling its efforts against a woman's right to choose and it is not just here at home. This is global, as has been mentioned already by previous sisters.

The anti-choice lobby has no funding crisis. It has already declared its intention to seek a repeat vote on the time limits after the next general election. More immediately, 13 restrictive amendments have been tabled for the next stage of the Bill at the Report Stage and yet none of these amendments seek to be helpful to women. It does not help women's choice and, as has already been stated, it does not help women in Northern Ireland to extend the current legislative requirements to them for safe abortion. The votes will be taken in the autumn and all amendments need to be vigorously opposed.

Sisters and brothers, we need to redouble our efforts in support of a woman's right to choose. If all 58 unions, with the strength of 6.5 million workers, act together to put pressure on this Government to support women, to support workers, to support freedom of choice and to support women's ability to determine their own future then together we can effect change. Congress, together we can neutralise the Palin effect - and I do not mean Michael! I mean the gun-toting, war-loving, homophobic tool in the armoury of McCain's right wing propaganda campaign in the US. A self-confessed feminist? I think not. In the words of Jim Royle, "My arse!" That woman does no favour to women in the UK." *(Applause)* The global assault on a woman's right to choose needs a united response. Comrades, that means us. Support the Abortion Rights campaign, affiliate to it if you have not already done so and give some money where you can.

Finally, Congress, this is a thought for this Labour government. If you want a quick win and you want to deliver something that is easy 40 years after the Abortion Act, if you are committed to equality and

committed to ending child poverty and not just to reducing it, then kick out the right wing nonsense. It is within your power whilst you still have it so, quick, please support, comrades. *(Applause)*

The President: The General Council support the vote.

* *Motion 19 was CARRIED*

Equal Pay

Judy McKnight (*General Council*) said:

President, Congress, I am very pleased to introduce *Winning equal pay*, a four-minute trailer for the TUC equal pay film archives. The film is a mixture of speech and also has some visual clips. If anybody is not able to fully access the video in its current form, if they let us know, we will ensure that full transcripts are available.

In 1888, the TUC Congress passed its first equal pay resolution. That was 120 years ago. This year we celebrate the 120th anniversary of the Match Women's strike at the Bryant and May factory in London's East End as well as the 40th anniversary of the Ford sewing machinists' strike at Dagenham, a courageous strike that led directly to the 1970 Equal Pay Act. But, colleagues, 120 years after that first equal pay resolution, we still do not have equal pay. For every pound that a man earns, a woman earns only 83p. Women in their forties who work full-time earn a massive 20 per cent less than men in their forties. It is unjust and it is wrong.

Fighting for equal pay remains at the heart of the trade union agenda and do not let any 'get rich quick no win fee' lawyer tell you otherwise. We are about to see a short film that celebrates the historic role of trade unions in challenging unequal pay. It is a trailer for the TUC equal pay archive, a series of eight filmed interviews with participants in landmark equal pay victories. It is a terrific new TUC documentary which has been widely used in unions, universities and schools, a tribute to Jo Morris and the TUC, who were responsible for putting it together.

The film records the massive changes in pay and grading structures that many of us have seen in our lifetime. I am proud that trade unions have been at the forefront in fighting for those changes. The ground-breaking equal value cases of the 1990s were, without exception, backed by trade unions. Without trade union support, these challenges to how women's skills were valued would not have been successful. As never before, every union negotiator needs to be vigilant to ensure that pay and grading settlements are watertight and deliver equal pay. Unionlearn has produced an excellent up-to-the-minute course on pay and grading issues, led by leading legal specialists. It has been rolled out in some large affiliates with very good feedback.

I hope those unions which are not already doing their own equal pay training will consider delivering the TUC course to their own officers and officials. This film tells the story of a hidden history, the turbulent history of women's struggle for equal pay. Brothers and sisters, never forget the fight goes on. *(Applause)* *(The video was then shown)*

The President: Congress, the video is a tribute to all our work on equal pay, but also a reminder of how much still needs to be done.

Closing the ethnic minority employment gap

Leslie Manasseh (*Connect*) moved Motion 21.

He said: I am a bit torn by this, Congress, because, on the one hand, I am very pleased to move this motion on behalf of the Black Workers' Conference but, on the

other, I think it is nothing short of a disgrace that I should have to because in every possible way, in terms of equality, workplace justice, social cohesion, individual aspiration, productivity and making use of talent, that employment gap represents the persistent failure of employers to give black workers a fair deal.

The Business Commission Report on Race Equality in the Workplace is a comprehensive, carefully-researched and, frankly, quite candid admission of that fact. It is entitled '60-76' to make the point that while 76 per cent of white people of working age have a job, only 60 per cent of black people do. It says that up to half of that gap may be due to discrimination in employment of one sort or another and unless employers change their behaviour, that gap will continue. Just think about that for a moment, Congress. The business community itself is saying that more than 250,000 black workers are denied a job because of the colour of their skin. It is a welcome admission of a very unwelcome fact.

Of course, we have known about that employment gap for as long as I can remember. We know about the black worker who does not get the interview, who does not get the job, who does not get the permanent contract, who does not get the training and who does not get the pay rise because they are our members. We know also that these are not isolated random incidents but evidence of a systemic and institutional problem which requires a collective response so I want to concentrate on what unions can do.

It has become increasingly clear to me that employers, most notably in the private sector, feel under little or no pressure to implement race equality policies or to consider whether there is an organisational bias against black workers. They do not fear the prospect of further legislation. They do not fear the enforcement regime associated with the current legislation. Doing nothing appears to carry little or no penalty.

It is within this kind of vacuum that unions can, and must, act. We are the only means for black workers collectively to challenge discrimination in the workplace and it is our job to ensure that employers do feel under pressure to act on race equality. This means, I believe, a change in gear and a change in emphasis. During recent years, we have quite rightly focused on building race equality into our internal structures and organisations. We have tried to make sure that within the unions, black workers have a voice and are fully represented. We have made quite a lot of progress. There is no room for complacency, of course, but things are getting better.

However, we must ensure that giving black workers a structure and a voice within trade unions does not stop there. This must not be an end in itself. In giving black workers a rightful voice, we must make sure that employers then hear it. We must make sure that equality structures strengthen our capacity and commitment to bargain for race equality and to bring employers to account. We must focus on organising, and not just our own organisation.

I am certain, Congress, that just a few months of confident and robust campaigning and bargaining by trade unions is worth certainly as much, and very possibly more, than years of sitting around a table of government task forces trying to find policy levers to try and nudge employers this way or that way. This is the challenge and the opportunity. Trade unions can bring race equality to all workplaces, but only if we reach out to non-members, particularly in the private sector, and put race equality at the centre of our negotiations with employers. We can, and should, use the Business Commission Report to put pressure on them. We can, and should, challenge them to equality-proof the way they operate. We can, and should, campaign to keep race equality at the top of the agenda. The ethnic minority employment gap is a

disgrace and unions offer the only sure way to make sure we get it. Please support. *(Applause)*

Zita Holbourne (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Motion 21.

She said: Congress, I am a member of the TUC Race Relations Committee.

In addition to the 16 per cent gap between white and black employment rates, 20 per cent of children living in poverty in this country are black. The gap costs £8.6bn annually. To close it, around 600,000 more black and minority ethnic people need to be in work. The key reason for the gap is the discrimination and disadvantage faced by black people in recruitment and employment. This takes many different forms and does not just affect individuals. It includes institutionalised discrimination impacting on people collectively.

Discrimination occurs in levels of employment, pay, promotion, appraisal systems and access to services. It is sometimes direct, but it also includes harassment and victimisation. Black workers are still disproportionately represented in low paid, part-time jobs. You only have to look at the Civil Service, where I am based, to see that black workers are highly concentrated in the lower grades, reduced the further up they go and almost non-existent by the time you reach the senior civil service.

Trade unions have a key role to play in combating the systems of disadvantage and discrimination faced by black people, both seeking and in employment. Engaging with union black structures is essential so that black members directly affected have the expertise and advice to suggest solutions. That is not to say that this is a concern just for black trade unionists. It is the responsibility of us all to tackle all forms of discrimination we encounter, especially where it leads to serious levels of unemployment and poverty impacting on standards of living and access to education affecting generations.

I am proud that my own union tackles low and unequal pay as a priority and that we run a range of events to support activists in tackling discrimination and disadvantage. We have black structures at all levels to tailor training and development programmes for black members. Union engagement with employers is crucial in order to get them to provide effective training and development programmes to ensure that their recruitment and appraisal procedures do not discriminate.

The TUC earlier this year published a report entitled *Ten years after - Black workers in employment*. The report refers to serious concerns about lack of employee engagement and strategies directed at race discrimination in the workplace. The National Employment Panel identified that 42 per cent of private employers could give no reasons for their organisations to take steps to promote race equality and 83 per cent of them did not think that any action, including litigation, would be taken against them if they did nothing. However, individual litigation does not, by itself, lift the barriers faced by black people.

Trade unions need to be proactive instead of simply reacting to individual complaints. They need to work with employers to bring about change and long-term solutions to prevent discrimination occurring in the first place. Systems of institutionalised racism are still thriving despite the public sector race duty, which should be eliminating this type of discrimination, despite unions like the PCS campaigning vigorously for proper enforcement of the duty.

To end, Congress, until there are effective changes in the law, the situation is not going to improve without proper engagement with employers, and with equality

at the heart of all collective bargaining. We have to ensure we have robust monitoring, reporting and enforcement. Unions have a key role to play in ensuring that this happens and a duty to hold the government to account. Please ensure that your union is proactive in taking steps and measures to close the minority ethnic employment gap. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

Mark Clifford (*UNISON*) supported Motion 21.

He said: Congress, the ethnic minority gap, i.e. the discrimination still faced by black workers, remains a bridge too far. This gap is a blight on our society. According to a report by the National Audit Office, large proportions of black people are living in deprived areas with high levels of unemployment and discrimination when looking for work. As long as this gap remains, so will high levels of poverty amongst black people.

Research carried out by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that the poverty rate for Britain's black people stands at 40 per cent, which is double the 20 per cent found amongst white British people. The research also found that black people have been overlooked for jobs and have been paid lower wages despite improvements in education and qualifications. Although the Government had made efforts in a bid to close this gap, their efforts seem to lack continuity and the problem still remains. Unless more work is done to reach out to black communities, prospects for increasing their employment rate remain bleak. Even though there has been a slow but steady reduction rate in the gap, many black people still face multiple barriers in gaining employment.

UNISON welcomes the Race Relations (Amendment) Act of 2000. We are using this Act to ensure that employers review their policies and understand and address the continuing discrimination faced by black workers. Our aim is to ensure that challenging racism becomes a core UNISON business for all our activists and officers and to help employees comply with the new equality duty by ensuring that they actively promote and deliver race equality.

UNISON welcomed the announcement in June of the proposed Equality Bill. In their announcement, the Government proposed that it would introduce measures to allow employers to take into account the under-representation of black people when selecting between candidates of equal ability. These positive measures caused uproar in some parts of the media, but they are small and reasonable steps that employers should be able to take.

Trade unions have led the way in tackling discrimination and reducing unemployment levels amongst black people. However, more must be done. This can be achieved by tackling the ethnic minority employment gap in all our bargaining work and keeping it as a top priority. Congress, support. *(Applause)*

Hyacinth Palmer (*Unite*) spoke in support of Motion 21.

She said: Congress, we welcome the National Employment Panel on racial equality, but we do not welcome the fact that for more than 20 years the unemployment level for black workers remains at nearly twice the level of white workers, that black people receive less pay for the work they do and that employers have been allowed to get away with not employing black people for far too long, purely due to discrimination.

As a trade union movement, we have to do more to challenge discrimination and fight inequality wherever we can. It must be a priority issue on all our

bargaining agendas because, as far as we are concerned, there are no more excuses. When a worker does not get a job because of the colour of his skin, the time for excuses is over. Action must be taken. We must get employers to tackle inequality in recruitment and selection and make sure that those involved are fully trained in diversity. They need to be aware of how stereotyping can stop the right people both from coming forward and from getting the job.

Unite strongly believe that electing union equality reps can make a big difference in how the trade union movement can help to eliminate discrimination in employment. They can also play a key role in equality-improving policies, in monitoring recruitment and selection procedures, in equality auditing and in ensuring a representative workplace by working with the workforce and the community to identify and remove any barriers. We know that the report backs up the fact that few employers go beyond the bottom line when it comes to racism. Only a few have raised equality policies, and those who have them are paper policies and not put into practice. We have to follow it up by real action targets, monitoring and public report of achievement as proposed by the Equality Bill. We believe that the Government should take positive action by making union equality reps statutory.

Congress, the ethnic minority employment gap must be closed in order for us to move forward and, as a trade union, we have a critical role to play. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: We will move straight to the vote. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Motion 21 was CARRIED*

Community Cohesion

The President: The General Council policy is to support Composite Motion 22.

Amanda Haehner (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*) moved Composite Motion 22.

She said: This important composite motion identifies the central role of education in tackling prejudice, intolerance and extremism, but makes clear that teachers in schools and colleges cannot do so alone. NASUWT is particularly concerned at the intensification of racist attacks, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. These are attacks which strike at the very heart of trade union membership.

As trade unionists, we deplore the unfounded and illogical associations made by right wing politicians and media cheerleaders between terrorism, human rights violations and certain ethnic and religious communities. These can only aggravate racial and religious tensions.

The moral panic surrounding Islamic extremism is a case in point and how schools and colleges respond to this will have a direct bearing on the capacity to build positive and sustainable relationships with all sections of the community. The response by government and public services must be based upon the recognition of the diversity within our communities and by rejecting sweeping assertions that minority communities pose a threat to the British way of life. Regrettably, colleagues, the policy rhetoric from the Government's Department of Communities and Local Government is now being seized upon by the right wing media and exploited by the BNP and other far right groups. The Government must learn the lessons from this.

Tackling all incidences of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim prejudice and hate crime is the only viable method of achieving success in tackling

extremism. Focusing on one faith or ethnic group is a recipe for disaster. It is the duty of government to create the conditions in which it is possible for all workers to stand together to oppose those who seek to encourage hatred and bigotry.

We should all be deeply concerned at the resurgence of the BNP. We should all be deeply angered by the increase in racist attacks across the country which has been the product of far right infiltration into the heart of many working class communities. These developments pose a real and direct threat to the very idea of cohesive and integrated communities and one which should unite us in action.

All of us who work in public services are at risk of a threat from the BNP. Colleagues, those of us who work in education do so because we believe in promoting the life chances of all young people. Anyone who does not share that agenda has no place in the education world or in public service. That is why the NASUWT continues to campaign for legislation to prohibit members of the BNP and other far right fascist groups from working in education or holding office as school governors. We hope the TUC will support our efforts to achieve this ambition.

NASUWT welcomes the support, in particular, of UNISON, the NUJ and PCS of our motion, which recognises that schools, colleges and the wider community must work together to promote successfully genuine community cohesion and in taking effective action to tackle violent extremism. From this month, OFSTED will be inspecting our schools and meeting its duty to promote community cohesion. Although many schools are already taking progressive steps in this direction, we believe that many local authorities are not geared up to support schools in implementing this positive duty.

We cannot afford to allow this new duty on schools to hit the buffers in the same way as did the public duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. The battle for equality has to take place in every aspect of public life, including the health service, local and regional government and the civil and public services, working to support schools in delivering every child and young person with a fully-rounded education in citizenship and trade union engagements. Colleagues, I urge you to support this composite. I move. (Applause)

Clare Williams (*UNISON*) seconded the motion.

She said: I am very pleased to second what I think is an extremely important motion and debate. Promoting community cohesion and combating the far right is a priority for UNISON and also for the Northern TUC. No one in this room needs reminding of the hate and division that the far right promote and the impact that this can have upon individuals, families, workplaces and communities, with people living with the threat of physical attacks. Also, I think we should acknowledge the many numbers of asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers who are living with the threat of deportation hanging over them as a product of a government policy which panders to a right wing political and media agenda.

We need a strategy that is broader than intervention only at election time. Although, of course, we do still need to focus on elections – and, I would say, in particular the Euro elections next year – the BNP is clearly targeting the Euro elections and believes that they have a real opportunity to win a seat. None of us should underestimate the impact of the BNP joining the Euro fascist block in the European Parliament. I think that everyone in this room would join with me in saying that we want to do whatever we can to make sure that that does not happen.

In the northern regions through the TUC, we have a programme of working with local councils and with

employers to promote diversity and to challenge racism and the myths against asylum seekers through training for shop stewards, training for members and joint publicity. We also focus on young people. We are sponsoring a banner theatre to go into schools and colleges to promote a show which challenges the myths about asylum seekers and refugees. We are working to show racism the red card, to promote football events, bringing communities and young people together both at schools and colleges. We are promoting club nights under the 'Hope not Hate' banner, targeting students. A programme encompassing all of these activities is about to be launched next month by Phil Wilson, who I want to congratulate, who is the Labour MP for Sedgefield, who has tackled the BNP head-on in his constituency and is campaigning on local issues.

Let us also remember that the BNP is exploiting the disillusionment felt by many within politics and mainstream political parties at the moment. Many people are experiencing low pay, low wages and lack of affordable housing. The BNP is trying to fill the vacuum and say that they are the party who represent them. We, in this room and in the labour movement, have to reclaim this role. It is us who have the policies, it is us who have the tradition of organising and campaigning and it is us who work with communities and people in workplaces to represent them and not the BNP. (*Applause*)

We need to make sure that we support migrant workers. Migrant workers need to be a key part of our strategy. We need to campaign and organise for them. Everyone in this room knows the importance of this debate and I say to you is, "Join wherever you can when you leave this hall to combat the far right and promote community cohesion." Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

Tim Lezard (*National Union of Journalists*) supported the motion.

He said: Congress, I am a former President of the NUJ, red as they come, and one of Searchlight's leading arse wipes. That is what it says on Redwatch about me.

The BNP can kiss my arse as far as I am concerned because being on Red Watch is no joke. For those of you who do not know, Red Watch is a website run by the far right. It has photographs and personal details, names, addresses and phone numbers of anti-BNP activists. It is a cynical, brutal and violent way of intimidating anti-fascists. Many journalists are on the site simply for doing their job in reporting on the BNP and exposing their racism and their hatred. But it is not just journalists; it is activists as well who suffer.

Let me tell you about an anti-BNP activist in Corsham. You probably do not know Corsham. It is a lovely, small market town in Wiltshire and it is famous only for being the home of Camilla Parker-Bowles. A BNP councillor was elected unopposed to the town council and Searchlight South-West organised a protest meeting outside the town hall for his first meeting. One of the people who came along to that protest was 21 year old Kyle Thornhill, who was so angered by the BNP's presence in his town that he organised a further protest at the next meeting. It was brilliant. Five hundred people there crammed onto the pavements of the street. It was the most colourful and vibrant demonstration I have ever been on.

The highlight of it for me was this black rasta on a bike with a rose in his teeth. It was like a Mexican wave. He would start at one end of the street and would be cycling along and people would be cheering him. He would get to the other end where this little group of BNP thugs were corralled. There were about 25 of them and about 500 of us. They were corralled with their union flags on and they were snarling. It was like

a Mexican wave. You tell me that the BNP are not racist because look at this. They could not stand a black man on a bike with a rose in his teeth. The other thing about Corsham -- Corsham being very middle class -- is that people were handing out sandwiches and cakes to the protestors. It was all very nice and very twee.

This story does have a bit of a sad ending because, not long after this demonstration, Kyle's photo and his address appeared on Red Watch. He had people coming around to his house late at night banging on the door. He had people ringing him at all times of the day and night. Earlier this year, Kyle disappeared. He packed his tent into his car and just drove off. Nobody knew where he was. For three days his parents and friends were worried sick, wondering what had happened to him. Eventually, he was found in Cornwall by the police. He drove off because the threats and intimidation took their toll and he had a mental breakdown. This is just one example of the consequences of Redwatch. This website should be closed down.

We have already asked the Government to close down the Redwatch website, but they said they could not do it because the web address is outside the UK. That is rubbish! Are you telling me that if the personal details of the Cabinet appeared on a website it would not be closed down immediately? (*Applause*) Of course it would, and if it is good enough for the Cabinet, it should be good enough for us. This is an issue which affects all of us so please support the motion. It is all of our responsibility. Fuck the BNP! (*Cheers and applause*)

Mark Benjamin (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of the motion.

He said: My union, PCS, believes in equality and diversity. PCS has members in all government departments, including the Ministry of Justice. Recently, I participated in the operation of the Black Vote-Magistrate Shadowing Scheme, which involved me shadowing a magistrate for six months. We believe that magistrates need to reflect the community they serve. Jack Straw presented me with my graduation certificate although I am sure that the POA think that he is the one that needs locking up.

I work in Harrow in north-west London, one of the most diverse boroughs in the country, with half the population being from a black and ethnic background. In the last two years, the BNP has had the cheek to stand a candidate in three separate ward by-elections. Thankfully, none of them were elected, but it shows that there are people out there who want to poison the community with their lies. It is these kinds of people who pose the biggest threat to peace in the UK in the long-term rather than extreme worshippers of Islam.

The ex-Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, once said that if you took away migrant labour in London for one day, the city would fall apart. He asked, "Who would drive our buses and tube trains? Who would serve you breakfast in McDonald's? Who would clean the toilets at the train stations?" Some of these migrant workers do the jobs that sometimes nobody wants to do. Under the previous Mayor of London we used to have an anti-racism festival event in London supported by various unions and anti-fascist organisations like 'Love music, hate racism'. Now this has gone. The new Mayor has removed the anti-racism message.

Congress, it is for us to campaign to build greater understanding within local communities by supporting similar anti-racism events like the Asian Mela in West London, which is attended by thousands of people of all races.

Barack Obama says that it is time for change. Well, Britain is changing. On the international stage, we now have BME icons like Lewis Hamilton. BNP supporters say that they are proud to parade the Union Jack. Well, so do we, like our Olympic heroes such as the boxer, James DeGale, a black man who won the gold medal in Beijing for Great Britain, and another boxer, four years earlier, Amir Khan, a Muslim, when he won the silver medal.

Let us keep Britain great. Let us keep Britain diverse. Congress, support the motion with the amendments. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: We will move straight to the vote. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Composite Motion 22 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, we have run out of time. Motion 23, paragraph 3.9, and Motion 24 are still outstanding so we will take a look at the programme and, if it is at all possible, we will take the business tomorrow.

(Congress adjourned at 5.30 p.m.)

**SECOND DAY: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 9TH
MORNING SESSION**

(Congress re-assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

The President: I now call Congress to order and I would like to thank the Percussion School who were playing for us earlier this morning. They were really great. *(Applause)*

I would like to remind delegation leaders that the ballot for the General Council takes place this morning, which is a very important. Ballot papers should be collected from the desk opposite the TUC information stand, which is situated in the ground floor exhibition area just inside the main front doors of the Brighton Centre. Ballot papers will only be provided in exchange for the official delegate form. Please note that the ballot closes at 12 noon today. There is also a delegates' questionnaire on your tables. Please return these to the TUC information stand no. 18 by the front entrance.

Report of the General Purposes Committee

Peter Hall (*General Purposes Committee*): Good morning, Congress. I can report that an emergency motion from the GMB has been approved. It is numbered E2 and is entitled 'Failing energy market'. It will be circulated around the hall this morning and the President will indicate when he hopes to take it. Thank you.

The President: Thank you, Peter. Congress, you will be aware that we did lose some business towards the end of yesterday afternoon and there is a chance that I may be able to take Motion 24 in the name of the TUC Disability Conference later this morning. However, it is more likely that Motion 23 in the name of EIS, Motion 24 and Emergency Motion 1 in the name of PCS will be taken on Wednesday afternoon or Thursday morning. I intend to take Emergency Motion 2 in the name of the GMB in the debate on the economy this afternoon.

Address by Arlene Holt Baker, AFL/CIO sororal delegate

The President: I now want to welcome to the rostrum Arlene Holt Baker, our sororal delegate from our sister organisation, the AFL/CIO. Arlene's experience as a union and grassroots organiser spans more than 30 years. In 2007, she was approved unanimously as Executive Vice-President by the AFL/CIO Executive Council, becoming the first African American to be elected to one of the Federation's three highest offices. She is the highest ranking African American woman in the union movement. As Vice-President, Arlene builds on her legacy of inspiring activism and reaching out to diverse communities to support the needs and aspirations of working people.

Congress, as you all know, this is a critical time in the United States. The outcome of the Presidential election will have ramifications not just for trade unionists in the US, but for working people around the world. Arlene has worked tirelessly to promote the political work of the AFL-CIO within the Democratic Party. Arlene, you are very welcome at our Congress and I now invite you to address us. *(Applause)*

Arlene Holt Baker (*AFL-CIO*) said: Brothers and Sisters, good morning and thank you for that introduction, President. I was looking at the banners in this hall and I feel so at home here with you. These banners could hang in any one of our union halls in America.

I also bring you greetings from my partners at the AFL-CIO, President John Sweeney and Secretary-Treasurer,

Richard Trumka. All of the AFL-CIO and our entire Executive Board join me in celebrating 114 years of friendship between the TUC and the AFL-CIO.

I also join you just a week after we have had Labor Day celebrations in the United States and I want to report to you that they were tremendous this year. There were more crowds turning out than ever before, but particularly in Michigan where we saw 70,000 people. We would like to think it was because John Sweeney, our President, was there, but I think it was encouraged by the fact that we had Senator Barack Obama in Michigan with us. *(Applause)*

I am also here just ten days after the finish of our Democratic Party Convention in Denver, Colorado, where I can report that more than one-quarter of our delegates were from union households. I give very special thanks to Brendan Barber, Guy Ryder, John Monks and John Evans who were able to join us at this historic Convention.

It has only been a few days since Hurricane Gustav threatened our wonderful city of New Orleans and we have two more big storms bearing down on our shores. Even with all of that weather activity, I can honestly say that the biggest winds sweeping across America are the winds of change. *(Applause)* With those winds at our backs, we have an opportunity not only to elect Barack Obama as President of the United States, but to take total control of both Houses of our Congress and begin to 'Turn around America'. This is not only returning control to working families, but returning America to its cherished position as a leader in the struggle for dignity and freedom around the world.

This election is so important to all of us because current global economic policies have failed workers worldwide. We must work together to make sure that the benefits of globalisation are broadly shared and that working people have a voice in the policies that shape our lives. We must work to ensure that corporate power does not go unchecked, that we build enforceable labour and environmental laws and standards into trade agreements, and that protection of the environment and the interests of workers are priorities, not afterthoughts, in our nation's economic policies.

This year the choices given to Americans have never been clearer. We can continue on the course chartered by George W Bush and the right wing forces represented by John McCain which have propelled us into a deepening recession, inflicted severe damage on our labour movement, undermined the social and education programmes so many of our citizens depend upon and mired us deeply into a war in Iraq that we should never have been involved in - a war that has to stop. *(Applause)*

Alternatively, we can radically alter our course through, as Barack Obama puts it, "Change we can believe in." Those changes include a universal healthcare system, a massive plan to create jobs, to stimulate our economy and get our country back on its feet, immigration reform that includes providing a clear path to citizenship for undocumented workers, and a sweeping reform of our labour laws so all workers have the freedom to form and join unions.

Those changes include recognising that climate change is the most pervasive form of globalisation because the atmosphere recognises no borders. We must work together with an environmental and economic development strategy to clean the planet and create good jobs. We stand at the crossroads of opportunity for investments, innovation, new technology and energy efficiency that will save jobs and create new jobs and new industries. Like the TUC, we recognise that there is no guarantee that these will be good jobs or that the needed investments will be made unless we

fight to make it so. They are changes that cannot come too soon for our people and our country.

In the United States, workers' wages, when adjusted for inflation, are frozen right where they were in 1973, more than 35 years ago. Those stagnant wages have forced more and more family members into the workforce but, even so, we still have the widest wage and wealth gap of any industrialised nation in the world.

In the United States the average corporate CEO now earns about 400 times more than the average worker, and the next highest ratio in the world is right here in your country. Until last night I had thought that it was 35 per cent higher, but I now understand that it has grown to be 100 per cent higher.

In America, 8.5 million people actively looking for work cannot find a job and, because of our mortgage crisis, three million families go to bed every night wondering if they will have a roof over their heads in the morning. As I have said, 47 million people go without healthcare coverage every day. Employers are eliminating workers' pension benefits. On top of all of this, we are waging an unjust war in Iraq that costs us more than \$10 bn a month whilst we leave millions of our American citizens alone to fight their personal wars against HIV-AIDS, diabetes, obesity and cancer.

As I travel constantly around our country, union members tell me that they are fed up with taking it on the chin. They are ready for radical change and it is their anger and frustration which has caused the nominations of Barack Obama and Joe Biden which will lift them into the offices of President and Vice-President.

However, our AFL-CIO goal is much higher than that. We are working to increase our daunting majority in our House of Representatives and to elect a veto-proof, filibuster-proof majority in the Senate. We passed the Employee Free Choice Act in the House, but it failed in the Senate. We must pick up at least nine more senators in order to have what we need to pass that Act and indeed all the other national changes that we must make.

How important is the Employee Free Choice Act? I want you to consider that our unions are now bringing in about 500,000 new members every year, but that is barely enough to cover the growth in our workforce or to replace the members we lose every year to globalisation and technology. However, our surveys and polls show that there are 60 million workers in our country who say that they would join a union in a heartbeat if they had the opportunity, but are unable to do so. This is because employers in our country are free to do almost anything they like in order to defeat union-organising campaigns, including threats, intimidation, discrimination against union supporters, forced attendance at anti-union meetings in company time, and the firing of union supporters in one of every four union campaigns. We have a lot at stake in this election so we are running the biggest membership education and mobilisation campaign in our history.

Even with all of this, some of our members are still considering voting for John McCain. Can you believe that? I like to think it is because they do not know Barack Obama, but we all know that there are also other more irrational reasons. We will remind those members that John McCain voted with George W Bush more than 95 per cent of the time and that a vote for John McCain is a vote against working families. We will remind those same members that Barack Obama has supported us for 98 per cent of the time.

Last week, as John McCain and his running mate, Sarah Palin – the pitbull with lipstick, as they call her – were accepting the nomination of their party, AFL-CIO volunteers were going from door to door in more than 100 cities across our country, giving a jump start to the

510 candidates we are backing in races from State Government to Congress to the White House. Between now and November 4th, we will execute the most intensive grassroots campaigns our country has ever seen using 250,000 union volunteers, 10 million door knocks, 25 million pieces of mail, 70 million telephone calls, 25 million worksite contacts, followed by a massive four-day 'Get out the Vote' drive and the most aggressive Voter Protection Programme we have ever conducted. On Election Day, voters from union households will represent more than 25 per cent of voters at the polls. With that kind of participation from working families, Barack Obama and Joe Biden will win and we will win the Senate seats we need.

We want to bring back what is best for America. We want to bring back the better America that we all once knew, the better America that helped the world pull itself up from worldwide depression, the better America that came to the aid of the Allies in World War II, the better America that always relied upon diplomacy over invasion and consensus over unilateral action, the better America that was a beacon of hope for anyone seeking freedom and economic and social justice.

In this election year, many Americans are mindful of the legacy of two of our most treasured leaders who were murdered just a few months apart 40 years ago, namely, Dr Martin Luther King Jr and Senator Robert F. Kennedy. So much of this election is about the dreams and vision that they had for a more egalitarian America. Forty years later, we stand on the threshold of fulfilling the dreams of the dreamer. We will turn America around and put us back on course towards an economy that works for everyone. We know that it is a daunting task, but we must do it because we know that the world is watching. Thank you so much. *(Applause)*

The President: I would like to thank Arlene for a really inspiring speech. It is all about ambition and making things happen. It is really about hope for the future, things that unite our trade union Movement. Obviously, we send our best wishes to trade union colleagues in the election that is now taking place. *(a presentation was made to Arlene Holt-Baker)*

Tax exempt mileage for private cars used on employer's business

David Watts (FDA) moved Composite Motion 8. He said: Congress will be only too well aware of the recent dramatic rises in the price of petrol and diesel, not to mention the other costs of running a car, but my purpose in being here is not to comment on the general economic circumstances or the level of duty on vehicle fuel. It is to draw attention to the way the Government's failure to act is allowing employers to exploit the sense of professionalism and duty to the public felt by many public sector workers. I will explain.

If you have to use your own car for official purposes, you should be repaid the money you spend on it. This is not a reward for your labour, your skills or your talent; it is simply making sure that you do not lose out when doing your job. The payment is not a reward; it is a simple reimbursement so therefore it should not be taxed. That principle is agreed.

For administrative convenience, there is a standard allowance for the cost of using your car on business journeys before tax. That rate is 40p a mile. The rate is intended to cover not only the costs of fuel, but also maintenance, servicing, insurance, road tax and other expenses. It has been 40p a mile since 2002.

Of course, prices have risen considerably since then. In 2002, the average cost of a litre of unleaded petrol was

74p, virtually half the price charged in some places now. Other costs have also risen considerably. The rate has not just failed to keep up with inflation; it is being deliberately held down. This hits public sector workers in two ways. Anything paid to you above the 40p level for using your car is subject to tax. However, in the civil service and elsewhere, there is another serious effect. Employers are using the taxation level as an excuse not even to consider increasing the allowance to repay their workers. In other words, this is an excuse not to pay you back the money you are spending performing your own job.

This affects thousands of public sector workers. I am sure other speakers to this motion will explain how it affects them. In the FDA, this impacts particularly on our school inspectors, prosecutors and other specialists, especially those working in geographically-dispersed parts of the country such as Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland members are particularly frustrated. As we know, drivers in the UK pay the highest amounts of duty on petrol and diesel in the EU. In the Republic of Ireland, although their fuel prices and road taxes are significantly less than ours, the mileage rate paid to civil servants there is one pound a mile.

When we have pursued the civil service allowance in the past, the Government has claimed that one reason for making no change is the need to contain the number of road journeys and CO2 emissions. It is a laudable aim but, as one of the delegates at our own conference said, "It is a pathetic excuse". A reduction in journeys will not happen while services are required. The other reason which is given for not increasing the civil service allowance is the administrative inconvenience of paying an allowance which will partly be taxed.

Our argument with the Government is two-fold. As an employer, it should pay a realistic allowance to staff who have to use their cars on official business. As the taxing authority, it should set a sensible tax exempt rate which truly reflects the cost of using a car today and not in 2002. I am pleased to see that Brendan has written to the responsible Minister, Jane Kennedy, pressing this case. We hope that Alistair Darling can say something positive this afternoon. It is not right that staff should have to subsidise public services from their own pay. Congress, I ask you to support the motion. I move. *(Applause)*

Anita Ralli (*Community and District Nursing Association*) seconded the motion. She said: I am here today to seek your support on behalf of district nurses across the UK. Let me take you through a typical shift of a district nurse I recently visited in a large county in the UK. The district nurse visited a patient requiring pain relief who was dying at home. She travelled 100 miles to provide dialysis support. She then went on to another home to give an insulin injection to a diabetic patient 50 miles away. She carried out more visits throughout the night in a rural area where sometimes there were no roads, no street lighting and sometimes no door numbers. Her shift was from 7 pm to 7 am and she covered probably about 200 miles in that one night alone.

To many, we are the hospital in the home. We are the ward without walls delivering incredibly complex care to patients 365 days of the year. In a typical week, 1.4 million people will receive help in their home. On the whole, district nurses are required to provide, or make payment towards, the vehicle necessary to do their job. They then have to provide petrol and claim the mileage, but reimbursement can sometimes take up to eight weeks.

In a nutshell, our members, who could not do their job without a car, are subsidising the NHS. District nurses

are struggling to manage the huge rise in the cost of running a car. For example, we have a member in the Liverpool area who has had his car broken into four times whilst on night service. Are management concerned? No. They have offered a token gesture which allows staff to claim for one incident a year. Who do you think will pay for those other three incidents? It is the district nurse. Our member is facing a bill of over £3,000 this year to repair his car.

The overall position is hotchpotch, unfair and inequitable. We welcome the move by the Government to provide more and more help in patients' homes. More NHS staff, however, will find themselves in this difficult situation. Nurses are notorious for not being assertive and fighting their own cause so this must stop now.

Whilst we support any reasonable efforts to reduce carbon emissions, it cannot be done at the expense of nurses or their patients. For too long, the Government has been relying on the goodwill of district nurses. I ask you to help our nurses to deliver care at home to your loved ones and family members with skill and dedication. I ask you to support this motion because you all stand for fairness and decency. An urgent review is well overdue. Congress, support us now. *(Applause)*

* *Composite Motion 8 was CARRIED*

Science and engineering skills

Nigel Titchen (*Prospect*) moved Motion 31.

He said: Congress, science matters to trade unions. Thousands of trade unionists work on science projects in research laboratories, universities, government departments and industry. Thousands more work as teachers and lecturers of science, engineering and maths in our schools, colleges and universities.

The TUC report, *Hybrid Cars and Shooting Stars*, is an excellent report and quite properly celebrates the good news about British science. The Government has invested significantly in the science base. It has established a ten-year science and innovation investment framework. It has produced Lord Sainsbury's report, *The race to the top*, which examines the role of science and innovation in ensuring the UK remains competitive in the globalised economy.

However, there is another story about the state of our science today and this is the reality that many of our members face. Companies are still investing far too little in R&D and, in the past few years, the Government has closed world-leading research institutes and programmes involving research into breast cancer, chemicals in food and animal diseases. Prospect has produced a map showing how agricultural and biological research institutes have faded. There are axes to show where sites have closed and clouds for those facing cuts or uncertainty. If you saw this map, you would think that there was an extreme weather cycle in progress. Dozens of laboratories and institutes have closed in the past decade with the loss of thousands of scientists, but even this is not the full picture. We are working on a separate map for the physical sciences and defence research establishments. The sad and rather frightening news is that we have already identified the potential loss of a further 126 laboratories.

Congress, I make no apology for commenting on the parlous state of affairs in the Science and Technology Funding Council following the announcement of the CSR settlement for 2008 to 2011, an issue that has dominated science media coverage throughout the year. In case you are not familiar with this saga, the Science and Technology Funding Council is the research council which covers particle physics and astronomy. Why does it matter? Let me give you two examples.

Work by solar physicists helps us to understand climate change and can also make communication satellites work more efficiently. Work by the particle physical scientists to create new light sources has medical application as they can target deep-seated cancers which cannot be treated with current X-ray techniques.

However, post the CSR, the Science and Technology Funding Council faced a £80m gap in its budget. Its own scientists and the wider scientific community had just three weeks to present a case for not cutting a number of high-profile projects. Since then there has been a flurry of activity, including the announcement of an independent inquiry into UK physics and a series of announcements by the Science and Technology Funding Council itself. However, at present, the unions involved are in the dark about what will transpire or how many jobs will be lost. This is despite the fact that the Science and Technology Funding Council was roundly criticised by the Science Select Committee for its secretive approach to in-house decisions. It is ironic that during the week when the world's biggest physics experiment is being initiated tomorrow at Cerne, in Switzerland, so many UK physicists are losing their jobs.

I also want to say something about skills and careers. Lord Sainsbury made clear that an increased supply of skilled people will be essential to ensure continued UK success in this important sphere and yet the future of set skills is far from assured. Key challenges are to increase supply from education, improve diversity and to make it more attractive for suitably-qualified entrants to work in STEM. During the past ten years, the number of degrees awarded in engineering and technology has fallen by 10 per cent and in physical sciences by 11 per cent. Women account for just 14 per cent of managers, 21 per cent of technicians, 5 per cent of engineering professionals and 1 per cent of skilled trades people.

As far as public science is concerned, the Government simply does not know how many scientists it employs, let alone their areas of expertise. It therefore cannot make any credible assessment of its own capability or its future needs. I spoke recently to one young Prospect member who, having achieved a PhD in physics, felt compelled to enter the finance sector to help pay off her student debt. She was there for two years before being driven back by her love of science to a job in the public sector. However, many, quite rationally, will not make that choice and will be lost to UK science.

Another young Prospect member described how the pressure to write for scientific journals and publish peer review journals, irresistible if you want to make a career in science, has to be done in her own time. We will be exploring these issues in more detail at our fringe meeting tomorrow. In the meantime, Congress, please support the motion and, with the TUC and sister unions, we look forward to achieving these objectives. *(Applause)*

Max Hyde (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded the motion. He said: President, I am a molecular scientist, a teacher, a trade unionist and a woman. I am proud to second this motion and welcome the TUC's science paper. There is a lot of data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in that paper so I thought I would inform you of a couple of other things that they have said.

Innovation is an increasingly collective and international endeavour. We say that if there is one group who really knows about collectivity and international solidarity, it is the trade union movement. Does it not give a lie to the relentless pursuit of marketisation, fragmentation and privatisation?

Knowledge and innovation leads to productivity and trade. We say that wastage of trained staff is wicked. This includes undeniable problems with the recruitment and retention of qualified science and maths teachers. Something is very wrong. The trade union movement shows a way forward by promoting fair and modern working practices.

I am also proud that my union is taking action to ensure fair pay for teachers. The trade union movement needs to be at the very core of the consultation regarding the vision for science and society. I have always been very happy to talk to government. I celebrate the achievement of science teachers and their pupils, but if business recognises the problem of initiative overload without evaluation of quality then why doesn't the Government? We have an over-prescriptive curriculum where the focus is on simplistic answers to complex questions. If you were a student who had been through the debacle which is the national curriculum, the most punishing testing regime in Europe, would you want to continue? By the way, if the Government, as Stephen Hawking has claimed, has made a basic £80m book-keeping error in science funding, I have several pupils who would be able to help it with its numeracy.

The Government says that every child matters, but we cannot, and should not, only rely upon families rich in wealth to provide society with higher-educated individuals. We have concerns about 14 to 19 reforms, possibly leading to an educational apartheid, and this must not happen. Vocational education should be valued, but what is on offer does not always live up to that name. So-called pathways must not become cul-de-sacs. This year, I am happy to agree with the General Secretary when he says, "A better future for all our people". Congress, I second. *(Applause)*

Tamsin Piper (*Unite*) supported the motion. She said: Unite is proud to represent scientists and engineers in a range of sectors: universities, aerospace, IT, the NHS, electronics, power generation and many more. The current shortages in science and engineering skills will have a severe impact upon the abilities of these industries to innovate and develop the new technologies which are so essential for the future of the British economy.

I work in the university sector as a technician, supporting research and teaching. Our members in this sector operate to maintain the scientific equipment used by researchers by training them in how to use it when they conduct experiments. There are skilled engineers who design and fabricate bespoke scientific instruments. They design and build satellites and probes for space and climate research. They are involved in teaching the next generation of science and engineering graduates.

Universities are facing a demographic time bomb as the population of technical staff is rapidly aging. The average age of core-funded technicians is over 40 and 50 per cent of them are over 50 years of age. At my own university, figures are worse and we expect the problem to peak there within the next seven or eight years as many of the technicians retire.

Loss of skilled and experienced technical staff will have an adverse effect on the ability of university scientists to conduct the basic research that is so essential, i.e. for medicine, engineering and science generally. However, little was being done to address it until recently and even then precious little. This is despite two major reports in the last ten years highlighting the problem, one from the Royal Society in 1998 and the second commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in 2004. Both of these identified the problems.

The Royal Society report in 1998 noted that during the 1980s there had been a 28 per cent fall in technical staff numbers and called for an immediate end to the loss. Six years later, the Higher Education Funding Council report noted that the loss of technical staff has continued, despite the Royal Society's warning. There was a 14 per cent fall between 1996 and 2001. Unless we can halt this trend, we will face a dire shortage of technical skills and knowledge in our universities.

We need improved and dedicated funding for technical support in higher education. We need apprenticeships and trainee schemes to develop the next generation of technicians. Conference, I support. *(Applause)*

Oliver De Peyer (*University and College Union*) supported the motion. He said: This happens to be my first congress. *(Applause)* Congress, as an early career scientist myself, I have seen at first hand the steady decline of morale amongst researchers in the last decade. We are told that our nation's science base is stronger than ever, but I can tell you today that this is fool's gold.

World-class researchers in this country find themselves with no security of employment and insecure, short-term funding. We jump through hoops for work assessment and performance-related pay, but our research and innovations no longer seem valued in our economy. We are sleepwalking into becoming a nation that prizes toasting junk bonds in City wine bars above being a proud manufacturing nation where working men and women, in partnership with researchers, that can supply the world with the high-tech goods and industries that it needs.

Comrades, other developed nations enjoy a strong surplus of trade in science and technology industries. I have travelled in planes assembled in France, trains made in Germany and when I have been sick, I have lain in scanners made in the Netherlands. There are people in this hall not much older than myself who will remember when our nation and our workers were counted proudly amongst the ranks of high-tech industry, but somebody called Thatcher took that away from us.

I can tell you now of the real fear felt by scientists and academia when devious vehicles such as the Research Assessment Exercise and the Research Excellence Framework come calling. These terms may be unfamiliar to some of you, but the people they disadvantage will be all too familiar: the older researchers; those who have been sick or disabled; the hourly-paid women researchers; and those with children. I have heard first-hand at this Congress of some other fabulous instruments of employee abuse in this sector such as the bizarrely-named 'permanent zero hours contract' and that old favourite, 'the below inflation pay rise'. It is no wonder that so many in these scientists leave and so few students choose to study science.

Comrades, I urge you all to begin rebuilding the science, technology and engineering industries in this country and to put them back at the heart of our prosperity so that we can face the challenges and remedies needed in our modern world. Congress, I urge you to support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: A great speech. We now move to the vote. The General Council's policy is to support.

* *Motion 31 was CARRIED*

Defence expenditure

Mike Clancy (*Prospect*) moved Motion 39: He said: Congress, in moving this motion I am going to ask you

to distinguish how you feel about the military interventions of the UK in recent years from the concerns expressed in this motion about the consequences of inadequate defence funding and confusion in defence strategy. This motion is about public servants in the MoD being under unrelenting pressure through job losses, reorganisation and relocation. This motion is about private sector defence members faced with work in the short term but uncertainty in the long term. It is about properly funded defence capability to support our armed forces when deployed. Regardless of whether we agree with the deployment in question, I hope we can unite in believing that the dangers facing these men and women should not be made worse by too little or poor equipment.

The Government promised the situation would be different in the future. The Defence Industrial Strategy published in 2005 valued onshore capacity. It recognised that the MoD needed to be an intelligent customer and the private sector a properly funded provider with a long term order book. The update of that strategy now appears to be shut away in a 'Pending' file in the MoD. The strategy has fallen apart as the department's spending plans have unravelled.

Here are some facts: We estimate that 300,000 jobs rely on the defence industry, nearly 100,000 directly. The skills and capability in this sector are easily lost but very difficult to retrieve. The Comprehensive Spending Review delivered a 1.5 per cent real terms increase in defence spend, but, in reality, because of existing commitments, it is really less than a 1 per cent increase, leaving a funding gap of about £2bn. This country cannot meet its planned commitments against these financial constraints and it jeopardises our armed forces and the civilians who support them.

Whilst cuts in the armed forces have attracted media attention, civilian posts essential to their deployment have suffered even more. Thousands of civilian posts in the MoD are being cut and only in the last few days another 7,000 have been identified for redundancy.

In the private sector, the certainty of the industrial strategy has given way to confusion. Our private sector defence capacity faces a turbulent future, despite the recent announcement about carrier new build. Defence manufacturing represents an industrial sector where the UK can still be a leader provided Government value this capacity.

The Defence Industrial Strategy provided direction and guidance to industry about future spending commitments by identifying those activities essential to UK sovereignty and security and where skill retention onshore was essential. That procurement strategy is now in crisis.

Congress, please distinguish between the support I ask you to give this motion, which is all about the issues that affect union members and their working lives in the defence sector, from our shared concerns about Government inclination for military intervention. *(Applause)*

Chris Baugh (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Motion 39.

He said: Congress, the purpose, first of all, in seconding the motion is to reassert the right of PCS and our sister unions to organise and actively defend the interests of all workers in the defence industry. It is a right, in my union's view, that is not conditional. It is a right that this movement must defend and has always defended. That applies to workers in the Ministry of Defence, in Government Communications Headquarters, in industries responsible for CO₂ emissions, in academies run by creationists and, particularly relevant to the debate this week, in an overcrowded punitive prison regime.

Secondly, we wish to highlight the impact of what has been described as the single biggest privatisation programme of a public institution in Western Europe. It is a process that was started under Thatcher in the 1980s with the sale of the Royal Ordnance Factories carried forward by John Major in programmes worth £700m involving 30,000 staff transferred into the private sector. Rather than any respite, under New Labour this process has actually been accelerated on a massive scale. There have been: one hundred private finance initiative projects worth £4bn lined up; a project already awarded to a consortium, including EDF and Fujitsu, that delivers only a quarter of promised IT projects at a cost of £7 bn, nearly double the original cost. The National Audit Office reported on the selling off of QinetiQ where a handful of senior managers who drew up, tendered and awarded the contract saw their personal investment increase 20,000 per cent on flotation. The chief executive saw a personal investment of £130,000 rise to £26m almost overnight. To quote the report itself: "The selling off of a valuable and strategically important public asset had served only to line the pockets of senior managers and private corporations."

Faced with this, with future plans of privatisation of defence training to the cost of £19bn of public money during a 25 year period, and a further 20,000 civilian staff in the MoD facing the threat of job cuts or being handed over to the private sector, it is hardly surprising that the UK defence capability is over stretched and under resourced, which creates increasingly stressful conditions for the civilian workforce and puts the lives of armed forces at risk.

I hope it is clear from PCS's record that we do not support how the UK defence capability is deployed. We support and we hope Congress will support the need to expose how the public interest is being corrupted, the need to work with sister unions in defending the interests of all workers in the defence sector and to show, in practice, that in the defence sector, as with elsewhere, campaigns and taking action can make a difference. I am referring to protecting pension rights, averting compulsory redundancies and, in the process to begin to challenge the cynicism and fatalism that has afflicted the British trade union movement for too long. We must show that whatever sector you work in, despite the stream of anti-union material, unions are relevant now as when a group of labourers first combined under a tree at Tolpuddle. *(Applause)*

Mike Kirby (UNISON) opposed Motion 39. He said: I am reluctantly opposing the motion and the amendment which for us fails to distinguish between expenditure on conventional arms and nuclear weapons.

The proposal ignores the evidence that defence expenditure on the development of a new generation of nuclear weapons is at the expense of other public service jobs, which are more socially useful, and diversifying into more socially useful technologies. The costs of Britain's nuclear missile systems and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are escalating at a time when ordinary people are facing steep price increases in food, fuel and energy. The British Government is developing Aldermaston to research, test and build new generations of nuclear weapons, including many nukes for use on the battlefield.

However many ballistic missiles you have, they will not help against terrorism, climate change and global economic meltdown. Weapons stimulate hostility, they create instability and they promote proliferation. Nuclear weapons are dirty and poisonous and they are incredibly expensive to maintain. *(Applause)* The indiscriminate mass killings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are well documented, but current nuclear weapons are

much more powerful. Fifty could kill 200 million people the whole of Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Germany. And, Congress, accidents do happen!

The Government has put the annual cost of Trident replacement at £1bn a year. The White Paper states that this will not be at the cost of existing MoD budget, but will receive additional resources. If a billion is not coming out of the MoD budget, the so called 'additional resources' must be coming from somewhere else in public expenditure. *(Applause)*

It has been claimed that upwards of 11,000 jobs would be lost to Scotland if Trident was not replaced. However, a report produced last year by the Scottish Trade Union Congress and Scottish CND demonstrates that replacement costs will cost more jobs than they provide. The funds released by cancellation would create more productive investment. In the short term, the number of jobs at Faslane, the base on the west coast of Scotland which services submarines, will increase with Trident having to be serviced until 2022 and with the new nuclear powered Astute Class submarines coming on stream.

A planned programme of diversification adequately funded would ensure that displaced workers would be employed in comparable jobs with skills transferred into energy efficiency, conservation and renewables. The Scottish report does not examine the wider conversion agenda across Britain. However, it does remind us that in 1987 the Barrow trade unionists in the north east of England produced detailed conversion proposals for the shipyard there. Those early diversification proposals were rejected by management in favour of continued defence production. Employment in Barrow has since fallen from 12,000 to 3,000. Congress, there is an alternative. Let's at least explore it. *(Applause)*

Keith Hazlewood (GMB) supported Motion 39.

He said: Congress, the GMB, along with other unions, represents employees in both the MoD civilian workforce and the workers in the defence industries that supply the MoD. When Labour came to power in 1997, it was pleasing to see them make a fresh approach to the MoD, to the workforce and to the trade unions.

First, we were consulted about the defence policy through the Strategic Defence Review. This was followed with the first of the consultations of the defence industrial strategy. The GMB, along with the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions and the MoD industrial trade unions, responded to these consultations. Although we had some reservations about the MoD's definitions of the skilled workers, the timing of orders with suppliers and within the MoD, along with what proportion of work would go to UK manufacturing, we were generally positive about this process. However, with the exception of the orders for the two aircraft carriers, which were finally placed this summer, the rest of the process has now fallen into disrepair.

The MoD not only finds itself stretched in military conflicts on two fronts, it finds itself continually robbing Peter to pay Paul to ensure that our troops are supplied with the equipment to enable them to carry out their military role, whilst at the same time reducing the civilian workforce who supply our troops with goods and services and outsourcing this work to private contractors.

In trying to match expenditure to income whilst supplying our troops, we find ships being mothballed instead of refitted. Helicopters are being moved from search and rescue to replace unserviceable helicopters in the frontline, and aircraft flying training has been reduced. While UK bases are closed, army units are

merged, MoD jobs are cut, workers outsourced and workshops are privatised with no thought to the consequences. Orders for equipment from the private sector are delayed causing lay offs and redundancies. In fact, what started out as a sensible strategy has just fallen apart.

If we are going to have a defence capability in the UK, we must ensure that those who work in the MoD, whether military or civilian, are supported with a credible strategy and not one that is made up as we go along. *(Applause)*

Mike Clancy (*Prospect*) said: In exercising my right of reply to our colleagues in UNISON and to any other colleagues in the hall who share their views and there are many who do so and understandably so this motion is not about the composition of defence spending, nor is it about the particular balance between conventional, nuclear or other weapons. We share in many ways as individuals and as groups the validity of your concerns about proliferation and the challenges to world peace that we all face.

However, the reality is that this is about union members with the same challenges as anyone else in this hall. We represent, as a movement, people who do controversial activities or are in controversial occupations, and they still have the right to be represented, to have their interests voiced and their issues raised at the highest level which this Congress represents.

So I hope in voting you will make that distinction between the political calculations and decisions of Government and the working lives of defence members. *(Applause)*

The President: We now move to the vote. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Motion 39 was CARRIED*

Protection of employees in the betting industry

Keren Bender (*Community, The Union for Life*) moved Motion 72.

She said: Congress, last week my union held a national action week, a week focused on recruiting new members into the union. Many of us spent the week visiting betting shops around the country. In every shop we visited the story was the same endless tales of verbal abuse; never ending stories of physical violence; staff, mainly women, being forced to work alone; employees being made to carry large sums of money to the bank; problem gamblers; anti-social behaviour spilling into our streets and, with winter approaching and the dark nights coming, staff are being made to work late into the night often on their own and then having to travel home in the dark.

I would like to share some of these stories with you. A young woman named Katie told us that she had been the victim of an armed robbery. She was working alone at the time when three men burst into her shop. They managed to get behind the protective screen. They beat her up and then ran away with the day's takings. Katie was battered and bruised and took the following week off. Her employer offered no help, no counselling and no assistance with medical treatment, but, to top it all, they deducted a week's pay from her salary saying that she had failed to fill in the correct forms on the sick leave application. Colleagues, I am pleased to say Katie joined Community on the spot.

There is another example. A young man we visited in London told us that on his first day he had a nail gun held to his head as his shop was held up in a robbery. His employer told him there was nothing they could do

as crimes committed in betting shops were not really crimes at all and that he just had to grin and bear it.

Colleagues, these stories are not one offs. Official figures show us that violent crime is on the increase in betting shops – it is a place where there is a lot of cash yet, despite this evidence, betting shop employers are still refusing properly to protect their staff at work. They are still refusing to talk to us. Most are even refusing to display the zero tolerance posters in their shops. This is why my union has launched a campaign for minimum standards in betting shops, minimum standards on safety, training and security.

Think about this. I do not know about you, but I personally was totally oblivious to the fear that betting shop workers feel and the danger that they face. How many of you walk past your local bookies and wonder if the guys and girls inside the shop are safe in their workplace?

Congress, we are taking this campaign to the Government, employers and the police. Enough is enough. Every worker is entitled to a safe working environment. These are men and women like you and me just trying to earn a decent living. Please support our campaign. *(Applause)*

Jude Brimble (*GMB*) seconded Motion 72.

She said: GMB has a long and proud history of fighting for the rights of workers for a safe and healthy workplace. Like many areas of the hospitality and gaming sector, workers in betting shops are treated with little regard by the employers. They experience low pay, excessive hours, poor conditions and, unfortunately, violence and abuse. Violence and abuse for many, as we have heard, is an everyday occurrence; an everyday occurrence that employers refuse to deal with, refuse to take a hard line on with customers and turning a blind eye as they count the profits at the end of each day.

Spitting, swearing, violence and threats are all regarded as part of the job by many of the employers out there. Congress, these should never be part of anybody's job. There is no dignity if there is abuse; there is no respect where there is assault and there is certainly no excuse for employers who allow it to happen.

Congress, let me also share with you a story. In the gaming sector, one of our members, a night worker, was working when a well known public figure, a regular punter, lost several million pounds in one gambling session. The punter, clearly frustrated and angry, decided it was OK to subject Joe to a tirade of abuse that resulted in him throwing a handful of chips in his face and spitting at him. Well, Joe rightly complained, only to be told by his employer that when a punter loses £2m in one night, any behaviour is acceptable.

That disgraceful attitude by that particular employer, I am afraid, is all too common within the sector and in betting shops in particular. There is a need for fundamental change of attitude by the employers to take their responsibilities seriously, to provide proper training for staff, to provide proper security for staff and to promote the robust policies on zero tolerance where people are clearly told that they will be prosecuted if they abuse the staff in those shops.

Unfortunately, the nature of the industry means that legislation is needed to force employers down this route with minimum standards to protect workers. The employers have dragged their feet and refused to engage with the trade unions. They operate on the margins of employment law, too concerned about their margins of profit.

I am afraid on this one the odds are clearly stacked against the industry. We congratulate Community in

their campaign for safe working places in betting shops, and we support the call for legislation to make betting and gaming a safe place for people to work in. Congress, let us support this resolution; let us get behind the campaign and let us give workers in betting shops the dignity and respect that they so rightly deserve. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 72 was CARRIED*

Public services

Jane Carolan (*UNISON*) moved Composite Motion 14.

She said: Today, here and now, this TUC Congress has the opportunity to stand up to the Government and demand a change of direction, a change that is long overdue and one that will be welcomed by the vast majority of the British public. For too long this Government has paid lip service to the ethos of public services and to the 7 million people who work to provide them. That is everyone in the NHS, in the civil service, in local government, in education and our police staff.

We have been stabbed in the back and then in the front. NHS services are privatised. Local council services continue to go to the highest bidder. Recently, East Ayrshire Council in Scotland awarded a contract for assisting adults with learning disabilities to a commercial care company. Was it to improve services? Was it to increase the level of care? Well, those who receive the service are in no doubt. They have been sold to the lowest bidder, victims of commercial undercutting with no consultation or regard for the quality of care. That is one example, one of thousands.

The Private Funding Initiative remains costly, inflexible and very expensive. I can tell you that £36bn of public money has been spent, but even the Public Accounts Committee in the House of Commons believes that the Government has failed to evaluate whether the costs are justified. PFI is a classic case of private profit replacing public sector ethos; mega profit at the expense of the public purse, but unable to respond to changing needs on a 30 year inflexible contract.

Let us consider independent treatment centres. They introduce a competitive commercial market into the NHS, cherry picking profitable patients, undermining NHS viability, taking NHS staff and delivering poor value for money. Education is now a commodity. For £2m, which you may not actually have to pay, you too can have your own academy school and dictate all its policies, even if you are a second hand car dealer or a religious fundamentalist or even both, with no evaluation, outside local authority control, but paid for by government money, cutting out staff and parents.

Now, my union's members at OFSTED, who are fighting a review by the consultants McKinsey aimed at imposing a new pay structure, find that the Early Years Inspectorate is to be privatised. Should standards in the child care sector be left to a private company? I do not think any parent in this hall would agree with that. Easy headlines are made by promising 'reforms', headlines that never mention that the reforms transform lines of democratic accountability and service quality, as these examples show.

Then we have 'shared services' another nice sounding title. You may know it better as 'outsourcing'. Local authorities working together is one thing, but now they are told they have to become commissioners and purchasers of services rather than providers. Nicholas Ridley rides again. The reasons that Nicholas Ridley was wrong in the 1980s are exactly the same now.

One example that speaks volumes and where the bulk of the problems we have with dirty hospitals arise – that is right – is where the contracts are outsourced. Cause and effect have been demonstrated time and

again. Quality services and cost cutting are incompatible.

Then, Congress, some public services have already been made partially extinct.

The lack of decent public housing once more threatens to become a national disgrace. As homelessness rises and councils demonstrate they want to sort the problem, Government's lack of real investment is a scandal.

If Labour in power wishes to change its political fortunes, it is time to stop listening and act. Real commitment to public service provisions is vital. Public services are there to serve the collective, to put the needs of society first and to serve its most vulnerable members. Please meet the needs of the public for what are essential services, to emphasise services based on care and compassion, dignity and respect, equal treatment and accountability. Commit to sufficient resources; bring privatised services in house; empower public service workers. Drop the pro-business ideology. Act in favour of your natural supporters, not fair weather friends who now want to try to help the Tories into power.

More importantly, there needs to be a recognition that public sector workers cannot survive on poverty wages. Cuts in public sector pay mean cuts in living standards for the individual, contract the economy and lead to further recession.

Can I suggest to the Chancellor that he adds a little book by John Maynard Keynes to his reading list? *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* should give him a few ideas. It is a very easy read!

Congress, we take the lead in saying that fairness for the public and fairness for public sector workers are two sides of the same coin. They must be the Government's priority now. *(Applause)*

Bill Greenshields (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded Composite Motion 14.

He said: Privatisation is the order of the day across the free market world, not just because governments have lost the plot, but because some very powerful forces demand that everything be turned over to the profit arena.

Our Education International of education unions puts it like this: "Public education is increasingly being targeted by predatory and powerful entrepreneurial interests aiming at nothing less than its dismantling by subjecting it to competition." New Labour has, undoubtedly, embraced those entrepreneurial interests, thus their refusal at Warwick even to discuss the privatisation agenda, such as the Academy School Programme with schools sold off to millionaire sponsors who, as Jane said, are used-car salesmen, religious fundamentalists, property developers, carpet warehouses, mobile phone magnates and a sausage and pie manufacturer. Comrades, this is not about standards. Why would a millionaire sausage king run a school better than a local authority? I am prepared now to give a firm undertaking that teachers will steer clear of interfering in all processed meat production provided the pie man backs off from grabbing our schools! *(Applause)*

But there is no democratic procedural way of stopping privatisation; there is no parental vote; no community control over academies, just the interests of the private sector and, on the other hand, the campaigning strength of local people. Our decision on public sector pay and this composite are inextricably linked. There cannot be good public services unless workers are properly paid. Conversely, low wages, pay flexibility, workforce reform undermining national pay and conditions and reduced job security are features and prerequisites of full blown privatisation.

So do we just protest or can we stop privatisation? To start with, we need real unity. The composite motion recognises that until the whole privatised agenda is defeated, all services are at risk. We need not just to declare unity of purpose, but to co-ordinate our campaign, to build active community support through campaigning bodies such as the Anti Academies Alliance. Read the paper that has been put out this morning.

Any lack of involvement by any one union will weaken all the rest. A failure to fight now against privatisation and pay cuts will result in plummeting conditions in the future. We need to reflect on what Brian Caton said yesterday. The Government has rejected the power of reason. The battle is on. Many fear that this might lose the Labour Party the election, but there is only one organisation that is going to lose the Labour Party the election and that is the Labour Party! *(Applause)* Maybe this could a discussion over dinner tonight.

The only chance Labour has of winning is if they abandon their anti-worker and anti-public service policies even at this late stage. Recent public sector strike action revitalised members and organisations and recruited new members. We look forward to passing this composite motion unanimously, putting it together with a pay strategy, building ever greater unity with all our sister unions and come out fighting. Solidarity for ever, comrades. *(Applause)*

Andy Ballard (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported Composite Motion 14.

He said: Congress, the value of belonging to a trade union is a well rehearsed and familiar story. ATL believes that employers can also get great benefit from our members being part of the movement that maybe we need to articulate more clearly and more often those benefits to the key policy and decision makers.

Examples of the positive value of trade union activity abound. In my own experience, as a branch secretary for ATL, I can cite decades of a mutually productive and beneficial relationship between trade unions and a local authority employer, including recently highly valuable development work done by union learning representatives.

However, as we all know, many employers retain a very negative view of trade unions. We know that the public sector is under grave threat and ATL and our sister unions are working hard to gain recognition for all unions representing workers in education institutions which have been handed over to the private sector. We will continue to protest that marketisation. It is high time that we considered what conclusions we should draw from this new struggle to gain recognition rights for workers for whom it was hitherto a given right. What does this new battleground indicate?

Congress, our Government continues to be ambivalent about the union movement. It is happy to do business with us in matters of social partnership, but callously disregards our worth to our members, to working women with children and to the education service as the Government pursue their privatisation agenda.

Some of the private sector employers who have been given state schools to run deny any value in unions and are hostile to them by refusing to meet, discuss or negotiate on recognition rights. Our organisers and members have been harassed, intimidated and bullied when they have tried to work collectively for the common good. Clearly, some of these private sector organisations who desire to control state education services have been reading the union busting manuals and are engaging in techniques and practices to ensure that they have union free workplaces.

Friends, many of our sister unions have faced this sort of challenge for years and fight the good fight to protect and organise workers. ATL applauds their magnificent efforts during the long years of this movement. This fight is a reality in workplaces which suddenly move from public to private control. Members who previously enjoyed all the benefits of membership suddenly and catastrophically find themselves back in the Dark Ages of their ragged trousered forefathers.

That this could happen at all is an outrage; that this should happen during a Labour Government watch is utterly shameful! Just what is the Government saying to our movement? Well, I think we all know. So we must galvanise ourselves for a renewed struggle to ensure that trade union rights, including those which the Labour Government has failed to restore, the right to representation, the right to negotiate collectively on workplace issues and the right to be protected from harassment and exploitation must remain for all workers in all sectors. *(Applause)*

Sasha Callaghan (*University and College Union*) supported Composite Motion 14.

She said: President, Congress, the last decade has been one long shameful catalogue of the destruction of public services in this country. That is never more clear than in post-16 education. We are now facing the situation where we have one of the most casualised workforces in the UK. We have a legacy of casualisation, with lecturers able to be fired at two hours' notice and bogus self employment. We have students expecting a decent education in a class of 150. That is not a lecture, but a class. We have higher and higher fees increasing student debt.

Who is responsible for this? Who has stood by and let this happen? It is the government that has let this happen, a government that would rather listen to arms manufacturers, to the CBI and to the Institute of Directors than it would to educators, to trade unions and to the millions of people in this country who are sliding into fuel poverty; a government which has handed over education to the bullies, the wreckers, the cutters and the grabbers and, in the case of many deeply unprincipled college principals, the downright criminal and they have the prison records to show for it!

The Government has shown a touching naivety in believing, as John Maynard Keynes says, that the nastiest of men, and they usually are men, with the nastiest of motives will somehow act for the benefit of all, and it is perfectly clear that that naivety has destroyed something that we were so proud of, the public services in this country. Enough; enough of PFI, PPP and academies.

As trade unionists, I think the reason why we have been so strong in the past is because we dare to dream. We have dreamt of public services; we have dreamt of a society that is fair and just. As educators, we want to see our students being taught free in a situation where justice and social responsibility holds sway. We want a workforce where lecturers, support staff and academic related staff are treated fairly and with respect. It does not have to be a dream. We have dreamt too long. It is time to stop dreaming, start acting and say, "Enough is enough".

I always believe the best time to kick someone is when they are down. I certainly have to say that the Government is down at the moment and if we do not take the opportunity to show them exactly how we feel and that we are intent upon acting to save public services in this country, it will be a lost opportunity. Congress, I ask you to support Composite Motion 14, to stand strong, to stop dreaming and start acting. Support this composite motion. *(Applause)*

David Drever (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) supported Composite Motion 14.

He said: Congress, this is the largest composite motion we have in front of us. It is necessarily comprehensive and it is inclusive. However, a thread runs through it that is the defence of public accountable services in contrast to the promotion of private provision of services driven by a promise of big profits in a new market that has previously been unavailable. That is, of course, the public sector itself.

There has been a two fold drive, firstly, to open up public services to private profit and, secondly, to solve this growing economic crisis, this 'credit crunch', as it is called, by cutting provision, as we have seen recently in the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.

Comrades, the circumstances in Scotland are quite different from elsewhere in the United Kingdom. The consequences for these cuts in Scotland in education are telling and profound. There has been a failure and an inability of local authorities in Scotland to employ newly qualified teachers, the teachers who have served between four and five years in training, who have been in schools for a year and done their probational teaching year, and who are now ready and able to take up full time and permanent posts. There has been a failure to employ many of these newly qualified teachers. That is an appalling waste of talent and an appalling waste of the training that has been invested in them. This, of course, has affected the Scottish Government's promise to drive down class sizes, a key part of their election promises. The result is that pupils in the schools are suffering. In addition to that, there has been a loss of jobs in schools and cuts to per capita spending on pupils themselves which affects every aspect of educational provision.

Colleagues, this is just the start. It is the beginning of a three-year cycle in Scotland that will spell disaster for Scottish education and the public sector at large.

A blame game is going on just now. Are the local authority employers to blame? Is the Scottish Government to blame? Is the Westminster Government to blame for these cuts? We do not want to involve ourselves in that blame game? We agree with what other colleagues have said at the microphone today. We require a public sector that is properly resourced and properly funded. We require central government to undertake it and we require the local authority employers to undertake it as well. If we do not do that, we let down all these people who require and depend on the public sector for many aspects of their lives.

Colleagues, there is a brief history lesson here. The composite motion mentions campaigning to protect public services, particularly in the run-up to the next general election. Those of you with long memories will remember in 1976 a Labour government, then led by Jim Callaghan, undertook massive spending cuts. To finish on this point, that, colleagues, was the first step in the failure to be reelected in 1979. If we do not have action to defend public services now, the current Labour Government in the UK will go down the same road. Colleagues, for these reasons, support Composite Motion 14. (*Applause*)

Charles Ward (*Association of Educational Psychologists*): Congress, I want to focus on the end of this composite, particularly on commissioning and commissioning within children's services authorities. This year the DCSF, the Department for Children, Schools and Families, or as we might now want to call it, the 'Department for Commissioning and Syphoning Finance', announced that the way forward for Children's Trusts was commissioning of all services. Local authorities and local workers, quite clearly, are not to be trusted. Following their paper on

encouraging local authorities/children's services authorities to move into commissioning, I have to say that many local authorities have been quite sensible and taken a measured approach, but some have charged ahead with seriously dangerous gusto. Particularly, I want to mention Manchester City Council where, within their Children's Services, everything has been parcelled up and pocketed up into little pieces. Everything has been costed and sold. Everyone is at risk, not only the workers but also the children for whom those services are supposed to provide. Importantly, small services like educational psychology services are seriously threatened.

My union, the AEP, is now in dispute with Manchester. The reason why we are in dispute with Manchester is not because they are moving towards commissioning but because they will not even talk to us about their proposals, or they would not until we started to campaign, to write to all their schools, to all their MPs and now they have begun to talk to us.

Manchester wants to break up the Psychology Service. It has removed the leadership from the Psychology Service and it has pushed people out into small groups, all of which have to be bought in. All the proposals are cash based. If schools do not buy in, then our members will lose their jobs, and it will not help the children. All it does is pay grovelling lip service to government policy.

Congress, commissioning, as we see it in Manchester, does not make services and access to services for children equal. It makes it unequal. We know that the schools which have the most money, the schools in the areas where they can raise funds easily, will be the schools that buy in the most and the best services. In Manchester and in other commissioning services, the run-in to commissioning will mean that the most vulnerable children will be the worst protected. I ask you to support Composite 14.

Brian Strutton (*GMB*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 14.

He said: In particular, I ask for your support to our amendment, 'recommendation vii', for the setting up of an independent review of the cost effectiveness of the vast amount of taxpayers' money that finds its way into private sector coffers. The sums are huge. I am talking about the £130bn spent each year in buying goods and services from the private sector. The sum of £44bn worth of public services is now provided by the private sector. This extravaganza is driven by a market dickat rather than a public value alternative, which is what we want to see. The Government's starting point for achieving that begins and ends with private enterprise. This biased approach implies that the public sector cannot deliver efficiently. That is a mischievous proposition which ignores the real facts. The point is that there is no evidence at all that private sector organisations are capable of delivering better value for money than the public sector. In fact the private sector has not delivered better value and has often made any problems worse. Research has found that private sector efficiency savings do not outweigh the extra costs of paying dividends to shareholders, but the ultimate risk cannot be transferred so that the public sector will always have to pick up the tab when things go wrong. But the private sector often delivers lower quality services – for example, in social care – because they rely on minimum waged jobs with high turnover, and little, if any, training. Furthermore, research has found that breaking up the public sector into contracts to the private sector often has unintended consequences. For example, the creation of independent treatment centres has reduced opportunities for junior doctors to develop skills and left NHS hospitals with difficult, expensive cases and unused capacity. But increasing choice can actually

increase inequality. For example, parental choice has led to greater inequalities between the best performing schools and the rest. By the way, people do not want choice. They want good quality, local public services available when they need them. That is why the GMB wants an independent review and for such a review to consider whether we are getting real value for money and scope for delivering through in-house provision. It also would determine whether service quality had improved or worsened as well as considering the impact of democratic accountability and the wider needs of society.

Finally, Congress, another good reason to ask these searching questions is because, far too often, when public bodies are buying in goods and services, they end up selling out their own workforces. I am thinking, particularly, here of the saddest, blackest stain on the character of this Government – the failure to use public procurement to support the Remploy factories and the Remploy workers. I support.

Jerry Pagan (*Fire Brigades' Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 14.

He said: It seems that no part of the public sector can escape the savage cuts currently being inflicted by this Government, and the UK Fire Service is no exception. In recent years we have seen cuts in the numbers of frontline firefighters and the FBU is currently campaigning against the Government's intention to close 48 emergency fire control rooms nationwide and to reduce those to only nine regional centres, with potentially devastating consequences for the public and our members. This madcap scheme is estimated to have already cost in excess of £1bn, much of which has gone straight into the pockets of private consultants. However, at a time when these and other vital public services are being cut and this Government claims they cannot afford the investment that the public sector so desperately needs, and a time when they have attacked the living standards of the lowest paid workers in this country by abolishing the 10p rate of income tax, this Government chooses to do nothing about the tax avoidance of the super-rich.

Up to £33bn a year of funds, which are desperately needed by the UK's public services are either being lost as a result of this form of tax avoidance or relief is being given to the people who do not need it. The total loss of tax in the UK each year comes to more than £100bn, which is £1 for every £5 that is paid to the Treasury, according to the *Missing Billions* report commissioned by the TUC.

The entire UK Fire Service costs just £1.7bn a year to run. This is a drop in the ocean compared with the £100 bn annual cost of the NHS. The total tax loss is as much as the combined costs of these two essential services. The TUC *Missing Billions* report makes a wide range of recommendations to ensure that a fairer tax system is created that will guaranteed to close many of the loopholes which the rich and their companies now abuse. Closing these loopholes would not only create a fairer tax system but could provide much needed investment in the public sector. Tax increases are not needed for those on lower incomes, nor is a stealth tax needed. But for those who have the cash and can afford to pay, they should do so. Please support the composite.

The President: I now intend moving to the vote on the composite on public services. The General Council policy is to support Composite Motion 14.

* *Composite Motion 14* was CARRIED.

The National Health Service

Lilian Macer (*UNISON*) moved Composite Motion 16.

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She said: Congress, 2008 has witnessed celebrations in all parts of the NHS and in all countries of the UK as the Service reaches 60, and quite right too.

Despite the attempts of various governments to reform the NHS beyond recognition, it is to the great credit of the trade union movement that the Service remains overwhelmingly publicly owned and free at the point of use, continuing to deliver high quality in the fairest and most compassionate way possible.

As the composite notes, in its 60th year the days of referring to one National Health Service are long gone. Healthcare is an area which has demonstrated the considerable impact that devolution is having. And for health workers in Scotland and Wales, this has been one of the areas where devolution has been a godsend, at least in comparison with those working in the increasingly marketised NHS in England.

In England, though, there have been some positive outcomes from the Government's Next Stage Review, particularly in terms of the workforce training and development, and with the appearance of the first NHS Constitution, the principles of which have been endorsed by all UK health ministers. This Constitution should preserve the essential core principles of the NHS, even if the scary prospect of the Tories getting their hands back on the Service becomes a reality.

Unfortunately, however, the Darzi process did not mark a major shift away from the prevailing direction of health policy. Instead we get more access for private companies, more competition and more consumerism.

It is clear that primary care is the new frontier for private sector intrusion into the NHS. The private sector are champing at the bit to get their teeth into health centres and GP practices. Of course, they are desperate to win building contracts for LIFT schemes and polyclinics.

Elsewhere, despite damaging recent revelations about the failure of 'payment by results' to deal adequately with specialist services, particularly cancer care, the Government are ploughing on with expanding the system into new areas of the NHS, which will bring planning problems and financial instability to other parts of the health service.

Then, of course, there's our old friend 'patient choice'. Of course, everyone wants patients to be able to access the highest quality of service which is most appropriate for their needs. But the Government still have not grasped the fact that choice does not necessarily mean equality.

For example, the consumerist approach to personal health budgets – to be piloted in the health service – holds many dangers for the NHS, not least the prospect that patients who exhausted their budget could put pressure on a system which allows them to top-up their own personal care with their own money, something which undermines the NHS, as the only people who could afford to do this are the rich.

The experience of our members in social care has already highlighted many of the pitfalls with personal budgets, so we need to see far greater analysis of the potential consequences of adopting such an approach within the NHS. And for once, the pilots should do exactly what it says on the tin; test a policy to see if it works, and if it doesn't, scrap it.

The threat of top-ups or co-payments is one that all parts of the UK have been struggling with during the summer as NICE guidelines and the Scottish Medicines Consortium have come under pressure from user groups and the media to allow patients to pay for extra drugs that are too expensive for the NHS to fund. It is a hugely emotive issue for patients and their families, but also for those healthcare staff who find

themselves in the position of having to tell someone that an effective treatment is not available for them.

UNISON has called for more consistency in the way that the guidelines are implemented, greater pressure on drug companies to lower their prices and also an ongoing debate in this area.

However, we have been absolutely clear that opening up the NHS to a co-payments free-for-all would be the first step onto the slippery slope to a two-tier NHS, where the rich got a business class service and the rest of us had to settle for the scraps which were left over.

Another issue that could affect all countries in the UK is the proposed EU Directive on Cross-Border Healthcare. Under the guise of boosting patient rights, the Directive is another cynical attempt by the European Commission to import marketised principles through the back door.

So to close, Congress, let's be thankful that after 60 years we still have an NHS that continues to strive for equality and fairness, but we must also remain vigilant in confronting the many new challenges from both home and abroad. Thank you.

Naomi McVey (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Composite Motion 16.

She said: I am pleased to second Composite 16 on behalf of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. Bad news stories dominate the media coverage of the NHS. This might fill newspapers but, frankly, it is demoralising for people like me who work for the Service. There is so much to celebrate about the NHS, in this the year of its 60th birthday. Many of the more recent reforms should bring about more improvement, such as the new emphasis on quality of care, investing more in the development of staff and making health promotion as important as healthcare.

The CSP wants to play its part in this new health agenda and believes that the TUC should as well. But it will not happen without a change in approach. The Government and the NHS have talked the talk about staff involvement and partnership working for quite some time now, but it will take more than warm words to make this a reality so that change is done with health workers and not to them.

We also need more transparency about where all the extra investment is going. Did you know that the NHS ended up with a massive financial surplus at the end of the last financial year, and that this is forecast to rise to more than £1.7bn by the end of next April. Yet on the frontline we are still seeing services squeezed, posts stripped out, rolls downgraded and not nearly enough jobs for newly qualified staff. In our view, a mismatch is going on between where public money should be spent and where it is being spent.

One area where it most definitely should not be spent is boosting the profits of the private sector. Public healthcare is not a commodity and the NHS should not be a marketplace. Competition, it is argued, is a means to drive up standards but, in our experience, it places complicated boundaries between services. It encourages secrecy rather than sharing of good practice between services. It, potentially, places money before the quality of care and it undermines the terms and conditions of our members.

So the CSP believes, like UNISON, that there has to be a re-think on this aspect of government policy. The future of our National Health Service is so important to every trade unionist that we are also calling in this motion for the TUC to stimulate a debate about the kind of health service that we want.

The TUC's Touchstone pamphlet, the *Missing Billions*, which has already been mentioned in Congress, was a real success story and a model to follow. Please support this motion. I second.

Marjory Broughton (*Unite*) speaking in support of Composite Motion 16 said: The Darzi Report was commissioned to celebrate 60 years of the NHS. The report recommended changes to the NHS, in that small businesses would compete against each other in a health marketplace. Unite has not supported this move. However, there are goals which Unite does support like personalised health quality and good delivery to all. Unite believes that marketisation and privatisation will interfere with the delivery of these goals. Unite, furthermore, is disappointed that there is little reference to industrial issues, particularly in view of the low esteem and morale currently experienced by many key health delivery staff due to high workloads and the long-hours culture, where staff regularly work many extra unpaid hours outside their contracts. In addition, low morale is the result of a culture of bullying, harassment and violence. The training, recruitment and retention of staff could have a big impact on the delivery of service. All these issues need to be addressed if standards are to continue to improve. Unite broadly welcomes the plan to have an NHS consultation especially as the document, for the first time, pledges that the NHS will strive to deliver a good service to patients.

Unite is concerned with the content of the constitution when dealing with the internal market and the commissioning process, where private and third sector organisations can bid against the public sector to provide services on a widespread scale, as this process has never been tested and the stakes are very high if it results in failure.

Trade unions are not mentioned in the constitution, which is a matter of grave concern to us, and the right to join a recognised trade union should be the right of all staff.

The continuing creep of privatisation into the health service is a worrying trend for many staff. What does a board of directors expect of a privatised health service? It expects profits for its shareholders, profits which could have been spent on improving care and conditions of service for patients and staff. There is only one pot of money. It is not infinite. In this time of credit crunch, what will we all fall back on? I will tell you. We will fall back on the NHS and its dedicated and under-paid workers, yet they are the people who have been left and who we look for to provide solutions because the privatised shareholders might withdraw their investment if profits are lower than expected. It will be the caring staff who worry about patients left lying on trolleys. Who do we look for in times of crisis? Yes, we look to our mothers and our grandmothers and, yes, we look to an efficient local health service to help sort us out. The NHS is now old enough to be a granny and we rely on it to make us well and support us when we are not. Unite defends a publicly funded and controlled health service, providing free healthcare. I urge you to support Composite Motion 16.

The President: We now move to the vote on Composite 16. There is no need to reply. The General Council supports the composite.

* *Composite Motion 16 was CARRIED.*

Royal Mail

Billy Hayes (*Communication Workers Union*) moved Motion 67.

He said: Congress, earlier this year the British Government carried out a commitment to review the impact of liberalisation of postal services in the UK. That reduced them from a commitment that was given at Warwick 1, as it is now called, and that review was carried out by a guy called Richard Hooper. This was

necessary because of the impact of liberalisation. What had taken place in this country was the abolition of a 350 year old monopoly, well in advance of any other country in Europe, and that development had profound implications. That monopoly allows Royal Mail to deliver to 28.4 million addresses in the UK and to have a universal service with a universal price. Postcom's removal of the monopoly allowed competitors to operate in the profitable areas of the business, but the competitors do not have to provide the full service which Royal Mail currently does by delivering, where necessary, to all 28.4 million addresses. The impact of such liberalisation has meant that the Royal Mail's competitors have won 40 per cent of Royal Mail's business. Yet the actual delivery, the so-called 'final mile', which goes to your front door, is still performed by Royal Mail employees. In fact, 99.8 per cent of all deliveries are done by Royal Mail employees. Despite the growth of the internet, internet companies are one of the Royal Mail's biggest users. However, the loss of so much revenue to the Royal Mail has had a profound impact on its business. In Postcom's evidence to the Hooper Review, it now proposes to privatise Royal Mail and break up the industry. So having caused the problem, they now think the thing to do is to bleed the patient a bit more. The Regulator wants the public to subsidise the loss-making areas, such as the counter network, yet enable the competition to enter into the profitable areas. Does this scenario sound familiar, where the public is expected to underwrite the loss-making areas when the private sector is entitled to access the more profitable areas of the industry?

Of course, more disgracefully, with all the problems within Royal Mail, Royal Mail management also wants to see the privatisation of their industry. Why is that? Let me tell you that Britain's best paid public servant is a man called Adam Crozier. He gets £3 million a year. He has the same attitude as those working in the private sector, which is the worse you perform, the better your pay gets at the top of the industry. I repeat. He gets £3 million for overseeing the destruction of Royal Mail and the great service it has provided. There are now no more Sunday collections in this loss-making industry. But between 2004-2007 Royal Mail management has lobbied and lobbied to get the industry privatised and they have been unsuccessful.

The Hooper Review is going to report very soon. Interestingly, and it is probably a coincidence, Hooper is not going to report just before the TUC Congress. Neither will it report just before the Labour Party Conference, the Tory Party Conference or the Liberal Party Conference. It is going to report when the entire conference season is out of the way, but we have been given some pretty heavy hints as to what Hooper is looking at. We know that they are talking about the privatisation and the break-up of Royal Mail. But, of course, when we talk about privatisation and liberalisation, the terms 'joint venture' and 'getting the staff more involved' may well be used. But they are not content with destroying our postal industry, I expect they will want to see companies like TNT, Deutschpost or FedEx getting a stake in Royal Mail. I am talking about the system which operates in Germany at the moment, where Deutschpost is actually owned by New Zealand Post. So they are looking at some kind of innovation. Their attitude is, "The patient is doing very badly, so let's bleed it some more". We are going to make sure that this Labour Government does not take up the issue of privatisation in whatever form is suggested.

From what has happened in this country, we think people are now sick and tired of marketisation and privatisation, and the sooner this Government gets the message the better. You see, we do not just fight privatisation just because it is an ideology. We can see

what privatisation has done to the rail industry and we can see what it has done to the other industries. When people talk about the benefits of privatisation, I do not see poor people in this country saying, "Isn't it a rip-roaring success with our gas prices going up? Isn't it a rip-roaring success with our electricity prices going up?" Let me say this. Privatisation is an ideology whose time has run its course, and particularly with what we see happening within our industry.

Let me say that the best part of £2bn was given back to the British Government – to the Tory Government, mainly – in terms of when they took a pensions holiday.

I want to thank Brendan for the way in which he helped us last year in terms of our pay dispute. We got a really good deal, one of the best in the public sector, but we ain't going away! We are going to be fighting the privatisation of Royal Mail, we are going to be fighting to ensure that our members' pensions are sorted and we will be fighting – it doesn't matter whether it is a Labour Government or a Tory Government – as hard as we can for our members' interests. That is why we are urging you to support this motion. Thank you.

Ged Dempsey (*Unite*) seconded the motion.

He said: President and Congress, Unite is full square, one hundred per cent, in full solidarity with our brothers in the Communication Workers Union. Together the CWU and Unite have put forward an early day motion, EDM1506. Please, when you go home, get your MP to support this vital EDM on the Post Office. We recognise in Unite that this vital issue on the future of the Post Office impacts on every delegate, on all our families, members and communities. In particular, it impacts on the elderly and disabled, the low waged and those who live in our rural communities.

Let's look at the role of the Regulator. The position of the Universal Service Obligation in the UK is challenging as the distribution of the population is far from even. To encourage competition the Regulator forced the Royal Mail to provide access to its delivery at a cost which is less than it can charge its own customers. As a result, the competition has managed to cream off the most lucrative part of the postal collection business without having to pay the true price for the more costly deliveries. But the Hooper Review has concluded that the Regulator was at fault in pushing through those changes and, effectively, hampering the Royal Mail's activities.

Comrades, the Government have privatised services within the Post Office, including Her Majesty's Stationery Office, who carried out the printing by GPM trade union members. Essential contracts have been taken away by banks rather utilising the vital public service of the Post Office. The loss of key over-the-counter services like pensions and benefit payments has caused a significant loss of revenue to the Post Office Counter Service. That is not to mention the increase in security for postal workers and the threat of joblessness on those people. At the same time, postal workers' pensions have been attacked and downgraded. The Post Office is similar to our other public services, like the NHS and transport, in affecting the quality of life and in terms of public support. The Post Office must remain in public ownership for the interest of the public and all our communities. If the Government does not change direction on this key, core Labour policy it will be punished at the ballot box.

A certain Cabinet minister seems to have air-brushed his past, not mentioning any names, Alan.

Comrades, why does the closure of our local Post Offices matter? Try asking the pensioner, the disabled, the parent with young toddlers, those who have little

or no transport links, not to mention those who cannot afford to travel to access this essential public service. Congress, Unite is in full support of the Royal Mail and our Post Offices. We urge you to lend your support.

Gerry Ferguson (GMB) speaking in support of the motion, said: The GMB, like most other unions, is a large user of the Royal Mail's services. Furthermore, our 600,000 members also use Royal Mail services. It is the view of the GMB and our membership that the Royal Mail's services are getting worse, not better. During the past few years we have lost Sunday collections and second deliveries. Now, very often, post that was delivered at 8 or 9 in the morning is not delivered until the afternoon. The local postmen and postwomen are now being replaced by agency staff who are not even familiar with the town in which they are delivering, let alone the streets and the individual householders, while those in rural communities have suffered rounds of Post Office closures. Northumberland and Durham, which I represent, have been hit hard. The last round of closures also affected towns and cities. These closures were not even based on profit or loss or customers' requirements. They were just based on a pin being stuck in a map and saying, "Let's close every third Post Office which has another one within a two mile radius". This situation has caused many difficulties for the Post Offices which have remained open, often being unable to cope with the crowds and the volume of work that they have received. A number of them now have introduced crowd control to manage the queues in Post Offices.

Why are we in a mess where services to the public have been allowed to deteriorate? In fact, we are the victims of contradictory government policies which demand competition in the mail service and take away half the Post Offices and their workers, and then turn round and say "You must make a profit". The Government's own Review Body, led by Richard Hooper, a former deputy chairman of OFCOM, reported in May of this year, that liberalisation of Royal Mail has done little or nothing for small businesses or the public at large.

In fact both small business and the public at large believe that the Royal Mail's services are now worse than ever. The GMB and the public want to use and support their Post Offices and the Royal Mail, but we also want a public service that treats its customers fairly, provides high quality public service and a competent management, while at the same time treating its employees properly by improving their pay, conditions and pensions. I ask you to support Motion 67.

* *Motion 67 was CARRIED.*

Educational workforce development

John Chowcat (*Association of Professionals in Education and Children's Trusts*) moved Composite Motion 24.

He said: Congress, given today's harsh and globalised markets for manufactured goods and financial and other services, the UK economy can only hope to succeed if it upskills its workforce, but that in turn requires a strong and improving education and training sector. The heart of any education system lies deep in the classroom and high quality teaching and learning requires real and sustained investment in workforce development right across the education sector. This is not just our viewpoint. Prominent and internationally respected educationalists, like Prof. Michael Fullan from Ontario, have consistently highlighted the relevance of on-going staff professional learning to overall education progress. Study after research study has confirmed this approach. Only last year the detailed survey of 25 different national school systems, published by McKinsey under

the title of *How the World's Best Performing School Systems Come Out On Top*, noted, and I quote: "The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers". Its key conclusions included, "Top performing systems are relentless in their focus on improving the quality of instruction in the classroom". In fact, it memorably quoted a leader in Boston's quite impressive and rapidly improving school system, explaining: "The three pillars of our reform were professional development, professional development and professional development".

What we are now seeing in this country is a greater understanding and activity from government on this central issue. The announcement in last December's National Children's Plan for England that the DCSF is now committed to making teaching a masters level profession, opened an important debate, and it provides new opportunities to make progress on teachers' CPD. We also support concrete moves to strengthen training and career development for school support staff. The efforts of the Training and Development Agency, the TDA, to map and promote the supply of effective CPD for schools, recognising the key role of local authorities in this regard, and following national consultations with professional associations. What we need, Congress, is a clear-cut entitlement to high quality CPD for the whole education workforce at every level; that is, CPD which is enabling, which is formative and accessible through release facilities and sabbaticals, which is consistently and properly funded, which is co-ordinated by local authorities and accepted throughout the UK. This is genuinely vital, not just for the education sector but for the UK's overall economic future.

Please give your support to Composite 24.

Hazel Danson (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded Composite Motion 24.

She said: My union welcomes and endorses the motion's commitment to and recognition of the importance of high quality continuing professional development as an entitlement for all of us who work with children and young people. We do so because, as our greatly missed General Secretary, Steve Sinnott, passionately believed that education has the power to liberate. It has the power to transform lives, and that is best done by an education workforce team that is well paid, motivated, self-confident and skilled. However, in England this liberating power of education is being stifled by the high stakes, National Curriculum testing regime, a regime that sets school against school, that narrows the curriculum, that labels children as young as seven as failures, when in other countries they would only just be starting their formal education. This is a regime which has led to a cynical manipulation of funding in schools, which is all about helping the Government reach their own self-imposed targets and nothing about genuine and sustained improvements in people achievement.

Our children are the most tested in Europe and, according to UNICEF, they are the most miserable, too. The high stakes testing system poisons everything that it touches, including performance management and professional development opportunities. The NUT believes that the collaborative local approaches to school improvement outlined in the motion are undermined by the Government's over-emphasis on test results. The fiasco surrounding the administration, or lack, of this year's tests provides ample evidence that the tests and the school performance tables which accompany them should be scrapped.

Of the 134 submissions to the Education and Skills Select Committee on Testing, 133 of them agreed that there was a need for radical change. The one submission in favour of retaining the current system

was from the Government, which have continued to doggedly defend the results of this year's tests despite the concerns raised by schools and markers. This is not in the best interest of children, schools or the education system as a whole. The Government must now initiate an independent review of the current unstable, costly and damaging national testing arrangements. A review could also give the Government time to ponder how it might better spend the £165m it is currently wasting on the test contractor, money that would be better spent on programmes for education workforce development as outlined in the composite. Please support.

Sue Rogers (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*) supported Composite Motion 24.

She said: This composite is really like motherhood and apple pie. Its positive benefits cannot be denied. As professionals we can get more professional, we can get more effective and we can get more fulfilled by continuing professional development.

Let me make one brief remark on the comments made by my colleague from the NUT about the SATS. Like her I agree that the SATS this year were something of a fiasco. ETS proved to be totally inadequate to the task, and we welcome the Sutherland Inquiry. But, above all, what we despise is how the SATS are used to make league tables of schools, to name and shame, without any account taken of the social context in which schools find themselves. Furthermore, we are also very hesitant and concerned about the development of other systems which could prove massively workload intensive. As teachers we seek to build a very positive environment for the young. We seek to have a positive impact on the lives of young people, to improve them. In the years that have now produce workforce reform and the positive developments that has brought, we now have a team within schools working to support our children. All of the team should have the opportunity, if we are really to have a career structure which is progressive and supportive, to take advantage of continuing professional development. The fact is it has now moved from the margins, where it relied on goodwill and where the head decided whether to allow you to take advantage of CPD, to very much the centre stage in the whole career structure for teachers and the team who are part of the new education experience.

It is after all, colleagues, and I say this now as a teacher with more than 35 years' experience, quite fascinating how children develop. It never ceases to amaze me. I remember in my early years in the profession being amazed that people could learn to walk very quickly but it took them years before they could learn to hop. It never ceases to amaze me that telling children that if they go back within 24 hours, when they are revising, to any revision notes, there is a 60 per cent improvement in their retention and, similarly, if they go back again 48 hours later. It is a point worth remembering to tell your children. As we research on how the brain works, all of this improves our ability to be effective within the classroom.

NASUWT has, for a long time, had a policy whereby you have a sabbatical one year in every seven. At the moment, I am owed five years on that policy. But if we take that idea of continuing professional development of sabbatical release, then we take the idea of transforming the school workforce, of increasing its effectiveness, of promoting its development and seeing for all a real opportunity for career progression, a benefit to the whole education team. Support this composite.

Mary Bousted (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 24.

She said: Congress, I want to re-focus on the key issue of the composite, which is continuing professional development. It is often said: "To look to the future we have to start from where we are at, and if we were to start we would not start from here". This is the case with CPD.

The Training and Development Agency, the agency which is responsible for funding award-bearing CPD for teachers and for co-ordinating national policy on CPD for support staff, did a seminal report three years ago on the state of play. It was quite a moment. In a rare display of hair-shirt wearing, the TDA admitted that CPD is too often short-term, reactive and lacking in strategic vision. Teachers are too rarely engaged in systematic analysis of their CPD needs. Teachers in schools too rarely access the type of CPD which is most likely to be effective in meeting their needs. Teachers, too often, undertake CPD in relative isolation with little support and feedback. There is very uneven access to CPD and in most areas inadequate information exists about quality providers.

Teachers want but are not getting good quality subject-based CPD and support staff in schools are the last line for CPD. Their needs are often not identified and too often not met. That is the experience of ATL members. They do not get the CPD they do need, but they get lots of CPD they do not need. The roller coaster of the national strategy has flattened all before them. Yes, folks, we have been here before but it is literacy and numeracy again and again and again!

That is why in working in social partnership on the Revised Performance Management System for teachers ATL pressed hard for a new approach to CPD. It was an approach which recognised the work of teachers as professionals. What does 'professionalism' mean? It means you are able to make choices about your practice as a teacher and that you are able to exercise choice about CPD. That is why we argued so strongly and got it written into the statutory guidance that, as well as meeting the needs of the school, CPD also had to meet the personal and professional needs of the teacher. That is why we have worked so hard to support the development of CPD leaders and to pilot a database of CPD opportunities so that teachers can make informed decisions about how to meet their needs and so that schools can more effectively plan their CPD provision.

So are we there yet? No, we are not. This motion calls for high quality CPD as an entitlement for all in the teaching and education professions. Comrades, we cannot accept an unequal deal where more, more and more is demanded of educational professionals without a contractual right to support and training so that educational professionals can meet the demands made upon them. We need now to secure a contractual entitlement to CPD. We need better CPD and we need it now. Support the motion.

The President: I have just been given a historic note, really; one of the education unions has decided to waive its right to speak! (*Laughter*) The Association for College Management has waived its right to speak. I would just like to thank them on behalf of Congress. We can now move to the vote. The General Council support the motion.

* *Composite Motion 24 was CARRIED.*

Apprentices

Wilf Flynn (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) moved Motion 79. He said: Proud to have served an apprenticeship as a joiner, proud to have worked with generations who have passed on their

skills, and proud to have joined the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers as that apprentice. In the construction industry we are not having apprenticeships delivered. If we were, UCATT would not have had to produce an apprenticeship document which outlines the case for apprentices not only in the construction industry but elsewhere. In the private sector you heard yesterday from Tommy Lannon on the effect of bogus self-employment on pensions. It equally applies to apprentices. What we have under the current situation is the worst examples of the construction industry being brought into local government. We have private contractors carrying out the work instead of directly employed local authority/AMO/stock transfer employees and what we have is contractors coming in, receiving the contract, not doing it, subcontracting it to somebody else who subcontracts it to somebody else. The logic of that is you do not get the apprentices. So, we cannot afford to simply wait until the jobs have been done and have a parliamentary committee look at PFI and the like, we need local authorities, AMOs and stock transfers who are making the contract in the first place to have that within the contract; if there are millions and in some cases hundreds of millions of pounds, then the ratio is there for apprentices. It is not in defiance of the European legislation. It can be done. On a lot of things it is the political will that is required. We need the training because we need it for future projects and the future of industry.

What kind of training are we talking about? When I made reference to being an apprentice it was work-based and it was college-based. We have situations now where it is simply college-based. You do not train a tradesman, or tradesperson, simply by sitting them in a classroom and you do not train them to the standards required by making the NVQs too low. So, we need on-the-job training for all the generations to come because if we do not get it right now, like on a lot of other issues on this agenda, we will not have the apprentices today, we certainly will not have them tomorrow, and we have to make sure that the Olympic Games are not a lost opportunity. *(Applause)*

Edna Rolph (GMB) seconded Motion 79.

She said: President, Congress, I spent all my working life in manufacturing and am well aware of the necessity for high-quality training. The decline in apprenticeships which occurred under the previous administration was scandalous and this government can take credit for reversing that decline. The target of 400,000 apprenticeship places in England is sensible and achievable. This target must go hand-in-hand with other conditions for apprentices, including a guaranteed minimum wage that rises every year and guaranteed jobs on completion of training. An apprenticeship must also have, clearly identified, the job, the qualification and the level of achievement required, where the training will be undertaken and who is responsible for delivering that training. Unless these conditions are applied to all apprentices there will still be a high drop-out in rates. Although the average completed rate has now risen to around 34 per cent, companies that recognise trade unions where the apprenticeship forms part of the collective agreement achieve rates in the order of 88-96 per cent, three times the rate in non-recognised companies. We also ask Congress to note that in companies who recognise trade unions the starting rate of pay is higher at 50 per cent of the qualified rate, well above the Learning and Skills Council rate of £80 and the TUC's suggested rate of £110. We welcome the Government's commitment to apprenticeships in the public sector; however, they must be proper apprenticeship schemes. They must also include trade union negotiation rights and be

agreed by the appropriate trade unions to ensure that apprentices are properly represented in the workplace.

Colleagues, the public sector is responsible for many billions of pounds of public procurement each year and the Government has set a target for building two million new homes by 2016. It will be stipulated that only firms who guarantee properly managed apprenticeships can be awarded these contracts. The procedure specification should also insist on involvement of the appropriate trade unions for pay and conditions to be agreed upon.

Well, colleagues, things have improved in England and Wales but in Scotland the NSP has quietly announced the withdrawal of funding for apprenticeships outside engineering, construction, and science, which means losing around 5,000 apprenticeship places, in other industries, in Scotland. It is clear that the NSP is more interested in abandoning its car park charges than training Scotland's future skilled workforce. *(Applause)*

John Walsh (Unite) supported Motion 79. He said: I have been an activist since I was an apprentice in aerospace. I was lucky to receive a skilled, decently paid job at the end of it but this is not true for so many of my peers. I applaud the Government's target of half a million apprenticeships, as described in this motion, but only if they guarantee the upkeep of quality. By 2013, the Government plans that 85 per cent of all 19-year olds should have reached a Level 2 qualification. This is a start but employers demand the minimum of Level 3 qualification to fulfil the requirements of the EU Lisbon targets for a knowledge-based economy.

It is clear that the new matching service lauded by Gordon Brown is fundamentally flawed and is little more than a gesture. There is a distinct and growing imbalance between supply and demand for apprenticeships and there is currently little or no effort to encourage companies winning large government contracts to engage with the apprenticeship programme. For example, London has one of the lowest apprenticeship participation rates in the UK at only 9 per cent. London boroughs like Newham and Tower Hamlets have unacceptably high levels of unemployment and are yet to see the benefits of jobs and development arising from Olympic projects. The Government must introduce wage subsidies and incentives for small and medium-sized enterprises to encourage apprenticeships of all ages.

I have campaigned for apprenticeships for as long as I have worked because I believe in them. If the Government does not use this opportunity, fully focusing on both quantity and quality, then they are in danger of doing more harm than good to our most effective form of vocational training, broadening the skills gap, damaging our key industries further but, worst of all, disenfranchising an entire generation of our future members. Congress, please support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: We now go to the vote. The General Council support.

* *Motion 79 was CARRIED.*

Training in the public sector and machinery of government

Jonathan Ledger (napo) moved Composite Motion 20, and spoke to paragraphs 1 and 2, and (i) of the Motion.

He said: The Leitch Review of skills and education challenged the Government to enable the UK to become a world leader in skills by 2020. Its targets included dramatically increasing the number of people

developing skills ranging from Level 2 to Level 4 occupational standards. It highlighted government responsibility to drive the change in attitude and commitment needed to deliver such ambitious targets. It was in this context that the Probation Service began to review occupational standards covering the training of probation staff. Training for staff is a key issue for napo. In the mid-1990s the Tory Government broke the link between probation and social work training and napo fought a long campaign for the retention of degree-level training. Our campaign received support from the Labour Party and in government Jack Straw, as Home Secretary, delivered on the promise with the introduction of the diploma in probation studies. The recent review in which napo was an active participant included the diploma but also considered the training needs of all staff. It resulted in radical proposals entirely in line with Leitch principles which would introduce new qualifying training arrangements covering all staff. The new arrangements will provide in-service training that would enable staff to develop skills from Level 2 to Level 4 and beyond. We believe these arrangements would dramatically raise personal development and professional standards across the probation service. We were dismayed, therefore, to learn earlier this year that the Ministry of Justice had put the project on hold for reasons of affordability and flexibility. Months later and the future of the project remains unclear, demoralising staff who had believed that new training opportunities were arriving, and creating uncertainty about the future of probation workforce planning. Napo is campaigning hard for the project to be restarted and for its recommendations to be implemented. We have reminded Jack Straw, now Justice Secretary, of his past commitment to probation training. In order to make the new qualifying training arrangements workable and effective, specifically napo is calling for proper time off arrangements combined with workload relief, thorough assessment underpinned by independent external accreditation, training that provides staff with transferable skills and a fair pay structure encouraging and supporting commitment to training.

Congress, we are seeking your support for our campaign and recognising that our concerns will be shared by other unions, a commitment to all campaigns aiming not only to defend training and professional development but to improve provision of higher skills for all staff. Please support the motion.

Peter Pendle (*Association for College Management*) seconded Composite Motion 20. He said: Earlier this year a government white paper proposed radical changes to the structural arrangements for 14-19 provision in adult education; unfortunately, not for the first time. Originally colleges were accountable to local authorities. Then the Tories removed this accountability and set up an unelected quango, the Further Education Funding Council, to control and direct colleges in a competitive market economy. This failed, of course, and so the new Labour government abolished the FEFC and created an even bigger bureaucracy with the Learning and Skills Council.

The LSC has apparently failed to meet government targets and it too is about to be condemned just as it is getting its act together. To replace it some of the colleges go back to local government, others will be accountable to not one but three new national quangos, and some a mixture of both. Everyone will have a finger in the pie – RDAs, Department of Work and Pensions, DIUS, DCFs, and anyone else you care to think of. The proposed new infrastructure will prove complex and cumbersome, give rise to destructive interagency power play, stack the resources of colleges into bureaucracy, and divert them from their essential purpose, that of providing for individuals,

communities, and employers, the education service that they want and need.

Since 1993, more and more time and resources have been wasted on managing bureaucratic data returns, auditing, and meeting ridiculous targets, and bidding for small amounts of ring-fenced cash. The Government have promised to remove this burden but these proposals will just make matters worse for colleges and their workers. Let me be clear, the majority of colleges oppose these changes, regardless of what John Denham may say.

International research suggests that education provision is most successful for children, young people, and adults, where the long-term structural arrangements are stable, enduring, effective, and transparent, in other words, where there is little churn in respect of the agencies that have responsibility for planning, funding, and supporting schools, colleges and other providers. As the motion suggests, Finland is the best example of a country whose organisation of education has remained stable for a long time and whose record on participation and achievement outstrips its European neighbours.

We are about to see the English system of further education once again thrown into the air and radically rearranged in such a way as to give us absolutely no confidence we will have the long-term stable settlement that we need. Within a few years the new arrangements will unravel under the weight of their own complexity. Only by developing the infrastructure in dialogue with professionals will we achieve the arrangements that are best suited to offering world-class education provision for young people and adults and thereby the success for individuals, communities, and employers, that is our collective goal and that is comparable to the best in the world.

Let me just finish with a quote from last week's education *Guardian*: "FE management is not about helping students to learn, it is about obeying the threats of a series of governments which have neither understood nor loved FE." Sadly, that is very true. Please support the composite. (*Applause*)

The President: Before I take the next speaker, Congress, you will have noticed that we have now been joined on the platform by the Rt. Hon. John Denham, MP, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills. John will address us a little later in this session but welcome, John, to our Congress. (*Applause*)

Tony Conway (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 20. He said: President, Congress, I currently work for the Department for Children, Schools, and Families, one year ago I worked for the DFES, not long ago before that I worked for the Employment Department, I have also worked for the Training Commission, the Training Division, Innotech, and for the Manpower Services Commission. Nothing has changed, Congress, members still do the same job, we still organise skills, adult learning, education, youth training, and support for children. Jobs have not changed, departments have just moved around them. We now spend more on consultants because of these changes, hundreds of thousands of pounds. We have new headed paper, new logos, new office signs, new computer systems, and changes to pay and our terms and conditions.

I would like to reassure the Minister and Congress that we are not opposed to machinery of government changes per se but, Congress, there must be a benefit too; our members' terms and conditions must not be driven down. Machinery of government changes cannot be used as an alternative for real action to improve access to learning. Our members in BERR,

DCFS, and DIUS, along with the LSC, are at the forefront of all these changes. Three sets of terms and conditions are being changed, new pay systems, three rather than two, and office closures threatened.

I will move on to the LSC. Less than two years ago the LSC went through a huge turmoil with over 1,000 redundancies and we were forced to take industrial action to protect jobs and services. PCS is once again concerned about the possibility of massive job losses and the possibility of further industrial action. The announcement made just over 12 months ago on staff working in the LSC has created massive uncertainty. We still have no security about our members' future. Office locations are unknown, staff numbers required for new organisation unknown, timetables of transfers and LA arrangements remain vague as there is delayed engagement among LAs to develop clusters tasked to delivering 14-19 education and the new diploma system. The LSC is beginning to struggle to meet its demanding targets. Last week we failed to deliver EMA to young people commencing FE, another outsourced service. LSC previously delivered its targets but a degree of uncertainty and insecurity is beginning to impact on ability to deliver and there is also a significant under-spend on Train to Gain.

Congress, I will finish on this point, such changes really impact on members who deliver the service, whether they work in local education authorities, whether they work in the local authorities, whether they work in the further education sector, and that includes staff working in the civil service as well. We need stability, we need transparency, yes, but we also need to be treated fairly with any changes so we can look forward to going to work and we can get on with delivering our jobs. Please support the composite. *(Applause)*

The President: Again, nothing to reply to so we will move straight to the vote. The General Council support Composite Motion 20.

* *Composite Motion 20 was CARRIED.*

Presentation of unionlearn video

The President: Delegates, I would like to bring in Billy Hayes, Chair of unionlearn. Billy has been a great champion of learning and Union Learning Reps, the first chair of unionlearn he has played a major role in establishing it as a force for learning. I now hand over to Billy who will say a few words about our work on learning and skills before introducing the Rt. Hon. John Denham, MP, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills. Welcome, Billy.

Billy Hayes (General Council): Thanks, Dave. On behalf of the General Council I am pleased to be able to welcome the Secretary of State to Congress to speak about the skills agenda. The Government and the unions are singing from the same hymn sheet on this particular issue. I understand in terms of the learning agenda there is a choir boy who wants to join us, I believe it is David Cameron; he is very impressed by the learning agenda and has talked about keeping it.

Skills matter for old and young alike. They will matter even more in the years to come as jobs increasingly require a wider skills set. The union movement acknowledges the Government's scale of ambition in this area and also what it has already achieved on this front - revitalising apprenticeships, expanding training opportunities for workers to train to gain. Many of the workers benefiting from these new training opportunities are being failed by the school system and then failed again by their employers. We know that workers without qualifications are four times less likely to receive training compared with graduate employees. The new right to request time to train is therefore a

welcome initiative and will help unions to do even more to tackle the training divide in the workplace. The new right is open to all workers regardless of their skill level and unions are in a stronger position than ever before to help their members get on at work by supporting their training needs.

In my role as chair of the unionlearn board, I am pleased with what we have achieved on this front. It is now 10 years since unions committed themselves to establishing a network of learning reps, and what a success it has been. Government support, in particular, from the Union Learning Fund has been a crucial factor in helping unions train up to 20,000 union learning reps in that time. These reps are now helping 200,000 union members a year in accessing learning opportunities at work and you know from your own experience - I can speak for my own union - how it is bringing people to training and learning, but also bringing in a new generation of activists.

Establishment of unionlearn is helping us to drive this agenda forward at an even greater pace. We have had terrific support from John Denham and his ministerial team for the union learning agenda and I would like personally to pay tribute to the commitment in this area. I think you are doing a fantastic job, John. It is probably the only... It really is a good job that you are doing. *(Laughter)* I do not know whether that is politically correct to say you are doing a fantastic job, but you are. On the learning agenda we are singing from the same *hymn sheet*, you are doing a great job, and without any further ado, John, I would like you to address Congress. *(Applause)*

Address by Rt Hon John Denham MP, Secretary Of State For Innovation, Universities And Skills

John Denham: Congress, Mr President, Billy Hayes, thank you for the introduction and for the opportunity to speak to you today.

As you know, these are difficult economic times, with the international credit crunch, rising global food prices, sharp increases and swift changes in world energy prices: difficult times triggered by international events. We know that global forces can produce great wealth but we also know that they can push societies like ours towards greater insecurity, inequality, and unfairness. It is in these times of insecurity that the values of trade unions and the labour movement are most important.

This Labour Government has been at its best when we have believed in our values. Our core belief is that we all do better for ourselves and our families if we look after each other. Most of us cannot provide for ourselves our own schools, or colleges, or hospitals. We have to do it together. We also believe that good government has the power to shape society for the better and to step in when people need our help. These are the values and beliefs that the trades union movement shares with the Labour Government.

More important, perhaps, these values and beliefs are shared by the majority of the British people. It is why we are different to the Tories. They do not share our values, they do not share the values of the British people, and they do not at heart believe in the power or the responsibility of government to step in to help change people's lives for the better. These values and beliefs we share give you and us the power to shape Britain for the better, power that must be used both effectively but also responsibly. These are times of great change.

We know there are real difficulties and we know there are also real opportunities. Take for one example, construction, today the construction industry is experiencing real difficulties in house-building but look just a few years into the future and we know that we will need many more skilled people working in

construction than we have available to us today. In part this is because of government investment in the Olympics, in Crossrail, in housing, as well as in new schools, colleges, and in hospitals, and in part as the Government sets the framework for new jobs in energy, from nuclear to renewable, all of this will demand more, not fewer, skilled people.

So, we have to tackle the problems of today while making sure we are prepared for the opportunities of the future. That is why we do not want to lose young skilled trainees from the industry so we have set up a clearing house so that construction apprenticeships that may be at risk of redundancy are matched with new employers to allow them to complete the remainder of their training. That is why together with DWP and Defra we are making sure that anyone who might lose their job in house-building has a chance of taking up new skilled opportunities in insulating homes and businesses, and improving energy efficiency across the country. That is why last week we launched a programme to help homebuyers, social housing, and the housing market.

In the past construction has been kept afloat by the uncertain and fluctuating pool of migrant labour. In future, we must make sure that many more young people in Britain get the training that will make sure they get the new jobs. So, with employers we have agreed that construction will create 42,000 new apprenticeships by 2012. These apprenticeships will provide proper training in real jobs so that we can build the sector's future and that of the workforce, and to make sure we do we are creating a new taskforce with major employers and unions so that we make sure that construction training works as effectively as possible expanding apprenticeships and radically improving training opportunities. We will make sure that every year we use the power of government contracts to help ensure in construction that opportunities to expand training and deliver apprenticeships are taken. I want at this moment to acknowledge UCATT's role in helping to shape our work on apprenticeships and training in the sector.

In the labour Movement we have always known that education and skills are one of the most powerful levers to improve social mobility. We know that if we help an adult improve their skills, their children are more likely to succeed, too. It is all too easy to forget what we inherited from the Tories 10 years ago: 7m adults unable to read and write. Since 2001, over 2.25m adults have been helped with literacy and numeracy. We are not going to stop there. We will make sure that no adult in the country is deprived of the opportunities to learn, to read, to write, or to gain new skills in the workplace, working together, bringing education to people who have been written off, and changing their lives.

What do the majority of our children want today? They want the chance to go to university or to get a high-quality apprenticeship, or training that will lead to a good job. Under Labour, more than 300,000 people have had the chance to go to university who would have been denied that opportunity under the Tories. They believe that too many other people's children go to university.

We all know that apprenticeships were practically destroyed in the 1990s. When David Cameron was advising Norman Lamont at the Treasury there was not a single penny available to support apprenticeships, but we have rescued apprenticeships. We have trebled the number of people taking them up since 1997. Over 60 per cent of people now complete their apprenticeship compared with just over 20 per cent a few years ago. We will go on to make sure that they are a mainstream option for all young people and also for adults in England. Within the next decade one in

five young people will be able to take up an apprenticeship.

We are creating a National Apprenticeships Service. By 2010, we will be spending over £1bn to support employers and apprentices properly. We are slashing bureaucracy without lowering standards so that over 140,000 people complete apprenticeships in 2010. With our new Apprenticeships Bill we will make clear exactly what every apprentice and employer can expect from each other and from us.

As a result of new investment in the last Budget, and decisions I have been able to take for this autumn, for the first time we are giving every 18-year old a right to public funding so that they can continue their training and education; at university, at college, in work, or an apprenticeship, until they are 25 or they get a Level 3 qualification. This is something that no government minister has ever been able to come to this Congress and say before: a promise of support to all our young people, because everyone has talent, because everyone has the right to support and develop that talent to get as far in life as their ambitions and abilities can take them.

For adults we are doing more. Together we are bringing about a change in the culture. Step by step we are entrenching people's rights to learn, in law. We have given new rights to millions of people, the right to basic skills, the right to study skills needed for better jobs, the right for young people to have an apprenticeship, if that is what suits them, the right for young people to keep training and studying into their 20s to get a Level 3 qualification, and all of this free training for those who need it.

Especially when times are tight, a Labour government believes in the right to carry on learning. It is what we have always believed. It is part of our Labour tradition from Ruskin and Morris in the 19th century to Jenny Lee and Harold Wilson's determination to create the Open University in the 1960s. That is why this Labour government will make it a right to request time for training. It will cover around 22 million workers. They will be able to request training that will help them do their jobs better, from an IT course to a degree.

It is not a soft option. It has the potential completely to transform the culture of workplaces across England. It is a system that works for individuals whether you are stacking shelves or selling software, where each employee understands they have rights, to maternity and paternity leave, to flexible working, and now to the time to learn too. In the workplace, who better to ensure that these rights are taken up than this movement.

None of this should allow any employer to ignore the opportunity or the responsibility. In a rapidly changing world, a business strategy based on standing still is not going to work. Most businesses and public services know this well enough but a third of employers still offer no training at all, and this must change.

These rights are shaped by our values together in the labour movement. That is why so many have been helped by Union Learning Representatives and by unionlearn. Over 20,000 Union Learning Representatives in the workplace today, best friends in the workplace, colleagues that can advise, support, and encourage you to do the right thing and take up training; a fantastic return, incidentally, on the investment this Government has made in ULRs and unionlearn. (Applause)

With your help thousands of employers have signed the skills pledge to make sure that every employee without good basic skills and qualifications has the opportunity to get them. Four-and-a-half thousand employers covering nearly 5 million employees have signed up and I know that Union Learning Reps will

help get more employers using Train to Gain as the best way of acting on the pledge and ensuring real and lasting impact. Train to Gain clearly works: 78 per cent of employers who had taken up training through the service would recommend it to other employers; 43 per cent of people at work who completed training through Train to Gain received a pay rise; 30 per cent were promoted and 69 per cent now say they want to carry on studying.

You know, the Tories want all but to abolish it. They want to take away training from thousands of people who do not have qualifications. By cutting £1bn from Train to Gain they would deny up to a million people a year the opportunity to get training and to get on in their lives, and at a stroke undermining the work of unionlearn and thousands of Union Learning Reps. They said they would cut £1bn from Train to Gain and they have said they would spend £1 bn on cutting inheritance tax for 3,000 families. One million people lose their right to train, 3,000 people get the extra inheritance tax. The same old Tories: nothing has changed. Let's be clear, the effect of that decision would take away, effectively, all of the legal rights for adults to train that we have been introducing, and rights are important in the training system.

Last year we referred, with your support, the exemption of apprentices from the National Minimum Wage to the Low Pay Commission. Today the average apprentice is paid about £170 a week. Without prejudicing the work of the Low Pay Commission, I am announcing today that in England minimum apprenticeship pay will rise from £80 to £95 per week during the coming year. *(Applause)* It will be young women, apprentices like those in hairdressing and in the care sector, who will benefit most.

Congress, to finish I want to remind you of what we have achieved when we have worked together. Our labour movement has introduced radical changes to workplaces throughout the country: more apprenticeships, more training, more rights in the workplace, more opportunities for everyone to get on in their lives, changes that have affected millions of people, improved their wages, their careers, and transforming the life chances of themselves and their children.

In 1997, when Britain's problems were largely self-inflicted, it was Labour that made the link between individual opportunity and social responsibility to achieve great changes. Today, many of the challenges we face are from outside with dramatic global changes to our economy and society, but those values are just as important today. We have a responsibility to help people and communities, not just to weather the storm, but to transform their lives.

The power to change lives is in our hands. More than ever, these are the same values and the same belief in the proper role of good government that Britain needs in today's world where the most pressing problems have international roots. Together we still have a job to do, to show why the values of the labour movement are as important today as they were 11 years ago. I am proud of what we have done and I know that you are too, but we have not finished yet. There is so much more that we can and must achieve, and let's do it together. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: John, thank you for that great speech. We really are proud of our unionlearn, it is a tremendous project on behalf of the whole of the trades union movement, and we are really proud of the way we have been able to link in with you on a joint agenda. This is how we should be working with government, taking an agenda forward that helps our members and helps the economy. Thank you very much for coming today. *(Applause)*

Congress, we have a little more business to do before you all rush off for lunch. I may have made a little mistake, I hate to acknowledge that, that in moving towards John's speech and Billy Hayes's introduction I forgot to take four paragraphs and I think I may have disadvantaged one of the delegates who wanted to speak to one of those paragraphs. If that is the case, I am more than willing to take the paragraphs now and if that person is in the hall then obviously if she could come to the front and make the point that she wanted to make, unless I have misread it. The paragraphs are 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4. OK, nobody wishes to speak on those paragraphs? (No response) That really does complete Chapter 6 of the General Council Report.

Could I remind delegates that there are various meetings taking place at lunchtime. Details of these meetings can be found at pages 16 and 17 of the *Congress Guide*, or the leaflet included in the wallet. This also is important, I would like to remind delegation leaders to complete and return the equality monitoring form that has been sent to them. Delegates should have received forms from their delegation leaders. If any delegates have not received a form, they should see their delegation leader.

That concludes the morning's business. We now stand adjourned until 2.15 p.m. Thank you for your cooperation this morning.

(Congress adjourned until 2.15 pm)

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress re-assembled at 2.15 p.m.)

The President: Good afternoon, everybody. I now call Congress to order. Thank you to the Percussion School, who have been playing for us this afternoon. They were tremendous. *(Applause)*

We start this afternoon's business by returning to Chapter 4 of the General Council's Report on the economy, page 55. Congress, I am now going to explain to you how we intend to take the debate so please listen carefully. I will call upon the General Secretary to introduce the debate, to move the General Council's Statement on the economy and explain the General Council's reservation on Motion 25. I will then call the mover and seconder of Motion 25. I will then call the mover and seconder of Emergency Motion 2, the Failing energy market. I will then open up the debate on the General Council's Statement, Motion 25 and Emergency Motion 2. If necessary, I will give the right of reply to the mover of Motion 25, then the mover of Emergency Motion 2, and I will then invite the General Secretary to reply. I will then take the vote on the General Council's Statement, followed by the vote on Motion 25 and then the vote on Emergency Motion 2. I hope that is all clear to you.

General Council's Statement on the Economy

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*) leading in on the General Council's Statement on the economy said: When we gathered in this hall a year ago, none of us could have predicted that the credit crunch that had begun just a month before would have such far-reaching consequences.

Thirteen months on, the contagion that began in the United States' sub-prime market has spread across the globe with oil prices reaching record highs. All of us have been battered by a perfect economic storm. As trade unionists, we are acutely aware that the economy is of central importance to every worker in the country. It is what sustains our jobs, funds our pensions, finances our public services, determines our living standards and shapes the quality of all of our lives. It is clear that Britain's long economic boom is over and it is the ordinary working people, represented by the trade unions, who will be affected most.

Last month, this country recorded its first quarter of negative growth in over a decade and a half. Manufacturing output plunged. House prices are falling and mortgages are hard to come by. Food, fuel and energy costs have shot through the roof. Wages, especially in the public sector, are not keeping pace with the rising cost of living. With unemployment creeping up, over three million workers now feel insecure about their jobs.

That is why the General Council's Statement is calling for radical action from the Government. The argument we are making is straightforward. It is that different times require different solutions. None of us here would underestimate Labour's overall record on the economy or the global nature of the problems now facing us. We know that there are no magic answers. It goes without saying that we welcome measures announced last week to boost the housing market.

However, we need an even more fundamental break from the status quo. That does not mean going soft on inflation, but it does mean recognising that the big risk to our economic wellbeing is not an inflationary spiral but the current downturn sliding into a prolonged recession. That is why we are calling for fiscal action to help those who have been hardest hit.

We must be bold in other aspects of policy too, from countering fuel poverty, through to a new regulatory regime for the City, through to an intelligent green industrial strategy. We have set out hard-headed proposals. We say to the Government that to fund these measures, it is right to look for a bigger, fairer contribution through the tax system from those who can afford to pay. That includes the wealthiest in our society and it includes the energy companies who have been accumulating such vast profits.

Many of these ideas feature prominently in Motion 25 which is supported by the General Council. We also support Emergency Motion 2 on the failing energy market. At a time when so many people are at risk of slipping into fuel poverty, it is bizarre that Ofgen's priority appears to be undermining workers' pension schemes.

Congress, as I have said, the General Council supports Motion 25, but it needs to bring to your attention some important reservations in respect of aspects of the amendment put forward by the RMT, which have been accepted by Unite. The amendment talks of taking major sectors of the British economy into public ownership including water, gas, coal, oil and transport. *(Cheers and applause)* Actually, you are not meant to be clapping at those points, Congress, as I am about to explain!

One concern is that it is less than clear, for example, with regard to transport. What exactly is intended? Our policy on returning rail to public ownership is clear. Exactly what happens to other parts of the transport system?

Let us also be clear that these are not objectives to extend public ownership on the scale envisaged here. First, at a time of economic uncertainty, our focus should be on the immediate priorities of members' jobs, pay and living standards and not on a wide-scale nationalisation programme for which there is likely to be little public appetite. Secondly, the resources to acquire such huge undertakings would decimate already stretched public finances. Thirdly, our campaigning in other areas would be undermined.

We should not lose sight of just what this debate is about. It is about giving ordinary working people, especially those most in need, a helping hand. It is about ensuring that the costs of the slowdown are borne by those who can afford to pay. It is about rebalancing our economy for growth, stability and success in the years ahead. On that basis, I ask you to

support the General Council's Statement. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

The Economy

Tony Woodley (*Unite*) moved Motion 25. He said: Comrades, our people and our country are being damaged by the economic crisis that has been caused by the super-rich and City speculators. There is no doubt that it is our duty to press for policies and changes which protect the most vulnerable in our society. That is our mission. However, every time trade unions put their heads above the parapet, the media talks about that famous 'winter of discontent'.

That rhetoric is absolute rubbish. Ordinary families are facing a winter of fear: fear of the cold; fear of the fuel bill; fear for their jobs and even their homes. It cannot be addressed by lagging the loft, as suggested by some crackpots around this Prime Minister. Without real help with their fuel bills now, we will be lagging the coffins of our old and aged who will not be able to pay their bills if we have a cold winter. *(Applause)*

We all know that the greedy oil companies make tens of billions of pounds and over the next four years they will make an extra £15bn out of the British public. With that money, you could gold-plate every house in the country, never mind lagging lofts. Do not tell me that these companies need the money for investment because almost half of Esso's profits, for example, are going straight back to the shareholders in dividends. The utilities are putting up their bills by 20-40 per cent this year alone. This is an increase of over 500 per cent since 2003. What is the answer?

We have John Hutton - in my view the CBI's representative in the Government - saying that it would be "a disincentive to business" if we have a windfall tax. Is it a disincentive for monopolies which have a licence to print money? Do not make me laugh. If it was not so serious, it would actually be somewhat laughable.

The truth is this. Every time there is a 10 per cent fuel rise, we will see more than 400,000 ordinary working men and women slip into fuel poverty. In the TUC, we should make it absolutely clear here that if we have trade unionists who refuse to disconnect fuel or power to a pensioner or a family in trouble, we should get behind that person and support them. *(Cheers and applause)* We all know, do we not, that the problem is not just big business behaving like this. What can you expect from a pig other than a grunt!

The sad thing is this. Time and time again, our Government rolls over in front of this vested interest. I have a message, therefore, for our Prime Minister. Gordon, you have written a book about courage. Take the words out of the page. Sweep away the Blairite diehards. Put people's interests before vested interests and bring in a windfall tax for our people now. *(Applause)*

Allowing business to be unregulated and the markets to please themselves must come to an end. The Government must intervene. To start with, there should be a windfall tax. If they do not co-operate, we should legislate and regulate to cap price increases as the French Government has done with at least one of their companies. If the markets still do not get the message, this Government should consider taking these absolutely essential public industries - water, gas and electricity - back into public ownership. If it is good enough for the banks, it is good enough for the utilities. *(Cheers and applause)*

Comrades, this is not rhetoric of the past; it is fairness for the future. Let me end by reading you two genuine messages that I received at the end of last week after we made our position about the Government's failure to act on this very clear.

The first is from Annie, a council tenant in Lambeth: "On top of the bills I have to pay every week, my council now wants me to pay £50 a week towards the cost of lighting our building and this is backdated to April this year. This will mean that I am paying £60 a week on fuel. That is 50 per cent of the money I have to feed me and my son and pay my rent and just live on. Lambeth Council is threatening us with eviction if we do not pay this bill. My son is only two and now I have to decide to heat our flat or to put food on the table. Nobody in the local authority will help, but it is the Government that I blame. I have supported Labour all my life and I cannot believe that they are doing this to people like me. I thought they were on our side." So did I.

The second is from Anthony, an ex-serviceman from Sheffield: "I heard Unite on the news about the electric. It is a breath of fresh air about what was said. I am a 62 year old ex-serviceman and disabled. I am sat with a blanket around me today because I am cold. We need help now or we will have many deaths and we will end up asking for world aid to help the poor. We have become an uncivilised, uncaring country. Brown can sleep warm tonight. I would have respect if he turned out his own lights and heating until the problem is over. Maybe then he would know what it feels like to be cold and hungry in this so-called civilised society."

Brothers and sisters, on behalf of Annie, Anthony and Unite, I move. (*Cheers and applause*)

John Leach (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded the motion. He said: We proudly second the motion with our amendment, which has been accepted by our comrades in Unite.

I will clarify the issues about which the General Secretary expressed reservations shortly. Our amendment deals with two specific issues. One is the inefficiency demonstrated by the billions of pounds wasted in the public/private partnership in London Underground. Corporate failings are one thing, but we need to remember that inefficiency in the public sector needs to be blown out of the water. This should be done not only by the TUC, but by the leadership of the labour movement in this country. The current Labour Government needs to listen because we hear time and time again from them that private is good and public is bad and it is not true.

Metronet has been brought back in-house and renationalised. It had to be as it had gone belly up. I came to the rostrum last year and spoke on this resolution then. However, we still have the privateers in the London Tube lifting £1m a week clear profit out of tube lines. That is just one example. It is an obscenity that needs to be addressed by this Government. It is immoral and obscene to attack the most vulnerable in society with pay restraint.

We also believe that the public ownership argument is not lost. It needs to be fought for again and again and again. The National Health Service is 60 years old this year. We salute that. However, the railways in this country were nationalised 60 years ago by a Labour government and, 11 years into this one, they are still privately owned. The reason is that profit continues to go into the shareholders' pockets on a day-to-day basis. That is something that we, as the labour movement, should reject in its entirety.

We want to go back to what existed before 1979, as Tony Woodley has explained. We want the public utilities to be brought back into public ownership. We believe the whole of the British trade union movement must never rest until that is the case. We would even go further. We would say that council housing, which is desperately required by people throughout this land, should be at the top of the agenda for this Labour

Government. It might find that it is a vote winner as well! We second this resolution with absolute pride. We want to go and fight for this right now! (*Applause*)

Failing Energy Market

Gary Smith (*GMB*) moved Emergency Motion 2. He said: Congress, the problem with energy prices is self-evident. We know that every household in the country is feeling the pain from soaring gas and electricity prices. While previous speakers have identified correctly that the elderly and the poorest are more vulnerable, we also have to understand that there are young people with families who will have to choose whether they can feed their families or light and heat their homes this winter. There are 4.5 million households living in fuel poverty and that number is rising. It is an absolute blight on modern-day Britain. It is shameful, Congress, that in one of the world's richest countries and under a Labour Government, the choice for so many this winter is heating or eating. There is no doubt that the argument in favour of a windfall tax has great merit. However, we must understand that the real problem lies in the failure of the energy markets. We know that oil is a finite resource, but there is something fundamentally amiss when, in one day, three times the number of barrels of oil is traded than are actually consumed in the real world in a year. It is obscene that for large parts of the summer the UK exports gas, but we are told that prices are being driven up by inadequate supplies in the winter.

We should be under no illusions that this country is still suffering as a result of failed Tory policies on energy. That Tory agenda was about privatisation, liberalisation, profiteering, the 'dash for gas' and pit closures. I think it is a damning failing on the part of this current Labour Government that they have failed to tackle Tory orthodoxy on energy policy. (*Applause*)

A case in point is that we have Ofgen, the energy regulator, idly wringing its hands while the big six energy companies rake in the profits and pay out £1.6bn in dividends. As the General Secretary of the TUC has identified, after failing to act on prices, it now seems that Ofgen is going to seek to attack the pensions of gas and electricity workers. We have a very clear message for Ofgen: pension provisions in the gas and electricity sectors were hard fought for rights and we will seek to defend those terms and conditions. We will fight Ofgen tooth and nail if they seek to attack our members' pension provisions. (*Applause*)

We say very clearly to the Labour Government that it is time to stop acting like a rabbit caught in the headlights as the country is crying out for leadership on energy prices. Insulating lofts is a right and proper thing to do, but let us not delude ourselves that it is going to solve the underlying and very fundamental problems. We need a strategic vision on energy and concrete action on implementing a balanced energy policy. It simply cannot be left to the market to determine whether we are going to be able to keep the lights on in the years to come. The Government needs to intervene to ensure that we are using all the resources at our disposal in an optimum, efficient and sustainable way. I hope the trade union movement will continue to make the case for the use of clean coal technology and, very importantly, for using coal in the production of gas in the years to come.

The current system of regulation under Ofgen needs to be scrapped. It is time for politicians to take responsibility for the welfare of those who elect them. Any new regulatory framework must be under parliamentary control. We want action on unfair tariffs. We want concrete action on delivery of energy efficiency in every home and workplace. We want to see investment delivered in our energy infrastructure

and storage capacity. We desperately need it and the problems that we have had with gas over the previous years demonstrate that point to us very clearly.

In bringing my remarks to a conclusion, we also say that it is time for the Government to stand up to the City of London and close the London loophole which allows speculators to drive up the price of oil. The laissez-faire approach on energy is failing and we need government action, not dogma about market solutions. Congress, I ask you to support the motion and send a clear message to the people of this country that the trade union movement is standing up for their interests. I move. *(Applause)*

Ian Lavery (*National Union of Mineworkers*) seconded Emergency Motion 2. He said: Comrades, is it not an absolute scandal that after nearly 11 years of a Labour Government and its totally bankrupt energy policy, having ignored with almost contemptuous arrogance the warnings of this Congress year after year, we are now faced with the prospect of our elderly and the poorest in society looking with trepidation and fear at the advancing winter months?

It was not so long ago that we had to witness the obscene spectacle of two old-age pensioners found dead, cuddled in each other's arms, simply because they could not pay the gas and electricity bills. Under the Tories, yes, we expect it, but under Labour we expect more. We have the right to demand a damn sight more compassion.

I think someone said yesterday that poor people do not cause inflation; they are the victims of it. It is to be hoped that this sort of thing does not happen again because if we experience two pensioners cuddling each other because they do not have heat and the warmth then God knows what will happen at the next election.

We need to record at this Congress our dissatisfaction with the markets on energy. The madness and gluttony of our market-orientated energy policy has finally brought us to a crossroads of shame. Since New Labour came to power in 1997, we have pandered to the rich and the powerful. There are 4.5 million people now in fuel poverty. Next year, it is estimated that 5.7 million people will be in fuel poverty. 'Eat or heat' is the new slogan. They say that when you sup with the Devil, you need a long spoon. We have supped with the Devil without a spoon and the Devil does not take prisoners.

In the name of common humanity, we must help those vulnerable people who cannot help themselves or give up all pretensions of being a caring organisation. Do we seriously want to face the electorate in just over a year's time with this sort of thing on our consciences? It is a damning indictment of the society in which we live that our elderly sit in fear of gas and electricity bills dropping through their letterboxes and they have to sit wrapped in blankets to keep warm whilst the gas and electricity companies make obscene profits and fat cat directors feather their own nests in their ever-expanding appetite for untold riches.

Comrades, our Labour Government – yes, our Labour Government – is in the last chance saloon. They have ignored this moment time and time again, Congress after Congress, but they refuse to listen. This is a message to them from this rostrum: this time you are about to abandon the very weakest of those whom we hold most dear and the political price will be unimaginable. Congress, I am delighted to second this emergency motion. *(Applause)*

Paul Noon (*Prospect*) supported Motion 25. He said: Prospect welcomes and supports the General Council's statement. We also agree with Motion 25 from Unite, but have some reservations about the amendment,

which I will explain. We also support the focus in the GMB's Emergency Motion 2 on the threat to pensions.

I want to say a word about the reference in the General Council's Statement on public sector pay and echo the concerns about the economic effects of the Government's public sector pay policy. Yesterday, Congress set out the moral case for opposing the 2 per cent pay limit, but what it also means is real-term pay cuts for public servants. Just as importantly, there is a very strong economic argument against a present reduction in spending power which results in public sector workers having less disposable income, as this dampens demand at a time when the economy needs the stimulus of growth. Although we recognise that inflation is always going to be a concern, the threat of recession is just as much a problem.

We have had the credit crunch and now we have the energy crunch. The victims are households with soaring bills. The poorest are hardest hit because of the way in which charges for electricity operate. Also hard hit is business, which then affects jobs. With this in mind, it is bizarre that Ofgen should focus so much on attacking defined benefit pension schemes, which are properly the product of collective negotiations and bargaining, rather than intervention. We stand with the GMB and other unions to defend those schemes, not only for existing staff, but also for people who may join the industry in the future.

Of course, shareholders are not the victims in this. They have seen their dividends increase. In the longer term, the answer must be more effective regulation, but this regulation should not deter investment in the industry. This is needed for skills in health and safety – ten workers in the electricity supply industry were killed in 2007 – and should deliver secure and sustainable investment.

However, we do share the concerns expressed by the General Secretary on nationalisation in terms of our representation of members in the electricity supply industry. Over the last couple of years, we have been able to secure reasonable pay settlements of 4 or 5 per cent which have matched the rate of inflation. The idea of going back to public sector pay rises will not be attractive for many people in that industry so the views of the workers have to be taken into account.

Finally, the causes of the current economic problems may lie in oil, food prices and the credit crunch, but they have to be addressed here. The Chancellor must take account of these resolutions and the General Council's Statement if it is to be managed effectively. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Dave Green (*Fire Brigades Union*) supported Motion 25. He said: The huge problems that face our economy are well-documented and are set out clearly in the motion with the amendment. However, we must defend the public and our members. We must recognise that the market is failing abysmally. Bank and finance institutions, which oil the wheels of both our economy and the global economy, distrust each other so much that they are not even lending to each other. The finance institutions have, in effect, gone on strike and I can assure you that that was without a ballot!

Food and fuel prices advance in double digits. Energy companies higher their prices and they make record profits. What on earth happened to the concept of free market competition bringing prices down? Rail travel is crippling expensive, but we still have overcrowding. The Government has lost control over what matters most to working people and it stands apparently helpless. Therefore, what do we do?

We must support a windfall tax on energy companies. That is an important first step. However, this and tighter regulation will not in itself end the obscene

profiteering at the expense of working class families. The motion, as amended, makes a case for nationalising transport, railways and other utilities. It also calls for an end to the inefficiencies and wasted millions of government initiatives. George Bush has nationalised institutions in arguably the most strategic part of the economy – finance. On Sunday, the US Treasury announced the biggest financial bail-out in the country's history as it took the troubled American mortgage giants, Fanny Mae and Freddie Mac, into temporary public ownership to save them from collapse. A Republican administration, espousing small government and an unfettered capital market, has nationalised the country's two biggest mortgage companies to the tune of at least £200bn.

In fact, Washington has a long history of providing financial help to the private sector when the economic or political risk of corporate collapse appears too high. The efforts to save Fanny Mae and Freddie Mac are only the latest in a series of financial manoeuvres by the Government which stretches back to the rescue of the military contract of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and Penn Central Railroad under President Nixon, shoring up Chrysler in the waning days of the Carter administration and the salvage of the Savings and Loan System in the late 1980s.

It is not just in the US that the benefits of nationalisation are being recognised. New Zealand, once host to the first social democratic Government to embrace a free market programme of wholesale privatisation, liberalisation and deregulation, has re-nationalised railways and Air New Zealand under the Labour coalition, headed by Helen Clark.

Here, in Britain, New Labour has already done it. Northern Rock has cost £50bn (and still counting) to the taxpayer. Do not forget that re-nationalisation of the railways still remains official Labour Party policy. If this Government is prepared to consider re-nationalisation, then starting with public services may be a better bet. Comrades, please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Ann Leader (*GMB*) supported Motion 25. She said: The time has come for tough decisions to be made by Government. The economy is now at a standstill for the first time since Labour came to power. It is time that the Government intervened to boost the economy with new and popular measures. The time is right to introduce a windfall tax on the suppliers of gas, oil and electricity. Billions could then be used to kick-start the economy and lower the rate of the fuel tax, which in turn would lower the price of food and other commodities in the shops. Transport costs would fall and give the distribution and retail sector the incentive to re-employ some of our members who have been laid off.

In the wider economy, the Government should give back control of social housing direct to local authorities and use the money to build new stock for rent. This would create much-needed housing for our low-paid members, kick-start the construction sector and create job opportunities for workers laid off due to the credit crunch.

New Labour has reached the end of the line as far as the markets and privatisation are concerned. People have woken up to the reality that capitalism can damage their well-being. If you ride on a tiger's back, the consequences of falling off are obvious. Unfortunately, in a number of areas, this New Labour Government has been building on the legacy of Thatcherite policies. Privatisation and PFI have gone further than even the Tories would have dared and what has it achieved for ordinary working people? Nothing at all.

Sadly, when history is written, the New Labour years will be regarded as the years of lost opportunity. There have been achievements: the National Minimum Wage, advances in education and social reforms. However, we are trade unionists and we are aspirational. We want the best for our members. We need to look to the future and put an end to this sorry period of ideological famine before the last grains of sand slip through the hourglass of Labour power. The value of community, mutual gain and the sharing of all our common assets are not to be scoffed at because it does not revolve around individual greed. There is a modern word for this concept which carries hope for the future of all in the labour movement and that word is "socialism". Congress, support Motion 25. *(Applause)*

* *The General Council's statement was CARRIED*

* *Motion 25 was CARRIED*

* *Emergency Motion 2 was CARRIED*

London 2012 – the Olympic and Paralympic Games

Gerry Morrissey (*Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union*) speaking to paragraph 4.24, said: Thank you very much, President, for letting me speak on this. If you have read the paragraph about the Olympics, you will realise that the TUC has been doing a lot of work behind the scenes in co-ordinating the interests of two groups of unions. The first group, covering construction workers, are in the first phase of the Olympic project. Unions like mine are in the second phase, which is the actual event itself. We have an extremely good document which covers the construction workers and the TUC is now helping to co-ordinate our efforts to get the same for people who will be working in, and around, the event. I just want to raise three concerns about the Olympics which I know the TUC are aware of and will be taking into account in their activities. The first is the question of legacy. At the moment, there are structures being built on site. The media centre interests us as the contract for that is likely to be signed very soon, but there is still not a single word about planning for its legacy use. The legacy could be really important for East London, for London and for the UK, but if it is not properly planned then, as with a lot of previous Olympic Games, it may not happen. We must all keep our eyes on legacy planning for the Olympic site and for other sites around the country.

The second issue which has emerged is regarding volunteers, who are covered by the agreements that the TUC has managed to broker. We have had members being approached quite directly (not by LOCOG, which is the organising committee, but by their intermediaries) and asked if they will work for nothing because 'it is a very wonderful event and they owe it to their country to do it.' Effectively, skilled people are being asked to work for nothing.

There are lots of volunteers for the Olympic Games. Over 100,000 people have applied to work for free at the Olympics. I do not want to spoil anybody's fun and sense of commitment to this. However, it is an event where the world is watching and security and health and safety are important. There may be roles for volunteers, but there are also roles for properly-trained, skilled workers who get paid. I hope the TUC will back us all in making sure that they are used. *(Applause)*

These are the two fundamental concerns which affect everybody. We also have a third concern. A big event called the Cultural Olympiad was launched last week. There are many wonderful plans for arts events, street dancing and everything you can think of, but there is not yet any money to do it. The entertainment unions

are very concerned that the money to fund the Cultural Olympiad may well be taken away from other activities and in fact cause a net loss.

Let us look forward to the Olympics as it will be good for Britain, but let us not assume that everything is in place yet. We will need to keep a careful watch on what is happening. Thank you to the TUC for the interest they have shown. (*Applause*)

Working time and holiday entitlements

John Toomey (*GMB*) spoke to paragraph 4.13 of the General Council's Report.

He said: I would like to welcome the work undertaken by the TUC on reduced and non-working hours. The slow progress in Europe is the direct responsibility of the UK. The Government has blocked every move to progress the shorter working week. I remind delegates that we were talking about a 48-hour week and 3.3 million people exceeded this. I would point out that in 1989, the CSCU trade union started a 35-hour week campaign, 13 hours less than the 48-hour week. The campaign was funded in manufacturing plants across the UK.

Some 19 years later, it is time to re-launch the 35 hour week. The TUC should look at combining its campaign with that of the CSCU. Let us launch a joint approach and abolish the long-hour culture. May I say to Mr Derek Simpson that when he was elected to Amicus, he promised, "Now for the 35 hour week." By God, you can afford it - you have £16 million in the bank. It is time that we re-launched the 35 hour week. Thank you. (*Cheers and applause*)

The President: Thank you for that contribution. Derek does not get a right of reply. We now move on to paragraph 4.6 and Motion 26, tax justice, the General Council support.

Tax Justice

Janice Godrich (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) moved Motion 26. She said: We welcome the publication of the TUC pamphlet *The Missing Billions – The UK Tax Gap*, which exposes the scandal of the £25bn lost each year through tax avoidance and the further £8bn that is lost through tax planning by the rich and big businesses, who are able to exploit loopholes that the Government has provided for them in order to reduce their tax bills. To rub salt into the wound, the report also shows that, given political will, much of the UK's lost tax could be reclaimed.

We have a government which claims that it is serious about combating poverty and inequality and yet, for over a decade, ministers have presided over a tax system which allows many very rich individuals and wealthy companies to pay little or no tax. It is no wonder the International Monetary Fund has described the UK as an offshore tax haven for the world's super-rich. The missing billions could be used to transform our public services. They could take millions of pensioners and children out of poverty. They could build the social housing that millions of young workers and families desperately need. Vitally, they could guarantee fair pay increases for every low-paid public servant.

The missing tax billions are only one part of a broader picture of inequality and injustice in the UK. They could help to begin the long overdue process of narrowing the gap between rich and poor which has widened to levels not seen since the 1930s. It appears almost certain that the Government will miss its target to halve child poverty by 2010 by miles. One of the most damning surveys recently released was that of the Child Action Poverty Group, who reported that current

parents are the first in a generation who believe that their children will be worse off than themselves.

One person in particular, however, will benefit from New Labour's support for the rich and the powerful. Within months of resigning as Prime Minister, Tony Blair accumulated nearly £10m: £5m through his memoirs, £2.5m for a directorship at J.P. Morgan and £2m for advising Zurich Financial Services. Luckily for him, the tax loopholes he presided over for ten years mean that it is unlikely that he will have to pay 40 per cent of this income to the Treasury.

Now, none of this is accidental. The Government has had more than ten years in power to design and implement a tax system which promotes greater equality and which generates the funds needed to rebuild our public services, but they have chosen not to do so. They have taken this choice because they have come to believe that the needs of the rich are more important than those of the poor, that the wealthy are wealthy because they deserve to be, and that the private sector is more important than the public sector. None of this is true, but we have a government which is acting as if it is so.

We need to collect the missing billions. The PCS has been arguing that when you have a tax gap, it is ludicrous to continue to cut the jobs of the thousands who are responsible for collecting it. HM Revenue and Customs has already gone a considerable way towards realising their ambition to make savings equivalent to 12,500 jobs by 2011 and we believe that continuing with these job cuts on this scale, in the light of such a ludicrous missing amount of money, is irresponsible and unsustainable.

This motion places the issue of tax avoidance within the context of the need for a more equal society so how is it that Gordon Brown is now promising a fair deal for everyone in this new world? The social and economic changes which are currently taking place are nothing to do with delivering a bright new future. They are actually about recreating the past – the world of boom and bust epitomised by the Roaring Twenties, the Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression, a world of opulence for the few and misery for the majority. The devastated economy at that time prompted a determination on the part of an entire generation that that would never happen again. On the one hand, strict controls were placed on finance capital and, on the other, the welfare state was created.

It is therefore to the eternal shame of the Government that they have not only abolished the controls on finance capital, but they have also inflicted some deep wounds on the welfare state with their privatisation mania. Would it not make a change, for example, if ministers applied their bullying zeal to dealing with the deflationary impact of tax avoidance rather than imposing caps on low-paid public sector workers? If John Hutton can call for lie detectors to catch out benefit cheats, why has he not recommended their use to catch tax avoiders? (*Applause*)

On behalf of our members, we need to reclaim the billions that have been stolen from them and the motion lays out a number of steps in which this can be achieved.

In conclusion, the unregulated financial centres of the US and the UK, unchallenged by government, have allowed banks to create credit-fed booms in property and consumer spending. The last debate showed that we will not allow our members to pay that price. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Neil Derrick (*GMB*) seconded Motion 26. He said: Let me start by revisiting some quotes from that friend of the trade union movement, our esteemed Minister for

Business, John Hutton. He has provided such a rich source of material for speeches this week. Who said he was good for nothing? Here is the quote in full: "Rather than asking whether huge salaries are morally justified, we should celebrate the fact that people can be enormously wealthy in this country. Rather than placing a cap on success, we should be questioning why it is not available to more people."

Now we know - huge salaries are there to be celebrated. In fact, they should be made available to more people. Why is it that after 12 years of this Government, the vast wealth in this country is not available to more people? Is that not what a Labour Government is for? I will tell you why, colleagues. It is because our unfair tax regime is allowing our society to become increasingly polarised. The mega-wealthy are being actively encouraged to make more money and to keep more of the money that they make while "hardworking families in these difficult times", surely the most patronising phrase of the summer, are seeing their hard-earned cash disappear before their very eyes.

Sadly, there is still one tax rule for the rich and one for the rest of us. There is no cap on success if you are on a huge salary, but a 2 per cent unbreakable cap if you are a public servant. There are unfettered earnings and lower taxes for the private equity elite and for the non-doms, but unrelenting misery for those at the bottom of the pay league. There are tax loopholes for the multinationals with clever corporate lawyers, but absolutely no way out for those on low incomes and, it seems, even less influence over this Government.

Colleagues, a modern tax system with equality at its core would not allow those at the top to leech away the nation's wealth whilst increasing the burden on those at the bottom. In a week when calls for windfall taxes on energy companies' profits grow louder and louder, Sam Laidlaw, Chief Executive of Centrica, was handed – he did not even have to ask for it – a £1m increase in his pay, taking his salary to £5m a year. Here is an opportunity for a bit of redistribution if ever there was one.

A just and fair tax system is the measure of a progressive society providing social mobility for those most in need. My union badly wants that. This motion builds on the work of the TUC in this area, setting out a clear strategy designed to close the tax gap. The GMB is right behind it. Support the motion and support the campaign, 'Tax justice for all'. Thank you. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 26 was CARRIED*

Taxation

Bernie Taylor (*GMB*) spoke to paragraph 4.6 of the General Council's Report.

He said: Congress, I am speaking on behalf of our aviation members regarding paragraph 4.6 - taxation.

First of all, we welcome the TUC's undertaking to raise the issue of fair taxation and tax avoidance with the Government. However, we would like Congress to be aware of the Treasury's proposal to change from air departure tax to aviation duty on each plane. This knee-jerk reaction by the Government was not thought through. It panders to the green lobby without considering the effects on companies and the workforce in the UK.

If this proposal goes through, it will put UK-owned long-haul aviation at a competitive disadvantage in a highly competitive global market. It will result in several thousand aviation jobs being transferred from the UK to Europe and it will apply more downward pressure on pay and conditions for our members in aviation. It will also do nothing for the environment.

I would ask the TUC, on behalf of the GMB, to put this unfair tax at the top of their agenda before it is too late. We need to save these jobs and the TUC needs to act now. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: I can give assurance on behalf of the General Secretary and the General Council that the TUC will work with the aviation unions to pursue the important point which has just been raised by the previous speaker.

Greener pastures? Poverty and social exclusion in rural areas

Phil Jacques (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) moved Motion 27.

He said: Congress, we know that not everyone who lives and works in the country is a privileged consumer. In Britain one in five people are living in poverty. Many of our poor go without basic necessities. In fact, the UK is one of the most unequal societies of the industrialised world. It is a country with the least degree of social mobility and an obscene and ever increasing gap between rich and poor. But statistics about poverty do not give us the full picture.

A participant in a workshop held by the Coalition Against Poverty once remarked: "Poor people can imagine what it is like to be rich but the rich cannot imagine what it is like to be poor".

Let me refer to the support worker moving from Manchester, who was shocked to find poverty in Dorset as being the worse she had ever come across. No wonder she was shocked. Most of our statistics in debates about poverty focus on towns and cities. Thinking about poverty immediately conjures up images of large inner city council estates, blighted by high levels of unemployment, substance abuse, a loss of hope and aspiration and gang-fuelled violence. But poverty in rural areas is also a significant, persistent and no less severe problem. One in five households in rural areas, including 900,000 children, live below the official poverty line. Most of rural poverty is invisible because it is in such close proximity to affluence.

Congress, as educational professionals we know that poverty has a strong impact on life chances as well as on levels of attainment.

I do not need to tell you that the British education system remains split along class lines, but there is an equally strong link between poverty and low educational attainment in rural areas as there is in urban areas. Almost a quarter of 16 year olds in rural areas obtain no GCSEs above grade 'D' and one in twenty doesn't pass any. So why has the Government largely neglected to address rural poverty and, instead, targeted most of its anti-poverty initiatives on urban areas? Furthermore, why are rural schools and colleges not supported as well as their urban equivalents in offering a broad and balanced education which meet the needs of all their students?

Congress, the answer is simple. The Government does not tackle poverty as something which affects a class of people who are systematically disadvantaged in our society. Instead, the Government works with a concept of social exclusion that looks at poor individuals and families in isolation from each other. As there are statistically many more poor households in urban areas, it is no surprise, therefore, that the Government has largely neglected to address poverty in rural areas, which is widely dispersed and hidden beneath affluence.

It is difficult to understand how the Government can ever successfully tackle poverty without a focus on social class. The Government's approach to education as a contributor to the economy, rather than as a key route out of poverty, means that most of the Government's initiatives to break the link between

poverty and low educational attainment have been driven by economic thinking. We know that these initiatives have been subject to competitive bidding by local authorities. We also know that they have been guided by considerations of cost-effectiveness. This means that you target your initiative where it is likely to achieve the highest score, and where you have a high concentration of poor households, there is a greater statistical chance that you will get a higher score. It is all about meeting performance targets rather than tackling the source of the problem.

Within such a framework, rural schools and colleges struggle particularly hard to contribute towards breaking the link between poverty and low educational attainment. ATL's research has shown that constraints on rural schools and colleges and the lack of essential infrastructure have a direct detrimental impact on the life chances of poor children and young people in rural areas. Let us work together to press the Government to develop coherent and all-inclusive anti-poverty policies. Social exclusion is not an individual problem but a problem of social class. Let us also make sure that the Government does not just pay lip service to a commitment to social class. We want to see a rigorous rural impact assessment of all government policies, including education policies and initiatives. Rural poverty is not only the missing piece in the anti-poverty jigsaw but it is also the yardstick of ascertaining a genuine commitment, tackling socio-economic disadvantage.

Let me close with Nelson Mandela's words: "Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an active of justice." Please support this motion.

Jerry Glazier (*National Union of Teachers*) supported Motion 27.

He said: Congress, this motion has a clear focus on the devastating impact that poverty has in rural areas. Green and pleasant lands may be around those who suffer poverty in rural areas, but that provides no relief from the grinding consequences faced in often greatly isolated and small communities. Sadly, poverty in rural areas is largely forgotten and often unseen, but its impact is every bit as severe as poverty in urban areas. But, unlike most urban areas, rural areas suffer from a lack of adequate transport, community provision, health, social and youth services. So it is not unsurprising that some of the highest levels of drug abuse per population are found in the rural areas, as well as serious mental health issues.

The Government's concept of choice and diversity is absurd in urban areas but nothing compared to its absurdity in rural areas with primary schools under threat and also when a single secondary school may have to serve a radius of 50 miles, with many hours spent weekly by students travelling to and from school. It is in these schools that teachers and other workers see the dreadful consequences of poverty on families and their access to education.

As has been said, with 20 per cent of rural households living below the official poverty line, the Government must act now to show it understands that the issue of social class is not defined by the cities. The effects of poverty are the same on the individual but the strategies which need to be adopted to take families out of poverty must be different. They must be differentiated. They must be sufficiently compensatory. They must be inclusive but, above all, they must recognise class factors.

Congress, please, unanimously, support this motion to help ensure that the Government understands that it must urgently review its anti-poverty policies and put pressure on them to conduct the rural impact assessment on all its education policies and initiatives. I second.

* *Motion 27 was CARRIED*

Child Poverty

Beth Pollard (*Association of Educational Psychologists*) moved Motion 28.

She said: Congress, it is not a cliché to say that our children are our future. Why, then, as the fifth richest country in the world do 3.9 million of our children – that is one in three – live in poverty? Powerful action needs to be taken to remove this inequality. It is the major theme of this Congress and the AEP is proud to propose this motion.

We do, though, need to applaud the good start which this Government has made with its commitment to ending child poverty by 2020 and a target of halving the number of children living in poverty by 2010. Initially, there was good progress but these efforts, we know, have stalled. It was estimated that a £3bn investment in tax credits and benefits would need to be made if the 2010 target is to be reached. The Government has spent a further £1bn to combat child poverty in this year's Budget, although recent statistics show the number of children living in poverty still rose slightly this year.

To put the £3bn into perspective, last year the British public spent £2bn on flowers and £7.8bn on gadgets. A total of £26m was spent in retail stores over Christmas. More importantly, we note that the Government managed to find £2.7bn for the 10p tax debacle earlier this year. So another £3bn for our children?

The effects of poverty pass from generation to generation. The words of social inequalities' researcher Richard Wilkinson are both eloquent and real when he describes life in poverty. He said: "To feel depressed, cheated, bitter, desperate, vulnerable, frightened, angry, worried about debts or job or housing insecurity, to feel devalued, useless, helpless, uncared for, hopeless, isolated, anxious and a failure, these feelings can dominate people's whole experience of life." This, then, is a social and family environment in which so very many of our children are raised and the circumstances into which they themselves are likely to move when they become parents. To be raised in poverty means not just a childhood of poverty but all too frequently a lifetime of disadvantage from physical and mental health, education, opportunity, achievement and aspiration.

The effects of poverty on the development of children in poorer families are wide-ranging. Some psychological effects lead to difficulties in forming relationships with parents and others; influence the development of the brain causing difficulties with complex thinking and reasoning; problems with attention, concentration and impulse control; behaviour problems in school; significant problems with emotional health and some effects on educational attainment. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds begin to fall behind their richer peers at just 22 months of age. Poorer children are half as likely to obtain the vital GCSEs. They leave school earlier with fewer qualifications and fewer go on to university.

A particular shame on us as a society is the fact that children in care are five times less likely to get those GCSEs. Without equal educational achievement, children from poorer families are being deprived of many adult life opportunities available to others. We also know the huge effects of poverty on the health of poorer children and that health inequalities in childhood continue into adulthood.

This body, the TUC, has established a campaign against poverty. This motion supports those aims and calls on

the Government for renewed, significant and immediate action. We further propose that an obligation is placed on local authorities to target their resources to areas of specific child poverty and need. In the interests of social justice, we urge the Government to re-double its action to lift our children out of poverty and to give all our children their best chance to enrich their distant tomorrows and to create a society truly fit for our children in the 21st century.

Angela Lynes (*UNISON*) seconded the motion.

She said: Congress, child poverty is something that many people think only happens in far away countries but not here, yet sadly almost four million children live in poverty in the UK and poverty affects not just someone's life and life chances but too often is passed on through generations. Education is probably the single biggest factor in breaking this cycle, but as this motion points out we need targeted policies to deal with tax, health and social inequalities.

A recent World Health Organisation report showed that a baby boy born and raised in Calton in the east end of Glasgow, has a life expectancy of just 54 years. But go just 15 minutes up the road to Lenzie, a suburb of Glasgow, and he has a good chance of living until the age of 82. It is not because parents in East Glasgow are bad parents or do not look after their children as well as parents in Lindsay, but because the effects of being born in poverty will affect every aspect of this child's life.

The Government and Gordon Brown, in particular, have made childcare and anti-poverty strategies central to their policies and should be congratulated for this. However, there is still a long way to go before these become so embedded in society and become so mainstream that future governments of whatever political persuasion will find it difficult to dismantle them. Children on free school meals are still less likely to do well in school, get good GCSEs or go on to higher education. They are more likely to have health problems, end up unemployed or in low paid jobs. This is completely unacceptable. Poverty can affect every part of their life from not having a place at home to do homework, to being unable to afford a school uniform or go on a school trip, and too many schools still insist on expensive uniforms or trips costing hundreds of pounds and offer very little or even no help. It is not that we do not know how to change the situation because there is a wealth of research showing that early intervention and good quality childcare has a huge impact on children's lives. Instead of squandering money on academies as the Government is in England, we know that putting money into additional support specifically aimed at helping not only children and young children but their families as well can change outcomes.

Children in poverty live in families in poverty, often where parents are out of work or marginalised but also in families with low pay, our members' families. Congress, poverty does not just happen in far away places but it is happening in our communities and in our workplaces and it is never acceptable.

We must continue to make this a central point in the Government's policies and to continue to urge our unions to fight against low pay and for everyone, regardless of where they are born, to have a fair chance in life. Please support.

Martin Reed (*National Union of Teachers*), speaking in support of Motion 28, said:

Congress, the target to end child poverty by 2020 and halve it by 2010 should be welcomed. Since 1999, when the current Government pledged to end child poverty, 600,000 children have been lifted out of the

trap of social exclusion and economic marginalisation. However, progress in combating the disease of child poverty has recently stalled. A total of 3.9 million children still live in poverty today in the UK, and since 2005 child poverty has risen by nearly 200,000 children. These are devastating figures.

Poverty shapes a child's development. Even before reaching his or her second birthday, a child from a poorer family is already more likely to show a lower level of attainment than a child from a better off family. By the age of six, a less able child from a better off family is likely to have overtaken an able child born into an environment of social and economic poverty.

The Rowntree Foundation Report shows us the scale and indeed the depth of the crisis. Child poverty predicts educational outcomes in the UK more strongly than in any other OECD country. Changing this is a crucial part of severing the inter-generational cycle of poverty and despair. It is crucial that resources should be ring-fenced to local authorities, and in particular schools, with higher incidents of social deprivation. Funding needs to be radically increased to achieve smaller class sizes, focussed learning and one-to-one tuition. Of course, we need a progressive and redistributed taxation system.

Congress, Gordon Brown's promise to increase spending limits per child to match private schools should not be allowed to gather dust. If it is good enough for Eton and Harrow, it is good enough for our state schools also. The per pupil funding of £8,000 must be reached before 2014 and the gap between private and public funding must be progressively narrowed through staging. We simply cannot afford to wait. Poverty remains the scourge that divides child from child. It is a Victorian spectre that blights so many of our communities. Keep child poverty at the top of the political agenda and join us and other teaching organisations on 4th October in Trafalgar Square as part of the campaign to end child poverty. Our children are our future. The aspirations of children from poorer backgrounds must be met. The future of our society depends upon it.

Steve White (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*) spoke in support of the motion.

He said: Our Government has come under fire for many things this week and rightly so. Trade unions want the best for our members and, therefore, our nation's children and their future economic and social prospects. However, we must applaud the Government when it does the right things, as it did with this pledge, colleagues. It was a bold pledge, a courageous pledge and a challenging one. What better could we have for our children's futures? So, yes, applaud we must. However, crucial in this motion is not just applauding but it is taking the Government to task when it does not keep its promises. The Government still has time and it is vital. Passing this motion will ensure that we are in favour of keeping this Government on the road to eliminating child poverty by 2020.

Teachers and support staff in schools number more than a million workers who are represented by unions here today. We see the evidence of child poverty every day in the classroom. Hungry, malnourished, poorly clothed, unhealthy and badly housed children cannot learn effectively and achieve their potential. Through no fault of their own, they are they denied the life chances and opportunities of others. It is nye on impossible for many to break out of the cycle of poverty and exclusion.

The effects of poverty hit children in the face from their first few days at school. Experiences are missed, activities and opportunities are denied, leading to a general lack of confidence and self-esteem to tackle

the challenges and build relationships that others enjoy. In extreme cases this leads to them experiencing bullying and victimisation by the better-off, which adds to their difficulties. Did you know that one-sixth of the nearly two million children entitled to free school meals do not claim them. The stigma and the barriers to achieve these entitlements again hit hard at the poorest, and sometimes even the most basic strategies to tackle this issue do not always do the job.

The UK, as has been mentioned, has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the developed world. The majority of children, though, live in households where at least one adult is working. What does that say about a true, decent living wage? Poor children leave school earlier with complications impacting on employment prospects and future earning potential. Exclusion of kids from a range of living patterns, cultures and activities enjoyed by the better-off lead to multiple deprivation and eventually exclusion from many aspects which are of interest to us all here, namely, education, health and representation in the political arena. So, broad social change is needed in addition to proper living wages.

Colleagues, we must support the march on October 4th. I implore all of the trade unions represented here today to bring their families and friends to pack Trafalgar Square on that afternoon. It will be a fabulous sight.

The NASUWT working together with our sister trade unionists in ATL and NUT have produced a booklet which has gone into schools this week. It has been emailed. Again, we implore all representatives here who have places on governing bodies to ensure that this small, short resource booklet is used to bring this aspect of child poverty to the top of the agenda. I support.

The President: I will now move to the vote on Motion 28. It is the General Council's policy to support.

* *Motion 28 was CARRIED*

Security of energy supply

Ian Lavery (*National Union of Mineworkers*) moved Composite Motion 10.

He said: Congress, this could not be a more appropriate time for us to be discussing this composite motion. Europe has been reminded once again, that's if it ever needed reminding at all, of the dangers of depending on politically unstable regions of the world for its energy security. The recent conflict following Georgia's attack on South Ossetia and Russia's military response should remind us all just how precarious our energy security is in an uncertain world. The recent conflict followed the gas shock of January 2006 when Russia cut gas supplies to the Ukraine and the knock-on effect of that was a 33 per cent reduction in gas supplies right across central Europe, right to the Atlantic seaboard.

As we know the UK is stranded right at the very end of this complex supply system, and it is only thanks to our dwindling indigenous gas that we escaped the drastic consequences of the dispute between Russia and the Ukraine. It is quite a sobering statistic that in 2007 America consumed more than 24 per cent of the total world oil consumption, but it only produced 8.5 per cent of world oil production. This is a considerable shortfall by any standards. It means that the US must import the overwhelming majority of its oil requirement. Of course the main problem is that the base of reserves of oil have shifted away from the west to the east, and the war in Iraq, the recent war in Georgia coupled with the placing of nuclear weapons

in Poland and constant threats of a military strike against Iran are all part of the battle to control the world's oil and gas supplies. Last year Britain imported 43 million tonnes of coal, 50 per cent of which came from Russia. It is this very geo-political instability and the fact that half of our imported coal comes from Russia that the National Union of Mineworkers has been warning about for years and years. It must be a compelling reason for us to exploit the nation's vast coal reserves currently languishing beneath our feet. Our dependence on Russia for coal is startling and our future dependence on Russia for gas is, quite honestly, frightening.

Whilst we imported around 21 million tonnes of coal from Russia, our once proud British deep-mine coal industry only accounted for around 8 million tonnes in production. It is a scandal that at a time when gas companies are increasing the price of domestic gas supplies by as much as 55 per cent this year alone it causes untold distress to old and young alike that our Government continues to neglect the rich coal reserves which we have as a nation and with which we have been blessed.

Coal can be burned cleanly. The first clean coal carbon capture and storage station in Europe opened only on Monday of this week in Germany. We are lagging behind Germany and other parts of the world in terms of innovation and the manufacturing of these clean coal carbon capture storage power stations, and it is not acceptable, comrades.

We can produce coal cheaper than it can be imported. We have the technology, we have the vast reserves and, at this moment in time, we have just got the skills base which we used to enjoy, but that is dwindling fast. We need, as a nation, to push ahead. The EU wants 12 clean carbon capture storage power stations in Europe. We have one on the stocks at this moment in time, and it is a beauty parade with the Government and companies which wish to be part of that demonstration plan.

I commend the excellent document by the TUC Clean Coal Task Group with regard to the future of coal and clean coal burned in Europe and the UK. It is an absolutely fantastic document.

In conclusion, let me say that we cannot continue to rely on our energy sources from elsewhere in this world. It is absolutely crazy to think that we have the reserves beneath our feet. We are the only country in the world which is continuing to close our coal industry and sterilise vast reserves. People have come to this rostrum today calling for the re-nationalisation of all of those industries which were privatised by the Tory Government. I would love the support of this Congress to renationalise the British deep-mine coal industry. I move.

Patrick Carragher (*British Association of Colliery Management – Technical, Energy and Administrative Management*) seconded Composite Motion 10.

He said: I am very pleased to second this composite motion on Security of Energy Supply. Ian has made many of the points which I would wish to concur with so I will be brief.

I would like to start by thanking the TUC for all the work they have done in setting up the Clean Coal Task Group and, indeed, in the input they have given to the Government's Review of Energy Policy. However, the criticism which has to be levelled is that whilst the Government and, indeed, the Coal Forum under the Energy White Paper has done much good work, all we have got in the past ten years from government is talk, talk, talk. There is no delivery. We are stumbling into a crisis where we will end up with most of our power stations decommissioned and we will not be able to get replacement stations in on time.

There has been much talk about where the future of coal is at the moment. If we look at the remaining coal mines that we have, there is talk of entering new seams in existing mines. Hatfield Colliery recently reopened and, indeed, it has been reported today that they have just appointed some fresh green labour, which is a very important issue if we are going to sustain coal mining operations long-term into the future. That is to be welcomed.

However, we certainly need movement on new power stations, and Kings North is the immediate one. Ian made reference to the new clean coal plant in Germany at Spremburg and really the vision the Government has for clean coal with the current competition they have is not ambitious enough. It only looks at one form of capture at the end of the combustion process. There are other technologies which need to be demonstrated. With that, I am very happy to support this composite and I ask delegates to give it their full support.

Sue Ferns (*Prospect*) supported Composite 10.

She said: Congress, three years ago we, together with the NUM and Unite, made exactly the same case at a packed TUC fringe meeting. All the unions are frustrated that there has not been greater progress in the intervening period, especially given the increasingly urgent challenge of ensuring security of supply. We will be working with sister unions and employers again to press the case for urgent action at the conference on the future for clean coal to be held in London next month.

Prospect's contribution to this motion relates specifically to the need for a more proactive approach to maintain and develop a skilled workforce. It is clear that at a time of rising demand for engineering and other technical skills both from across the energy sector and from other major infrastructure projects, there is growing evidence of skill shortages and skills gaps. The Government's new Manufacturing Strategy, which was published just yesterday, says that modern manufacturing will need an extra 324,000 scientists and engineers by 2014, but we know that two in five engineering apprentices fail to complete and just 3 per cent of them are female compared with 97 per cent of child care apprentices. Only 6 per cent of HE students study engineering and technology subjects, and around 30 per cent of these are from outside the UK. Around 30 per cent of engineering and technology graduates and 25 per cent of post graduates choose to start work in the finance and business sectors where they can, typically, earning 25 per cent to 50 per cent more.

In June the Energy Minister gave us a welcomed assurance that the Government is committed to ensuring that the energy sector has the skill base it needs. He also acknowledged the benefits of working together with employers, sector skills councils and unions. Yet – guess what? – there is a proposal in the new Manufacturing Strategy to convene a high level forum on low carbon skills that does not at present provide for any trade union involvement. So the challenge now is to transform the Minister's words into actions and to ensure a joined-up approach across Government.

We believe that the Commission for Employment and Skills has a key role in making sure that this happens.

We also need to remember that energy is a safety critical industry. Prospect has submitted evidence calling for OFGEM and Government to highlight the demand for safety and the demand for the regulatory regime, particularly in the light of a rise in fatal incidents during the past year. The response from OFGEM is, essentially, that they regard workplace safety as beyond the scope of their responsibilities, despite the fact that it is their regime that is driving

ever greater work intensification in the name of efficiency.

It is evident that OFGEM is more interested in driving down pay and pensions than they are in ensuring investment in a safe working environment and employees' skills. This balance of priorities is not only wrong but dangerous and we want the Government to tackle it head on.

For all our sakes, support this motion and make sure we move quickly on from talking about energy policy to putting it into practice. I support.

Terry Fox (*National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers*) supported the composite motion.

He said: Congress, like my old grandma always said, "Like it or lump it, Britain cannot function without coal". If we stop using this valuable energy resource, quite simply the lights will go out. One in three electrical appliances in the country, from the lounge light bulb to the hospital X-ray machine, use electricity generated from coal. Coal generates around 35 per cent of Britain's electricity today, with around 60 per cent of the coal we use imported from Russia, South Africa, Colombia, Indonesia and other countries. We also rely on Russia for large volumes of coal. More than 40 million tonnes of steam coal came into Britain last year adding over £2bn to the balance of trade deficit, increasing our carbon footprint and putting added pressure on our port and rail structures.

Yet we have vast reserves of coal right under our feet, capable of being extracted from both the surface and deep mines to the highest of operational standards, thereby creating jobs, wealth in communities and eliminating adverse environmental and financial cost.

If we accept this 'political must' to keep the lights on, there is no currently available option but to burn coal and it makes eminent sense that we burn British-mined coal. To access reserves requires a substantial financial commitment, which can only be justified and demonstrated provided there remains a viable market for this product. Preferably the British mined coal will be consumed in a new power plant that burns coal more cleanly and more efficiently and, ultimately, with CO₂ captured and stored safely.

My old grandma also said that our energy policy is complicated at the best of times – my grandma was well read – and we have to reconcile security of supply, affordability and sustainability. Recent retail price increases have focused attention on affordability, and all the time environment requirements are transforming the industry and pushing up cost. The huge increases in energy prices go without saying. UK electricity generators are increasingly investing in renewable energy sources, such as wind, wave, tidal and biomass, to name but a few. Last year the share of electricity generated from renewable sources reached 5 per cent. The most ambitious targets for 2020 set the share of renewables at 15 per cent, but this would only provide 30 per cent of our electricity needs. In order to maintain security of supply, the remaining 70 per cent will have to come from other sources.

So, Congress, as my grandma said finally, "Like it or lump it, energy touches everybody". With these huge increases, like it or lump it, we must renationalise the industry.

Pat Kyrou (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 10.

She said: Congress, I would like to point out one of the reasons for our no longer being self-sufficient in gas. The relaxation of the EC Directive restricting the use of petroleum products for generating electricity started a rush for gas. There had been a European-wide decision

not to use gas for electricity generation but to keep it for domestic and industrial heating, which is its best use.

There was also a short-lived UK moratorium on the further construction of gas-fired stations. The rush for gas meant that the UK natural gas supplies stopped being sufficient for our needs earlier than they should have done. This has led to a double whammy. Not only are our home and industrial heating supplies not secure but neither is our electricity supply.

I am a physics teacher and I used to take my pupils to our new local gas-fired power station. The first time we went the engineer showing us round was proud of the station and its bright primary colours as though it was made of Lego. It was compact, having been built on just the coal storage yard of the previous coal-fired station. So he was somewhat thrown when I asked him if he was worried – I might have said “ashamed” – to be so quickly reducing the UK’s gas reserves? He indignantly denied this was the case, but the following year, when he and I were taking another group round, he admitted he was concerned about where our natural gas would come from in the future.

One of the advantages for power generators in constructing gas-fired stations was that at that time the electricity generators were being compelled to reduce their sulphur emissions. It was envisaged that the way they would do this would be to use lower sulphur coal or oil, or that they would scrub the combustion gases. Instead, they built gas-fired stations as burning gas produces little or no sulphur dioxide and, thus, they lowered their overall sulphur emissions without improving their other stations or using cleaner fuel.

It seems a no-brainer that oil should be kept for transport, gas for heating and coal for electricity generation. The UK has large coal reserves, whose exploitation for coal-fired stations will provide jobs and produce community and economic revival. Despite reports to the contrary, the carbon dioxide to heat ratio is the same for coal and gas-fired stations. They will both need carbon capture to slow down global warming. The proposed Kingsnorth coal-burning station will be carbon capture ready and its construction should be supported, but it must be fuelled by UK coal and use UK technology in its carbon capture. Please support the motion.

The President: We now move to the vote on Composite Motion 10, Security of energy supply. The General Council supports.

* *Composite Motion 10 was CARRIED*

Welcome to Alistair Darling MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer

The President: Congress, we have now been joined on the platform by our Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling. I will ask Alistair to address us a little later in the session. On behalf of Congress, welcome. *(Applause)*

The Commission on Vulnerable Employment

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*) in leading in on Chapter 1 of the General Council’s Report, said: President and Congress, there is no more important item on the agenda of our Congress this week than the issue of vulnerable work. Four months ago we published the report of our Commission on Vulnerable Employment, and it was good to have you with us, Alistair, when we launched that report. Its findings shocked us all, not just by highlighting the extent of the problem we face and the abysmal conditions faced by two million people in Britain today, but by revealing

the fact that so many of the abuses are taking place within the current legal framework and that enforcement of the law is so weak.

Our report sets out a coherent programme of action, a progressive consensus for change that government, unions and decent employers can unite around. Congress, it is up to us to make the running, not just in campaigning for better employment rights and a much stronger enforcement regime, as we are, but in organising vulnerable workers, too, as we must.

The best protection that any worker can have is a union card in their pocket. Congress, it can be done. From Unite and the GMB’s work with migrant communities in London and around the country, to UNISON’s overseas nurses’ network and the work done by CWU, PCS and USDAW with agency workers. There are already some tremendous examples of unions making a difference where it is needed most. So our challenge now is to make this kind of engagement the norm, not the exception, right across the movement. Let us remember that with a quarter of vulnerable workers employed in workplaces where unions are recognised, there is a real foundation for us to build on. So let this be our mission for the year ahead, to reach out to Britain’s most vulnerable workers, to tackle exploitation, maltreatment and abuse head on and to win a better deal for those who need it most.

Congress, the stories told by vulnerable workers themselves act as the most powerful call for action. So let us see a short film that gives just a flavour of the scale of the challenge that we face. *(a video was then shown)*

The President: Congress, I had the honour of being part of that Commission. I have to say that the officers of the TUC who served on that Commission were absolutely tremendous. I have also got to say that being part of the Commission was life-changing in the things that we saw and demonstrating what we need to do as a trade union movement. This is really an important part of our work. I ask Congress formally to adopt the Report of the Commission.

* *The Report of the Commission on Vulnerable Employment was adopted*

Vulnerable Workers

Paddy Lillis (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) moved Composite Motion 1.

He said: Colleagues, the basis of employment rights debates at Congress has changed fundamentally since Labour came to power. Before 1997, when the Conservatives were last in power, there were emotional calls for things such as the introduction of a minimum wage, the introduction of paid statutory holiday entitlements and legislation giving equal rights to part-time workers. You do not get those sorts of motions at Congress today. That is because Labour has introduced legislation delivering all of them as well as the many other measures which have given workers more rights in the workplace. But it is vital that employment rights deliver in practice, and this means vulnerable workers who have been denied their rights and protections have somewhere they can go to make sure that their employer is forced to obey the law. You can put in place the most comprehensive set of employment rights possible but they would be meaningless without effective methods of enforcement. That is what this motion is about today. Enforcement of employment rights is a massive issue. This is seen by the amount of pain and work devoted to it in our own Commission on Vulnerable Employment and the Government’s Vulnerable Workers’ Enforcement Forum. Both bodies have recognised that, despite all the advances which have

been made, there are still workers being denied their legitimate rights, mistreated and abused at work. The situation has to be tackled head on and stopped. That is why we welcomed the measures announced by the Government in July. They go some way to meeting what we are calling for in this motion today, in particular a campaign to raise awareness of employment rights and enforcement. We are calling for a change in legislation to allow the various enforcement agencies to share information so that multi-abuse of employment rights is tackled more easily, pushing enforcement much higher up the agenda. But more still needs to be done.

The remit of the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority should be extended to cover all agency labour providers. The GLA has proven an effective enforcement agency in the sectors it covers, but it cannot stop offences in those unregulated areas it does not cover, such as hospitality and catering. There needs to be a commitment to an annual year-on-year real increase in the enforcement budgets of all the enforcement agencies. There needs to be a more vigorous pro-active enforcement strategy with unannounced visits to employers if felt necessary, which investigate in depth those sectors likely to be rife with exploitation and abuse. There needs to be a great role for trade unions in the whole enforcement process, in particular so that we can take up group claims, on behalf of a number workers, straight to an employment tribunal. We must make it easier to enforce all rights at work, not just those covered by the existing enforcement agencies. There are a whole number of contractual rights at work, such as holiday and sick pay, for which there is no enforcement agency to call on and the only route available is that of an individual going to an employment tribunal. These areas of possible abuse should be allocated to the most relevant enforcement agency through an extended remit, if necessary, thus ensuring a fully comprehensive coverage of employment right enforcement.

Congress, USDAW is a union that operates in those sectors of the economy where Labour's employment rights legislation is most focused. We do welcome what the Labour Government has done in extending and improving employment rights but we need to ensure that workers have truly benefited from those improvements and new protections. That is why we need to have in place the strongest possible enforcement mechanisms. I move.

Sally Treble (*Equity*) seconded Composite Motion 1.

She said: Congress, we have just watched that video and, of course, we have been reading in *Hard Work*, *Hidden Lives* absolutely harrowing tales involving the exploitation and abuse of vulnerable workers. I bet there is no one in this room would ever dream that an Equity representative could come to this rostrum and talk about Equity members being exploited, abused and vulnerable. But it happens. It happens within our union. It may be a surprise to you all but show business is not all glamour and high pay. We have more than our fair share of low paid and exploited workers.

Every day Equity staff deal with film makers, producers, theatres and television companies who seemingly believe that they can get away with paying our members and performers little or nothing. The situation has not always been highlighted. Often the workers are too scared and too afraid to make complaints because they are not just afraid of losing the job they are on but, in our business, if you make complaints you actually ruin and jeopardise all your future work. So they are very reluctant to take complaints against anybody.

Within Equity's part of the motion there are three issues. The first one is that we think that the most sensible thing is a measure to enable third parties, such as trade unions, to take employers to an employment tribunal on behalf of the worker. So, consequently, that worker is not sticking their head above the parapet. However, what is a mystery to me is why union representation was not in the Employment Bill to start with? I do not understand that. We are the best at it. We have got all the infrastructure and experience to represent our members, be it in the courts or at tribunals.

Also a mystery to me is why the Government failed to keep its promise to ban up-front book fees, which is a widespread practice amongst the agents who represent models and walk-on and supporting artistes in television. Up-front fees continue unabated and unchecked. Let me give you an example. Recently, an Equity member got a job from an agent. He worked a 14 hour day in television and after the agent had deducted his fee and the agent's commission, our member received a cheque for the princely sum of £22. That artiste came nowhere for earning the national minimum wage for his day's work because the agent had grabbed 90 per cent of his fee. This case, I assure, was not isolated. Workers should be entitled to at least receive the national minimum wage for a day's work. He may have earned more than the national minimum wage but he certainly did not receive it on that day.

The President: Could you start to wind-up, please?

Sally Treble: Yes. I must make this point because it is very important. In television we have no agreement for performers in talent shows. Some of the biggest employers in the television industry, who make X-Factor, Pop Idol, the One And Only and Big Brother, refuse to pay professional performers because they choose to call those performers 'contestants', so they get away with not paying one half-penny to any of those performers. This is absolutely iniquitous. The Government has to make ----

The President: Sally, would you wind-up, please.

Sally Treble: ---- all such employers aware of their responsibilities under the National Minimum Wage Act. I second.

Bev Miller (*UNISON*) supported Composite Motion 1.

She said: When the TUC published its report of the Commission on Vulnerable Employment earlier this year it really opened our eyes. It described employment practices that many of us had not come across and showed that the abuse of workers was more widespread than we thought. I certainly assumed that the worst abuses were in construction, agriculture or food processing. But it was clear that the twilight world of abuse was as described by my General Secretary, Dave Prentis, and it existed right across the economy, including the public sector in which I work. Abuse exists from care homes to cleaning, to call centres and more. It exposed the appalling practices of many of the so-called 'employment agencies' involved, such as over-charging for over-crowded and sub-standard accommodation, inequitable pay and poorer working conditions where permanent staff earn more for the same work or denying vulnerable workers paid holiday leave or statutory sick pay. Such abuse has led to stress-related illnesses and working whilst ill. But employers, such as local authorities, hide behind the fact that they employ workers through agencies and then deny their responsibilities and shift the blame

back on to agencies, with nobody taking responsibility for or respecting the worker. This is a return to Victorian working practices where there was no recognition for workers, except as a tool of production.

In the midst of all of this are people unable to rise above poverty, with no job security, career progression or statutory rights. Vulnerable workers who are black, women or disabled face considerably more discriminatory and deplorable working conditions. It is a real challenge for us as trade unions as we reach out to vulnerable workers. How many of you have tried to represent an agency worker? How many of you have had to fight against a lack of trade union recognition for such workers? Yes, the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority was a real move forward but it does not cover all sectors. We still have a weak enforcement system in the UK with the main agencies not co-operating or sharing information. In fact, a minimum wage inspector is barred from sharing information about any health and safety violation they spot on a visit. Fortunately, this shameful practice is starting to change. More resources are needed for the enforcement agencies with all of their power recognised. In particular, employment tribunal awards should be clearly enforced, especially in the private sector.

The actions called for by the composite will go a considerable way towards improving working and living conditions for vulnerable workers. Support the composite and end the inhumane and unacceptable exploitation which affects vulnerable workers.

Dave Bean (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 1.

He said: Congress, vulnerable workers do not have enough employment rights, but what rights they need have to be properly enforced to mean anything at all. It is the PCS members in the civil service who do most of the enforcing in the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority, Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, the National Minimum Wage Inspectorate and the Health and Safety Executive. Workers in these organisations see harrowing cases of exploitation of the worst kind possible, but they have far too few resources to deal with these situations, let alone work proactively to discover or prevent abuse. Our members in the enforcement bodies are facing job cuts and squeezes on resources under the Government's so-called 'efficiency agenda'.

We know that there have been some welcome reforms and some small increases in the staffing of organisations which do the enforcement. These are small organisations and the increases have been tiny. For example, the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate was increased from 12 to 24 staff to police agency worker regulations across the whole country, but that is nowhere near enough to carry out this important work properly. In the Health and Safety Executive, management is closing the London office and moving jobs to the north-west in order to make savings, resulting in the experience of hundreds of people being lost to the organisation and individuals facing the choice of uprooting their families or losing their jobs.

HM Revenue and Customs and the Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Departments have so far failed to deliver on Gordon Brown's promise of a 50 per cent increase in resources to enforce the National Minimum Wage. Adding 20 new inspectors, joining 80 inspectors and a total of 130 staff, does not translate into anything like a 50 per cent increase in resources. After 10 years of the National Minimum Wage there are still only 6,000 cases out of, potentially, hundreds of thousands a year that are actually taken up. This is not enough to make sure that there is proper

enforcement of the National Minimum Wage. The people doing the enforcement sorely need more resources, the chance to co-ordinate and work with other enforcement bodies and they want to cover all industries across the country.

Workers need other ways to enforce their rights. Taking an individual employment tribunal case is difficult if you are a vulnerable worker, especially as this is another area subject to potential cuts in the number of civil servants' jobs. We want to see trade unions having a practical role in making sure workers get the rights they need and deserve.

PCS care about employment rights for all workers and especially vulnerable workers. PCS represents staff who are doing their best to enforce vulnerable workers' rights. Our members want to do a good job but they must have the resources and powers to do so. PCS fully supports Composite Motion 1.

Jean Crocker (*University and College Union*) supported Composite Motion 1. She said: This is my first Congress. (*Applause*) People are sometimes surprised to hear that vulnerable employment is widespread in post-16 education. Casualisation of academic and related staff in higher education, for example, is second only to that in the hotel and catering industry. The measures proposed here will support UCU's fight against vulnerable employment and our anti-casualisation campaign to be launched in November. There are still huge numbers of hourly paid lecturers, often long-serving, in further, higher, and adult education, and I am one of them. The full number is not in statistics. Some employers say they cannot identify hourly paid staff so equality issues cannot be properly monitored. National pay rises do not always apply. Some hourly rates are very low. Permanent zero hours contracts apparently comply with the fixed term regulations but allow an employer to appoint more lecturers at any time and then pick and choose who gets what hours, if any. Some lecturers are promised a percentage of existing hours the following year but these can be further reduced year on year. Others are unwillingly placed on contracts for services which certainly feel like bogus self-employment. One university allows them to join the pension scheme but deducts the employer's as well as the employee's contribution from their hourly pay. Agency work is the norm in some colleges. The recent excellent agreement addresses low and unequal pay but further measures are needed to tackle lack of occupational pension and sick leave; also collective bargaining is compromised by the lack of union recognition by the institution for these workers. Ninety-six per cent of new research appointments are fixed term. Casualised workers are often selected for redundancy on the basis of their contract, sometimes by non-arrival of next year's work timetable. Vulnerable workers often think twice before challenging their employer. The measures in this composite and the accompanying cultural change will be of great value. When they are introduced we ask the General Council to ensure that the vulnerable workers in post-16 education are remembered alongside the others. Please support this composite. (*Applause*)

Jack Dromey (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 1. He said: Congress, imagine a world where you are never able to buy your kids new shoes, where you are never able to go on holiday, life on the margins in charity shops, timing your shopping to snap up food past its sell-by date. In the 20th century we fought to banish want, poverty and disease. We have made real progress, including the establishment of a national minimum wage, but what the Commission did was to shine a light on the sad reality in the 21st century of

millions trapped in a world of exploitation, insecurity, fear, and at its worst modern-day slavery, a world of poor health and bad housing, an unequal world of kids trapped in poverty.

I was proud to serve on the Commission on Vulnerable Employees and it starts with launching a challenge to us as trade unions, we must act because exploitation is at its worst in areas where trade unions are at their weakest. That is why we have invested in a hundred organisers in Unite to tackle that kind of exploitation. Next, the Commission challenges us to give leadership on migration. Should our country run with the tide of the brain dead boot boys of the BNP, the svelte voice of xenophobia, Migration Watch. Now with Frank Field and Nicholas Soames getting into bed with one another, it must be one hell of a big bed. Or do we say that we welcome migrants who come to our shores, they enrich our society, the economy needs migration, and we then organise all workers around equal treatment of all workers to combat exploitation and to prevent undercutting. *(Applause)*

The Commission then challenges all those with power to act. The time has come for the supermarkets to stop abusing their market power, driving down costs along the supply chain leading to that two-tier labour market, more and more agency workers overwhelmingly migrant on poorer conditions of employment, the numbers of directly employed workers here for generations on better conditions of employment falling. All that causes division and damages social cohesion.

Chair, in conclusion, the Congress then challenges government to act. The Government was wrong to drag its heels on equal treatment of agency workers and the directly employed but at last has moved. The Government was right to introduce the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to stamp out exploitation in agriculture and fisheries. Now we look to the Government to act on the proposals of the Vulnerable Workers Forum, the establishment of the Fair Employment Enforcement Board, bringing together all of the enforcement agencies to wage war on bad employers, sending an unmistakable message that there will be no hiding place for bad employers in the 21st century.

Congress, in conclusion, poverty and vulnerable employment scars our society and shames our country. Millions marched and a Labour government acted to Make Poverty History in Africa. That was a great and noble cause where we still have along way to go but now we need to act, in addition, here in Britain in that great and noble cause, Make Poverty History at Home. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

* *Composite Motion 1 was CARRIED.*

The President: I would now like to welcome the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling, to Congress. Alistair was first elected to Parliament in 1987 and he has held Cabinet posts at the Department of Transport, and Works and Pensions, and now perhaps the easiest job of all, at the Treasury. Congress, there can be no doubt that this is one of the most challenging times to be a Labour Chancellor. With all of the pressures in the global economy, as well as at home, I do not think any of us believe that you have an easy job, Alistair. Alistair, I know that you recognise these are not exactly easy times for working people either. Many of the working people that we represent are really struggling to make ends meet and they find it even harder to take when they see the people at the very top of our society not paying their fair share. I know that delegates will want to listen carefully to the Chancellor's words and I am sure that delegates will also welcome the opportunity to put

questions directly to Alistair after his address. Alistair, I invite you to address Congress. *(Applause)*

Address by The Rt Hon Alistair Darling, MP, Chancellor Of The Exchequer

Rt Hon Alistair Darling: Thank you very much, Dave, for your kind introduction and let me thank you too for the opportunity to address your Congress this afternoon. I am looking forward to speaking to you and I am looking forward, I think, to answering your questions afterwards.

Let me start by congratulating the TUC on the work and the commission that looked into the problems being faced by vulnerable workers. I remember being at the launch in the summer and this is an example of excellent work done by the TUC, and by others, tackling a problem - the exploitation of vulnerable workers - that has no place in a civilised society and we must do everything we can to stamp it out. That is why we have introduced legislation to deal with the problems in relation to gangmasters. We have introduced a new penalty regime for people who do not pay the minimum wage, and that is why we want to do more to enforce rights at work and to make it easier to report abuses, and to take action when we find them. It is just one example of many issues where we are listening and where we are working together improving conditions for people at work. As we face these difficult times, that is more important than ever.

Now, I know that you want me to talk today about where we are, the challenges we face, and how we are going to meet them. Times are tough but provided we do the right things, supporting people, supporting the economy, then we will get through it. Above all, we must maintain the economic stability we have now and in the future, the stability on which all the progress we have made these past 11 years was built.

Stability is not an end in itself but it is there for a purpose. Our purpose as a government is fairness, to build a country where everyone has the opportunity to succeed regardless of their background. Sustainable growth, higher employment, better living standards, more investment in health, transport and education, they are all essential if we are going to build the fairer, stronger country that we all want to see.

Now, a stable economy is not an optional extra, it is a means to an end; fairness, rising prosperity, opportunities for everyone, that is what we have achieved and what we will continue to endeavour to achieve in the future. But, first, I want to talk about the difficult economic climate that is facing us right now and why I believe that we have good reasons to be confident about the future.

As everyone can see in this hall, and outside, the global economic environment has changed dramatically in the last year, here and in every country in the world. The decision this weekend by the United States government to take control of institutions that guaranteed over \$5trillion worth of mortgages demonstrates the sheer scale of the problems that countries across the world now face.

Last year we intervened to save Northern Rock, to stop the problems there from spreading to other banks. It was controversial at the time, it is still opposed by the Tories now, but it was necessary and it is right.

The world has changed profoundly over past decades: what happens in one part of the world almost immediately affects every other. Globalisation, more trade, will mean more prosperity and jobs in the future but it also brings risks because the economic problems in one country can no longer be contained within its borders. Every country in the world has found itself hit by two global shocks, the credit crunch and the surge in food and energy prices.

Last summer, when the US sub-prime market collapsed, it took only a few weeks before financial markets were affected right across the world. Everywhere, financial institutions reacted by reducing the amounts of money they lend to each other and then quickly made it much more difficult for people and businesses to borrow money from them.

The biggest impact is being felt in the mortgage markets. You can see that today. A decade ago, almost all mortgages in this country were funded from the savings that people made in banks and building societies. By last summer, half of all the new mortgages were instead being funded by money raised on the global money markets.

All this funding has disappeared and UK mortgage lending has now been severely reduced and this credit crunch coincided, of course, with another problem, the massive surge in the price of oil and other basic materials: wheat prices up by 24 per cent, rice 118 per cent. Partly, it is the short-term impact of geopolitical uncertainty in some parts of the world and bad harvests. It is also because of the rapidly changing world, countries like China, India, and Brazil, have been growing at record-breaking speed. Now, that is a good thing but it means that their demand for food, for oil, and other commodities is growing as well.

The most dramatic rise has been in the price of oil. It is hard to believe that ten years ago a barrel of oil cost just \$10. This year it has jumped \$10 in a single day. This time last year a barrel cost just \$60; this summer the price of oil peaked at \$147. The impact of that, and of the credit crunch, of these two shocks, is being felt in every country in the world, by every business, and by every family.

Across the world inflation is up and growth down, in France, in Germany, in Japan, and the United States. For you and your members it means higher prices at petrol stations, it means higher prices at the supermarket, and more expensive gas and electricity bills. Yes, times are tough. For businesses they are tough, they are tough for families but, yes, too, we will get through them.

These two events, on their own bad enough, together are having a profound effect here and all over the world. The difference this time for us is that we can deal with the consequences provided we do the right thing, provided we do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

That is why I am confident we will get through it because this is different from the home-grown problems of the 1970s, 1980s, or even the early 1990s, because our economy is stronger than in the past: in the 1970s inflation hit almost 25 per cent, today inflation is too high but less than 5 per cent; in the 1980s over 3 million on the dole, today, near-record numbers of people in work; in the 1990s under the Tories interest rates hit 15 per cent, today they are 5 per cent. As I have said before, yes, the economy will slow down but with strong fundamentals and with the right support from the Government, we will get through this, provided we do not risk stability because we will never again return to those days that cost so much to people.

Now, most people understand that the problems we face are global. They recognise that no country, no government, can turn back these global economic forces on their own. Internationally, we are working with other governments to find the long-term answers to some of these problems. At home, you expect now, and rightly, that we do all we can to help families through this difficult time.

From this month, around 22 million people on low and middle incomes will get a £60 tax rebate in their pay packet, and an extra £10 a month from now until April.

On housing, we are supporting people by spending £1bn to speed up the delivery of social homes, increase help for people facing repossession and extra support for first-time buyers; something you called for, something we have delivered.

We coupled this with an immediate stamp duty holiday for house purchases, helping families through the housing downturn, particularly people struggling to meet mortgage payments.

On fuel prices, too, we have frozen fuel duty this year, saving families and businesses around £100m a month.

The Winter Fuel payment, which is paid to older people, introduced by this government and opposed by the Tories, this year we are increasing it by £50 to £250 for the over-60s and by £100 to £400 for the over-80s.

Earlier this year too, we secured money from the energy companies to cut the tariffs for those on the lowest incomes. Energy companies must face their responsibilities to help people in this difficult time. So, we will do more and they must do more, too. Soon, we will announce how we will help people reduce their energy bills not just this winter but every winter; millions of homes to benefit, and thousands of jobs to be created, from becoming a more energy-efficient society.

I have said I am listening. I have heard calls for a windfall tax on the energy companies and I am quite sure we will return to this in the question session shortly. We have three goals: the first, energy security, as a country we must become less reliant on imported oil and gas, as you were debating earlier this afternoon; secondly, cleaner and greener energy so that we can tackle climate change; thirdly, keeping energy prices down as low as we can for businesses and for families because no one should go cold this winter, or any other winter. Meeting those goals is what is important and they will need continuous investment over many years, bringing energy security and creating new jobs. That is what we are doing, more support now, on housing, energy, and from this month through people's pay packets, as well as helping people and those at risk.

Now, everyone in this country, in this hall, knows that these are tough times but families and businesses would face even tougher times in the future if we throw away the stability that we have worked so hard to secure. We have seen what has happened in the past when that stability goes. It is not the people on the highest incomes who pay the price, it is the low-paid, it is the elderly, and those who would lose their jobs. A stable economy is not an optional extra; it is a means to an end, fairness. It has been the foundation from which we have delivered the changes that this country rightly demanded from us. The alternative would cost jobs up and down the country. That is why pay matters right across the board, in the private sector and the public sector, in the boardroom as much as it does on the shop-floor.

You are rightly concerned about excessive bonuses, especially when people seem to get money for failing, not for succeeding, and that has got to change. A bonus should be for hard work, not big mistakes. Excessive bonuses, which encourage traders to take excessive risks at a time of easy global credit, were one of the major reasons for the global credit crunch. We need to learn to prevent that from happening again.

I know you will want to come back to pay in the questions but just let me say this. Inflation today is caused by the rise in oil and food prices, that is the primary cause, but oil prices have fallen and most forecasters expect inflation to come down next year. That is why it would be so damaging for us to allow inflation to become entrenched here, as it did in the past, which is why in the public and private sectors pay rises must be consistent with our inflation target

because otherwise every penny in pay rises will be quickly swallowed up by higher prices, and we all remember the job losses that followed in the past once inflation takes hold. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their jobs, as we saw in the 1980s and the 1990s, and we cannot and we will not allow that to happen again.

Now, yes, fairness is about pay, that is why we introduced the minimum wage, but it is also about jobs, it is about fighting discrimination, cutting waiting lists, providing quality childcare and about decent education. It is also about opportunities for the future and even in these difficult times today we need to look ahead and here the Government and the TUC are working closely together so that we can continue to compete in a rapidly changing global economy. If we are going to ensure economic growth, we need to be clear where the economy is strong and where the new jobs will be created in the years to come. We must all be ready to keep working together to make the most of these opportunities. In many cases our most successful industries are the ones where many of you have members, like manufacturing, which accounts for half of our exports and attracts most foreign investment here; like knowledge-based industries, the pharmaceutical industry, biotechnology and science, which have created over half the new jobs in this country over the last 20 years.

In all these cases, it is not a case of picking winners but recognising that government support can make a difference. In biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, we are helping with publicly-funded research and with tax credits. In aerospace, we are helping by financing new projects like Airbus. In manufacturing, yesterday we launched a new strategy to build on this huge success story. Britain is good at manufacturing. We can be even more successful with the right support. Together we can secure many new high-value green-collar jobs, making the most of our transition to a low-carbon economy.

Britain could be the world leader on carbon capture and renewable energy. In 20 years this could mean a potential one million new jobs in low carbon industries. So now and in the future we are guided in the spirit of fairness and enterprise which underpins the ambitions and priorities of everyone in this hall, and everyone in the country, working together to create new jobs and new opportunities, just as we have done since 1997.

It is almost 11 years since I stood in this very hall when our party was in government for the first time in two decades. It is all too easy to forget what the country was like then. Public services were starved of investment, we had an under-funded NHS, classrooms, many of them built by the Victorians, tens of thousands earning less than £3 an hour, and almost no childcare. Let's not take for granted how we have changed this country. It is what the Tories want you to do, to pretend that there has never been any change, never been any progress, or if there was that it happened by accident. Of course we need to do more but do not let that overshadow what we have achieved, a country changed for the better, not at the expense of economic stability but because of it.

That is why we made the Bank of England independent and why we support their independence. We have trebled public investment and at the same time reduced national debt to one of the lowest levels of any major developed country. It means we can now allow borrowing to rise, to support the economy and families at this crucial time, but in the medium term governments everywhere have to live within their means.

So, I will set out at the Pre-Budget Report how I will continue to deliver sound public finances because that is the platform for everything we have achieved:

150,000 more teachers, nurses and doctors, are working in new hospitals and rebuilt schools across the country. Public sector pay has increased by 39 per cent since 2000; that is more than the private sector. Instead of 3 million people out of work, we have had 3 million more jobs. There are better working conditions, paid holidays, childcare support, help for carers, jobs for lone parents and people with disabilities, and, yes, as Jack was saying, equal treatment for agency workers. For the first time ever, every employer will be contributing to pensions. We have seen increased child benefit, maternity leave, tax credits helping millions of people and millions of families, and the lowest income families as much as £4,000 a year better off. Under the Tories child poverty trebled; now it has fallen and we are determined to eliminate it. In 1997, employers were paying whatever they liked, today, a decent minimum wage. You asked for it. We delivered it. That is why we are ensuring that tips do not count as part of the minimum wage. You campaigned for it. We agreed.

Not only did the opposition never support these changes when they were in government, they opposed most of them when they were in opposition. While we were spending £1bn on helping families with rising housing costs last week, on the same day the Tories announced that they would spend £1bn helping a tiny minority of people avoid paying inheritance tax. Now they want spending cuts to pay for their proposals.

We have achieved a great deal together but we have more to do. Times are tough right now but together we will get through it. We are and we will remain a government committed to fairness of opportunity for everyone. Our priority is to help families at these difficult times because that is what governments are for; our mission to build a country where everyone has the opportunity to succeed regardless of their background, preparing our country for the challenges of the future. That is a prize worth fighting for. Thank you very much. *(Applause)* Now I fear I am in your hands.

The President: Yes, definitely. Thank you, Alistair. Brendan will now chair the question and answer session.

Brendan Barber: OK, colleagues, as you know we invited unions to submit questions. We received questions on a quite a number of topics. I suspect we will not be able to cover them all, but a number of unions put questions in on the issue of public sector pay and I am going to ask Sue Orwin of UNISON to put the first point, and then Janice Godrich from PCS to come second. Then I will just refer to some of the issues that other unions also touched on in questions in this area. Sue, please?

Susan Orwin (UNISON): Good afternoon, Chancellor. I am a proud NHS worker of many years and a proud UNISON member devoted to representing the interests of members. I am like my low-paid colleagues increasingly worried about the rapidly rising genuine level of inflation. For low-paid workers, soaring energy, fuel and food costs swallow up their disposable income. You know that it is not good for this economy and the stark choice of food or warmth is imminent. As a direct result of the current pay policy and the wider economic crisis beyond members' control we are expected to accept year on year real-term pay cuts. Furthermore, we are repeatedly told that an upturn will make inflation worse for everyone. This is not fair. It is not just. I ask you today to confirm what you propose to do in order to rectify this totally unacceptable situation. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Janice Godrich (*Public and Commercial Services Union*): Chancellor, you talked in your address about doing all you can to help families and I would like to ask you a question on behalf of the thousands of families that work in government departments, most of them working to deliver your manifesto priorities. PCS opposes the Government's unfair pay policy, that is a matter of record; however, civil and public servants in PCS suffer doubly in that unlike any other part of the public sector incremental progression is taken off any cost of living increase leaving people like myself, for example, who work in the Department of Work and Pensions, not receiving the inflation rate but receiving nil percent consolidated pay rises for the next two years. Do you think that is fair, just, and equal, and if you agree with us, which I hope you do, that it is not, what do you intend to do about it? (*Applause*)

Brendan Barber: Thanks, Janice. Colleagues, questions in this area also touched on the issue of interference by the Treasury getting in the way of settlements being achieved, where public sector employers are prepared to reach agreements, ATL, in particular, and NASUWT referring to FE lecturers in Northern Ireland, Prospect has touched on the implications for recruitment and retention of public sector workers of the current pay policy, reference in particular to nuclear safety inspectors is one example of that, and a number of unions really pressing hard on the point that public sector pay is not the cause of inflation, and holding it down in the way that the governments currently seeks to (*Applause*) you are aiming at the wrong target, Alistair; over to you.

Alistair Darling: OK. First of all, in relation to pay generally, I said when I spoke to you a few moments ago that the primary cause of inflation and the results of which we are seeing at the moment, is the increasing price of oil and the increase in the price of food. There is no doubt about that. I also said to you that if you look at oil prices just now, they are falling. We will see what happens but most forecasters think that inflation will fall back in the next year.

The problem that we really must avoid is getting ourselves into a situation that we have been in the past where if you get inflation becoming entrenched here at home, then as I said earlier every penny you get by way of a wage increase is completely swallowed up by ever-rising prices. Now, we have been here before; in the 1970s, 1980, and 1990s we have seen that. Whilst you may get a cheer one year for allowing that to happen, by the next year when prices were eroding any gains that people were making, then people would quite rightly be very harsh with you, and that is what I want to avoid.

I do think, though, that the point that both Sue and Janice made about low pay is important. We have actually over the last 10 years increased public sector pay; it has actually risen further and higher than private sector pay. There are other issues like pensions, of course. (*dissent*) No, it has actually. There are particular problems, which I know, Janice, in relation to the Department of Work and Pensions where after a certain point people have had a non-consolidated 3 per cent increase. I understand the problems that is causing. We are looking to see what we can do to help people in that particular department where I know low pay is a particular problem. There are particular cases as you mentioned, Brendan, and which I know have been raised in relation to the Health and Safety Commission, getting people to work on the nuclear inspectorate, I think also in relation to the railways inspectorate as well and, clearly, we have to look at these things. Recruitment and retention are very, very important.

I know what I am saying is not likely to be popular in this particular hall but I really think the problem that I want to avoid is getting ourselves into a situation where in the past we have allowed inflation to get entrenched in this country and we have paid a very heavy price for it, not just in living standards, not just in terms of pay but the jobs that start to go. As I said earlier, it is not the people on the higher incomes who suffer, it is particularly the people on low incomes, and when people start to lose their jobs that is when we get into real, real problems and I want to avoid that, as I am sure all of you do as well.

Brendan Barber: OK, Alistair, an issue that I think we will be talking about further for quite a period. You touched briefly in your speech, Alistair, on the issue of a windfall tax on the energy companies. Sharon Hutchinson of Unite, perhaps, will make a point on that issue.

Sharon Hutchinson (*Unite*): Thanks, Brendan. Alistair, all six major energy suppliers in the UK have hiked their prices in recent months, in some cases by as much as 35 per cent. For each one percent increase in energy costs another 50,000 householders are put at risk of fuel poverty. At the same time, those same energy companies are reporting record profits. Do you not agree that rather than offering to insulate houses an immediate reduction in individual bills paid for by a windfall tax on oil and energy companies is the right and fair way to prevent unnecessary deaths this winter? (*Applause*)

Brendan Barber: Alistair, we will take that one.

Alistair Darling: First of all, let me deal with the windfall tax question. For those who report these things, no, I am not going to make any announcement on tax today on this, or anything else. I do not think you will expect me to do that. I think in relation to the windfall tax, there are two separate issues I want to look at.

Many people have looked at the oil companies and said, "Look, they are making huge profits, what are you going to do about it?" I think it is worth bearing in mind that if you take BP, for example, which reported rising profits earlier this year, most of those profits were made overseas and they will pay tax on those profits in other countries; they do not pay them here. Within this country, we do tax the profits that are made in the North Sea at a higher rate than other companies; they pay between 50 and 75 per cent, so they are taxed at a higher rate. I think the utilities, the electricity and the gas companies, present a slightly different problem. The real problem there was that when the European Union issued the emissions trading scheme, that is a scheme that is designed to try and make sure that energy companies are much more energy efficient and they burn and produce less carbon, they got the allowances under that scheme in phase one for nothing; they were given away. That is what the European law said. Even in the second phase, which we have just now, you can only auction, that is, require the companies to pay for up to 10 per cent. Undoubtedly, they made gains there and some of them passed them on to consumers, others I do not think did. The third phase, we are arguing that 100 per cent of those allowances should be auctioned so that we get the money and we can spend that money on behalf of people in this country.

Now, all these matters, the emissions trading scheme, they raise all sorts of legal issues which need to be dealt with. I think the other thing that is important to bear in mind is this, as I said when I spoke to you, there

are three objectives: one, we do need more investment year on year to renew the power stations in this country to ensure that we reduce our dependence on oil and gas, that means more renewables, it means more nuclear, and that will need money which has to be spent over the next few years and for many years beyond that. We also need to ensure that, of course, we protect people as well.

We will be making an announcement about what exactly we are proposing to do fairly shortly but since I think it was Gill who raised it in relation to insulation, it is very easy to knock it but actually if we can cut people's fuel bills not just this winter but next winter and the winter after that, and into the future, by ensuring that people waste less energy so that less energy is going out through the roof or through the walls, that actually is a good thing. It improves the quality of the housing stock. It is actually a good thing to be doing, so do not let anybody knock it. Also, incidentally, it will create a lot of jobs over the next few years. We will be announcing proposals fairly shortly but I am acutely aware of the fact that we have to strike the balance between getting the long-term investment we need, which again creates jobs, but at the same time we also have an obligation to help people, particularly people who are really feeling squeezed as a result of the gas and electricity prices they are having to pay at the moment.

Brendan Barber: OK, thanks, Alistair. Tommy Hall from the GMB wishes to raise some of the background issues to the economic problems we have. Tommy?

Tommy Hall (GMB): Thanks, Brendan. Chancellor, in hindsight does the Government believe it should have done more to discourage the disproportionate and irresponsible borrowing by the banks? Thank you. (Applause)

Alistair Darling: I think there are two things I would say to you. One, there is no doubt that banks across the world lent money and invested money in people where they were not at all clear could actually repay these loans or could actually have owned properties that were enough to repay the loan if they defaulted. I remember speaking to a chief executive of a bank fairly recently and he said to me, straight-faced, "We only lend now to people where we understand the risk." I said, "Does that mean you did not understand the risk in the past?"

I am afraid there is a lot of evidence and, as I say, banks across the world did not understand the risks to which they were being exposed. When you think about it, in America banks were lending money to people who could only just make their repayments when interest rates were 2 per cent. When interest rates started to go up, people then discovered not only could they not pay that money but the properties they owned were not worth anything like they thought. The answer to your question is unequivocally, yes, banks do need to be more prudent, they do need to understand the risks to which they are exposed, and they do need to ensure that if they are lending money to somebody they can pay it back.

That brings me to the second part of what you were saying, that is, there is no doubt also that especially over the last few years when banks found it easier to raise money on the money markets to lend it to people, then they should perhaps, as I said before, have stuck to the old-fashioned principles of banking and make sure that someone can repay the money they lend. If you lend somebody 125 per cent of the value of a property, they are by definition in negative equity from day one. Now, I think banks do need to be careful, and building societies do need to be careful.

Yes, everyone of you in the hall, I suspect, knows someone, a friend, maybe a member of your family, who is trying to get a mortgage at the moment, and we want to help as other governments have done in making it easier for people to get mortgages, but what we do not want is to go back to a situation that we have had over the last few years where people are being leant money on properties that are not worth what people think, or lending money that they cannot possibly repay. So, a return to good old-fashioned principles of banking, whether it is between themselves or between themselves and their ordinary customers, I believe it is absolutely essential.

Brendan Barber: Thanks, Alistair. I think we have time probably just for two more. Mick Carney from TSSA, and Lawrence Hunt from UCATT.

Mick Carney (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association): Chancellor, given the recent OECD statement that the UK economy will be in recession by the end of this year, can the Chancellor tell us how the Government plans to get us out of this situation? More specifically, will he countenance any significant increase in public spending and public debt to help us out of recession, and does he have any specific plans to help the poor who will be hardest hit by any recession? (Applause)

Alistair Darling: The OECD is one of a number of organisations that makes fairly regular forecasts as to what our economy and what other economies may do. Earlier this year, it was forecasting quite strong growth but the position is, as I was saying earlier, that right across the world all countries are facing a significant downturn in growth, growth is slowing. If you look at France, Germany, and Italy just now they have actually seen falling output. In this country, our last quarter of growth was flat.

Now, I believe, as I said to you earlier, that there are two parts to this. Yes, we are facing a unique set of circumstances that are causing these problems, the credit crunch and rising oil and commodity prices. The second part is equally important because of what I said earlier, I think the fundamentals in our economy, the fact that we have near-record numbers of people in work which actually has a huge determining influence on confidence, the fact that we have historically low inflation and low interest rates, these things will all help us; and of course our economy has grown for over 10 years. It has grown strongly and in the last year actually was the strongest growing economy of any developed country, so we go into a difficult period from a position where we are much stronger than we have ever been in the past.

Yes, we do need to do things to help. For example, we have intervened in order to help the banking system, that was absolutely critical and different but the Americans have done something similar this past weekend. Of course, we also, as I was saying earlier, need to take steps to help families, to help businesses get through what is a difficult time. We will do that. We have announced various things which I referred to earlier on. There will be more to do in the future but it is absolutely critical, people do not expect governments to be able to stop these massive global forces but they do expect the Government to be on the side of people, to be on the side of businesses, to be on the side of the economy and supporting us through a difficult time, and I am determined we will do that.

Brendan Barber: Thanks, Alistair. The final question is on some of the abuses in the construction industry. Lawrence Hunt.

Lawrence Hunt (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*): Thanks, Brendan. Alistair, Prof. Mark Harvey in his report, *The Evasion Economy*, estimates that false self-employment in the construction industry is costing the Exchequer at least £1.5bn a year – I repeat that, £1.5bn a year. I am sure you could put this to good use. It is estimated that 400,000 construction workers are working falsely self-employed under the construction industry tax scheme. False self-employment corrupts the construction industry as workers are denied employment rights, rights to holiday pay, sick pay, and will not be covered, by the way, under the new government proposals for the pensions. False self-employment has a detrimental effect on health and safety and prevents the training of apprentices. What is the Treasury doing to tackle this problem? Thank you. (*Applause*)

Brendan Barber: Thank you, Lawrence.

Alistair Darling: First of all, if you can lay your hands on £1.5bn I will be very pleased to hear from you, and I will talk to you afterwards! Secondly, and seriously, you are right, this is a problem. It is equally important that we distinguish the people who are genuinely self-employed and people who sometimes are persuaded by the employer to be self-employed and that goes against their best interests because of pension contributions and everything else. We are aware of the problem. My ministerial colleague, Angela Eagle, is due to meet, I think, with members of UCATT and with others later this month, or the beginning of the next month, so that we can discuss how we can find a way through protecting the interests of people who are genuinely self-employed but trying to avoid this problem where people are actually making – it is a false economy for them. You may persuade somebody that you get a few extra bob a week in your pocket now but if they do not have their pension contributions and they do not have other rights, then they will lose out in the long-term. It is important that we tackle those abuses, not just from the Treasury's point of view, which is always useful, but it is actually very important from the individual's point of view. I hope we will have a constructive meeting with you in the next few weeks.

Brendan Barber: Alistair, thanks very much for that. Congress, thanks to those unions that put questions in. I hope Congress feels it has been a useful exchange with the Chancellor. There are clearly a whole number of areas where there are major issues to be resolved but I am pleased that the Chancellor has been prepared to come and join us this afternoon, not only to speak but also to have this dialogue with delegates. Alistair, many thanks indeed. (*Applause*)

Regular foot health screening in schools

Gary Gibson (*Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists*) moved Motion 64. He said: President, Congress, as a representative of the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists I would like to draw to your attention to the importance of foot health checks and foot health screening, and education, for the entire population of the UK, most specifically those of the younger generation. I am actually a practitioner as well so I speak from the heart in actually delivering this motion. Podiatry is a highly specialised profession which concentrates on the field of healthcare devoted to the study and treatment of disorders of the foot, but it is more than that. How can the foot be isolated in that way? It has also to involve the ankle and the lower limb. In this country there is a fine balance in the provision of foot healthcare from podiatrists. Many

work in the National Health Service whilst a significant number also operate as private practitioners. Whichever area of practice they work in, it is the podiatrist who is called upon to provide expert treatment and health education in the provision of foot healthcare.

I used to believe before I became a podiatrist that it was footwear that was the bad guy but I soon learned once I had entered into training there was a little bit more than just footwear that was causing the problem, it was also the motions of the foot whilst it was walking. The young foot is not the adult foot; it is not a mirror image on a smaller scale. The structures of the foot and leg change and develop over time with the impact of the stresses that run through it. Similarly, genetic, environmental, and social differences between the individuals affect different referral patterns, in fact in some areas there are no referral patterns whatsoever. The development changes to the foot alongside any different referral patterns need careful screening to monitor and support any need for realignment in the foot and the lower limb, together with the problems that they may cause. Of course, we have done screening before on a small scale but that revolved more around screening for verrucas and such like, but I am talking more specifically about developmental issues. Such screening would provide significant equality for every member of the population.

The results of poor healthcare can be catastrophic for the child, or young adult. Initially, it can have an impact on the child's development. They may not be able to participate in sports, and the problems of obesity and isolation can become prevalent. This can have lasting consequences. Later in life the problems can develop further. It is not uncommon for children who have had foot problems in their childhood to complain of early onset arthritis or weaknesses in the lower limb which can then, of course, lead to hip, knee, and ankle problems. The likely loss of mobility can be devastating and a requirement for surgery local to these areas can also be inevitable, which again has the impact on the quality of life.

Now, it may seem that I am painting a rather black picture here but I work with the care of the elderly on a regular basis and I am convinced as a practitioner I come across such issues on a daily basis that could have been prevented if we had done this form of screening. That is more proactive than reactive to the care that we need to deliver. Let me give you an example. Take a young adult from a deprived background who struggles at sport in school, he suffers pain when he runs but does not get treatment or health education necessary to his concerns, and that is all because of his background. He loses interest in sport at school, he becomes isolated and sometimes bullied by his so-called mates just because he is different. From there it can be a downward spiral, poor exam results, lower job prospects, lowered self-esteem, with the increasing chance of weight gain and associated ill-health problems. Diabetes, poor mobility, and lack of confidence, are just three worrying examples of what can happen.

That is why I propose to Congress the importance of foot health and lower limb screening to be established and strengthened in schools. I would also emphasise the importance of this being carried out by the appropriate specialists in that field, those being the Health Professions Council registered podiatrists. The programme of regular foot health checks should be associated with the necessary foot health education of both the patients, parents, guardians, and carers, we provide a service for as well as the other professions we work alongside. I therefore request Congress to support our campaign for the increased provision of foot health screening in schools and the promotion of

increased foot health education in conjunction with the treatment that is associated with it. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

Mary Turner (GMB) seconded Motion 64. She said: Congress, our children are our future. Some of us remember when the state took a role in ensuring children's health and welfare. The National Health provided orange juice, cod liver oil capsules, school milk, regular health checks, foot examinations, school playing fields, and of course decent healthy meals, welfare policies which created a healthy and fit generation with the longest life expectancy in history. What do we have now? We have Thatcher's grandchildren. She started with the school milk and moved on to ruin the school meals service and our children's welfare by the Tories' destruction of our communities and schools with policies that left Thatcher's legacy, Congress, a natural decrease in life expectancy in areas of poverty and deprivation. In the 21st century, in a much richer country, now we see the return of the spectres of poverty and ignorance, and a generation of malnourished children.

As many of you will know, the health and welfare of our children is a subject very close to my heart. I have long campaigned for decent school meals for children and at last we are making progress. But in case anyone thinks I have gone soft, I have not, and I will never stop until our children, all of them, receive free school meals. *(Applause)* Colleagues, I was recently horrified to learn of the increase in type 2 diabetes amongst children, a disease directly linked to poor diet and obesity. It is not the children's fault if they are unfit and have a poor diet that leads to poor health and diabetes, it is the fault of a society that has failed them.

The reason I am saying this is because bad feet and diabetes in children can lead to far more serious consequences. Congress, the care of our children's feet is so very important to their future. Perhaps it is not an area people think is very important but for diabetic children poor foot health can lead to amputation and in fact this country has the highest number of amputations for both adults and children. Let me tell you that 100 amputations take place every week; that is a disgrace and it is time that we looked at it seriously. These are shocking numbers in a society like ours.

Congress, foot health is very important indeed. The children of low income families are easily identified. In my day they were then poorly dressed and wore plimsolls to school; nowadays they are often obese and wear cheap clothes and shoes that do not fit because their parents cannot afford decent food, clothing, and footwear, and obesity is linked to that. They are the ones who are going to suffer most in the recession. It is not a question of cutting back on piano and ballet lessons for the children of low income families, no, Congress.

Well, Gordon, if we are serious about taking children out of poverty, then stop the creeping privatisation of our public services and invest in our children, not lining the pockets of the venture capitalists and the private equity bosses. *(Applause)*

Congress, I am pleased to have the opportunity to second this motion from the Society of Podiatrists. You have so eloquently put why children's foot healthcare is so important but, Congress, the whole child is important and we need to bring back a society that cares for our children and cares for their future, ensures they are decently fed, clad, and shod.

I give another message to our ex-ministers and MPs. I see them running round to the television studios saying that we must have a change of leader; that is not my business. But look at yourselves, it is not a change of

leader you want, it is a change of your damned policies; that is what you want. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 64 was CARRIED*

Scrutineers' Report

Dave Morgan (*Chair of the Scrutineers*): Delegates, please turn to the back of the Agenda and I will give the results of the ballots for the General Council and the General Purposes Committee.

General Council

Section A (*Unions with more than 200,000 members*)

Unite (*ten members*)

Tony Burke	Gail Cartmail
Martin Mayer	Len McCluskey
Dougie Rooney	Derek Simpson
Pat Stuart	Paul Talbot
Tony Woodhouse	Tony Woodley

UNISON (*seven members*)

Bob Abberley	Jane Carolan
Gerry Gallagher	Dave Prentis
Alison Shepherd	Eleanor Smith
Liz Snape	

GMB (*three members*)

Sheila Bearcroft	Allan Garley
Paul Kenny	

Communication Workers Union (*two members*)

Billy Hayes	Tony Kearns
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National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (*two members*)

Chris Keates	Sue Rogers
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National Union of Teachers (*two members*)

Christine Blower	Dave Harvey
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Public and Commercial Services Union (*two members*)

Janice Godrich	Mark Serwotka
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Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (*two members*)

John Hannett	Fiona Wilson
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Section B (*Unions with between 100,000 and 200,000 members*)

Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Mary Bousted

Prospect

Paul Noon

University and College Union

Sally Hunt

Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians

Alan Ritchie

Section C (*Unions with fewer than 100,000 members eleven to be elected*)

Name	Union	Votes
Jonathan Baume*	FDA	474,000
Brian Caton *	POA	363,000
Bob Crow	RMT	278,000
Jeremy Dear *	NUJ	437,000
Gerry Doherty*	TSSA	587,000
Michael Leahy*	Community	396,000

Jonathan Ledger	napo	179,000
Joe Marino	BFAWU	218,000
Robert Monks	URTU	20,000
Ged Nichols *	Accord	473,000
Brian Orrell *	NUMAST	475,000
Christine Payne*	Equity	300,000
Tim Poil *	NGSU	437,000
John Smith*	MU	560,000
Matt Wrack *	FBU	411,000

taking place this evening, details are on pages 17 and 18 of the *Congress Guide*, or the leaflet included in your wallet.

That concludes the afternoon's business. Congress is adjourned until 9.30 tomorrow morning. Thank you very much, Congress.

(Congress adjourned at 5.30 p.m.)

Section D (*Women from unions with fewer than 200,000 members- four to be elected – no contest*)

Sue Ferns	Prospect
Anita Halpin	National Union of Journalists
Lesley Mercer	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Julia Neal	Association of Teachers and Lecturers

Section E (*Member representing black workers from unions with more than 200,000 members*)

Mohammed Taj Unite

Section F (*Member representing black workers from unions with fewer than 200,000 members*)

Name	Union	Votes
Leslie Manasseh*	Connect	698,000
Colin Moses	POA	482,000

Section G (*Member representing black women*)

Gloria Mills UNISON

Section H (*Member representing disabled workers*)

Mark Fysh UNISON

Section I (*Member representing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Workers*)

Maria Exall Communication Workers Union

Section J (*Member representing young workers*)

John Walsh Unite

General Purposes Committee (*Five to be elected*)

Name	Union	Votes
Andy Ballard	ATL	989,000
Phil Davies*	GMB	6,142,000
Peter Hall*	RMT	5,821,000
Alastair Hunter*	UCU	5,792,000
Linda McCulloch*	Unite	6,189,000
Annette Mansell-Green*	UNISON	6,266,000

The President: Thank you, Dave. May I remind delegates once again that there are various meetings

**THIRD DAY: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 10TH
MORNING SESSION**

(Congress re-assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

The President: I call Congress to order. Congress, can I thank on your behalf the Mountbatten Sax Quartet who have been playing for us this morning. They were really great. *(Applause)*

General Purposes Committee Report

Annette Mansell-Green (*General Purposes Committee*): Good morning, Congress. Firstly, can I report that an Emergency Motion from ASLEF, with the support of the RMT and TSSA, has been approved by the General Purposes Committee. It is numbered E3, and entitled, The Associated Train Crew Union. It will be circulated around the hall this morning and the President will indicate when he hopes to take it.

I would also like to remind delegates that materials may not be circulated in the Congress Hall without the express permission of the General Purposes Committee. Thank you, Congress.

The President: Thank you, Annette. Congress, as you know, there is some outstanding business which I intend to take, as follows. If there is time I hope to take either Motion 23 and/or Motion 24 at the end of the afternoon, and Emergency Motions 1 and 3 are very likely to be taken on Thursday.

Congress, I am delighted to welcome the Labour Party's sororal delegate to our Congress, Dianne Hayter. Dianne is a former Chief Executive of the European Parliamentary Labour Party and General Secretary of the Fabian Society. Dianne, you are very, very welcome to address our Congress. Thank you.

Address by Dianne Hayter, Labour Party Sororal Delegate

Dianne Hayter (*The Labour Party*): President, sisters and brothers, those of you here with grey hair, or none, will remember that I actually started long before the kind words that you said, nearly 40 years ago I began my career at the GMB. My roots in the union movement go long and deep. In fact, when I first came to Congress it was at a different building, at the Corn Exchange. I then went to help set up the ETUC in Brussels, and then the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD nearly 40 years ago, but today I remain as committed to improving the rights of union members as I did in those early years. I have also written about trade unions, both about their leading lights that formed the PLP in 1906 and also their role, as I see it, in saving the Labour Party in the 1980s when the unions very decisively chose not to throw their lot in with the SDP, and then seized the Party by the scruff of its neck to return it to electability in the interests of working people. Under the tutelage of Charlie Turner, of the RMT, it was the union members of the NEC who set about weeding out militant. Without such help in sorting out a somewhat dysfunctional NEC Neil Kinnock would have been hard pressed to turn the Party into an organisation dedicated to the concerns of working people and to winning voters' confidence.

The unions created the Labour Party in 1900 to ensure the voice of people in Parliament and in the 1980s those unions knew that if it failed in that it would be impotent to safeguard their members. Today as I sit on the NEC, now far from dysfunctional I should say, I see around the table the heirs and successors of those early pioneers who had created the Party in 1900. The names of your unions may, sadly to my historian's mind, have changed but your histories have not disappeared.

In 1906, when 29 trade unionists were elected to parliament and formed the PLP, their union names sung out the trades they represented – iron and steel, engineers, gas workers, spinners, weavers, railway servants, shop assistants, warehousemen, clerks, shipwrights, carpenters, joiners, and smelters. In 2006, when we celebrated the centenary of the PLP the Party acknowledged the proud role of the unions in transforming Britain's political landscape. It is not surprising that the rising stars of the early Parliamentary Party came from the unions. It was in the unions they served their apprenticeship in organising, representing others, problem solving, debating, and policy-making.

Over the past year as Chair I have had good reason to appreciate the support of the affiliated unions as we poached one of your best, Ray Collins, as our General Secretary. I have been superbly supported by Cath Speight of Amicus Unite as Vice Chair. We have leant on your wisdom and understanding in addressing our indebtedness and relied on your members and activists in local and by-election challenges. In return we have fashioned between us at the National Policy Forum a programme of action for the years ahead to bring security and prosperity to working people and their families, to the retired, the disabled, to vulnerable consumers, and to those at the margins of society who lack the voice to protect their own rights and living standards.

The Policy Forum represented a real dialogue between government and the unions and the outcome is testimony to its success. Of course, we face large challenges if we are to implement those plans. We have to win back seats at local government where so many public services are delivered and we must win seats in the European elections in June to assure a strong voice in the European Parliament. In November, we will adopt along with sister parties from all 27 member states a manifesto for the European elections. This will build on EU successes in creation of jobs, security at work, and proper protections and rights for all. But the manifesto must also attract wavering voters, the unorganised, the insecure, those afraid of change and diversity. It must demonstrate that their concerns are our concerns.

The EU Council is dominated by the Right with sadly precious few socialists in government. This makes it vital to have a strong voice in the European Parliament to counter that right-wing view. We need to increase the number of Labour MEPs and thus the size of the socialist block in Strasbourg. We will be calling on your help again for the sake of union members, to ensure that from 2009 to 2014 we have a strong say in the EU through the European Parliament. We also have to win parliamentary and local government seats.

Another advantage of having started in a union so long ago is that a fellow researcher at the time, at the ETU, was John Speller. Now, he remains an assiduous reader of newspapers and, luckily, has just shown me one that I had missed. This summarises a poll showing the opposition's lead over the government settling at 14 per cent, down on the 20 per cent advantage it held but still substantial, but the cutting is from 1990. It was Labour in opposition with an apparent unassailable lead and in 1992 that opposition lost. Not all of you remember that history and the younger amongst you will not remember the deprivations experienced under the Conservatives with public services starved of funds, staff, and support, the dark and dismal days; the dark and dismal Tory years, in the words of your President yesterday.

In 1990, that same year, a thousand million pounds worth of repairs were needed in London schools alone. We saw schools with leaking roofs, outside loos, large class sizes, patients treated in hospitals built in the 19th century, mal-equipped, wards closed or mothballed;

65,000 single homeless in our capital city alone, and a freeze on council building. Above all, I recall that constant worry about whether our children would have a job as a cohort of school leavers faced a bleak future, one in five in Hackney and Haringey out of work, around Kings Cross the figure was one in three.

This was not just a Labour issue. Do you remember the words of the church's Faith in the City report, it described a dispiriting scene, crime, vandalism, drugs, with many living at subsistence level, lacking support or even opportunities for self-help, effectively, in their words, "separate territories outside the mainstream of our social and economic life". The report condemned Thatcher and its emphasis on individualism and not enough collective obligation; and it went on, "It is the poor who have borne the brunt, both the employed and the working poor, yet it is the poor who are seen by some as scroungers or a burden on the country. This is a cruel example of blaming the victim."

Next year will witness the centenary of the Beatrice Webb Minority Report on the Poor Laws. What we now take for granted was revolutionary in 1909. The workhouse and outdoor relief were still around with a culture of blaming the workless for their poverty, but Beatrice Webb said, no, poverty was in the system, not the individual, and it was the job of government to reform that system, to ensure work was available, and to guarantee an income and care for those who could not work. That was not a lesson heeded by the conservatives. It has been Labour which held to Beatrice Webb's beliefs in preventing and alleviating poverty and it has been Labour which set its sights on full employment. The Tories, they do not change, they promised to cut inheritance tax for the wealthiest, cut Sure Start, slice £4.5bn from our schools programme, withdraw Britain from the European Social Chapter, reverse the agreement for evening and weekend GP opening hours, scrap patients' rights, including the guarantee that cancer patients are seen by a specialist within two weeks of a GP referral.

I have been around a long time and it is not for my generation that Labour needs a continuation in office, it is for our children and our grandchildren that we have an obligation to ensure that the next decade offers as many improvements to our social and economic fabric as the last decade has wrought. Together our two wings of the movement, with unity of purpose, unity of action, this is the inheritance that we can pass on to our successors. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you very much, Dianne. Thank you for being with us today and thank you for the address. I wish now to present you with the Congress Gold Badge. Thank you also for the book, *The Men Who Made Labour*. *(Presentation of Gold Badge amid applause)*

The Equality Bill

Jonathan Baume (FDA) moved Composite Motion 6. He said: President, delegates, one of the great achievements of British society over the past 40 years has been the slow but steady progress to a fair society where every citizen can expect to be treated equally, free from discrimination. There has been a sea change in social attitudes underpinned by a framework of primary legislation and, more recently, European law. Now, we should not underestimate how far we have come. Life on Mars, and I am not referring to this week in Brighton, parodied the norms and attitudes that were so common 35 years ago but which are now largely unacceptable in 2008. Building respect and ensuring fairness will always in the end rely on changing social attitudes and the views of individuals,

winning a battle of hearts and minds, as much as upon the laws themselves.

Whilst we should welcome the enormous progress made, no one in this hall will doubt the work still to be done. Last week's report on sex and power by the Equality and Human Rights Commission illustrated the problem still facing women across senior posts within the economy. We all look back with respect and admiration at the women in Ford and elsewhere in the '60s who led the fight for equal pay but low paid women still remain at the bottom of the economic hierarchy. Nor should we underestimate the pernicious effect of the discrimination that will affect us all, whatever our background and characteristics. Age discrimination remains prevalent in every walk of life at a time when there are now more pensioners than teenagers. So, the Equality Bill must level up the laws on age discrimination, recognising and balancing the rights of younger and older people.

The FDA, and I am sure Congress as a whole, looks forward to working with the Government in preparing the proposed Equality Bill. A stakeholder group has already been established. Sarah Veale, together with colleagues from UNISON and Unite will be representing our views but in doing so I hope they will take account of what we believe are shortcomings in the current proposals. We do believe that there needs to be a more conscious balancing that not only focuses on the need to protect against discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, and age, but also recognises the importance of protecting against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion, and belief. Transgender people, in particular, still face considerable public hostility and ridicule. In building a fairer society this Congress has been in the vanguard of those seeking to protect against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion, and belief. Yet we must recognise that there will at times be tensions and to achieve our goals there is a need for a measured debate that accepts there will be different perspectives about how to move forward.

Now, I know some union members will be uncomfortable with greater provision for positive action and the media has recently highlighted, as did Motion 17, the tensions that can arise between those holding strong religious views and the question of sexual orientation. Religious belief has also come into conflict at times, for example, with the responsibility of teachers to children. There will not be simple answers to some of these cases. The FDA strongly supports lesbian and gay rights but we consciously abstained on Motion 17, not because we supported the views of Joel Edwards but because we wanted to take the opportunity as a union to have a fuller debate amongst ourselves about how best to resolve these obvious tensions, and the Equality Bill must not duck these difficult questions.

Now, we also believe that the equality duty should be extended into the private and voluntary sectors, particularly given the often blurred boundaries that now exist and are unlikely to be rolled back in the delivery of wider public services. The FDA also welcomes the amendments from colleagues to the original motion on the importance of pay audits for all employees. We want to see a more effective litigation process for representative actions and statutory provision for union equality reps, and unions must be able to play a role in the design of employer equality schemes. Unions working in partnership with employers can offer the leadership that is so critical to ensure that everyone in the workplace can fulfil their equality duties.

As legislation has accrued over 40 years, there is inevitably confusion to be resolved and opportunities for change and progress, so let us look forward to working with the Government to make the Equality Bill

a milestone, a milestone towards a fair and tolerant society underpinned by mutual respect to which we all aspire. Support Composite 6. (*Applause*)

Susan Highton (*UNISON*) seconded Composite Motion 6. She said: The proposed Equality Bill presents an opportunity for us to campaign for decent modern equality legislation that we so clearly need. UNISON has one million women members and our disabled members, like women and LGBT members, lead our fight for equality. We know that it is only when all equality strands are taken equally seriously and given equal value that results can be achieved. We believe in a single equality duty ensuring that the public sector has to promote equality for all those people who are discriminated against and suffer disadvantage. These responsibilities should also be extended to the private and voluntary sector. There is no reason why all employers should not be doing all they can to promote equality, equality from which we all would benefit.

We welcome the proposed review of equal pay law. It is urgently needed. Currently, the equal pay claims of tens of thousands of women are stuck in tribunal systems. It is normal for it to take years for a case to be decided. In the past when UNISON has won equal pay cases, money has had to be paid into women's estates for their heirs to receive because the women have not lived long enough to see their injustice righted.

It is unacceptable that the gender pay gap continues to exist and a change to the law, including allowing trade unions and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to take representative action, is essential if we are serious about closing that gap. We also know that it is impossible to right historic injustice on the cheap. We welcome the Government's intervention to allow councils to release money to fund equal pay but more than 30 years after the Equal Pay Act it is unacceptable that we are still failing to find the money to pay women fairly.

If we are serious about achieving equal pay in the future, mandatory pay audits are the only tool that has been proven to work. We welcome this use in the public sector but they must be extended to the private sector if justice for women is to be achieved. There is much proposed by the Equality Bill that is very welcome and transparency is the vital first step to right an injustice. We welcome the moves towards achieving it. Positive action in employment and use of the programme to increase equality in the private sector are all welcome measures but our challenge to the Government is this: we will make history as a great reforming government by bringing equality law to the standards of the 21st century.

UNISON will continue to campaign to make the most of the current public sector duties to seek and achieve equal pay and to fight all forms of discrimination, but we need better legislation if we are fully to succeed. Congress, please join with us to campaign to ensure that this bill is not a missed opportunity and to ensure that it is a success that we can all be proud of. Please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Jeff Broome (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) supported Composite Motion 6. He said: Issues of equality and fairness are at the very heart of our work. They are the principles upon which our entire movement was built and against which we measure our progress and secure our future. Our members have much to gain from the creation of a single equality act. However, we too are concerned that without a coordinated campaign this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make a real difference, truly to level the playing field and to close the gender, ethnic, and disability pay and employment gaps, will be missed.

USDAW organises primarily in the retail sector, the second largest employer of women in the UK. Women make up just two-thirds of the retail workforce and just under two-thirds of our membership. On the whole, our women members work part-time, crowded into a narrow range of low paying occupations with little or no access to training, and even less opportunity to progress on to managerial roles.

It will come as no surprise to anyone here that the reform of the equality pay legislation is an USDAW priority for the bill, a priority I know we share with many other affiliates. Congress, despite decades of equal pay initiatives and libraries full of research, the reality of life on the shop floor for women we represent has changed very little. Whilst we congratulate government on their genuine commitment to closing the pay gap, the light touch voluntary approach proposed in the bill is not enough to meet the challenges we face.

Research from the European Commission confirms we have one of the worst records on equal pay in the European Union. The equalities review found that at the current rate of progress we will not close the pay gap for almost another century. Our women members cannot and should not have to wait that long. We need to seize the moment and work together to place employers under a positive duty of conducting meaningful pay audits. A single equality act could and should be the most important piece of equality legislation we have seen for decades, and it is up to us to make that happen. Please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Philip Hulse (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) supported Composite Motion 6. He said: We welcome many of the proposals contained in the Equality Bill but the opportunity it presents to have a real and lasting impact will be greatly reduced as it stands at the moment. We know that discrimination still exists at unacceptable levels in the workplace, despite the years of legislation designed to protect workers. Each year the Healthcare Commission carries out a survey of NHS staff. In the last three years around 8 per cent of staff reported that they had experienced discrimination in their Trust in the last 12 months. This figure rose to 12 per cent among black and ethnic minority staff who reported experiencing discrimination on grounds of their race.

Trade unions have a wealth of experience, knowledge and expertise, in the field of equalities and diversity which we are only too happy to share with employers. It is essential, therefore, that trade unions work as partners with employers in the design of equality schemes to ensure that they do what they are meant to do. We know from experience that employers can have a range of excellent equalities policies, well written, well intentioned, but policies alone cannot change years of discrimination in equality.

Support for the principles of equality and diversity are needed from the most senior levels in any organisation if they are to be taken seriously and put into practice throughout. It is not yet clear whether the new legislation will include an obligation on employers to carry out equality impact assessments. Impact assessments are key to obtaining good equality outcomes. The Government has, however, made it clear that it will not legislate for mandatory equal pay audits. Watering down these statutory duties that currently require monitoring and auditing will be a backward step in the fight for equal pay for women.

Training and awareness-raising for staff must also be part of the equalities package. The Healthcare Commission survey also found that among NHS staff only one-third had received training on disability or race issues from their employer and even fewer had

received training on gender, age, sexual orientation, or religion. Unless we develop understanding and awareness of what discrimination is and the damaging impact it can have on colleagues and service users' lives, there will be no change.

We call, therefore, on the TUC to continue its excellent work in the whole field of equalities and diversity and to support affiliates to make a real difference to the working lives and opportunities of our members by continuing to campaign for further improvements to this bill. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

Amarjite Singh (*Communication Workers Union*) supported Composite Motion 6. He said: In support of the composite I want to focus on two key areas of concern the CWU has about the proposed Equality Bill which were the focus of recent discussions between unions and government at Warwick 2. The first concern is the need to extend the equality duties set out in the bill beyond the public sector to include the private and voluntary sector. It is simply unfair and inconsistent to say that greater clarity in discrimination law and comprehensive protection across all areas of discrimination should be confined only to the public sector organisations. If we are serious about delivering equality at work and implementing all the provisions of the bill we need to ensure that it covers all workers in all industries and sectors, public, private, and voluntary. A bill designed to deliver comprehensive protection to workers on equality issues should not be confined only to those employed in the public sector.

The second point I want to make relates to tackling the continuing scandal of gender pay inequality through the use of compulsory pay audits. Despite 30 years of equality law women still face majority pay injustice at work. Women working full-time earn on average 17.5 per cent less per hour than men. Women working part-time fare even worse, earning 36 per cent less per hour than male full-timers. Over the course of their working life women working full-time can expect to earn £330,000 less than a full-time man. Experience has shown that the voluntary approach to equal pay audits favoured by employers has failed to deliver fair pay at work. Despite an explosion of equal pay claims, study after study has shown that the majority of employers, particularly small private sector firms, will not take action unless they are compelled to do so by law.

The simple reality is that without mandatory pay audits it will take years to close the gender pay gap. The compulsory audits are central to tackling unfair pay between the sectors. They would ensure employers have a legal duty to review and implement fair pay systems without individuals having to resort to lengthy and costly legal action. Congress, only by forcing employers to analyse their pay systems can we determine a route out of unfair pay and ensure that equal pay for work of equal value becomes a reality. Congress, support the motion. *(Applause)*

Sue Bond (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 6. She said: The Equality Bill at last gives the opportunity to simplify, harmonise, and improve the Byzantine and convoluted maze of discrimination laws, but if this chance is missed we shall still be stuck in this sorry maze with a hierarchy of rights, and some of us more equal than others; but even if the resulting legislation contains everything we could want, it will still be meaningless without proper enforcement. Just look at the current public sector duties. Last year the CRE denounced a total of 15 – yes, 15 – different government departments for failing to comply with the race equality duty but 12 months later the Equality and Human Rights Commission which

replaced it has done nothing about it apart from a few cosy chats with some permanent secretaries.

Now, PCS represents nearly all the staff at the Equality Commission, dedicated professionals who have spent the past year suffering from the chaotic creation of this new under-funded body, their role and their pay still undetermined thanks to government's public sector pay policy, working for an organisation which professes a commitment to a fairer society but lacks the resources, the sanctions, or the political will to enforce even these most blatant breaches of the law. We want an equality bill which provides a clearer role for trade unions and gives the new equality commission strong powers and sanctions, and the resources to use them. What we do not want is a commission which kneels at the altar of this government's policy of light touch regulation so as not to offend their friends in business, even to the extent of very recent public hand-wringing over the perceived reluctance of employers to recruit women because of their entitlement to the very modest maternity rights which trade unions have fought for, for decades.

We have to reject this light touch approach from a government that can boast of the harshest anti-trade union laws in the western world but shrinks at introducing the strong enforcement of equal rights in the workplace. For even if we get this bill right, without enforcement and sanctions it will be like a car without petrol, it may be the most perfectly constructed and beautifully crafted vehicle in the world, but it will not be going anywhere. Please support. *(Applause)*

Diana Holland (*Unite*) supported Composition Motion 6. She said: This bill is an important landmark in the struggle for equality at work. It does not go as far as we want but it does go further than seemed likely a year ago. These improvements did not just happen, it took concerted campaigning, and I would like to thank every trade unionist who has played their part. It also did take a minister in Harriet Harman, who was prepared to listen, and to act, and we hope to work with her further as we now call for these much needed additional measures: rights for union equality reps, equal pay audits, action in the private and voluntary sectors, and better protection for groups of workers.

Working with shop stewards, union equality reps are making a real difference in the workplace, making sure disabled workers have proper access, sorting out the practicalities of flexible working, and ensuring migrant workers know their rights, but they need paid time off and they need recognition.

I grew up when it was lawful to sack a woman or not give her a job just because she was a woman and when signs could lawfully say, "No black or Irish people need apply", and as a union officer I still live with the hidden stories of lesbian and gay members when they had no legal protection. The last 10 years have seen advances on equality not matched since the 1970s and clearly while not enough, none of us can afford to take these achievements for granted. We must make sure that no one is fooled by the Conservatives dressing themselves up in the language of equality when they want to slash public spending, give billions to the rich, oppose flexible working, family leave, and even your right to a well-earned holiday.

We know what else we are up against, blanket opposition from the CBI, inertia, too many people in politics, business, and the media, who do not take equality seriously, and the horrifying reactions like those of the BNP candidate who said that rape was like force-feeding a woman chocolate cake. That is why we still have to fight against the extreme right-wing bigots in the BNP.

Congress, we must never let economic fears divide working men and women. We need a strong equality bill. Equality is the rock on which we build unity. It is at the heart of our industrial and public service agenda, and equality for future generations is the inspiration that we can all share. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Kamaljeet Jandu (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 6. He said: Sisters and brothers, the price of the food bill is rising, the cost of heating our homes is rising, the cost of keeping our family fed, clothed, and sheltered, is rising, and the scourge of our communities, unemployment, is beginning to raise its ugly head. Simply put, and to echo the message of other speakers, Britain is sinking into recession and, President, the danger is that it will be us, our members, our communities, that will face the brunt of this downturn. This is the unfettered market for you.

The question is why, why do we find ourselves in this position? We are told it is a world phenomena unleashed by globalisation. We are quoted the virtues of Adam Smith in his *The Wealth of Nations* that it is the invisible hand of the market, it is the market finding its balance in demand and supply to settle at the optimum level, but optimum level for whom? It is the invisible hand that is coming to pickpocket the money from our wallets. It is the invisible hand that is reducing the amount of food on our tables. It is the invisible hand that is threatening to take away the roof over our heads. Surely, there must be a better way to organise our economy. The marketplace is not untouchable. We can regulate it and organise it for the benefit of not just a few but for the many.

The question I am sure you are all asking here is, what has this got to do with equality, what has it got to do with the Equality Bill? I say: everything. Equality is not in isolation or exclusive. For example, when the economy is doing well women are encouraged to come out of the home and into the workplace, and migrants are encouraged to come and sell their labour cheaply, and vice versa, but the market cannot protect the poorest. The private sector that employs nearly 80 per cent of workers advocates the virtues of the marketplace, but cannot deliver equality. "No more regulation" is the mantra from the private sector but if they will not take voluntary responsibility to address workplace segregation, unequal pay, harassment, low pay, and other forms of discrimination, then I would say to the minister for equalities, regulate, legislate, and let's have a fairer workplace and a just society. I also have a message to Harriet Harman: you have our support. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

Mary Davis (*University and College Union*) supported Composite Motion 6. She said: Congress, sisters and brothers, our union overall supports this composite but we want to express a note of caution on what we can see as one of the rather misconceived formulations, that is, the concern that the composite expresses that the Government's proposals concentrate on 'the more traditional areas', for example, sex and race discrimination, over the newer so-called equality strands. We believe there is no danger here whatsoever. Basically, we fear that the Government wants to treat all the strands exactly the same and I believe that as a trade union movement we should oppose this because discrimination on the grounds of age, religion, and belief, is simply not the same as oppression faced by women or black people. We need to recognise that and if we do not we are doing an injustice to the whole concept of equality.

I am not, therefore, arguing that there is a hierarchy but we do have to understand that there are differences between the equality strands. If we do not

recognise this we end up with the lowest common denominator approach to equality, a one size fits all, a melting pot approach to equality, which I do not think really does justice to the issue. It is because we rejected this one size fits all notion that we opposed as a trade union movement the dismantling of the separate commissions, and our fears have proved to be correct and very well-founded, if we look at the lamentable record so far of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, which really has not done justice to the specificity of the oppression and the discrimination faced by the different strands.

That is why it is so vital that we have a single equality act with real teeth and we need to send a very clear and unambiguous message to the Government, and we know there are big battles by the way on this with the dinosaurs in the Cabinet and in the Government, we need strengthened equality duties, we need the extension as people have said of legislation to the private and voluntary sector, mandatory pay audits, and above all stronger powers of enforcement. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance. All existing legislation will go. Let us ensure that it is not replaced by a single act of mediocrity. The price of equality is eternal vigilance. Let's be vigilant. Let's continue campaigning. I beg you to support. *(Applause)*

* *Composite Motion 6 was CARRIED.*

Reclaim the Night

Barbara White (*Musicians' Union*) moved Motion 20, She said: The first Reclaim the Night march was held in Leeds in 1977, the Yorkshire Ripper was still terrorising the North of England and women were advised to stay in after dark. Marches occurred simultaneously from Manchester to Soho.

The Musicians' Union has 30,000 members and 7,500 of these members are women. Musicians frequently perform until the early hours of the morning. Many of our negotiated agreements satisfy the need for safe private transport to be arranged for musicians working late at night. The majority of our members are freelance workers and have to arrange their own transport when coming home from a playing engagement. Some of our women members have their own transport but for those who do not they have to rely on a lift from a colleague or hire a taxi. Women have to take extra care when assessing their needs each time they are offered an engagement. Women musicians experience the same fears that all women have in regard to their safety after dark. They are also particularly vulnerable as they are usually carrying valuable musical instruments. After 11 o'clock at night public transport services are quite infrequent and under-policed. Our Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, has admitted that she does not feel safe walking in unknown areas late at night. Our musicians are frequently working in an area that is totally unknown to them. Fear of violent attack and rape almost puts the female population under curfew. This does not just affect women's personal lives but also their working lives. Women should not find themselves disadvantaged either through refusing work which involves night travel or by travelling in fear if they accept the work. It is not only women musicians who have to weigh up their safety and security against their income, the same problem applies to many men and women, be they backstage staff, or shift workers. Often safety wins the day and the loss of a one-off job can lead to the loss of a series of jobs.

The aim of Reclaim the Night is a right to use public space without fear. Those who march remind women that they should not be targets and should not believe themselves to be targets. They march for solidarity and to empower women to examine ways not only to make their streets safer but to make them feel safer. It is

also suggested that women should attend self-defence classes. Women feel less afraid when they have skills which enable them to defend themselves. Unions have the ability to provide every working woman access to self-defence classes through the unionlearn structure or through workplace and other learning agreements in various establishments.

This year will be the fifth anniversary of the revival of Reclaim the Night in the United Kingdom. There will be a march in Central London on 22nd November. The march is for women only but men are welcome to the rally and the party which will follow the march. I hope that individual unions and the TUC will highlight this event. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Congress has been joined by Harriet Harman, Leader of the House of Commons and Minister for Equalities. I would like to welcome Harriet to our Congress on behalf of everybody here. *(Applause)*

Corinna Marlowe (*Equity*) seconded Motion 20.

She said: Equity is glad that the Musicians' Union has accepted this amendment which seeks to widen the scope of this practical motion. Equity has almost as many women members as men, but we earn much less than the men. Our union looks after performers, like actors, dancers, singers, variety, circus and cabaret artists. Recently, and not without controversy, Equity has also accepted fashion models and pole dancers as members to give them protection from exploitation. Many of our members work extremely irregular hours, often very late at night, and we do not have any spare cash for cabs.

While learning self defence may help us to travel safely, another practical form of help would be safe, affordable and available public transport so that we do not have to use our new karate skills. In London and other major cities, the cost of property has gone up so extraordinarily in my lifetime that more and more of the younger generation of performers have to live far from their workplaces so they have very long journeys home. Better transport would, of course, help everyone, including our male colleagues, to get home safely.

While 'Reclaim the Night' began as a protest against male violence, sadly, that is not the only kind nowadays. A few weeks ago, a young friend of mine, Becky, an actor/musician Equity member, was going home after watching a showing of a horror film in which she appeared when she was savagely attacked in the street by two girls and left badly injured. There were fears that her skull and her wrist were broken and she is unable to work for a considerable time. Self defence training might have lessened her injuries, if only to help her know when to stop fighting.

Of course, it is not only performers who need freedom of movement at night. Many women represented by other unions in this hall are shift workers who have to travel at night; cleaners, hospital or factory workers who may not feel safe on their way home. We all, men and women, deserve safe, affordable and available transport around the clock. We ask Congress to support the motion as amended. *(Applause)*

June Minnery (*GMB*) supported Motion 20.

She said: GMB is concerned that vulnerable workers across all areas of the leisure and entertainment industry are not being properly taken care of when their shifts or performances are over. My daughter worked in a theatre bar and at the end of the evening had either to cross a busy road or use a dimly lit underpass to the bus stand or taxi rank. It was only a few hundred yards, but she had to run a gauntlet of

drunks, drug addicts and on one occasion witness someone being stabbed. She felt very intimidated. Even when public transport was available, it was not always safe to use.

We believe that employers and agents have a duty to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment, not just whilst in the working arena, but for safe egress from the workplace and to ensure that safe, reliable transport is available to get them home.

We live in perilous times and GMB has led by example in getting casino owners to consider this aspect of job safety at the end of long, tiring and anti social shifts, particularly for our female members. Ideally, vulnerable workers should take advantage of the services provided by the GMB Professional Drivers' branch, but we realise that this is not always possible.

However, the use of safe methods of returning home should and must be considered as part of any contract, no matter how short lived. Of course, in helping the campaign 'Reclaim the Night' we must raise its profile by organising demonstrations and campaigns. It will also help if we seek to deliver some practical applications with regard to responsibilities. GMB wholeheartedly supports this motion and asks you to do so as well. Thank you. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you. The General Council supports the motion.

* *Motion 20 was CARRIED*

Presentation of lay rep awards

The President: We now come to the part of the agenda, Congress, where we recognise the immense contribution made by the activists of our movement. The awards are made in recognition of the vital work of our lay reps, who are the very bedrock of the trade union movement. Each year we choose a number of outstanding representatives to accept the awards on behalf of all their fellow representatives. In a moment we will meet this year's representatives and I will be asking Harriet to present the awards to each of them, but, first, we will see a short film which tells you something about their achievements. *(The video was shown followed by applause)*

The President: Congress, it is now time to meet our award winners. First of all, Marcin Hinz. Marcin is a shop steward with the Bakers' Union. Marcin was instrumental in organising food companies in the Midlands. He helped to organise the mainly Polish workforce at Farmhouse Potato Bakers and through his efforts Marcin has organised more than 200 new members in six branches of the union. *(Presentation of the Award amidst applause)*

The President: The second person I would like to introduce is a close friend of mine in UNISON, Clare Williams. Clare Williams is the regional convener for the UNISON Northern Region and chair of the Northern TUC Women's Committee and Race Advisory Group. Clare has been at the forefront of the campaign against the far right in the region putting herself at risk. She has promoted the international dimension of UNISON's work and Clare has been the driving force behind a number of practical activities to enable women to grow in confidence within the union and to express their own agenda for action. Well done, Clare. *(Presentation of Award amidst applause)*

The President: Our next award winner, the Safety Rep Award, is Chris Wesson. Chris Wesson is the safety rep with the CWU and works for BT. Chris has

campaigned against the dangers of asbestos and succeeded in convincing BT management of the need to assess the risk of exposure to asbestos. As a result of Chris's campaigns, several areas were closed off and BT asked for Chris's advice on the redrafting of their asbestos safety processes.

Chris also drafted his own guide on asbestos for safety reps which has been widely used within the CWU and, hopefully, will be taken up by other unions now they have heard what he has done. (*Presentation of the Award amidst applause*)

The President: Next we have the Learning Rep Award, which goes to Janet Johnson. Janet works for Jobcentre Plus and is the Union Learning Rep for PCS. She has brought learning to hundreds of members introducing skills for life courses in the office during work time and supporting learners from level 2 through to the Open University. Janet has recruited 24 new union learning reps in the last year and she now co-ordinates the work of 43 union learning reps in her own region. That is work which is absolutely tremendous and a credit to the trade union movement. (*Presentation of the Award made amidst applause*)

The President: I am now proud to announce the Congress Award for Youth, which goes to Carla Powell. Carla Powell is a newly qualified teacher and a member of ATL. Carla sits on the TUC Young Members' Forum and has been actively involved in the TUC schools programme. She is a member of the steering group of ATL Future, the union's young members structure, and Carla is now campaigning for the rights of children from the travelling community a great campaign. (*Presentation of the Award amidst applause*)

The President: I think that is one of the best parts of Congress. That completes the lay rep awards.

Address by Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP, Leader of the House of Commons and Minister for Equalities

The President: I would now like to invite Harriet Harman to address Congress. Harriet has been a Member of Parliament for Peckham in South East London from 1982 to 1997 and for Camberwell and Peckham since the 1st May 1997 General Election. Harriet has held a number of really important ministerial positions. Today, as well as being Minister for Women and Equalities, she is Leader of the House of Commons and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. Harriet will first address Congress and then she has agreed, and this is great, to take and answer questions, giving delegates a chance to put the questions to her directly. Harriet, you really are welcome. I invite you now to address conference.

Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman QC MP: It is a great honour and a real privilege for me to be here with you this morning and to take part in your debate.

We all know that the background to this conference is very important indeed and that whilst we have made big steps forward on the things that we care about, we face difficult economic times. We know that whilst these economic problems are not homegrown, they are certainly hitting home and they have hit hardest at those who can least afford it. That is why the job of the Government and the determination of the Government is to see the economy in this country through the difficult times, make the right decisions to do that and also to protect those who are hardest hit and most vulnerable to the economic difficulties.

There are some people who step forward quickly and say, "Because the economy is seeing difficult times, you will have to put issues of tackling inequality on the back burner, that it is a luxury that we cannot afford when the economy is hard pressed, that we will just have to take a raincheck on that and revisit it later".

However, we are not going to do that and I want to say why. If you are discriminated against, treated unfairly, subjected to prejudice because you are a woman or because you are black and Asian or because your face does not fit or they say you are too old, that is unacceptable at any time, but it is even more objectionable when you feel times are hard for you and you feel that your back is against the wall. So we are not going to step back in our quest for equality. Quite the opposite. Just as Gordon Brown led the economy to strengthen it with more jobs and our quest for fairness, investing more in public services and helping people better off, so Gordon Brown, as our Prime Minister, will lead the country as we take the economy through these difficult times and we step up our determination to have more fairness and social justice.

These are shared values between the trade union movement and the Labour Party. It was the trade union movement and the Labour Party that together worked to deliver the National Minimum Wage; it was the trade union movement and the Labour Party which introduced new rights for working parents and protected older people against discrimination and it was the trade union movement and the Labour Party which together have worked to set up the really powerful now Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Together we have worked to make a lot of progress and together we have worked to see that even more progress will be made. So, having already increased maternity pay and leave, we are going to see maternity leave increase to a full 12 months. Having extended rights to working mothers, we are now going to ensure that fathers can take more time off when their children are young. We are going to bring in a tough new Equality Bill and we are going to make all of our work more effective by strengthening the work of trade union equality reps in the workplace.

But we all know that inequality is not just a matter of unfairness between black and white or men and women or people with disabilities. It is also a question of the gap between rich and poor and the gap between the north and south. Although we do know we have made a lot of progress, let me just give you two examples of how inequality can be stubborn and can be persistent. It used to be the case that women could expect to live longer than men. Now a rich man can expect to live longer than a poor woman. We all expect children to be able to achieve their full potential in school, but it is the case that by the time they reach the age of six, a less able child from a wealthy family will have overtaken a more able child from a poor family. These are inequalities that we must tackle and we must root out.

That is why I am announcing to conference this morning that I am setting up the National Equality Panel which will chart where we have made progress during the past 10 years and where we need to make much more progress. We could not have anybody better to chair it than Professor John Hills. I know that he is already working with the TUC and will expect the trade unions to be playing an important part in his work. He will report to Government after 12 months and then we will be able to lay the basis for stepping even further forward on the important work to tackle inequality and to bring forward social justice.

Whilst I am talking about inequality and social justice, of course, I have to mention the Conservatives who are now posing as the new friends of equality. After attacking so viciously and persistently all the causes

that we, in the labour and trade union movement, have campaigned for and worked so hard on during the last decade, they have now whipped round and said: "Oh, we are in favour of it all; we are the new friends of equality". However, they are the false friends of equality and fairness because, although they are now siding up to trade unionists, fawning over equality campaigns and lurking around women's organisations, they are still false friends of fairness because the Tory Party which bought this country 'back to basics' now says it recognises that families come in all shapes and sizes. But look at their policies, their tax policies, the so-called tax break for married couples which would penalise couples who have separated or lone mothers. It would actually make their life harder. The Tory Party, the party that decried our concern for more childcare as the 'nanny state', now says they too want to see more nurseries, oh, but they would cut back on Sure Start. The party that decried our quest for more women Members of Parliament as political correctness gone made now say that they want to increase the number of Tory women MPs they have. By the way, we have 96 Labour women MPs and they have only 17 Tory women MPs. They say they now want to increase the number, but they would never take the positive action and the steps that we actually did to make that a reality. I always say about David Cameron that he wants women for one thing and one thing only, and that is their votes.

It is no surprise, if you look at the pattern of equality legislation, with Labour Governments in the 1960s and 1970s pioneering new legislation to tackle race discrimination, unfairness in pay for women and sex discrimination, then the Labour Government again coming in in 1997 extending our equality laws for people with disabilities, older people on grounds of sexual orientation. So Labour Governments have always championed equality. And what did the Tories do when they were in power for 18 years? Can anybody remember the equality laws they brought in? Not one. Not one during 18 years unless, of course, you count clause 28.

So the Tories have always been against tackling inequality and Labour has always been for tackling inequality and so it remains. We have made progress. We do face difficulties. We will get through those difficulties and we will make further progress. But, remember, Congress, though we have made progress, we all know there is further work to be done. That is why we need to work together to win a fourth term for a Labour Government. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*): President, I take over at this point. As Congress knows, we now have the opportunity for the question and answer session with Harriet. Perhaps those unions, I think we have indicated which we were hoping to hear, could approach the microphone.

The first issue that has been indicated that unions want to put some questions to Harriet on is the issue of equal pay. There are a number of points on this issue. I was going to ask Lorraine Parker from the GMB perhaps to put the first question, then Catherine Donaldson from Prospect and then Pam Singh from UNISON. We will take three questions on this issue before Harriet then responds.

Lorraine Parker (*GMB*): Minister, the question is about equal pay audits. Why is the Government refusing to extend equal pay audits to the private sector and why does the private sector have an exemption? Is the Government suggesting that pay inequality is only an issue for the public sector? Thank you. *(Applause)*

Catherine Donaldson (*Prospect*): Good morning, Minister. Recent court decisions, particularly *GMB v. Allen*, have seriously undermined the capacity of trade unions and employers to resolve equal pay issues through collective bargaining. These developments potentially compel trade unions to litigate rather than negotiate to avoid costly challenges. What will the Government do to ensure that workplace equality can be achieved through collective bargaining where the parties do not face being sued for their actions? *(Applause)*

Pam Singh (*UNISON*): Good morning, Minister. UNISON has for years been campaigning for equal pay for women in the public sector. However, we are aware that public sector procurement has undermined moves towards achieving equal pay for public sector workers. What is the Government going to do to stop privatisation and procurement becoming a way of undermining equal pay obligations? Thank you. *(Applause)*

Harriet Harman: We want to be absolutely sure that we have equality of pay between men and women across the public sector and the private sector. We know that although there has been progress in narrowing the pay gap, there is still a much bigger pay gap in the private sector. In the private sector the gap between the pay of men and women is double what it is in the public sector. We know that 80 per cent of people are employed in the private sector; so we are concerned to take steps to narrow the pay gap in the private sector as well as to ensure that public authorities pay women fairly.

We are going to do a number of things about that. I think that this point relates to Pam Singh's question as well about procurement. It is not OK for the private sector to be working for the public sector, effectively, providing goods and services in the public interest, but to escape their equality obligations. The public sector has a duty to promote equality and not to discriminate. When they are purchasing goods and services from the private sector, that is a public function and that must be subject to their duty in the way they go about it. Those private sector companies which are wanting to do business and there are billions of pounds worth of business that the private sector does with the public sector must conform to the same equality standards. Therefore, we are doing a great deal of work to make sure that public authorities, when they are actually purchasing, ensure equality in the private sector from whom they are purchasing.

I am very glad that the Equality and Human Rights Commission is going to carry out two legally based inquiries into the different sections of the private sector. I know that Trevor Phillips, who is the excellent chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, will be making more details of this known in the future, but the Equality and Human Rights Commission is going to be undertaking inquiries into the gender discrimination in the financial services industry, which is a massive employer of women, and yet one of the industries where there is the biggest gap between men and women.

They are also looking to carry out an inquiry, which they will be working with the unions on as well, into the construction industry, where, although it has been recruiting many more people to work in the industry, there is still a very low percentage of black and Asian people in that industry.

So we do expect equality in the private sector as well. We are going to use public procurement and tighter enforcement and more work from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. However, if we do not see enough progress in the private sector, particularly on

the question of transparency and openness - you cannot tackle discrimination if you cannot see it, and, therefore, we want people to be open about the percentage of disabled people they employ, the percentage of their workforce that is black or Asian and the pay gap between men and women if we do not see progress from employers in that respect in the private sector, we do have reserve powers under the Companies Act actually to make them do that.

Catherine, I will address your point about unions wanting actually to be backing up their members and helping them be better off and have fairness in the workplace and not be tangled up in literally thousands of legal cases. We all know that while it is right to give individuals a right to challenge the discrimination against them, questions of unequal pay are not a problem actually for that individual woman. They are a structural problem that has led to her being paid unequally.

Therefore, if there is a structural systemic problem, there needs to be a structural and systemic solution to it. That is one of the reasons why we are looking at having representative actions where you can have groups of employees getting together, rather than individuals, one by one by one, which seems to benefit hugely the 'no win no fee' lawyers, but creates chaos and unfairness everywhere else. So we are looking at representative actions.

The Civil Justice Council has just produced a report saying that they can see a lot of merit in that. I have been working with my ministerial colleagues in the Ministry of Justice to make sure that we look at that and see whether or not we can go forward with representative actions.

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*): Harriet, thanks very much. The next issue is around the role of equality reps and we have a question from Monica Taylor from Unite. (Applause)

Monica Taylor (*Unite*): Good morning, Minister. My question is on statutory rights for equality reps. You once said, and I quote: "There is still inequality in our economy and society that needs to be tackled". It can also be difficult for union reps to challenge prejudice and discrimination with confidence and to get time off on equalities. So my question to you is would you not agree that we need a statutory right for union equality reps to ensure that we are able to provide the support that is needed? (Applause)

Harriet Harman: I want to say that I have a huge amount of respect for the work that is done by trade union equality reps. I have great hopes of the role that trade union equality reps will play in the future, not just for the individuals, which I will say something about in a second, but also for the whole of the trade union movement because I know that the trade union movement is most popular when people see the trade union as their strong friend at work.

If you are at work and your relationship breaks down, life is difficult for you anyway at that time and you need to renegotiate your hours because you have different childcare responsibilities, whether you are a woman or a man, that is a difficult time for you. It is a difficult time when you need to approach management and it is difficult particularly if management is unreasonable.

That is the real point of huge importance of people at work having a trade union equality rep who has both the trust of the person at work, but the experience to negotiate with management actually to help those hours get changed. It is the same situation if you develop a disability or you have a disability but it gets

worse and you need changes at work. You are feeling at your most vulnerable and feeling most up against it. Therefore, a trade union equality rep at work who is fully *au fait* with all the legal provisions on this and knows what your rights are can actually back you up to get those rights.

I think that the work of the trade union equality reps, alongside collective bargaining, is a major new front for trade unions to go forwards on. That is why I was very pleased that the Women and Work Commission, in which the trade unions played a big part, ensured that the Government's Union Modernisation Fund invested millions of pounds in the pioneering work of shaping and formulating the work of trade union equality reps.

I was very impressed listening at a conference that I held jointly with the TUC of trade union equality reps on hearing about their work. What we need to do is build a clear picture of the work that has been done and the obstacles to that work that is being done and then strengthen the role of trade union equality reps. I have no doubt that they are important for the future because we can legislate in Government and we can be committed to things, but, at the end of the day, you know only too well that if people do not feel strong at work in their rights, then actually those rights do not count for anything. The trade union equality reps are a key plank in our delivering on our social justice and fairness agenda.

Brendan Barber: Thanks, Harriet. The next issue that two unions wanted to put questions on is the issue of childcare. We have Jeff Broome from USDAW and then Janet Cassidy from RMT.

Jeff Broome (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*): Good morning, Minister. The current economic climate is hitting hard-working low-income families particularly badly. With the increase in the prices of basics such as food, fuel and utilities, what plans does the Government have to help low income families with children in balancing the cost of work and childcare?

Janet Cassidy (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*): I actually asked you this question at the TUC Women's Conference regarding childcare for shift workers, because it does not allow for them to work, let alone work full time. What is being done, if anything, to allow shift workers the choice, or is it just too easy to say, "The grandparents will watch them" and do it for love rather than money? (Applause)

Harriet Harman: I think that childcare is one of those things where we have made huge strides forward, but we have a lot of progress still to make. In my own constituency of Camberwell and Peckham in the London Borough of Southwark, which is not a well-off area and actually the position will be the same throughout the country, there are now double the number of childcare places there were 10 years ago, so the situation has really been changed. However, I know that there are still problems, in particular for people who work shifts and especially for people who work night shifts.

For people who work shifts, there are many breakfast clubs, and we need to expand and have more of them. For example, I visited the other day the Camberwell After School Project which is also a breakfast club where many of the people who work on the shifts in nearby King's College Hospital are able to drop their kids off really very early in the morning. They are taken care of, given breakfast and then taken to school. That actually does help with shift work.

However, we need more of that and people need help with the cost of it.

I think for people who are working night shift, the question is how you actually financially support an arrangement which is best for the child, which is usually being able to be at home in his or her own bed. That, therefore, does become expensive.

I think one of the things about which I would like to pay tribute to Ken Livingstone, the former Mayor of London, is that we worked with him to set up in London the Childcare Affordability Project where we are evaluating a number of different ways of how we actually get childcare help to those who are on low incomes and need maximum flexibility. That Childcare Affordability Project will be reporting shortly and then we will act on it. People work, whether they are cleaners or factory workers, all different hours of the day and we need to make sure that they have enough income so they do not have to work all hours day and night, but also at least to make sure that when they are on their shifts they have the reassurance and security of knowing their children are well looked after.

Brendan Barber: Harriet, thanks. I think we have time for just two more questions, I am afraid, on access to work. Firstly, a question from Lesley Mercer, and I will ask Harriet to respond to that. Then a question from Mary Page from the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers on civil partnerships and public sector pensions. I am sorry to the other colleagues.

Lesley Mercer (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*): Harriet, it is really good to see you here today because I think we all know your commitment to equality going back many, many years; so it is great.

My question is about access-to-work funding and the risk that it may be withdrawn from the public sector. This ring-fenced funding is critical to the employment of disabled people in our public services. One of our delegates here today at this conference would not be able to work in our NHS without it. Can you give us any assurances for the future, please?

Harriet Harman: I can reassure you in two respects on that. In relation to the public funds that are going to be available to employers across the piece, the Government is saying that employers should provide what is reasonable to help people with disabilities in their workplace. But, beyond what it is reasonable for the employer to provide, the Government is going to provide funds which we are committed to doubling because we know that it is very important indeed to back people up with the sorts of adaptations and changes that are needed to help disabled people remain in and do the very important work they are doing.

However, there is also, particularly in the public sector, important progress we will be making in respect of the public sector duty on employers of disabled people. At the moment they have to produce a policy, but you cannot actually see what progress is being made and you cannot see how one public sector employer compares with another. We are working on an obligation of transparency so that somebody who is living in the London Borough of Southwark or working for the London Borough of Southwark can see how many disabled people are employed by the London Borough of Southwark compared, say, for example, to the London Borough of Lambeth.

We will look at those differences and make sure that we build on the experience of those who are making progress and that we ensure that those who are

lagging behind catch up. We can monitor progress year on year, because people must have the right attitudes and approach, but we have actually to see the outcome. It is no good just talking about the importance of employing people with disabilities on a fair basis; we actually have to see public authorities including them in their workforce. We have to see those percentages and monitor year by year the situation so that we can be absolutely certain we are making progress.

Brendan Barber: The final question is from Mary Page of the NASUWT.

Mary Page (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*): Good morning, Harriet. Your Government, without doubt, has done more to improve the working and living conditions for LGBT people than any other, but there are still a few loopholes that need to be closed. One of them is in the provision of survivor pension benefits.

Whilst widows of workers in the public sector receive their pension benefits backdated to 1978, the benefits for widowers and survivors of same sex couples and civil partnerships extend back only to 1988, a 10 year discrepancy. Ending this very unfair and discriminatory situation would be a relatively cheap yet very important move towards full and genuine equality. What will you be doing to end this injustice, for example, through the proposed Equalities Bill? (*Applause*)

Harriet Harman: I think I have mentioned that, after so many years, recognition of same sex partnerships is one of the things of which we are very proud and that a Labour Government was able to introduce legislation to recognise partnerships between people of the same sex. This is probably a secret but Angela Eagle, who is one of our Ministers, is marrying her long-term partner and ardent trade unionist, Maria, very shortly. (*Applause*) They are both at this Conference so we extend to them our very best wishes.

One of the most glaring injustices regarding the lack of civil partnerships was the fact that it was not recognised for pension purposes after one of the couple had died. It is very important that people in civil partnerships have the same rights to inherited pension provision. However, it is a matter of concern to people that it only dates back to when civil partnerships were introduced. I know that whilst people recognise that this is a step forward, they are dissatisfied that it is not more retrospective. However, we had to start somewhere and we felt that this was the right place.

Brendan Barber: Harriet, thank you very much and apologies to all those unions whose questions could not be taken. Harriet covers a hugely extensive and important brief in Government, as has been demonstrated by the degree of interest from colleagues this morning. I think it is pretty clear that we could not have a sturdier champion for equality in Government than Harriet. She also has to try and keep Jack on the straight and narrow as well! Harriet, many thanks indeed for the session this morning. (*Applause*)

Organising and Representation Task Group

The President: Congress, we now return to Chapter 2 of the General Council's Report, 'Organising and rights at work' and the section on organising which is on page 15. I invite Tony Woodley, Chair of the Organising and Representation Task Group, to introduce the video on organising. Welcome, Tony.

Tony Woodley (*General Council*): Thank you, President. Good morning, Congress. Colleagues, I would just like to ask you to cast your minds back to 1998 after close to 20 years of a Tory administration which was hell-bent not only on destroying the miners and their communities, but also on destroying trade unionism. Remember those famous words that we were 'the enemy within'. At that time, we saw our membership fall from over 12.5 million to barely 7 million between 1979 and 1998. Our membership reached the lowest point in half-a-century, driven by more than two decades of membership decline.

Some of our problems were really of our own making: phoney partnerships; no-strike deals; the cancer of competitive trade unionism; and destroying and fighting each other. No wonder potential members at that time asked the question, "What is the point in being in a union? They are impotent. They are too close to the gaffer or they are too close to the Government." Comrades, that perception for many was the reality.

Ten years ago, our movement stood at a crossroads. Buoyed by the victory of a Labour Government, our choice then was stark. We could either continue to wither on the vine or we could say, "Enough is enough. Let us take our destiny into our own hands and begin the long, hard process of organising to grow and to win for workers in the world of work." It was not just about recruitment because I am sure you all know that research shows that without reorganisation in the workplace and winning on terms and conditions of employment, workers soon become extremely disillusioned and drop out of the unions themselves.

Of course size matters, but it is not just about size or more finance. It is about workers being better organised, stronger and more powerful to be able to fight back and regain their confidence in the world of work. Comrades, I am very glad to say that, at that time, Congress chose to organise. We chose to put real resources into funding and educating the full-time organisers of tomorrow, the next generation of workers, our shock troops, who would teach the very hard task of organisation of issues so, as a consequence, we would see our members winning again in the workplace.

The launch of the Organising Academy in 1998 was, in my view, a catalyst for those changes. To the shame and regret of the T&G, my own union at the time, we did not participate in that although many unions in this audience certainly did. It has been a fantastic success, bringing more young members, more women and more black members into our movement as a consequence.

In a couple of minutes' time, you will be shown a short film summarising the achievements of the Organising Academy during those last ten years and there have been many great examples. However, just as important are the efforts that other unions in this hall have made to meet the organising challenge. They have been absolutely tremendous. More than half of the TUC's unions have grown during the past ten years, the majority by more than 10 per cent. However, we must not be complacent. We have much more to do with membership which in the private sector is still below 17 per cent. Even in the public sector, our membership stands below 60 per cent density. Therefore, we do need to re-double our efforts.

Unions like my own have begun to reach into those parts of the private sector that people used to consider virtual no-go zones. Low-cost aviation, contract cleaning and the food industry have seen tens of thousands of new members, hundreds more shop stewards and sector-wide combines. Workers can combine together in order to win together. I am very pleased to say that Unite employs well over 100 organisers now. I know, from the commitment in this

room, that there are many other unions which are doing equally well in their efforts.

What has the result been of our efforts and this change of direction? During the past ten years, we have stopped the rot, we have stabilised trade union membership and we have begun to get a sense of confidence back into our workplaces, a sense that unions are on their way back and are starting to win again for working people. However, it is not enough just to stabilise decline. We need to grow. We do need to do much more if we are going to be serious about organising the next generation of workers and indeed driving up the densities about which I have just been speaking.

This week the TUC is launching the Activist Academy, a new programme agreed by the Organising and Representation Task Group, which I am privileged to chair. It aims to tap into the vast potential of a new army of shop stewards and lay reps as we train well over 1,000 lay organisers during the next three years, which is really exciting.

Unions, I hope, will continue to prioritise organising and growth because the stakes could not be higher. Let us not forget those colleagues who are meeting the organising challenge today. It is not just about organisers, but about general secretaries, lay reps, national officers and all of us trying to change the culture of our movement.

As my great predecessor, the legendary Jack Jones, remarked more than 30 years ago when he gave the Dimpleby Lecture: "This is the great challenge to Labour - to build a better life..... a challenge to fashion the future of social justice and brotherhood in peace. The old and the young, the black and the white, we all have our part to play in this. Let us play our part."

Comrades, let us play our part. I hope you enjoy the DVD which is just about to be shown to you. Thank you for listening. (*Video shown*)

The President: Thank you, Congress. Organising is really central to everything that we do as individual unions. The unions here today will be able to take that video away and show it to their organisations so that they benefit from it.

Congress, I am pleased to say that we have been joined on the platform by the newly-elected President of the National Union of Students, Wes Streeter. Wes is here to observe the debate on the Young Members' Composite. Wes, you are really welcome. (*Applause*)

Young Members

Tony Kearns (*Communication Workers' Union*) moved Composite Motion 5. He said: I move Composite Motion 5 on Young members and, in particular, our relationship with children as they come into the world of work.

We pride ourselves in the CWU on being in the forefront of attracting, retaining and developing young members. We set up a national youth structure in 2001 followed by successful developments to create a youth training programme, regional branch youth structures, youth representation on our principal policy and industrial committees, and a successful Young Members Forum to embed young activists into our culture for ever. We know that we are still climbing a steep learning curve, but we are not going to be complacent, which is why we believe that this composite is so important.

A fundamental area of weakness, not just for the CWU but for all unions, is that for far too many children, the trade union movement is just not on their radar. We believe that a fundamental cause of this is that, as far as the school curriculum is concerned, we are not

known. Some time ago, we could legitimately call this 'Thatcher's children syndrome', but we now believe that it is becoming 'Thatcher's grandchildren syndrome'. We believe that we need to reverse what is an uncomfortable trend.

There are already specific entry points on the existing curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 and at 'A' level in areas of citizenship, history, economics and business studies. Particularly at 'A' level, there is scope for aspects of trade union work to be covered. However, the current regime leaves too much to chance. The TU speakers in schools are excellent, but the delivery, despite the best of intentions, has been patchy and we think that this must be a higher priority.

Bobby Kelly, who sits on our delegation, speaks in schools. He says that one of the problems he faces is grabbing the attention of young children. If it is not part of the curriculum in terms of exams, they quite understandably switch off and see it as something to which they do not have to pay that much attention.

Giving my age away, when I started in the world of work, there were 12.5 million trade unionists and now there are 6.5 million. Therefore, when you enter the world of work, you are much less likely to come across a trade unionist.

In school, life issues and protection from bullying and harassment are offered by those in the teaching profession, but children, growing up to be young people, need to know that there is someone there to look after their interests. They need to know that the issues we value and the issues we have campaigned upon are their issues too. We need to tell young schoolgirls that promoting equality on pay for women is our cause. Children from ethnic and minority backgrounds need to know that campaigning to end racial discrimination is our cause. All children need to know that the fight to end low pay and protecting young workers is our cause.

Young children need to know, when they join the world of work, that the people they can trust are not those who have exploited young workers in the past but the trade union movements. These are the only people who will stand with them as they embark upon the often daunting and frightening world of work. It is not the employers, who opposed the minimum wage and exploited young workers through long hours in the past.

We are quite specific on what we are asking people to vote for in this composite. If Congress adopts this, you will be voting for the lobbying of Government to change the curriculum, to give more priority and resources to speakers in schools in a targeted way, and to find a way, by hook or by crook, to get our activists into classrooms. It is setting a priority for a Young Members' Forum. As the General Council has to report on it at next year's Congress, it has to be an ongoing, rolling campaign.

Congress, many speakers come to this rostrum and say, "This is the most important motion on the agenda." The CWU firmly believes that this is the most important motion on the agenda this week. If we want a future for this trade union movement, we must carry this composite unanimously. More importantly, if we want a future for our children to help to protect them from all the injustices that we have fought against and to get them to stand with us and fight that fight then we must carry this composite overwhelmingly. I move. (Applause)

Nick Cusack (*Professional Footballers' Association*) seconded Composite Motion 5. He said: The falling union membership over many years should not only be a cause of concern for trade unionists but for society as a whole. The role that trade unions play in championing the interests of the many rather than the

few is essential in creating a fairer and more just society. That being the case, without the influx of substantial numbers of new young members to renew the labour movement and fight the important battles to come, not only will working people suffer but, I believe, our country will also be a great deal worse off as a result.

I believe that the union I represent, the Professional Footballers' Association, is leading the way in attracting and retaining new members and sets a very positive example for other unions to follow. Our policy of 'once a member always a member' has ensured that every single footballer and trainee footballer at every professional club in the land is a trade union member. This 100 per cent membership in our industry is something that we, at the PFA, are extremely proud of and work hard to maintain. By looking after our players long after they hang up their boots through an unrivalled range of benefits and support, we have consistently had the unanimous backing of every footballer.

Education and retraining, helping ex-players needing medical treatment and financial support for members who fall on hard times form only a small snapshot of what we provide. It serves as an excellent template for other trade unions which have difficulty in recruiting and retaining the next generation of trade unionists. Indeed, we set aside funds to pay for major surgery for elderly ex-players, such as heart by-pass operations, and it is this kind of lifelong support to each and every member, irrespective of who they are or for how long they have played which, I believe, resonates so strongly throughout our membership.

You might think that this kind of trade union philanthropy would only appeal to our lower division members, but the support and solidarity that we receive from our Premiership members, many of whom come here to play from overseas, is also universally strong. To demonstrate this, you just have to look at our union reps in some of the top clubs. We have John Terry, the England captain, at Chelsea; Gary Neville at Manchester United; Jamie Carragher at Liverpool; Kola Toure at Arsenal; and Ledley King at Spurs. All of these guys are a tremendous support to the union and give advice and encouragement to the young players at their clubs. This proactive approach embeds the union within the fabric of football and has enabled the PFA to stay strong and influential, even when trade union power has been on the decline elsewhere.

To sum-up, I am aware that many other trade unions take the issue of recruitment and retention of members very seriously. It is my belief that the way forward is through colleagues working together, as the PFA does with Unions 21, supporting TUC initiatives in this area, and making sure that young people in the workplace understand the benefits and importance of a strong, vibrant trade union movement for the good of all in society. I support the composite. (Applause)

Julian Chapman (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*), supported Composite Motion 5. He said: Congress, the 14-19 diplomas that are being implemented from this year offer a new way of engaging young people in learning. They are intended to overcome the failures of the past, to be comprehensive and inclusive, and to bring to an end the historic academic/vocational divide which has undermined equality and social justice.

Central to the 14-19 developments is the expansion of work-based academic learning opportunities for all young people, including apprenticeships. Increasingly, young people from the age of 14 will be able to participate in learning in the workplace. Congress, these changes have the potential to deliver opportunities and benefits for young people, but they

may also bring the risk of youngsters in the workplace being exploited by unscrupulous employers.

Colleagues, if the 14-19 diplomas are to succeed, it is essential that the way in which these new qualifications operate ensures that the views of young people are heard. The Government has previously given priority to listening to the views of employers in the development of the 14-19 diplomas. We should not assume that this will be beneficial to young people.

The TUC's Diploma Voice Project seeks to balance this by cultivating young people's trade union engagement and commitment. The NASUWT fully supports this TUC initiative. Diploma Voice is an opportunity to give students a way of informing the implementation of the 14-19 diploma programme. Students will elect young reps who will receive training and support in advocacy and representation. These young reps will be mentored by a trade union representative from the relevant sector of their diploma line. Diploma Voice will allow students to be consulted on a range of issues relating to the content and delivery of the diplomas.

As teachers know, students need to be encouraged to take ownership of their own learning and to be given opportunities to provide structured feedback, whether to their school, college or workplace provider. This is the key to success. Student Voice must not be allowed to operate to the detriment of those who teach young people. Where Student Voice operates within appropriate limits, it can be a positive experience for all concerned. The TUC initiative should be a model of good practice in this respect. It should continue to ensure that comments on, and judgments about, individual teachers made by young people are specifically deemed out of bounds.

There are real opportunities for all trade unions which should flow from this initiative, especially if unions are enabled to respond positively and constructively to the presence of young people in the workplace. By capturing early the energy and enthusiasm of young people when they enter the workplace, future trade union membership and organisation should benefit immensely. I agree entirely with the mover of this motion. It is the nurturing of young trade unionists which will guarantee the future of our great movement. Congress, I urge you to support the composite. *(Applause)*

Carla Banks (*Connect*) supported Composite Motion 5. She said: This is my first time at Congress. *(Applause)* It is not that I want to offend anybody at Congress at all, but I fear that young people, when they think of trade unions, see a 50-year old man asking them to strike. From their perspective, they do not expect to be in a job for more than a year and they expect to be going up the career ladder quicker than they can pay their subscription fees.

This is a common misconception with trade unions as many young people have little understanding of their employment rights or even the role of trade unions in the workplace. As we all know, there is a wealth of information available to them if they just ask for it. Students and young people can start off in low-paid, low-skilled jobs with no basic knowledge of their employment rights or the role of trade unions. This can actually leave them open to a lot of abuse. Young people can suffer exploitation and just put this down to learning life experiences in the real world. If a trade union had been in place, this may never have happened.

We need to start this protection in schools. School is the place where children actually learn the skills to make the right choices in life and they should be protected whilst trying to achieve these goals. Joining a trade union should be a natural choice and when young people move into the workplace we want this

protection to be there for them. Therefore, Congress, we urge the Government to increase opportunities to learn about trade unions in the National Curriculum.

Trade unions are not looking for any preferential treatment at all – just a presence to allow an informed debate on this issue. Whatever our views are on these changes, this presents an ideal opportunity to make a positive difference regarding the role of trade unions in young people's lives. Traditional organisational strategies are very important for us, but we need to do more to recruit and retain young members. Connect has made some steps into this area through our young members' work in the summer. We were represented at music festivals at Reading, Leeds, Tolpuddle and Glastonbury and at community events. We have actually raised our profile and money for the causes that we support. Through issue-based campaigns, e.g. combating poverty, international development, and Justice for Colombia, we demonstrated our involvement in wider issues to young members.

Support from young members is essential for the future of trade unions. Even if you are not a young member, I am sure you know of a young person that this could affect amongst your family and friends. Give young people the experience of trade unions so that they can make informed decisions and help them to be protected in the workplace. Allow our movement to continue, grow and succeed. Please support this motion.

John Walsh (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 5. He said: I am Chair of the TUC Young Members' Forum and we have a horrible problem. Youth participation within our structures is in decline and nobody knows exactly why. I am sorry to say that there is no cure; all we can do is to treat the symptoms.

We must get them young. As the composite motion states, the TUC has a range of schools activities, including trade unions in the classroom, and 'The Better Way to Work'. One of the previous speakers has also alluded to the TUC's piloting of the Diploma Voice initiative.

We must never forget apprentices, young workers too often exploited for trying to improve their prospects. John Denman announced yesterday an increase in wages from £80 to £95 a week. This is a drop in the ocean and still an unviable choice for too many.

As I said, the National Union of Students' President, Wes Streeting, has joined us on the platform and I am extremely glad he is here to witness this debate because I know that he recognises the value of co-operation between our organisations. Exactly two years ago at this very Congress, the TUC and the NUS agreed a groundbreaking protocol agreement. In that time, the TUC Organising Academy has delivered customised training to Student Union officers and the NUS has worked with affiliated unions, including Unite's Working Students' Project, to develop organising initiatives. We share a joint commitment to collective action and social justice, working towards a common purpose.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, let us let young people in. Unite's young members' network is proving that more of us than you think are desperate to get involved. We have opinions and ideas about all aspects of our movement and there is no simple way to be heard. Political education is the key. All young workers, defined as below 27, have only ever worked under a Labour Government. Distant are the childhood memories of Thatcher and the hell the Tories put my parents through when we were only babies. I am afraid to say that there is no magic answer but by working hard and with compassion there is hope. Thank you.

Rory MacQueen (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 5. He said: This is my first time as a delegate. (*Applause*) I support this motion as the actions listed within it are central to the future of our movement. We know that in many workplaces, including my own unfortunately, young workers are less likely to be union members when compared with the workforce as a whole although they need representation at work at least as much.

Young workers are not apathetic. They are just as likely as other workers to speak out on matters which concern them. They are also willing to stand up and fight for their rights at work as recent disputes have demonstrated, including the GMB members working for NCP and the large number of young NUT and UCU members who were on strike earlier this year.

However, we know that the enemies of organised labour are always finding ingenious ways to circumvent laws, to prevent strikes, to spread propaganda and to bribe workers into voting against union recognition, often with the aid of union-busting corporations. Unlike their parents and grandparents, young people are not joining unions simply because they have experienced the world of work for a while. If they were then union membership in the UK would be increasing. Indeed, many have been so effectively indoctrinated by anti-union propaganda in the media that they would no more join a trade union than admit to listening to opera!

Therefore, it is imperative that we fight back, beginning with ensuring that all young people know about the gains won by preceding generations of unionists, ensuring that they are equipped to continue that struggle, and ensuring that they know that they will be welcomed and able to play an active role in any union they join.

Congress, I applaud the work already done in this area. I wholeheartedly commend the expansion of the trade unionists in the classroom programme, as described in the motion, and I look forward to reading the report on it, to be published next year. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: I am now going to put Composite Motion 5 on Young members – a really important composite – to the vote. The General Council support. *Composite Motion 5 was CARRIED*

Climate Change

Michael Leahy (*Community*) moved Composite Motion 9. He said: Congress, the economy may be cooling down, but the planet is still warming up. Despite the difficult times that we all face economically, we must not neglect our environmental responsibilities.

We have all heard of the Kyoto Protocol, but that agreement is rapidly running out. It expires in 2012. We all know the trials and tribulations that the world went through to get an agreement and the irresponsible attitude of George Bush. The international community must not fail in the next round of negotiations, which most certainly will be the last chance to prevent climate change reaching disastrous levels. Unions must keep up the pressure to ensure that we have an agreement in 2009.

That agreement must be a just transition to a low carbon future and for that to be the case it requires trade union engagement in the negotiations. The shift to a greener economy for technological innovation will drive economic growth and create secure, new, green jobs and industries. We cannot neglect our existing industries. We must support those energy-intensive sectors which are searching for solutions to reduce

their carbon footprints. Steel, chemicals, glass and aluminium are examples of these.

Congress, a just transition must not abandon trade union members. A just transition must not repeat the mistakes of Thatcher's damaging de-industrialisation. A just transition must provide a sustainable future for all: blue collar, white collar and green collar. We all know where we want – a green and fair economy – but we cannot achieve it by a giant leap. We must take small steps and think carefully about the path that we want to choose.

This must mean that we are fully engaged in the policy-making process. One small step would be to empower our environmental reps and give them the appropriate status and facility time to green their workplaces. Another small step would be to introduce a sectoral approach to carbon emissions with appropriate benchmarks introduced to ensure that all industries make what contribution they can to saving the planet. A third small step would see the UK Government lead the call in the EU for an import adjustment system. In a global economy what use is a European emissions trading scheme if it simply leads to carbon leakage? If the trading of emissions is not set up effectively, we run the risk of losing more than our manufacturing base. However, it is not only jobs that will be lost; it will almost certainly be the chance to reduce carbon emissions.

We must not give the multinationals the opportunity to become carbon tourists, seeking out countries where carbon emissions are poorly regulated. That would not provide us with a just transition.

This composite seeks to address the weaknesses in the policies that are shaping the transition. If the union movement influences this agenda, we will have a just transition. The stakes are high and time is short. Now is the time to shape the transition. Support the composite. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Leslie Manasseh (*Connect*) seconded Composite Motion 9. He said: As trade unions, we can be justifiably proud of our record on environmental campaigning, but even though climate change has become an issue of global concern in recent years, high energy prices and rising consumption have underlined once again that we need to change. We need to change the way we do business, the way we use energy and the way we travel. We all know that these changes have to be made and that we cannot simply wait to be hit by the worst impacts of global warming, but we also know that this change must be managed and planned in order to maximise opportunities for workers and consumers and to minimise the most negative effects.

Of specific concern to us is that our members will face fundamental changes in the world of work in years to come. We need new sustainable jobs and ways of working. We need to chart a course to get there which takes our members' interests into account. Of course, we know that market forces alone will not deliver a just transition to a low carbon economy. As trade unions, we can help educate and also represent the needs and voices of workers who will be part of the coming transformation. We can ensure that there are appropriate and sufficient measures in place to cope with the shifts in employment and skills that will be needed.

The Just Transition conference was an excellent way of raising these issues. Just Transition is a principle, a process and a practice. The principle is that a healthy economy and a clean environment can, and should, co-exist. The process is that changes to employment or activities should be fair and not cost workers or communities their health, wealth or assets. The practice is that those affected by these changes should

take a leading role in creating new policies and solutions.

Workplace environmental reps can take this forward in a very practical way. They can energise members and campaign locally to make sure that such a diverse and complex issue as climate change is seen as a problem that we must all address in some way. They are best-placed to advise, work with and, when necessary, put pressure on employers to make changes in the workplace. Only by giving them statutory rights will this issue be given the prominence and importance that it deserves. A voluntary approach might work with some employers but not, I suspect, with many.

Our own experience suggests that people are keen to take on this role. A new generation of activists is developing and their enthusiasm is very refreshing. We have seen them organise some really innovative activities around the workplace. I know that they can help us move along a very difficult road, but only if they themselves have a surer footing based in law. Please support the composite. (*Applause*)

Joanna Brown (*Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists*) supported Composite Motion 9. She said: I want to speak about the need for trade union environmental reps. We can all do more to make our workplaces greener, but how can we persuade employers to focus on green issues when they are worried about the bottom line?

A recent survey of union reps found that they were frustrated by the slow pace of action by employers. The NHS, where many of my members work, has set a target for Trusts to cut their carbon emissions by 15 per cent by 2010, but four out of ten NHS managers have not even begun to develop carbon reduction plans.

However, it is not all bad news in the NHS. For example, Antrim Area Hospital installed a wind turbine in 2005 that has cut its energy bill by £90,000 a year and Cornwall Healthcare started sourcing food locally when they realised that they were taking delivery of sandwiches that were produced as far away as Oxford. They estimate that by sourcing locally, they have reduced their food miles by 67 per cent and, in the process, improved the quality of food for patients.

On the other side of the coin, here is what two podiatry reps had to say. The first said: "For five months, we have been using disposable instruments. Each pack has two outer layers and one cardboard tray. The pack contains clippers, files and scalpel handles. Sterile scissors and tube gauze applicators are packaged separately. We are currently using 1,500 sets of instruments per week across the Primary Care Trust. The instruments are disposed of as sharps and all the packaging is disposed of as normal rubbish." Well, Congress, that is an awful lot of stuff going into landfill.

The second rep said: "In our community health centres, we pay for waste disposal via a private company. The council will not remove recyclables because it is not in their contract to remove ordinary waste. At my health centre, those of us who care about the environment take home anything that we would recycle normally and put it in our own recycling bin." She goes on to say that an environmental rep would help them as it would be up to them to do these negotiations as, "We do not have time to do another job."

In a nutshell, that is why we need environmental reps with a statutory right to paid time off. As the previous speakers have said, environmental reps will be able to raise awareness in the workplace and ensure that environmental issues are included on the bargaining agenda. Statutory rights are essential here because only progressive employers will agree to environmental reps on a voluntary basis.

Over half our carbon emissions are work-related so we all need to change the way we work. Trade union environmental reps will make a real difference in the workplace and in the wider community so please support the composite.

Nick Grant (*National Union of Teachers*): Congress, the infants, children and teenagers whom we teach across England and Wales do not pay subscriptions to our organisation, but the NUT sees an absolutely equal right for us to speak out, not just on our own pay and conditions but on every facet of the future that we are asked to build for these very people. It is with great humility that any educator takes on this task of building the future for you in society. Of course, climate change could not be a more important fact in the future of all of these students.

As the inscription on the side of your £2 coin in your pocket tells you, "Standing on the shoulders of giants" is something we ought to be doing. Two people, I think, performed that role for us at the same time as the birth of the TUC. When Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species* in 1859 and when Karl Marx produced the first volume of *Das Kapital* in 1867, both of them exposed the laws of motion for both the natural and the economic worlds. But the historical changes in our natural world are now abruptly and catastrophically attributable to the unregulated developments in our economic world. So we do need to act speedily and in global unison to provide a safe future for our kids.

One of the specific things we are up against now in our schools is Building Schools for the Future, a programme which has a lovely ring to it, except that the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, only as recently as July of this year, reported that 21 of the 24 proposals assessed by its School Design Panel were either 'not yet good enough' or 'mediocre' when it comes to factors regarding sustainability.

Indeed, at the same time, the Sustainable Development Commission estimated that under existing policies and trends within the school sector carbon emissions from schools are likely to fall by less than 20 per cent by 2050. I am sure that Congress knows that the Government regards 60 per cent as the target figure and, of course, many campaigners regard it as needing to be much higher than that even still, something like 80 per cent.

So today's policies and trends are, therefore, unlikely to lead us to a low carbon economy and certainly not within the necessary timeframe.

The Government puts its faith in markets promoting the use of carbon trading and offsetting as the way for schools to reduce their emissions, but climate change, as the Stern Review famously put it, is already "the greatest and widest ranging market failure ever seen". A planned and just transition is, indeed, the only way forward. If markets need regulating then the school curriculum needs deregulating. Adopting low carbon technologies in schools creates multiple teaching and learning opportunities based on the real life examples of pupils' own schools. Pupils are enthused by this but SATS and sustainability do not fit comfortably together. So let's have much better design in our schools and let's give teachers the freedom to teach about climate change by getting rid of SATS.

Tony Kearns (*Communication Workers Union*) supported the composite.

He said: When Stern produced the report on climate change it included some interesting figures. If you add up all the dead in the First World War, add them to the dead in the Second World War and add that figure to

the dead in the wars between then and now and add some more, you get some idea of the number of people who are going to die as a result of climate change. If that is not a sobering thought on climate change, because it is our members we are talking about in terms of their citizenship of this country, then I don't know what is. As climate change impacts upon this planet and this country, the natural resources in the world will be distributed and redistributed and, as a result of which, so will the nature and type of employment around the globe and the nature and type of employment in the United Kingdom. That is going to change. That is what we said in our amendment that forms part of the composite.

In a post carbon economy or a low carbon economy which the CEC, quite rightly, wants a just transition to, who is it who is going to build energy efficient homes? Who is it who is going to build carbon neutral factories? Who is it who is going to deliver a long-term sustainable transport system? It is going to be us and our members. So climate change affects our members in two ways. It affects them as citizens because of the disastrous impact and it affects them as workers because we will be delivering the new economy. That is why we say that a transition must give real protection to workers during a prolonged period of transition because, as the mover said, it will not be one giant step. I do not believe we can leave it to goodness and big business to deliver this for us. Protection for workers in a transition period must be built in, and the only way we are going to do that is if, as it says in the amendment, "the Government develops and introduce with the trade union movement and workers a coherent national strategy to reduce workplace CO₂ emissions. The point is that the majority of CO₂ emissions in this country come from the workplace. So it is our responsibility to engage with government to make sure that situation changes.

I make a plea. Jeremy Dear spoke about the people who attended the Climate Camp this year. I attended Climate Camp this year at Kingsnorth. We set up a plenary session with the trade union Climate Camp group to engage Climate Camp activists and explain to them that the trade union movement believed that this is a trade union issue and we should be working with climate change activists to make sure that we deliver a future for all people in society. The stereo-typical view that some people in the trade union movement have of the green movement is of sandal wearing hippies eating lentils and nut loaf has to end. That type of attitude, which some people at the Climate Camp still believe this movement has, has got to end. The impacts of climate change will affect our members as citizens and affect our members as workers and we have to demand that we have a say in how that new society develops and we work with environmentalists to make sure we deliver it together. I support.

Niki Constantinou (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 9. She said

President and Congress, eleven of the twelve warmest years since records began, a climate more volatile with potentially unwelcomed economic consequences, a need to mitigate the global impact and CO₂ and stabilise between 350 – 400 parts per million. The UK has already a wide complex range of policies to address climate change and reduce emissions. We welcome the Climate Change Bill and the Committee on Climate Change. Global greenhouse gases need to be reduced to limit warming to 2 degrees Centigrade. The science has moved on and this seems possible only if developed countries, including the UK, achieve reductions of approximately 80 per cent by 2050. A 4 degree rise in crop yields in low latitudes will be reduced. A 60 degree rise would cost millions of lives. It is vital that the electricity sector is decarbonised. Energy needs to

be de-centralised and supply diversified. Investment and development in carbon capture and storage needs to be accelerated. It is vital to fully commercialise low carbon technologies and energy efficiency for all sectors. There is a need for public and private sector investments to cope with the impact of unavoidable climate change. We need to adapt. We need an adaptation framework, committed to an energy skills and training strategy, global and shared operating systems through education, full adaptation to climate change and its effects.

The role of the trade unions educating on the causes and impact of climate change can help us all move to a low carbon economy. Through investments we have the potential to challenge. We need responsible business, an awareness of collaborative initiatives and environmental, social and governance issues within investment decision-making; evolved attitudes of the capital markets; long-term planning; infrastructure design; risk reduction, observing, research, funding co-operation and a knowledge sharing by governments. Unions can play a central role in the development of skills which the Government's White Paper recognises for the transition to a low carbon economy. It is in the UK's own interest to lead, to make free transfers of clean energy technologies to developing countries, to help them develop sustainably. Just transitions principles and provisions are of paramount importance for a fair transition. The development of new future industry highlights the importance of mechanisms to expand skills provision. Skills must match the deployment of new technologies, a strategic direct link with employers and recognition of the important role of the union learning representative. It is crucial that we have environmental representatives in the workplace. We need statutory rights today with immediate input for all industries and for staff and for shared awareness; for establishing committees with employer participation; a catalyst to help adapt the country's economic, social and governance systems. We do need workers' support for environmental transition, employee engagement and training as a dynamic for management and reduction strategy. If we have shared awareness, we can have collective actions, appropriate adaptation and fair transition policies. Congress and President, please support this composite. Thank you.

Emily Kelly (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite 9. She said: Congress, climate change has progressively moved up the political agenda and, like increasing numbers of unions, PCS members are becoming active around environment issues. At a national forum we held last year, our activists, many of whom were attending a union event for the first time, agreed that our reps need facility time in order to effectively carry out their role. PCS is working with John McDonnell MP to table an amendment to the Employment Bill which seeks to amend the ACAS Code of Practice on Trade Union Duties to provide time off for training and carrying out activities such as promoting green workplace initiatives and practices, carrying out environmental audits and being consulted on workplace environmental policies.

The Climate Change Bill going through Parliament set the scene to ensure that UK emissions are work-related, so businesses and organisations have a vital role to play involving staff at all levels. Collective action in the workplace can lead to changes in policy and structures as well as individual behaviour, and is, so, more effective at cutting carbon than action taken by individual consumers. Employers have, however, been slow to implement carbon reduction and wider environmental resources. Policy statements often do not translate into practical action in the workplace, and even when measures have been put in place there

is insufficient attention to secure workplace engagement.

PCS believes that the voluntary approach set out in Warwick 2 is not sufficient. We call for statutory paid time off, similar to that which is available to health and safety reps and union learning reps, as green reps have a vital role in raising awareness on green issues.

Please support the call for legislation consistent with the state of the problem and ensure that the trade union movement has at its heart the campaign against climate change.

Helen Rose (UNISON) spoke in support of Composite Motion 9. She said: Congress, I want to share with you an anecdote which, I think, demonstrates very clearly why workplace environmental reps will be key to greening the workplace and why they should enjoy the same statutory rights as other union reps. Last year UNISON took part in a Defra stakeholder event on the carbon reduction commitment which is the Government's new carbon trading scheme for the service sector. For part of the event we heard case studies on energy conservation from some of the organisations who will be involved in the new scheme, one from Sainsbury's and one from a local authority. Both have enjoyed some successes and some failures. What struck us in the Q and A session was how their different approaches to engaging with their workforce resulted in very different results. The local authority, which consulted widely with employees, sought to make the process work from bottom up. Sainsbury's, on the other hand, had simply introduced timer switches to lighting and other equipment but they did not tell the staff anything about it, why it was being done and how important it was. The result was that when the lights went off at the end of the day the Sainsbury's managers simply overrode the timer switches and carried on as before. The impact on relative energy savings was obvious.

Of course, government, both centrally and locally, know the value-added that trade unions bring. Recent publications from Defra and the LGA have extolled the virtues of working with us, of learning the lessons from the TUC's Green Workplace Project. They have recognised that working with us will be central to meeting the challenges of climate change and making schemes, such as the carbon reduction commitment, and the new performance framework for local government work on the ground. But what they will not do is give us the tools to do this job. We all know why this is. It is because of the fear of being accused by the business lobby of giving in to unions and imposing regulation and red tape. But what this does is ignore the value-added that we can bring, the virtuous circle of workforce engagement, reduced emissions and lower energy costs. We need to take the argument to employers and the Government.

Congress, the stakes could not be higher. Please support this composite.

The President: I now put Composite Motion 9 to the vote. The General Council support.

* *Composite Motion 9 was CARRIED.*

Floodings

Matt Wrack (Fire Brigades Union) moved Motion 35.

He said: Congress, this weekend, as you will have seen, heavy rain has caused severe flooding and killed at least eight people across Britain. Storms have lashed parts of the north-east of England, Hertfordshire, Yorkshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire during the weekend. Hundreds of homes remain submerged and further downpours are predicted for later this week in

western England and Wales. The north-east, east Midlands and Wales are due to get even more downpours. September, it appears, may turn out to be a record month for rainfall.

The Association of British Insurers says that the final bill for the weekend's floodings is likely to be in the region of the low tens of millions. The average repair bill for households will be reaching something like £20,000.

In one of the worst hit places in these most recent floods, Morpeth in Northumberland, one thousand properties have been affected and four hundred residents evacuated. Just a few weeks ago Northern Ireland and Scotland were badly affected by flooding. In many of these areas the people whose lives have been disrupted by these tragedies have only just finished cleaning up from last summer's floods. You will recall the scale of the floods that we saw across north and south-west England in the summer of last year.

What the Fire Brigades' Union believes that these floods demonstrate is that the effects of climate change are here with us today and we need to address that. We do not make any claims that any individual extreme weather event can be directly attributed to climate change but climate change models do suggest that we can expect more and more extreme weather events, such as the sort of floodings that we have experienced recently and which we saw across England last summer.

In those floods of last summer hundreds, indeed, thousands of people were rescued. Seven thousand people were rescued or evacuated by fire-fighters in June and July 2007, the biggest rescue effort that we have seen in the post-war period.

However, those floods also brought tragedy. Thirteen people were killed in those floods of June and July 2007. Forty-four thousand homes were flooded and five thousand people – I believe this is a scandal – have still not been able to return to their homes. Communities are still suffering. I think that is something which this movement needs to take a lead on.

Despite the scale of that challenge a marvellous job was done by a whole range of agencies, including fire-fighters, local authority workers, Defra workers and others. In terms of the co-ordination of that, I think we can be clear that greater tragedy was avoided and greater damage was avoided. We believe that there are many issues which have not yet been addressed by the Government departments responsible. We have attempted throughout the past year to raise a whole range of issues in terms of how floods impact on the Fire and Rescue Service. Despite some progress, we still have members who do not have adequate safety equipment when attending such incidents. I attended the floods in Yorkshire and Humberside last year and I saw our firefighter members in action. You will see on our stand a report which we have produced out of that. There are a number of pictures in that report. What you see in those pictures are firefighters engaged in a whole range of activities, rescuing and moving people around. One thing that struck me about those pictures is that in many, many cases they were wearing completely inadequate equipment and completely inadequate personal protective equipment which puts them at risk, if nothing else.

We have raised the question of the statutory duty of the Fire and Rescue Service to respond to such incidents. I have to say that it seems to us that the government department responsible, CLG, is in complete disarray, because the Fire and Rescue Service attends such incidents under a discretionary power under the Fire and Rescue Services Act. That also means that there is no requirement on other fire

authorities to provide the necessary support which is required in events of such scale.

So the motion is very clear in calling for the issue of the statutory duty of the Fire and Rescue Service to be addressed. We cannot allow – again, this is the view of our members – the Fire and Rescue Service to muddle through events of that scale and nature. The hazards in dealing with floods are very different to the hazards of dealing with fire, but they are hazards none the less. We had members who were hospitalised as a result of coming into contact with contaminated water. If we go back somewhat further, we had a member killed in 1999 when attending a water rescue issue incident. So these are extremely important issues for our members.

We believe it touches, as I say, on climate change, an area of the debate around climate change which we think has not yet been addressed adequately. I believe that this movement can play a key role. That is about how we adapt. We support the debate on climate change that we have just participated in. However, the effects of climate change are already with us. The challenge for us in this movement, the challenge for society more widely, is how we adapt. This motion seeks to address that issue. We need investment and statutory duty for the Fire and Rescue Service to address the issues that are outlined in the motion. I urge you to support.

Catherine Donaldson (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 35.

She said: Congress, I am particularly speaking to the amendment. Prospect feels that there is a secondary important infrastructure to the emergency services in that of such bodies as the Environment Agency, the Met Office, Natural England and, vitally, our energy utility companies. The EFRA Select Committee identified several key areas. There is a massive shortage of flood risk engineers nationally. We need to develop a strategy to address that shortage in the profession. Failure to do this will mean that a great deal of the Pitt review may not be able to be implemented.

Ministers make a great deal about the £800m allocation for 2010 and 2012, quoted as being large and vast sums. The reality of the CSR settlement when broken down is less than impressive and, in fact, it has been identified as inadequate to cope with the traditional and new flood risks that the country faces. We need to re-examine our current statutory duties on utilities in relation to emergency planning. We need to have duties placed on utilities to ensure that critical assets are protected from flooding and that adequate business continuity plans make sure that the supply is resilient, and if there is failure we have substitution.

The electricity industry has identified more than a thousand grid and primary sites in flood zones, and the industry is working with the Environment Agency to identify those which will warrant protection. We all remember Gloucester when our colleagues in the FBU were fighting to keep the high voltage compound free from flooding.

The Environment Agency's own investigations have highlighted three policy areas in need of action. The Environment Agency needs to have a clear overview role for urban flooding and it needs to have a hand on the framework for local authorities and partners to plan. We need to ensure that key utilities and public services take responsibility for climate changes, and improving critical infrastructures, facilities and services.

All public services and private sector utilities need a duty under the Climate Change Bill to take account of climate change impacts and their providing services. The Environment Agency has suffered budget cuts and instability. Only two weeks before the 2007 floods. Defra and EA asked for cuts to be made of £20m for 2008. Although the CSR settlement did inject some

additional funds, the Select Committee considers it inadequate to deal with the challenge.

Colleagues, it is thirty times as costly as getting burgled, and this thief takes everything in its path. Sea levels have been rising by around 2 millimetres in the south-east but are predicted to accelerate markedly. Time and tide waits for no man. We need the funding and we need it now. Support the motion.

George Fraser (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 35.

He said: Colleagues, the floods of 2007 across a large part of Britain, from Hull to central Wales, are well documented. There was amazing devastation and the loss of 15 lives. As always our emergency services and local authorities responded very well to the crisis, far better than their counterparts in the USA. But it was also clear that the nation was not prepared for floods of this nature and scale. Following on from the floods, the Government asked Sir Michael Pitt to report on what needs to be done. He made some 92 recommendations. These centred on planning control, better communication between emergency services, the provision of emergency kits to household and an emergency telephone system to give advance warning of floods in their 'at risk' areas, and other relatively simple operations. He made 92 recommendations and not one involved rocket science 92 recommendations and not one implemented.

Colleagues, it gets worse. In April of this year the Environment Agency actually came up with proposals for flood defences on the River Thames. They want to sell off the lock houses and take away the jobs of 16 lock keepers. They want to sell off land on the Sudbury flood plains to property developers. That is criminal! Union members speaking out against these plans have been threatened and intimidated. It really is time for the Government to stop talking about listening and actually start listening to the people who know how flood defences really work – the River workers.

Congress, our river workers are coming here tomorrow morning to demonstrate their plight and to ask for your support in getting a meeting with Hilary Benn, and it is not a moment too soon. Last weekend there was more severe flooding. One thousand people were flooded in Morpeth and, tragically, two people lost their lives in Wales.

Once again, the emergency services responded magnificently, and we should send our thanks to them. They are our valued and professional comrades in the Fire and Rescue Service, including those who work for local authorities and agencies providing food and shelter.

The GMB would also like to compliment the TUC for raising flood issues with Defra. We do not know if flooding is a direct result of global warming but it is patently clear that we must implement the Pitt report immediately.

Please support our workers tomorrow and please support Motion 35. Thank you.

Tony Kearns (*Communication Workers Union*):

Congress, the CWU supports the FBU in their fight for the tools for the job. The CWU would like to place on record its thanks to Matt Wrack and the workers he represents as well as all workers in the emergency services. When the authorities tell everybody in a flood situation to get the hell out, it is FBU members and members of the other emergency services who are going the other way, getting the hell in, to make sure that citizens are safe.

However, there is one group, who are adversely affected more than others, and that is the elderly in our society. The elderly in society are less able to look

after themselves and move themselves about. Those with less mobility suffer greatly. When the electricity goes down and the TV goes off, one of the major channels of communication for information about what help is coming and what to do in that type of disaster situation, is cut off from them. The elderly in society are also recognised as members of a group less likely to own and use mobile communications, i.e., mobile phones. So their ability to identify themselves and their needs in a disaster are restricted.

So in terms of supporting the proposition and particularly in terms of supporting the amendments by Prospect about working with government in providing critical public services, CWU is saying that in that plan and process alternative communication strategies or communication strategies to make sure that the elderly in society are assisted as they are unable to assist themselves as much as everybody else, are taken cognisance of in moving this issue forward. We support. Thank you.

The President: I now move to the vote on Motion 35 on flooding. The General Council's policy is to support the motion.

* *Motion 35 was CARRIED.*

The President: We are going to take the deferred motion, Motion 24, next, Access to work. Prior to doing that, I would like to read out two announcements. I am please to be able to inform Congress that the Congress badges for delegates are available for collection. Will delegation leaders please collection their delegation's badges from the TUC Information stand in the ground floor reception area. The badges have been packed by delegation so, please, ensure that one person collects for the whole delegation rather than collecting individual badges.

I would also like to remind delegation leaders to complete and return the quality monitoring form which has been sent to them. Delegates should have received forms from their delegation leaders. If any delegates have not received a form, they should see their delegation leader.

Access to Work

Cliff Towson (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) moved Motion 24.

He said: Thank you. This subject is important. It is important for all of you out there, not just for disabled people. It was great hearing Harriet Harman's response to our question. It was just a little unfortunate that she did not really answer it.

Let me explain what I mean. Access to Work has been around since 1994 and it is a fantastic system for supplying assistance in both education for equipment, the supply of equipment, adaptations to equipment, premises, providing transport help and support to people or even an actual person to help them do their job. The scheme has had a few problems, no doubt, but it has gone through the time. What makes it so successful is that it is an independent source of funding, and that is really what matters. You go along as an employee and an employer. Let me say that 49 per cent of those eligible for employment in the disabled sector who are actually employed, and 80 per cent of those work for the public sector. The consultation document is titled: *Improving Specialist Disability Services*. Question 16 refers to the proposal that public sector funding for this service be removed and that the public sector fund its own. We know that this has been tried in government offices and in ministerial departments, but we do not know how successful it is. We know that the TUC unions which are involved in that scheme have been reporting that

things do not look particularly good. We are hoping that some time before the end of the year some sort of statistics and report will come out.

The problem with removing funding from those particular areas is where does the money come from? The reality is that the money comes from existing budget lines. I have done some research and, as far as I can tell, there is no one who has a public sector budget which says, "This is for reasonable adjustment for the employment of disabled people". It does not exist. So it has to come from all sorts of sources.

In the Health Service, where I work, that is going to be medical equipment and, maybe, staffing, but a disabled person is going to be employed at the expense of a service that you, as an individual, may be receiving. That may be books for your children in education. How do you feel about that? I do not feel very good as a disabled person receiving these benefits and receiving this service knowing that that is happening. I also do not feel very good about having to go cap in hand to my employer who will now have to meet the whole cost. They already have to meet a small percentage but now the whole cost of employing.

Let us take a student, a newly qualified physiotherapist, for example. There are a huge number of physiotherapists and not enough jobs. Thank you, Mr Blair. These people are going to be in competition for jobs. There may be up to 200 applications for four or five jobs. Who is going to know if a manager is discriminating, who thinks, "I don't know how much this person is going to cost"? The problem with Access to Work is that you cannot have access to work until you have a job or you are in a job and your circumstances change. So they are sitting there. This person could cost a fortune and that is a misconception. In the vast majority of cases, it is a misconception. It does not happen. However, managers do not know that. So who is going to show whether they are being discriminatory?

Pensions: consider people who become disabled in later life. They are going to be pensioned off because it is cheaper. As my own employer said, "I don't have to foot the bill then." You are going to have a post code lottery because there will also be small departments which can afford you, perhaps, if you are cheap, but they will not know, or larger departments which have more money. I ask Congress to support this motion.

Susan Highton (*UNISON*) seconded Motion 24.

She said: I do not have a great deal to add. I think the mover tried to explain in its entirety the importance of Access to Work and what it means to our disabled members.

On the actual motion, under sub-paragraph (iii) it says: "Congress urges all affiliates to publicise the disastrous consequences for the employment of disabled people should Access to Work be removed from the public sector." Let me say that this morning I was fortunate to have a meeting with our Disabled Members' Committee from UNISON with the Minister, James Purnell, who said quite clearly that that is not the intention. So, Conference, let us just watch carefully that that is what happens, and if it does not we will hold him to his words. We are working very strongly with our National Disabled Members' Committee along with the Government to make sure that Access to Work is accessed to everybody of need, to make sure that it is more controllable than what it already is and that any employer, regardless of who it is, whether it is the private sector, the voluntary sector or the public sector, cannot use it against our members. Therefore, all I can say to Congress is please watch this, please work with the Government to make sure that our disabled

members can work and get good access to work. Please support.

Phil Davies (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 24.

He said: This debate is to take place today because the Minister, Harriet Harman, did not – did not – answer the question on Access to Work. We do not want league tables. We want proper funding for our disabled people to get them into work. Comrades, you may well ask why this motion is put before you. Unfortunately, it is because the Government has again got it wrong in their approach to disabled people in the world of work.

Under the existing Access to Work scheme all employees are equal, whether they are in the private sector, in a public sector authority or in the voluntary sector. They can all apply to the Access to Work scheme for funding to make adjustments to support disabled workers to get into work. The scheme can pay to adapt buildings, to provide special equipment or to engage a support worker. The scheme can also pay towards the cost of getting to work, and they can have help in using trains or buses. If you need a communicator at job interviews, then Access to work can be used. This is a great help to disabled people and it helps them in obtaining and keeping their jobs.

However, buried in the Government's consultation paper entitled *Improving Specialist Employment Services* earlier this year is a proposal to remove assistance to public sector employers. This seems to be on the ground that it was public money provided from one part of the public sector to another. Well, there is double speak for you, if ever there was. It would mean that any adjustment needed to support the employment of disabled people in the public sector would now have to be funded from the existing budget. The GMB objected strongly to this proposal on the ground that it was not only the economics of the madhouse but it would discriminate against public sector employees by putting them in a worse position in the private sector. It would in fact lead to cuts in expenditure by diverting money from frontline services to pay for adaptations. The alternative would be to discriminate against disabled people by saying that they could not afford to make adaptations, so they could not afford to employ severely disabled people.

Comrades, our disabled members in Remploy have been betrayed by this Government, a Labour Government. The closure of 29 factories employing 2,500 severely disabled workers in March this year will never be forgiven or forgotten, especially by those disabled workers who have now been thrown on the scrapheap. Comrades, we cannot afford to let disabled people be betrayed again through changes to the Access to Work scheme. We call on the TUC to ask affiliate unions to monitor this situation and actively campaign to stop the backdoor discrimination and the undue pressure on the public sector, which has a better record of employing disabled people. I support this motion. (*Applause*)

Jane Aitchinson (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 24.

She said: Congress, my members in the Department of Work and Pensions are, rightly, proud of the excellent service they provide in our world class Access to Work scheme. Disabled workers who rely on the scheme always speak highly of it, so imagine our shock and dismay when it was announced in 2003 that DWP staff would no longer have access to that very scheme. DWP staff, in James Purnell's own department, were the guinea pigs for the withdrawal of this vital service. No proper evaluation has taken place before rolling out this detriment to the rest of the public sector. So, Congress, let us do our own evaluation. Let's think.

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Does asking the managers who you know, to take the money for fares to get to work and for specialist disabled equipment out of their running costs budget, disincentivise them from employing disabled workers, or indeed providing all the help that they need? Of course it does. All of this is happening when the public sector is asked to behave like businesses. This gives them the opportunity to behave like Scrooge with our disabled members.

Access to Work removes from employers any additional costs of employing a disabled worker, giving disabled workers an equal chance to get work and to stay in work. Not allowing public sector workers access to this provision is yet another example of second class treatment for the public sector. PCS members are proud to deliver Access to Work. Why can't the Government take pride in being a decent employer instead of taking pride in driving down our terms and conditions?

You may have read in *The Guardian* on Saturday that the Government is in discussion with ITV about spending half-a-million pounds on a TV series with Jeremy Kyle, aimed apparently at getting people off benefits and back to work. You might not have heard of Jeremy Kyle because he does television programmes when we are at work, but he has been described as the human equivalent of bear baiting. It is the kind of television, to be honest, that makes you grateful that you have got a job and you do not have to watch it.

While the services we provide in Job Centres are being so savagely cut to save money, we question where this half-a-million pound subsidy to ITV is coming from. PCS members in Job Centres have helped to drive down unemployment to the lowest figure for decades. Proper funding for Access to Work for all can help to continue this trend. Today our message to the Government is to stop wasting public money on gimmicks that do not work and properly fund the staff and the services that do work for the public instead. Defend the public sector. Support the motion.

Paul Brown (*University and College Union*):

Comrades, quite a lot has already been put forward very eloquently by other speakers before me, so I will not delay you from your fringe meetings and lunch for too much longer, but it is necessary to say that a very important meeting is taking place during this lunchtime, which is the launch of a campaign to defend Access to Work being held by the TUC's Disability Committee. You are very welcome to come along, to hear the speakers. I believe that Anne McGuire, the Minister for Disabled People, is going to be in attendance putting her position on Access to Work. I think it is important to say that this is the third year in a row that the TUC's own Disability Conference has put forward Access to Work as our motion to Congress.

Why have we done that? Is it because we like chuntering on about Access to Work all the time? Is it because it is the only important issue and we have not got time to do much else? Actually, it is because it is so important. The figures have already been put. We have heard that only 49 per cent of disabled people are in work, and 80 per cent of those are in the public sector. I was not that great at maths. I went to a special school. The point is that even I can work out that cuts would absolutely affect our disabled members.

Access to Work is not perfect. There are some issues with the bureaucracy and so on, but that is not the issue. We know that our members have retained jobs because of it. I can think of a member in Wales who would certainly have had to give us his job if he could not have had a taxi to and from the college.

Also, Access to Work, which helps and supports disabled people, helps everyone. I know a case of a science teacher who had a lift installed to his lab. He did not stop anybody else using that lift. So, therefore, other students in the school were able to use that. I know myself that if I did not have Access to Work that having a job would be off the cards. There is no way that an employer would pick up the bill for the specialist equipment and support my needs. We want an answer from Harriet Harman, which is what she refused to give this morning on this item. There has been rumour and counter rumour which is worrying disabled people, whether they are going to lose their jobs or not be able to get jobs. We need to be told once and for all what the score is. Let's monitor, campaign and support the meeting at lunchtime. Let us support the campaign which is being launched by the TUC and the lobby of Parliament, and let us say that we will not have a two-tier disabled workforce. Support the motion.

Eileen Theaker (*GMB*) spoke to paragraph 3.9.

She said: President and Congress, I want to comment on Remploy. On behalf of the Remploy shop stewards and workers, I would like to thank the TUC for the support they gave to the Remploy campaign throughout last year. (*Applause*)

Secondly, I would like to pay tribute to those Remploy stewards who are here with us today and any who are not. Although the campaign failed to keep all the factories open that we were promised by a Labour minister, the campaign did at least save 15 factories and did secure more work for those remaining factories. The chief executive has left and the odd Government minister disappeared as well during the campaign. Congress, the fight has not ended. The campaign goes on and will not end until all those disabled workers who have been condemned to second-rate jobs or to life on the dole are gainfully employed again. Please remember, Congress, to continue to support the disabled colleagues in Remploy and throughout the country. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Gareth Davies (*Community*) spoke in support of Motion 24.

He said: Congress, the exclusion of the public sector from the scheme is crass. I will not dwell on it because you have heard it all already. I do ask that when we come to monitoring the process in future we take account of the awarding of contracts because it is my understanding that the DWP intends to award the contracts to one contractor per region, and this contractor will – not 'might' – not have the necessary expertise to cover all areas of disability and will therefore have to sub-contract.

We have particular problems as blind people because our concerns are, largely, software for computers because, obviously, many of our people may be working in offices. I use Window Eyes software, which is a screen reading technology. It may not be compatible in software in use by the employer, whoever the employer may be. Therefore, it needs some expertise to deal with it. I am sorry, but if the contract is awarded to Fred Bloggs or whoever it is, I fear that they may not have that sort of expertise and we need to make sure that the people to whom these contracts are awarded or sub-contracted do have it. Please support this motion.

The President: I now put Motion 24 to the vote. The General Council's policy is to support the motion.

* *Motion 24 was CARRIED.*

(*Congress adjourned at 12.30 p.m.*)

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

(*Congress re-assembled at 2.15 p.m.*)

The President: I call Congress to order. On behalf of Congress, I would like to thank once again the Mountbatten Quartet, who have been playing for us this afternoon. Again, they were tremendous. (*Applause*)

General Purposes Committee Report

Annette Mansell-Green (*General Purposes Committee*): Good afternoon, Congress. I am still here; the Hadron Converter has not caused a black hole, so Congress is still going on! I would just like to report the withdrawal of Motion 46 on Transport, in the name of the United Road Transport Union. The amendment, therefore, also falls.

I will of course make any further reports on progress of business and any further GPC decisions as and when necessary. Thank you, Congress.

Address By Tarsicio Mora Godoy, President of CUT Colombia

The President: Congress, I now welcome to the rostrum Tarsicio Mora Godoy. Tarsicio is President of the CUT in Colombia, prior to his election in June he was the legal director and ombudsman of the CUT and a national executive committee member. Before joining the CUT Tarsicio led the largest trade union in Colombia, FECODE, which represents teachers. In elections earlier this year he was the candidate of the Polo Democratic Opposition political party for the governorship of Cundinamarca region.

While Tarsicio is speaking the translation of his speech to Congress will be shown simultaneously on the screen. Tarsicio is promoting trade unionism in one of the most dangerous countries in the world and I would just like to say at the very start that you can count on the support of the British TUC in everything that you are doing. We are really pleased that you could join us today and now invite you to address our Congress. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Tarsicio Mora Godoy: On behalf of the Colombian workers grouped in the Unitary Workers Central of Colombia – CUT – I bring you a fraternal greeting and our thanks for the consideration that you have always had for us Colombians.

The CUT is a democratic organisation with 450,000 members in our affiliated unions, of whom 60 per cent are women – although unfortunately in the last elections only one woman was elected to the Executive Committee.

At this time, the country is in the midst of a political crisis. Seventy members of Congress, as well as ministers and army generals, are under investigation for links to paramilitaries. Fortunately in Colombia there are trade unions, human rights NGOs and social research institutions that, together with the social movement, defend the rule of law and seek to limit the excesses of authoritarianism.

Little by little, citizens' rights are being curtailed, the opposition is demonised and the economy cannot sustain the increasing military expenditure. The Executive seeks to weaken the other branches of power – the judiciary and the legislature. Government policies have ignored social issues.

We must condemn the fact that despite a national constitution, ILO Conventions and laws – social, political and cultural rights are systematically violated, especially by the government itself.

In Colombia we do not have labour laws that provide even minimal protection to the workers. The right to

freedom of association does not exist. In the last five years, 253 new unions have been refused registration; collective bargaining that seeks to improve working conditions is, in practice, illegal for some and almost impossible to exercise for others; and the Government has intentionally ignored ILO recommendations.

In 2007 in comparison to 2005, the number of collective bargaining agreements fell whilst the number of collective pacts – in English you might call them ‘workplace agreements’ – generally imposed by employers, grew substantially. In the 1996-1997 period, 460,000 people benefited from collective bargaining, whilst in 2006-2007 only 175,000 benefited. That is proof of a significant reduction in collective bargaining. Today 62 per cent of those who benefited from collective bargaining a decade ago are without protection.

In Colombia a political environment hostile to the exercise of trade union freedoms and social dialogue persists. Evidence of that is that the Government has introduced employment bills that ignore the proposals made by the union centres, which were aimed at fulfilling the recommendations made by the ILO.

Anti-trade union violence has increased. So far this year 41 trade unionists have been assassinated, four forcibly disappeared, four displaced and 126 threatened.

These figures demonstrate the human rights crisis facing the union movement. Violence is not random and indiscriminate, as the Government tries to claim in an effort to hide the real dimensions of the problem. The majority of human rights violations against trade unionists are linked to industrial disputes. Furthermore, in the majority of cases, armed actors intervene in labour conflicts in order to support and impose the employment policies of the State.

What we are seeing is systematic, permanent and selective violence, which can clearly be considered as political genocide against the trade union movement.

At the moment social organisations from the south of the country are marching – against hunger and poverty – to Bogota. Recently the lorry drivers went on strike for 16 days; the workers at the Drummond Coal Company were also on strike. Students, peasants and indigenous people are equally unhappy with the economic and social situation in the country. And, as I speak, the workers of the judiciary, members of the CUT-affiliated ‘Asonal Judicial’ trade union, are on indefinite national strike.

We want to find formulas that will allow us to escape from this desperate situation. We don’t want more war. This is why we ask you to support the campaign to persuade the British Government to halt the military aid that they are providing to the Colombian Army, and instead replace it with humanitarian and social development aid. We want foreign aid to be for peace and not for war.

I thank the TUC, its affiliated unions, and of course, the ‘Justice for Colombia’ campaign, for your solidarity.

Long live proletarian internationalism! Long live workers’ unity! And long live the TUC – so that together we may build the society and the world that we want! Thank you. *(Applause/standing ovation)*

The President: Congress, a tremendous start to our international debate this afternoon.

Human Rights

Natasha Gerson (*Equity*) moved Composite Motion 18. She said: We would like to thank Accord for letting us move. With all rights and freedoms come responsibilities. If we speak out or act to defend or pursue the rights enshrined in the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights we must accept that our actions may result in good and bad reactions and consequences. We cannot expect to proceed with our words and actions if we do not realise there may be a response, however unwelcome, from others, but we do not expect and will not tolerate that response if it involves withdrawal of our freedom, persecution, violence, and other threats to our liberty and quality of life, such as the basic right to decent working conditions and wages, and the right to join a trade union.

Sixty years on from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights such deplorable and unacceptable oppression still exists, nationally and internationally, involving our civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. We as trade unionists are at the forefront of the defence of these rights, together with other organisations like Amnesty International, International PEN, Liberty, and Equity’s own International Committee for Artists’ Freedom.

For Equity and for our sister unions our struggle involves the persecution of artists worldwide at the hands of brutal authoritarian regimes. I will give you some examples from the past year alone.

In Eritrea Equity was part of a campaign, along with Amnesty International, to help Helen Berhane, a well-known gospel singer who was held in detention and persecuted by her government for refusing to give up her music and her faith.

In Baghdad Equity provided financial assistance to the Independent Film and Television College. Despite the fact that due to concerns over security and the welfare of students, the work of the college had to be transferred to Syria. Those students have successfully completed their course and produce some powerful films documenting life in their troubled country. Equity will be screening those films later this year: all trade unionists welcome.

In Burma, after the violent suppression of anti-government protests in 2007, several performers were arrested and detained for speaking out or poking fun at the regime. These included the comedian and poet, Zagana, and Papa Lee, another popular satirical artist. Following international pressure both were released but Zagana was arrested again in the recent severe crackdown, others remain prisoners under this brutal regime.

In China, Equity worked to raise the case of the blacklisted actress, Tang Wei, here in the UK parliament. There are many, many other cases and all in one short year.

Congress, we cannot tolerate this. On behalf of the suppressed voices of the workers I have mentioned and all the others in similar positions, nationally and internationally, I urge you to support this composite. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Julian Bickerstaff (*Accord*) seconded Composite Motion 18. He said: This motion is a celebration of the 60 anniversary of the first Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I have managed to obtain this from Amnesty International that shows all the 30 declarations. I am not going to go through all 30 declarations this afternoon, the ones that I consider most applicable are Article 19 which deals with the rights and freedoms of speech and yet if you look in the magazines that are on the Amnesty stall you see that they have identified 77 countries that do not adhere to those principles. Furthermore, I would like to talk about Article 23, a copy of which I have about my person. I am a first-timer, Congress. *(Applause)* I have Article 23 on myself (*displayed on T-shirt*). It talks about your right to form and belong to trade unions yet as we have heard and know, tragically, in Colombia 39 people were killed just for being trade unionists.

This is deplorable. We defend internationally with Amnesty. Please, Congress, support this motion. *(Applause)*

Terry Cook (*FDA*) supported Composite Motion 18. He said: I am pleased to have the chance to support Composite 18 and, in particular, speaking to the third paragraph where we want to highlight the very important role that trade unions play in enabling people to express their human rights. It is clearly right that here of all place we should be aware of the huge part that trade unions have played in the achievement of human rights legislation. At home and abroad trade unionists have led, and as we have just heard still are leading, the defence of human rights and being able to join a union is in itself an essential human right.

I want to touch on two other less obvious ways in which there is a very close connection between trade unionism and human rights. First, the struggle for free trade unions goes hand-in-hand with building functioning state institutions. In the FDA, as a public sector union, we see fellow public servants in the developing countries leading the way in work organisation and the existence of independent and democratic structures within unions leads directly to pressure from citizens for similar responsiveness and accountability from their governments and provides a model for that.

I am a tax inspector and I am pleased that we have heard a lot about tax justice this week. A fair and stable tax system is a prerequisite for viable government and is the means of generating the income to fund the public spending that builds successful states. Membership of a union puts my professional counterparts abroad in a position to stand up to any influences that seek to manipulate and corrupt the processes of government. Trade unions are at the heart of civil society and that is necessary to guarantee human rights.

Second, in themselves unions provide the means for people to access the basic human right of self-development. Those of us who were at the Unions 21 fringe meeting heard eloquent accounts by young people of how it was only coming into contact with the trades union movement that enabled them to recognise the talent they have and gave them opportunities to put it into practice. How many people have been written off by the system because of preconceptions about race, or class, or gender, or disability, and then being given their life chances by participation in a union, not necessarily a second go at formal education but given confidence to discover skills of representation, of organisation, of negotiation, and leadership; being able to make the most of yourself is fundamental to human rights.

Congress, we have read and we have heard in the media this week a lot of cheap shots about the trade union dinosaurs not being extinct. Let's take this opportunity to recognise and celebrate the enormous positive contribution that unions make to human rights by strengthening democracy, governance, and citizenship, and by giving people a means of fulfilling their potential. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Donnacha Delong (*National Union of Journalists*) supported Composite Motion 18. He said: Firstly, Congress, I would like to point out that I work for Amnesty International so I am not going to make any comments on that part of the resolutions but what I would like to talk further about is the fact that trade union rights are human rights. Often we forget in our daily negotiations and battles with the employers and with the government that these rights, the right to join and to form trade unions was guaranteed 60 years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Human

rights are supposed to be universal and they are supposed to be guaranteed. Every article of the UDHR starts with the word "everyone", yet Article 23 is probably one of the most violated rights in the world. All actions to stop people organising in free trade unions violate this right, whether army-backed, death squads in Colombia, Mugabe's thugs in Zimbabwe, or the News International Staff Association. These are all abuses of our human rights as trade unionists. Every union-busting boss and every union-busting law violates our rights. As the world marks 60 years of these rights being guaranteed in the UDHR the trades union Movement has the opportunity to remind everyone who seeks to remove these rights that we are still here, that we are not going away, and we demand our human rights. *(Applause)*

The President: I will now take the vote on Composite Motion 18. The General Council Policy is to support.

* *Composite Motion 18 was CARRIED.*

Global organising, bargaining and international trade unionism

Peter Cox (*Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union*) speaking to paragraph 5.2 said: The second paragraph states: "The TUC continued to play a major role in the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) as set out in a resolution from the 2007 congress on workers' rights." I take it that was our resolution calling for a universal declaration of workers' rights to include accountancy reform and tax justice. It was moved by us and seconded by our friends from the Bakers' Union.

I would just like to say, President and Congress, that BECTU is very keen to participate in the midwifery of this declaration. There is already an initial draft for discussion which can be presented at the appropriate time and it looks like the appropriate time may be the seminar next month, on October 7th. We have already been in touch with your European Union and International Relations Department, who very kindly invited us to participate in that seminar, and we are happy to accept.

I will not say much more, President, except to say and just to comment, if I may, while I am here that the urgent need for such a declaration of workers' rights is clear from many of the passionate speeches that have been made from this rostrum over the last few days. However, there is one area that delegates have not covered, a big elephant in the room, that is accountancy, that is, it cannot be right for large or small companies to decimate public services, as we have heard, move production around the world to the ruin of communities and workers' lives, and cause death and destruction to the environment, wild life, and indeed human life, and yet still have a healthy balance sheet. I think war must be declared on the healthy balance sheet, the bogus healthy balance sheet, and in that context we look forward to developing these sorts of ideas at the seminar. Thanks very much for the invitation. See you next month. *(Applause)*

The President: We will take those comments on board.

Colombia

Gerry Doherty (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) moved Composite Motion 19. He said: I am proud and privileged to move Composite 19. Colleagues, 40 years ago and a handful of days a black American stood in front of an audience, not hugely dissimilar to this gathering, and delivered an iconic speech that became

known forever as the, 'I have a dream', speech. I too have a dream. My dream was bred and crystallised by a visit that I made to Colombia last year as part of a JfC delegation and, as others have said who have been on those JfC delegations, it truly was a life-changing experience. I saw society riven by division where the poor of a shanty town known as Aqua Blanca in the south of the country survived – yes, survived, did not live - on less than a dollar a day, where 90 per cent of the kids had no education because they could not afford it, and where they were constantly harassed and intimidated, and murdered, by the politically-driven police forces of a right-wing Uribe government that allow human rights abuses with barefaced impunity.

My dream was to return some day to a new Colombia, one where because of the pressure that was exerted I could hold my head up and say that we did our bit. I still have that dream but the reality is that for the vast majority of Colombians they live not in a dream but in a nightmare. The fact is that now, as in the recent past, Colombia is the most dangerous place in the world to be if you are a trade unionist. Hardly surprising, therefore, that less than 10 per cent of the workforce is unionised. Would you join a union if one of the side benefits was a late-night visit that resulted in you becoming one of the thousands that disappeared, or even worse a bullet in the back of the head?

I am a trade union general secretary and I sometimes think that I get a hard time of it, usually from my own members rather than employers, but when I saw with my own eyes the world in which trade union leaders live in Colombia I suddenly realised the idyllic world that I live in. Trade union leaders in Colombia live under constant threat. They need and they have teams of bodyguards protecting them and their families, bodyguards and security-protected offices, and constant fear 24 hours a day. That is the reality of life for trade unionists. I salute their fortitude. I salute their bravery. I salute their resolve. Tarsicio, please take back our best wishes to your colleagues in Colombia. *(Applause)*

You know, Congress, despite the bodyguards, despite the security measures, and despite the Uribe government's mealy-mouthed concern, trade unionists still suffer from government-inspired complicity in facing harassment and death as the composite motion makes clear, an 89 per cent increase this year alone. I think that tells its own story. Then think of Carmen, a trade union activist thrown into the hellhole of the El Buen Pastor political prison wing in the middle of Bogota simply for organising workers in the health service: no charges, no legal process, held for over two years without any due process of law. Congress, it was with some relief and no little joy that I heard in the week that Ingrid Betancourt was rescued from the Colombian jungle by the Uribe military forces that Carmen, too, was set free with the help and the assistance of JfC and Thompsons solicitors. But I say this to Snr. Uribe, if you can afford to expend the effort and the resources to rescue Ingrid Betancourt from the fat guerillas, why won't you exert the same effort to release the dozens, if not thousands, of trade unionists languishing and rotting in your own gaols? *(Applause)* I say this quite clearly to Gordon Brown, my Prime Minister – yes, I am a member of the Labour Party; it has been hard to stick with them over the years, we have had hard times – don't tell us that you are doing good by giving military aid to murderers. Stop it and stop it now. *(Applause)*

When we were there we met many people and time does not allow me to relate everything that was said to us but they did say two things clearly: "Do two things for us, Gerry. You be our voice to the rest of the world, tell the world what is going on in Colombia,

exert pressure, and get them to stop and, most of all, stop giving succour and aid to these people that kill our loved ones." *(Applause)*

Steve Davison (*Unite*) seconded Composite Motion 19. He said: It is a great pleasure to second this composite. I am very humbled to be able to contribute in this debate, and sometimes think, what do I really have to say after the introduction to this issue from the General Secretary of the CUT. Earlier this year, along with a colleague, Unite Assistant General Secretary Gail Cartmail, who is a member of the General Council, we were asked to participate in a visit with our global union partner, the United Steelworkers, as part of the AFLCIO delegation, to meet Colombian President Uribe, the Justice Minister, and obviously the trade unions, social justice workers, the ILO and the victims of the terror in the process.

I just want to repeat the point that we had the dubious privilege, but it was a privilege, to meet Carmen in Bogota's women's prison and I can say very clearly, colleagues, I have no intention of ever voluntarily going back into one of those places. The courage of the prisoners is remarkable and yet as we found out, no sooner was Carmen released along with her sister than her brother was murdered. Such is life in that terror regime of Colombia.

We learnt in that process a number of things. We learnt, for example, that Uribe is not some crazy that he has not gone off his head, that he is not sniffing too much of the national product, the man is a political agent for US imperialism in Colombia where that regime is what neo-liberalism is if it is taken to the nth degree, in other words, it is pure in that form and what is neo-liberalism other than the elimination of the workers' organisations, be they trade union or be they political, in order to prevent any hindrance to the free movement of capital and the pursuit of profits. That is why Colombia is the odd one out at the moment in Latin America, unlike the revolutionary struggles taking place in Venezuela, taking place in Bolivia, and in Ecuador, the interference of our government, along with the US government, is deliberately there to act as a warning to the progressive regimes of, "This is what your future is if you don't carry out the social transformation."

So, colleagues, we take great pleasure in supporting the colleagues from the CUT, but we need joined up thinking on this. You cannot support Venezuela, you cannot support Bolivia, without doing everything possible to assist the struggles of the workers of Colombia. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Julia Neal (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported Composite Motion 19. She said: President, members of Congress, the mandate of the ILO office in Bogota calls for the promotion of decent work, the defence of fundamental rights of workers, their leaders and unions, and specifically defends their physical integrity, freedom of association and speech, and rights to collective bargaining.

Congress, it is nearly two years since my visit to Colombia with JfC but the memories are still vivid. The appalling testimonies referring to murder, torture, and imprisonment, will haunt me for ever yet despite all our protests and actions the human rights atrocities continue. Notifications to the Committee of International Labour Standards cite acts of violence against trade unionists and their leaders, including killings, abductions, and disappearances. They also refer to the serious impunity surrounding these acts and a setting up of so-called associated work cooperatives so that workers are unable to form and join unions. The arbitrary refusal to register new trade union organisations and the prohibition of strikes are

also major problems; indeed, the ITUC informs us that many of the acts of violence against trade union leaders and their members are associated with industrial disputes. It is also clear that paramilitary groups view the trades union movement as sympathetic to guerrillas and the extreme left in order to justify their murderous acts against them. The government claims to have increased protection of trade unionists and to have provided escorts, armoured cars, and bullet-proof vests, but the deaths continue. So far there have been 41 this year. The total is even higher than the total for last year, and this is truly shocking.

On top of this, despite economic growth in Colombia, social inequality has continued to grow: 65 per cent of the country lives below the poverty line, 27 per cent of people have no fixed abode, 3 million children are not at school, and most employment is precarious, unprotected, and collective bargaining is at an all time low. In this context, the Colombian government's disregard for its ILO obligations, including the 2006 tripartite accord, is a disgrace, Congress, a truly free and independent trades union movement will not develop in Colombia unless there is respect for fundamental human rights. Only when the government fully ensures the life and security of trade union leaders will they be able to exercise their full rights under the tripartite agreement. The perpetrators of the killing of trade unionists must not go unpunished. At present, only a minute percentage of cases reach the trial or sentencing stage. There is no proper justice.

Congress, we must continue to support the trades union movement's call for the development of social justice and collective bargaining in Colombia. Lives depend on it. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

Kenny Bell (*UNISON*) supported Composite Motion 19. He said: I am proud to be able to commit UNISON to supporting this motion. We have had graphic explanation of why Colombia should be one of the top issues on our international agenda and our work programme. Quite often, though, at regional and branch level we do wonder what we can do other than give money or support motions and attempt to do a bit of lobbying, but I think our experience in the Northern Region under the umbrella of the Northern Region TUC is an indication that we can actually do a lot more at branch level and involve our members.

Under the auspices of the Northern Region TUC we have established the Northern Justice for Colombia which is building direct region to region links in the southwest of Colombia with the Cauca Valley CUT, the TUC equivalent, with individual trade unions, social movements, and NGOs, seeking to build and support long-term sustainable projects. We are providing financial support for campaigns against privatisation of street cleansing and refuse collection in the city of Cali that is currently ongoing. At the Justice for Colombia fringe meeting Brendan Barber made reference to a campaign in the early part of this century to support workers campaigning in Cali against the privatisation of the utilities there. They are currently waging another campaign against privatisation. All of these people have had threats from paramilitaries because of this activity.

We are working with the regional CUT to develop a number of projects, improving their ability to communicate with members by producing and helping with support for producing newsletters, helping with development of a website, helping to provide community kitchens in barrios to feed families and children; some will be in Aqua Blanca, the barrio that the mover of the motion has mentioned he visited in Cali. These are badly needed when an estimated 1,000

children under 5 years of age die each year due to lack of nutrition.

We are supporting the organisation of families from a small town in the region called Trujillo, a small town where more than 300 people have been murdered by paramilitaries, working with the victims' families to support them in their campaign for those responsible to be held to account. We are about to ship out 25 computers for use by unions and community organisations and, as we have heard, the defence of human rights is at the heart of this struggle. We are working with lawyers, especially those who work with trade unions, to support NGOs to build their human rights capacity, supporting activists to study law, trying to raise funds for them to employ more human rights lawyers. We are supporting union to union, branch to branch links between health branches, supporting and bringing together university workers' representatives.

Small amounts of funding we now know can make a real difference to these organisations but, as we have heard, our support is not just about financial support, it provides a degree of protection for activists in Colombia, and in fact sometimes it can help save lives. We have sent delegations to the region and we have brought people across. What is important is the NTUC has been able to bring the realities of life in Colombia to hundreds of our members and to engage branches in a way that previously they were not able to be engaged in supporting and developing solidarity work. We urge all regions and branches to consider, if you are not already doing this, how we can get more involved at this level to support our brothers and sisters in Colombia. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Sally Hunt (*General Council*): Thank you, President. Congress, a number of affiliated unions, especially the NUJ, have raised concerns about the beginning of formal legal proceedings next week against Dr Carlos Lozano, editor of the Colombia newspaper, *Voz*. Investigations began in May against him and other colleagues from the opposition who were accused of having links to the FARC, including former trade union leaders, S. Gloria Ramirez, and Congressman Wilson Borja. We have been in close contact with the CUT since then. The investigations are part of a pattern of criminalising social protest and a further attempt to demonise the opposition. The TUC and the British Government have protested to the Uribe government on numerous occasions on that and we will continue to insist that our government presses Uribe to stop attacking opposition figures and trades union leaders because those attacks make them targets for the paramilitaries and stifle democratic debate.

The CUT has expressed the view that the investigations will prove the innocence of those accused. This is the important paragraph. Justice for Colombia will be seeking to raise funds for the defence and to send a British trade unionist to Colombia to observe the hearings, and the General Council will support those efforts. *(Applause)* General Council statements are always carefully agreed, colleagues, but I have been told on this occasion because of that last paragraph and in the spirit of that, one can purchase trade union T-shirts from the Justice for Colombia stand and start those fundraising efforts, and it will be in the spirit of the General Council statement. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

* *Composite Motion 19 was CARRIED.*

Miami Five

Len McCluskey (*Unite*) moved Motion 76. He said: Brothers and sisters, this is a motion that speaks to the very heart of what we as a movement are for. It is about international solidarity with trade unionists and about human rights. It is about the extreme hostility

of right-wing groups within the USA towards Cuba, and it is about the fight against terrorism, the real fight against terrorism, the sort of terrorism which has seen 3,500 Cubans killed at the hands of ultra right-wing groups that have attacked Cuba over the past 50 years.

Congress, the Miami Five are Cubans and trade unionists who are convicted for trying to defend their country by gathering information on Cuban exile terrorists operating out of Miami. They were not guilty of any act of violence and their convictions have been condemned by the United Nations. The powerful Cuban exiles in Miami ensured an unfair trial, and even the US government attorney on the case has acknowledged that people who are sympathetic to Cuba cannot get a fair trial in Miami and the sentences they received were vindictive and cruel. All this is scandal enough but in prison in the States over the past 10 years their human rights have been further violated. They have been denied visits from their families, visas refused for mothers, wives, and children. This is a clear breach of their rights under international law and has been condemned by Amnesty International.

We call them the Miami Five, or the Cuban Five, but colleagues, I want you to remember them by their names: Fernando Gonzalez, Ramon Labanino, Antonia Guerrero, Rene Gonzalez, and Gerardo Hernandez, for these are individuals like you and I with families and loved ones. *(Applause)*

Congress, I have had the privilege of meeting the families of the five in Cuba. You know, colleagues, the rhetoric in speeches at conference is important but there is nothing that can compare to the look of sadness and injustice in the eyes of those who are aggrieved and the hope that they place in the hands of the international community. People like Adriana, a decent young Cuban woman, who has not seen her husband for 10 years and who was interviewed by Belgian TV who asked her when were her most difficult times. She said, "Every day when I go into the dining room and there are empty chairs around the table where my husband and the children I have longed for should be." Or Olga, who has not seen her husband for eight years and their 10-year old daughter, Ivette, who has seen her father twice and longs for him to cradle her in his arms as she falls asleep.

Congress, our movement must now break through the wall of silence that has surrounded this scandal. Thanks to our contacts with US unions we have now managed to get the Miami Five on the agenda in the States but we need to ensure that our Labour government puts pressure on the US administration to stop this persecution and to see justice is done. We want you to get involved, donate money from your branches to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, write to the Miami Five themselves and let this Congress's voice be heard, not just in Washington but in the dungeons of the United States by the victims of this abuse of justice: We are with you. You are not alone.

These five men could be forgiven if they were full of bitterness, hatred, and revenge, but they are not. There is a book that has been published called, *Letters of Love and Hope*, a compilation of letters to and from the families and the Five. It shows the humanity and dignity of these men and in many ways captures the very spirit of Cuba. Antonio Guerrero, one of the Five, is a poet in his own right and in finishing, Chair, I would like to share with Congress one of his poems written to his two sons, Gabriel and Antonio. It is a short poem and it is called, You Are.

You are my hands if I cannot greet faraway friends

You are my voice if I cannot denounce in the round tables of ideas

You are my smile if I cannot console in the purest hour

You are my dream if the moment arrives that I can dream no more.

Congress, it is the duty of all free thinking people to make sure that Antonio and his four comrades are allowed to continue their dream. *(Applause)*

Norma Stephenson (UNISON) seconded Motion 76. She said: I am proud to be seconding this motion and proud that this whole movement will give this important case our support and, more importantly, our actions. Congress, I too have been to Cuba. I know the strength of community that exists there and can you imagine how hard it must have been for these five brave men to leave their country and go to live in the USA? To leave your friends and loved ones and go to live in America is an incredible act for a Cuban.

Why did they do it: for nearly 50 years Miami-based terrorists opposed to Cuba's socialist society have waged war on Cuba. Cuba knew that as it embraced tourism for its economy to survive it had to fight those groups bombing hotels and trying to scare the tourists away. The information they gathered was passed to the United States but instead of arresting the terrorists the FBI arrested the Five on 12th September 1998, charged them with crimes and sentenced them to lengthy gaol sentences. But not only has the United States perpetuated this travesty of justice, at the behest of the Miami anti-Cuba groups it has taken the unprecedented decision to deny visiting rights to some of their family members. Families of the Five who I met, with Len, in Cuba have been denied visas and not seen their husbands for eight to 10 years, and small children have not been allowed to see their dads. This is an international human rights violations that I find obscene and we need to do everything we can to end this abuse now.

Go and visit the Cuba Solidarity stall, sign the pledge cards, support the vigil outside the US Embassy on 7th October, raise the issue at every level you can, especially if you are at the Labour Party where the wives will be speaking later this month. Cuba gives so much to this world. It is a beacon of hope across the planet and we should give these five heroes our full support. If we are serious, as we say we are, in fighting injustice and terrorism, let's fight it wherever it exists in the world, let our great movement, as one, demand that the UK government helps us put an end to this human rights abuse and travesty of justice. I am proud of the work that my union, UNISON, has done supporting Cuba and the Miami Five. Ten years on it is right that we all take up this important case and, as the Cubans say, *volverán, they will return.* *(Applause)*

The President: I am now going to put Motion 76 to the vote. The General Council support the motion.

* *Motion 76 was CARRIED.*

International development

Rotimi Sankore (National Union of Journalists): President, with your permission I would like to salute our Colombian colleagues. Having worked as a journalist and organising secretary of my journalists' union in a country under a dictatorship I can appreciate we did not even go through 10 per cent of what you suffer.

The TUC, like our union, does a lot of development work and a very crucial aspect of this is promoting the training and development of workers and also promoting development assistance to the developing countries of the world, and the TUC did this with a great deal of diligence at the last G8, but there is a

very crucial aspect of this which we really need to follow through to conclusion. A lot of people that engage in development work are not really aware that most of the resources put towards the developing country that go through this country and other G8 countries cannot be spent because the IMF has imposed expenditure ceilings on public issues like health and education. You can imagine what it would be like in this country if the IMF imposed an expenditure ceiling on health.

Now, an example, a very terrible example, of this happened in Kenya where Kenya suffered a double contradiction of having a shortage of nurses in hospitals but at the same time having thousands of nurses that could not be employed because of this expenditure ceiling. The UK can play a very crucial role here because colleagues may not know the UK, foremost amongst European countries, has more or less controlled the appointment of the managing director of the IMF for the last 63 years.

So, side by side with us raising more resources for this country it is also very crucial that through the TUC and the European Trade Union Confederation, as well we put pressure on the European governments that appoint the MD of the IMF, to say, this is not acceptable. I will just give one example, one very clear implication of this. Kenya and Canada have populations of 32 and 36 million, respectively. Canada has 62,000 doctors, Kenya has just over 4,000. Canada has 327,000 nurses, Kenya has just 27,000. If we imagine the stress that it puts on those medical personnel in those countries to service their population, and the problems that then follow through where many people even suspect it is a conspiracy, the IMF prevents the health workers from being employed, the health workers are then employed by the UK and other developing countries, but who will not train their own health workforces.

Lastly, if I may just add in conclusion, from next year the EU is introducing a blue card scheme. The blue card scheme is aimed at stealing 20 million skilled workers and professionals from Africa by 2023. Just imagine what would happen if China declared a red card scheme for 20 million skilled workers and professionals from Europe to Africa and the outrage that this would cause. So, colleagues, I urge the TUC to work with European colleagues to ensure that the scandalous behaviour of the IMF is stopped, and that we look into the blue card scheme that is coming up from January. *(Applause)*

Global Solidarity

Barbara White (*Musicians' Union*) speaking on paragraph 5.5 said: The paragraph 'Building Links' states that the TUC maintains close contact with the Italian trade union movement, and I would like to remind Congress that the Italian Government has begun to fingerprint all members of Italy's Roma community, including thousands of children. Most of these people went to Italy to flee persecution. Some of the Roma are now wearing black triangles on their clothes as they were forced to in the concentration camps during the Holocaust.

Half-a-million Roma were killed during the Holocaust. Many of the older members of Italy's Roma and Jewish populations remember well that the Holocaust began with this kind of discrimination. They fear that fingerprinting is the first step towards widespread segregation and discrimination. Only yesterday, I read that Rome's right wing mayor refused to condemn fascism as evil.

I have always been told that in order for such evil to occur all it needs is for good people to do nothing. I am counting myself as reasonably good and that is why I am standing here today. I would like to ask the TUC

to speak to their colleagues in Italy and encourage them to offer their support to the Roma community. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Sally Hunt (*General Council*): Thank you, President. We are grateful to you for raising this issue. I think it has been of great concern to many of us. To give a formal response, the TUC will take up this urgently with the ETUC and with our own Government. Our Italian colleagues are united in opposition to the policy but, to give you a clearer confirmation, we are going to look as quickly as we can into the dialogues that are taking place currently with the ITUC and the ETUC. It is an issue that we recognise as pressing and we will not stay silent on it. *(Applause)*

Hugh Lanning (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported the motion. He said: On paragraph 5.5 regarding Palestine, there are three brief points that I would like to make.

We welcome the agreement which the President announced that the ITUC brokered between the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions and the Histadrut, but there was a previous agreement in 1992. We are keen – and I know the General Council is aware of this – to ensure that this new agreement is monitored not only to make sure that the monies due are paid, but also that there is proper representation for Palestinian workers working in Israel. There are more than one million Palestinians in Israel, on the wrong side of the alleged security wall, whose rights need protecting. We hope that that aspect of the agreement will be monitored.

We also welcome the work in the Report on TUC Aid and the proposed projects with the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions. I was on one of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign delegations to Palestine and we can see the circumstances in which the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions have to operate with offices being raided and no heating. They need that support. I hope people will come to the fringe meeting tonight and give support to them so that we can put those projects into practice as soon as possible.

A trade delegation visited Palestine earlier this year and it seems that the position is getting worse and not better. Israel is intent on physically making a new settlement impossible. There are more illegal settlements being built with hilltop fortresses in the occupied territories. East Jerusalem is literally being built on top of Palestinian homes. The wall, as high as this backdrop, is encircling the West Bank. The settlement roads are dividing Palestine into bantustans and the siege of Gaza remains.

The occupation is illegal, but all these steps are being accepted by the EU and the UK. I know the General Council has raised these issues, but the campaign does need to be stepped up on behalf of Palestine. The report is a bit short on campaigning activities which were called for in the motion in 2006. I would ask the General Council to work with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in campaigning and co-ordinating a lobby of Parliament on 26th November. We should make that the largest lobby on their behalf so that we can build and amass movements until there is a free Palestine. *(Cheers and applause)*

Cuba

Mick Shaw (*Fire Brigades' Union*) moved Motion 77. He said: It was 50 years ago this coming January that the corrupt dictator, Batista, fled Cuba carrying all the loot that he could and the rebel army marched into Havana. In the second city, Santiago, Fidel Castro announced the victory of the Cuban Revolution. That

ushered in a new era for the Cuban people and the priorities of the revolutionary were very different from those which had gone before it.

The new priorities were getting teachers into the countryside to teach people how to read and write, to get healthcare to people who had never had healthcare provision before, and tackling inequality and poverty. Those priorities remain the priorities of the Cubans today. The result of that can be seen in the figures for life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy rates, which are amongst the best in that part of the world.

The United Nations compiles an index of countries based on the Human Development Index, which ranks countries according to their performance on life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy and access to clean water. Cuba is placed in the top category of those countries and that is a remarkable achievement. It shows what can be done when governments put human need before private profit and when they decide the priorities rather than the markets.

Of course, like any progressive country in that part of the world, the Cubans very soon came up against the hostility of the USA. For 47 years, Cuba has had to suffer an economic blockade from the USA. It has had to put up with US-sponsored invasions, sabotage and terrorism (including bombs being placed in hotels and on aeroplanes) but 50 years on, despite all of that, the Cuban Revolution is alive and well and is an inspiration to people throughout Caribbean and Latin America.

Cuba is not a utopia and no one should pretend that it is. Cuba has to be understood in the context of that 50 year campaign of aggression and hostility from the USA. Any country which is threatened by a powerful neighbour in the way in which Cuba has, and which has had to suffer from the effects of that economic blockade, will not be able to develop entirely in the way in which it wants.

Nevertheless, Cuba's achievements are something that is worth celebrating if for no other reason than their exemplary record on international aid. There are Cuban health professionals working free of charge in 79 developing countries. Cataract operations have been provided free of charge to a million people from other Caribbean and Latin American nations. Thirty thousand medical scholarships have been provided free of charge to students from developing countries and from poor parts of the USA as well. Cuba provides that kind of international solidarity with other countries in the world and we should be seeing what solidarity we can provide for Cuba.

The motion from the Fire Brigades' Union is not just calling for recognition of Cuba's achievements; it is calling for some concrete steps. We are glad that we have the full support of the General Council in what we are calling for. We are asking for an official speaker from the Cuban Trades Union Confederation ('CTUC') from the platform at Congress in 2009. Most of us are already affiliated to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign but for those who are not, we are calling upon the TUC to encourage all delegates to affiliate to that campaign. We are also calling upon the TUC to provide publicity for all the events that the Cuba Solidarity Campaign will be organising over the coming 12 months under the banner of 'Cuba at 50'.

Further, we are asking for the TUC to call upon the UK to develop an independent policy to that of the USA. Rather just following in the wake of whatever the USA does on Cuba, along with other parts of the world, we are saying that the UK should have an independent policy and that that policy should be based on improving trade between the UK and Cuba. It should oppose the scandal of US threats to independent UK companies which happen to trade with Cuba and which might operate in the USA. It is calling for a

high-level delegation to be sent to Cuba in order to allow that trade to develop. Congress, please support Motion 77 and *Viva Cuba*. (*Applause*)

James Anthony (*UNISON*) seconded Motion 77. He said: This motion points to the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and its many achievements. UNISON is proud to support this motion. We are proud of our history in supporting Cuba for as long as we have existed.

I went to Cuba with around 50 other young trade unionists from across the UK and took part in an international May Day parade. I think that we would all agree that this was an amazing experience. We had the great honour of being guests at the May Day Rally in Havana, bearing witness to more than 500,000 Cubans marching and celebrating Cuban socialism whilst, across the island, the majority of Cubans did the same in their communities.

In Cuba, we saw the achievements of the Cuban people and how those achievements are held back by the US blockade. As a nurse, I was particularly keen to look at healthcare. Visiting a polyclinic and talking with staff there, it really brought home to me the achievements of the Cuban health system with advanced care close to the community in a way that our Government can only dream of. This is an amazing achievement despite the hardship of being unable to purchase equipment and supplies from their closest neighbour, the United States.

The amazing outcomes in Cuba on health are not just because of the health system. In this country, we know the impact of poverty and inequality on health outcomes. Cuba's commitment to eradicating poverty and inequality has delivered one of the healthiest peoples in the world. These achievements are replicated in education with the best literacy levels in Latin America.

However, Cuba, as we have heard, does not just help Cubans. It sets an example to the world by the solidarity they give in the provision of health and education. Cuba has been criticised for using doctors to buy influence from other countries. I say that if all countries provided doctors rather than bombs what a wonderful world this would be! (*Applause*) Imagine now what Cuba could have achieved if it was not for the brutal blockade. The blockade of Cuba is illegal, utterly disproportionate and absolutely immoral.

The US is becoming increasingly isolated internationally. This year, the EU voted to end its sanctions within the common position and the UN has continued to vote to condemn the blockade. However, at the same time, they are trying to extend the blockade into other countries. Our Government must use its role internationally to support the right of Cuban's independence and its sovereignty. They must stand up against US attempts to impose their blockade here in the UK but mostly they must normalise relations with Cuba for the mutual benefits of our nations.

Cuba has much to gain from us, but we have much to learn from Cuba. It is time for a Ministerial-level visit. Let us use Cuba 50 not only as a celebration of Cuba's achievement, but to get our country on the right side in support of Cuba in their bid for freedom from the US. *Viva Cuba*. (*Cheers and applause*)

Dennis Doody (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) supported Motion 77. He said: Conference, I wish to applaud the FBU for the content of its excellent resolution and I want to qualify some of the things that have been said.

Over the years, I visited Cuba more than 40 times. During this period, I have witnessed first hand some of

the trials and tribulations that that country has endured. I recall the special period introduced by the Cuban Government after the collapse of the Soviet Union when stringent measures were introduced to ensure survival of the Revolution.

I was in Cuba when terrorists bombed the hotels in Havana, deliberately targeting Cuba's tourist industry and killing one young Italian tourist. I witnessed the support of the Cuban people in demanding the return of Ivan Gonzalez to his father from the Cuban fascists living in Miami. I have seen how Cubans cope with the daily propaganda war financed by the American Government against their country and, of course, the illegal blockade cruelly enforced for almost five decades.

Like Len McCluskey, I have also met the families of the five Cuban patriots incarcerated in the United States for attempting to combat terrorism. I have seen the despair and anguish it that has brought to them.

Despite all of this, Cuba and its Revolution remain undefeated. After 50 glorious years of revolution, they are unbowed, unbroken and proud. Congress, I believe that it is right that all progressive movements of the world should celebrate Cuba's achievements. Its healthcare system, its education system, its provision of free training for medical professors from all over the Third World and also from the United States of America have already been mentioned, however, we should not forget either the heroic struggle of the Cuban military on the battlefields of Africa.

It is 21 years since the Cuban army and the Angolans defeated the South African army in the battle of Coto Quinavali. Nelson Mandela was later to assert that, "The defeat by the Cubans and the Angolans in this battle was the turning point for the liberation of our continent and of my people from the scourge of apartheid."

The South African ambassador to Cuba, after the fall of apartheid, commented, "Today, South Africa has many newly-found friends. Yesterday, they referred to our leaders and combatants as terrorists and hounded us out of their countries whilst supporting apartheid. These very friends today want us to denounce and isolate Cuba. Our answer is simple: it is the blood of the Cuban martyrs and not that of our friends that runs deep in the African soil and nurtures the tree of freedom in our country."

Conference, it is because of these sacrifices that Cuba so richly deserves our support. Cuba's humility and its humanity are legendary. Their example is inspirational. They have given so much to the poorest in the world whilst being poor themselves. Conference, support the resolution. (*Applause*)

Andy Worth (GMB) supported the motion. He said: I am proud to be speaking in support of Motion 77 and to be sharing a platform with representatives from the CTUC, Manuel and Ronaldo. (*Applause*)

Congress, Cuba is a small country with limited resources, but Cuba is a giant in terms of socialism and solidarity. I also had the privilege of attending a study tour in Cuba, like previous speakers, and witnessed first-hand the great achievements of the Cuban people. We hope to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Revolution and also the 70th anniversary of the Cuban Trade Union Congress, which happens to coincide in 2009.

In paying homage to Cuban internationalism and the vital role that Cuba played in the fight against apartheid, Nelson Mandela said, "If it was not for Cuba, I would not be a free man today. If it was not for Cuba, apartheid would never have been defeated." Before the Revolution, Cuba was used by rich Americans as a playground. There were brothels with

Cuban women forced into prostitution, Mafia-controlled drugs and organised crime. It was an absolute disgrace and, thankfully, the Cuban Revolution put an end to such a travesty.

The Revolution saw an end to the daily degradations of the Cuban people and the indignity that they suffered. Today, Cuba has the best literacy rates of the Latin American countries. It educates people for free, which is more than our country can say. We do not educate our kids freely. We can learn much from Cuba.

We want to do what the motion calls for, but we believe that everybody in the hall should ensure that their union's individual branches are affiliated to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign. We should also lobby our MPs. You should visit Cuba and see for yourselves the truth. Do not believe the lies that are portrayed in the press. We should actively encourage our Government to move away from its foolish copying of the American embargo. *Viva Cuba, Viva Revolution, Companero.*

Dave Lovelidge (Unite) supported Motion 77. He said: Congress, I am proud to support Motion 77 and think that the actions of successive US administrations regarding Cuba and the illegal blockade are a disgrace, deplorable and disgusting.

I was fortunate enough to be part of the Unite delegation to visit Cuba in May of this year as an international guest at the May Day parade. The march of hundreds of thousands of ordinary smiling people was so impressive. You can defeat an army, but you cannot defeat an ideal or the people.

The fall of the Berlin Wall resulted in the loss of Cuba's major trading partner. This situation, along with the illegal blockade, led to a ten-year period with little oil or other energy provisions, resulting in the need to limit electricity use to a maximum of eight hours a day. If this happened in Britain, this period would be called 'The Hard Years' or 'The Dark Ages'. In Cuba, this period in their history is known as 'The Special Years'. This is because it only served to reinforce their resolve, their strength and their spirit.

Cuba has given hope to its youth by giving it free, high-quality education. Students get free housing, books, food, an income and, yes, no student loans. Pregnant women, at eight months, are accompanied by their GP to hospital where the GP will tell the consultant not only their medical needs but their dietary needs as well. Is it any wonder that Cuba has the lowest infant mortality in the world?

Cuba, as Mick said, is not perfect. It is not a utopia. Havana has serious housing problems where many families live in homes without windows or without walls, but these scars are a direct result of the US blockade. To their shame, the United States will not even lift it temporarily to allow in humanitarian aid following Hurricane Gustav. The excuse given by successive US Governments for the blockade is that Cuba poses a threat and they may attack. They will attack, but not with weapons of mass destruction. They will attack with ideas for a better and more just society.

When I went to Cuba, I was attacked. I was shot through the heart. Cuba attacks the senses. Like many, I had read about Cuba. However, this only attacks the sense of sight. If you are lucky enough to go there as I was – and please try to go – it attacks all the senses: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. It especially touches the heart. That is why the last part of this motion is so important – a Ministerial exchange. Please support the motion and support Cuba. *Viva Cuba.* (*Applause*)

* *Motion 77 was CARRIED*

European legislation

Sandra Mathers (*Society of Radiographers*) moved Motion 78. She said: I am speaking for the first time at Congress. (*Applause*) Now for something completely different - European legislation.

Contrary to the contention of the UK Independence Party and sections of the media, the European Commission has produced some excellent legislation for the good of citizens throughout Europe. Structures established by the Commission for drafting and consulting on directives include a strong collective voice for trade unions through a system of social partnership but the system is not perfect. There is a directive which now should be in force across Europe, protecting the health and safety of thousands of workers in a wide variety of industries. This directive is not yet implemented because it has been postponed by the Commission because no one recognised that implementation would affect the delivery of healthcare and, in particular, diagnostic services to deliver magnetic resonance imaging.

Magnetic resonance imaging, more commonly known as MRI scanning, is an essential tool for the diagnosis and the monitoring of diseases, including cancer. I am sure that everyone here has either had a scan undertaken by one of our members or knows someone who has benefited from the extraordinary accuracy and sensitivity of MRI. MRI does not use ionising radiation, making it a relatively safe technique for both patient and hospital worker alike, but it does use magnetic fields.

The European Directive on Physical Agents (Electromagnetic Fields) introduces controls over exposure of workers to magnetic fields in a wide variety of industries. These controls are necessary and are long-awaited. Quite rightly, the Directive received strong support from the trade union movement. However, the impact of implementation was never assessed and somehow, despite extensive consultation, no one realised that MRI services might be affected. In fact, it was only discovered once the Directive was approved that implementation would put a stop to much of the research into developing new and improved techniques for MRI and would also prevent a large number of essential scans to detect cancer or life-threatening illnesses.

To put this into context, figures from the Department of Health for 2007-08 indicate that approximately 1.3 million MRI scans were carried out within the NHS. Therefore, the impact of the implementation of this Directive on healthcare across Europe would have been disastrous.

Congress, the Society of Radiographers has been instrumental in an effort to avert this disaster so that medical imaging services can continue to support better health for all. However, we also recognise other disasters. We know that many workers in other industries are still waiting for protection from the potential risks of electromagnetic fields. Damage to the European legislative process has occurred and that is why this motion seeks to ensure that such a situation is never allowed to happen again.

There has to be better and wider consultation which makes use of the diversity which is a strength of our union movement. We have the knowledge and the skills within our collective memberships. We should be bringing this resource to bear in ensuring that unions become an even more vital component of the legislative process and, in doing so, ensure that directives are produced that protect health and safety without undermining healthcare.

Congress, the postponement of the Physical Agents' Directive has happened. We need to put the disasters behind us and emerge stronger as a movement. We ask the General Council to restate and reinforce its

stance on MRI implications of the Directive. Support our request for a united stance within the ETUC so that an appropriately revised directive can be achieved. Support our healthcare and support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Colin Magee (*UNISON*) seconded Motion 78. He said: I am happy to support Motion 78 on European legislation which, in particular, highlights and supports the Society of Radiographers regarding potentially lost opportunities when the EU Physical Agents' Directive was being drafted. The Directive itself introduces limits to exposure of workers to changing electromagnetic fields which, even to those of us who do not understand the intricacies, will be of keen interest to workers whose health is very seriously at risk. This is a major health and safety issue.

The thresholds being identified in the Directive are not the final ones as research is still not complete in the area. However, they did at least promise to introduce some form of control for workers in a wide range of industries, some of which have suffered far too long from the lack of protection. This is why it was so important that the Directive should have been correct at the first stage.

When the problems were identified by the collective trade union movement, they would not have been solved by just postponing the Directive as this would have resulted in delays to the introduction of safety legislation to many outside the MRI industry. The failure of consultation made the union movement a victim of criticism and we were accused of inflexibility and dogmatism. This is not the first time we have been accused of that!

Quite the opposite happened when this Directive was going through. Unions involved have demonstrated robustness. We have tried to turn the situation around by working with colleagues throughout Europe within the MRI community and other relevant groups to achieve a sensible revision of the legislation and one where MRI services can be effectively exempt.

Obviously, there were lessons to be learnt. The current structures for social partnership work well for us, but the finer detail of consultation has not worked in this instance. It is to be hoped that this situation can be reversed. Congress, support the motion and those who are working on this issue. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Bob Fromant (*Unite*) supported the motion. He said: I am a working shop steward and the South-East Region Labour Party European candidate.

Congress, the European Parliament and the Commission play an important role in developing wide legislation to provide a level playing field for business, commerce, employees and consumers across a trading block of some 500 million people. This motion, in itself, concerns a technical issue and it brings to light the importance of having friendly faces and MEPs to whom we can talk in the European Parliament. It is not a coincidence that when the right wing European People's Party is in the majority in the European Parliament, as at present, we get regulations and European Court judgments which favour free trade and business above the rights of workers and trade unions. Likewise, it is not a coincidence that when the left wing party of European Socialists is in the majority in the European Parliament, we tend to get regulations and European Court judgments which favour the spread of the social agenda, many of which have helped us to provide better working conditions for our members.

Please go back to your workplace and remind your members of the worker-friendly legislation previous socialist administrations have passed in Europe on

Health and Safety; the Working Time Directive; European Works Councils; and the Social Chapter. Urge your members to use their vote on June 4th next year and vote for Labour in Europe so that we can all play our part in bringing about a socialist Europe that is fair to all no matter where you were born or where you choose to live. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Alex Gordon (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) spoke against the motion. He said: I am no expert on magnetic resonance imaging, but I can assure the Society of Radiographers that my union is all in favour of it and a great many of our members will have benefited from the technique. Our concerns with their motion arise, as the title states, from European legislation and a number of premises, inferences and assumptions in their argument which are just plain false and we fear could be damaging to our members. I do not think you need an X-ray machine to see that.

Their motion expresses concern that directives implemented with insufficient consultation "served to undermine the good standing of the European legislative process", but it is bad legislation reached through a thoroughly undemocratic political process that undermines the political credibility of the European Union. It is the absence of democracy, not the lack of consultation, which is offensive.

First, there is the European Commission, an unelected body, the only authority to make laws and directives in the European process. The European Parliament, let us recall, is merely a consultative body.

Secondly, there are the directives themselves. Many EU directives simply promote the economic interests of liberalisation and privatisation. They serve the interests of big business and not the interests of the peoples of Europe. Transport workers know all about this to their cost because Britain's railways were privatised by a British Tory government on a model set out in European Directive 91440, which mandated that nation states should split infrastructure and operations of railways. Likewise, Scotland's ferry services, Caledonian McBrain, were put out to tender under EU rules and directives. Brussels is now planning an EU healthcare directive which, as the *Financial Times* newspaper gleefully reported, "... will create a single European healthcare market." This will have a devastating effect on our NHS.

These were not laws and directives drawn up in consultation with European trade unions or the working people; they were drawn up by faceless bureaucrats influenced by corporate lobby groups. This neo-liberal approach is enshrined in the re-named European Constitution, the so-called Lisbon Treaty, and that is why the Irish voters, including members of our union and Unite, rejected it in the Irish Republic.

Recognising these facts does not turn you into an anti-Europe apologist, as the motion suggests. For one thing, Europe is a land mass and, far from apologising for it, my union wants to prevent the European Union selling it off to the highest bidder. I oppose. (*Applause*)

Sandra Mathers (*Society of Radiographers*) exercised her right of reply. She said: The RMT's argument is about the rights and wrongs of the European Commission. Please do not allow their argument to overshadow our request for a proper, social partnership, strong consultative processes and excellent healthcare for all. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: I will now put Motion 78, European legislation, to the vote. The General Council supports the motion.

* *Motion 78 was CARRIED*

Presentation of Congress Gold Badge to Jeannie Drake

The President: Congress, we usually refer to retirements from the General Council on the Thursday of Congress week. However, Jeannie Drake is unable to be present at Congress tomorrow because of industrial business and we did not want the opportunity to pass without marking her huge contribution as a member of the General Council since 1990.

She has contributed across a wide range of TUC work and, of course, she chaired Congress three years ago. She was a member of the hugely influential Pensions Commission, which led to the decision to introduce compulsory employer contributions to workplace pensions.

Jeannie has also represented the interests of women workers on our behalf for many years on the EOC. Jeannie may have retired from her position as DGS of CWU and she may be leaving the General Council, but she will go on serving working people's interests in her roles as a board member of the Pensions Protection Fund and the Personal Accounts Delivery Authority. Jeannie, I really do have great pleasure in presenting you with the Gold Badge of Congress. (*Presentation of Congress Gold Badge to Jeannie Drake amidst applause*)

Jeannie Drake: President, Congress, I am conscious of time so I will say just a few words.

The trade union movement has been a large part of my working life and has made it so meaningful. An important part of that has been the 18 years or so that I have been on the General Council, with an opportunity to contribute on the wider stage. Brendan, I just want to thank you very much for your personal support, which has been unstinting. I also want to thank Kay and Frances for their friendship, which I hope continues; and all the TUC staff for their support. I would also like to say a huge thank you to my union, the CWU, for such shared memories and friendships, and to Billy Hayes for always encouraging me. I may retire from the job, but I will never retire from the trade union movement. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

Rail transport

The President: I call paragraph 4.17 and Composite Motion 11 on rail transport. The General Council support the composite with the reservation and I will be calling upon the Deputy General Secretary, Frances, during the debate to explain that reservation.

Andy Bain (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) moved Composite Motion 11. He said: We would not be here if change was not possible although sometimes it is difficult to see how that can happen. Change is possible and I will mention three examples of reversals of privatisation.

First, two new prisons, Buckley Hall and Blakenhurst, were taken back from the private sector in 2000 and 2001 and recently the Scottish Executive announced that it would not build any PPF-financed prisons, stating that any that were to be built would be publicly-owned and run.

Secondly, last week, the Argentinean government re-nationalised its state airline, possibly influenced by the great progress taking place in Venezuela. Thirdly, earlier this year, New Zealand, once the vanguard of neo-liberalisation, re-nationalised its railways after

sustained pressure from their Rail and Maritime Union. Therefore, it can be done.

We have heard much about neo-liberalism this week. It sounds complex, but it is not. It is about taking public money (our taxes) and giving it to the private companies to expand their power base and give profits to those who are already rich. As with lunches, there is no such thing as a free market. We have heard about the rigging of the postal market and the market for social and rented housing. The railway industry is a very complicated example of another rigged market - not rigged for the workers or the passengers but for the owners, the private company's shareholders. As somebody said earlier this week, it is so that the fat cats can feather their nests.

In 2004, the TSSA led the battle to the Government to win a policy of public ownership of the railways. This is still party policy although the Government refuses to act on this popular demand. Why not? It is because if they did, there would be a flood of further demands for more reversals of privatisation.

This Government favours privatisation and has many friends on company boards as its advisers, but it does have progressive policies relating to transport. It has targets for reducing carbon emissions and is talking about sustainable development. It has moved recently from just considering plans to tweak the network and squeeze more capacity out of it to exploring electrification and high-speed lines, with the need to plan well ahead. Importantly, it is considering land use and energy planning in conjunction with that. Therefore, we are not too far apart.

This composite is about long-term investment, as the Spaniards have done, in electrification, high-speed lines and an integrated infrastructure for the transport of freight. This investment will help reach carbon emission targets, it will cut road congestion and it will give value for money on a national level.

Public ownership of the rail network - and this is where we differ - would allow the industry to reach its full social, economic and environmental potential. Long-term planning for an integrated, sustainable and safer railway would be so much easier to deal with than dozens of companies pulling in different directions. Public ownership of the railways may not be the primary issue for the electorate, but it is certainly a popular one and one that could win many much-needed votes.

We need a very serious wake-up call here. The massed ranks of ministers at last night's General Council dinner had a message and that was, "We have done enough for you, but we have been too shy to claim the credit. It is now your job to sell it to your members and to deliver the next Labour Government." This is worrying. Does anybody here really believe that without a raft of progressive policies we have any chance of winning? We have very little time to make them change. If we cannot do it, it will be them and not us who return us to dark years with Cameron, a Tory Britain and a serious threat from the BNP.

Congress, please support a publicly-owned railway and do what you can to save the Labour Party from its leadership. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Keith Norman (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) seconded the motion. He said: We are still a small trade union, we are still viable and we are still working to represent our 18,000 members. We are very grateful for the comments made by the President of the TSSA, which is a relatively small trade union, a relatively independent trade union and a viable trade union. We are also grateful to the RMT, who will be coming to the rostrum later to make some further comments. They are also a relatively small but viable trade union. We are all working together in the

railway industry for the people who we represent. Sorry, I have to have a little dig. It would not be me if I did not do that!

The President of the TSSA has made the case. I think electrification and freight on rail is an obvious policy to everybody. A number of delegates have said this week that there is a lack of imagination in the Government and I think that is absolutely correct. There is a lack of imagination in the Department of Transport, but I will say that I have high hopes for Ruth Kelly. Ruth Kelly has been very positive in response to the demands of the trade unions. She is prepared to sit, listen and talk to us, taking things on board. I think that is hopeful for the future. The press have said that maybe she will be moving on, but I hope she does not. I hope that she stays at the Department of Transport because for the first time in a long time we have a transport minister who is prepared to listen.

So what is the case for freight on rail and electrification? It is outstanding economically and environmentally. Every other issue, including finance, supports freight on rail and electrification. This country gave railways to the world all those years ago and now we are seeing Spain, France and many other countries building high-speed direct routes and increasing their rail capacity, but where are we in Great Britain? It is quite sad.

To their credit, Network Rail is modernising Reading station. It should have been modernised 25 years ago, but at least it is getting on with it now. If British Railways had had the amount of money which is available to the privatised rail companies now, we would have had the best railway system in the world without any question. Thank you very much, Congress. (*Applause*)

Gareth Davies (*Community*) supported the motion. He said: The privatisation of the railways was an act of crass, neo-con liberalism which could never be justified even if you accept the market forces argument, as none of these companies, with the exception of one, could possibly make a profit. It is a matter of infrastructure. We have to go on subsidising it. We can work on what we do about that in terms of organising the railways at some future date. Therefore, I buy into this question of electrification and high-speed trains.

I was at the launch of the UK Vision Strategy on 18th April. Afterwards, it was necessary to go lunging through various tunnels, Cerne-style. We arrived in Paris at 17.26 later on that day for a meeting of the European Blind Union Rights' Commission. It speaks volumes about what we need from the railways. We disabled people have all sorts of magical powers to terrify the life out of you, but we have not cracked multi-location yet although, as you can see, we are getting pretty close to it.

As far as the amendment regarding this motion is concerned, it is to do with concessionary travel for disabled people. This (*indicating*) is a disability railcard and it entitles me to a third off fares. It is free travel on the trains for blind and partially-sighted people in Scotland. It varies according to where you are. This (*indicating*) is a Greater London travel card which entitles you to restricted free travel on buses and overhead trains and free travel on the Tube. We are calling for an extension of the concessionary fares scheme so please support this motion. Let us have a modern, efficient and socially-responsible railway for a modern, efficient and socially-responsible Britain. (*Applause*)

Frances O'Grady (*Deputy General Secretary*): The General Council supports the composite with a reservation. The composite is very welcome, including

its strong re-affirmation of TUC support for a publicly-owned and accountable railway. The General Council also welcomes the call to lobby for rail electrification. However, in supporting the composite, the General Council is entering the following reservation on the reference to energy sources for electrification. No single energy source should be given a priority and a diverse energy mix must include renewables, clean coal, gas and nuclear. This is the only way to deliver security of supply and lower carbon emissions. *(Applause)*

Tim Davison (*Unite*) supported Composition Motion 11. He said: *Unite* wholeheartedly supports the drive for improvements in the rail industry to fulfil its social, economic and environmental potential and to support and lobby for the electrification of rail. Our reservation on this composite is that it only instructs the General Council to argue to exclude nuclear power from the energy mix within the UK. *Unite* has a balanced energy policy, which includes the requirement for diversity in electricity generation to ensure security of supply. This policy gives full support to clean coal, renewables and nuclear.

We heard yesterday of the concerns with regard to fuel poverty in the economy debate. We also passed a composite on security of energy supply. In that debate, it was highlighted that during the next decade the UK faces an electricity gap due to our ageing power stations and the impact of the Large Combustion Plant Directive. If we do not plug this gap, we will see fuel poverty in the UK that we could not dream of in our worst nightmares. It would therefore be unwise to restrict any of the options available to us for diversity. If we do, we will end up relying on gas and oil for our base-load generation which in turn ties UK energy into the politics of many unstable governments.

Given the TUC support for a balanced energy policy, to exclude nuclear from electrification plans for the railways is to ignore the reality of future energy delivery consistent with the need to meet demand and to reduce carbon emissions for which the composite calls. Congress, I ask you to support this composite, but to take our reservation on board. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Malcolm Cantello (*UNISON*) supported the motion. He said: Congress, I am sure some of you will remember that when the TGV track from Paris to Lille was first opened in 1993, the year before the Channel Tunnel opened, the then French President, Francois Mitterand, joked about Britain's technology, referring to it as 'backwardness'. "Next year", he said, "we will set off at high speed across the Northern French plains and then push into the Channel Tunnel. Afterwards, we will dream of a very slow speed in Britain to admire the landscapes."

Since that time, of course, we have seen some progress. The publicly-funded Channel Tunnel Rail Link means less time to admire the landscapes of Kent, but as the composite we are debating today makes clear, we are still a long way behind. In France, Spain, Germany and Italy, high-speed rail is not confined to one showpiece stretch of line. The reason we are lagging behind is the lack of political will and money. The Channel Tunnel Rail Link cost £73m per mile, but one mile of a three-lane motorway costs £28m. It is little wonder then that the Government has seen more mileage in capturing votes from motorists.

We see this in relative costs to the public as well. In the eleven years since 1997, the cost of motoring has decreased 8 per cent yet bus fares, on average, have risen 13 per cent and train fares 5 per cent across that period.

What these comparisons do not tell us is the impact that the different modes of transport have on the environment. Under a sustainable transport policy, shouldn't the cost to the user reflect the cost to the environment? For example, flying from Edinburgh to London produces eight times more carbon dioxide emissions than going by train, but the cost of flying is often the same, or even cheaper, than going by train.

Walk-on rail fares, in particular, are far too high. People are not fortune tellers. They cannot always plan ahead so they often cannot get those cheap, advance tickets. This is not sustainable if carbon dioxide emissions are to be reduced by a sufficient amount to prevent the kind of runaway climate change that scientists warn us of.

The Government must think about the message it is sending to people. Is it encouraging low-carbon transport or is it just making people's lives more difficult when they try to choose the low-carbon option? The \$64m question is whether our transport system can be made more sustainable within the current framework in which profit takes precedence over investment and where problems of ownership and fragmentation prevent rail from fulfilling its social, economic and environmental potential.

In *UNISON*, we believe strongly in public services. We believe in the public sector ethos. We believe that some sectors of our economy need to operate in the public interest rather than in the short-term interests of profit. It is clear that, in the interests of sustainability, in the interests of the passenger, and in the interests of our brothers and sisters who work in the industry, rail belongs very much within the public realm. Please support the composite.

Peter Pinkney (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) supported Composite Motion 11.

He said: First of all, I would like to say that I am not proud or happy to be standing at this rostrum supporting this composite, not because I see anything wrong with the composite but because after eleven years of a Labour Government delegates are still coming to the rostrum and arguing to re-nationalise the railways. *(Applause)* In fact, this Labour Government wants to go a little bit further. At this very moment in time it is trying to privatise the Tyne-and-Wear Metro. That is a success story of a public owned railway if ever there was one, and the East London Line on the London Underground.

After 20 years of working on the railways I have seen a big deterioration. It has become a profits-first, safety-second railway. British Rail was not perfect but it provided a service. We called people 'passengers'. We did not call them 'customers'. The trains these days are nothing better than cattle trucks. On East Midland Mainline I have seen trains that are four carriages long and two of them have been first-class carriages. The rest of the people are crammed into two second-class carriages, and these people want to increase fares on a disgusting service like that. All they care about is raking in money. I have been on a GNER, when they were still running trains, in Doncaster. I was on a train which stopped at Doncaster and it took two full train loads of passengers off earlier trains which had failed and shoved them on our train and moved it on to London. If that wasn't a recipe for disaster, I don't know what was. That was purely about profit and they still had the cheek to raise fares.

Finally, I would like to move on to freight trains. For many years there has been a deterioration in the movement of coal, steel, cars, etc. on the freight side. But, worst of all, we have seen the loss of the Royal Mail on freight. That was an absolutely disgraceful decision by EWS to pull out of that service, and in this climate they should be on the railway and not on the

roads and not increasing the carbon content.
(Applause)

Comrades, I know you will support this motion, but I want you to go back to your workplaces, your works councils and fight for this. I don't want to hear people talking about how much it will cost to take the railways back into public ownership, because these fat cat profiteers have made billions – billions upon billions – out of the privatised railways. Take back the railways and give the public a safe and proper service. Thank you.

Andy Bain (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) in reply said: President, I will be very brief. We understand the reservations that were made. TSSA policy is in line with ASLEF's with regard to nuclear power. I just want to draw your attention to the fact that the composite only says that nuclear is not the best source of power and it calls on a review of energy alternatives. The TSSA and ASLEF would wish to see in such a review transparent costing through the lifecycle of energy supply. That is from the building of the infrastructure, the maintenance of it, the storage of waste – obviously, in the case of nuclear, that is quite significant – and then decommissioning. With that I would like to thank the General Council for their support and please support the composite.

The President: We now move to the vote on Composite Motion 11. The General Council supports with the reservation.

* *Composite Motion 11 was CARRIED.*

Transportation of musical instruments on planes

Danny Longstaff (*Musicians' Union*) moved Motion 43.

He said: Congress, since the advent of commercial air travel the Musicians' Union has sought clarification and agreement of the relevant government departments and the airline industry on the transport of musical instruments in the cabins of aircraft. However, all of us are aware and respect the security problems facing the aviation industry worldwide and accept the difficulties it has had to face during the past few years. So imagine our excitement when, on September 6th last year, on this very platform, our General Secretary, John Smith, told us that after all the hard work, especially in the prevailing climate, that agreement had been reached with the Department for Transport that musical instruments may be carried in the aircraft cabin. I quote: "The Union is, therefore, delighted to report that, as a result of our campaign, the Department of Transport has agreed to ease strict airline security measures in the case of MU members. The Department has stated that professional musicians travelling to domestic or overseas engagements from UK airports will now be allowed to carry their instruments into aircraft cabins as hand luggage." That is pretty damned clear.

Just to make sure, last Friday I checked the BAA website and found this under "Frequently asked questions": "Can I take my musical instrument on board?" "Yes." "In addition to the hand baggage allowance, one musical instrument in its case can be taken into the cabin." So at last we have parity with sports equipment and skis. Sadly, the problem does not end here. There are anomalies. I am talking about the inconsistent attitude of airports, check-in desks, security and the carriers themselves.

Here is a little background as to why this issue is important to us. It is fair to say that every instrumental member of our union, some 30,000, has had to fly with their instruments in anger; i.e., to perform at the other end, some a lot more than others.

Musicians are, by the very nature of the profession, itinerant. We travel to where the work is. It is simply what we do. Musical instruments are incredibly valuable and incredibly fragile. So it is not unreasonable to expect to be allowed to look after and be responsible for your own instrument. One would have thought that the carriers would be pleased to shed any liability, anyway. The slightest damage can render an instrument totally unplayable, and losing them is even worse. Both scenarios result in loss of work, let alone the stress, cost and inconvenience caused. Of course, you have the option to buy a ticket for your instrument, but then you run the risk of making the engagement unviable. Remember, whilst we may enjoy what we do, we do always have to make a living.

Then there are flight cases. I do not have the time to tell you the horror stories but, suffice it to say that on seeing a flight case the mechanical systems, not the handlers, let's be fair, seem to have a mission to test the durability of the cases and there is still the strong risk of loss.

So, despite the agreement between ourselves and the Department for Transport there is much confusion. We provide a printed document to all our members with wording agreed between the Musicians' Union and the Department for Transport which we present at the check-in, and it quotes the following: "Each passenger is allowed to carry one musical instrument in its case." How much clearer do we have to make it? Seemingly, a lot, which is why I am standing at this rostrum. The motion before you simply asks that Congress requests that the General Council lobby BAA, IATA and other appropriate aviation bodies with the intention of relaxing restrictions put upon the carrying of instruments as hand baggage and adhering to the agreed MU/Department for Transport guidelines. If it is good enough for the Department for Transport and it is good enough for us, it must be more than good enough for the airports and the carriers.

Whilst I am at the rostrum, I would like to make a comment about something else that happened earlier this week. May I, respectfully, request that the TUC liaise with the production company which produced Monday's introductory video and ensure that in future any film soundtracks be recorded by real musicians and not, whether computerised, digitalised, synthesised, string, brass, woodwind and rhythm section, so that the young musicians who we have seen this week have a future. Thank you.

Ed Blissett (*GMB*) seconded Motion 43.

He said: Congress, I am pleased to be seconding our colleagues from the MU or, perhaps, given the nature of this debate, they should be playing second fiddle or, perhaps even more eloquently, second violin to the MU.

Sisters and brothers, we fully support, as the union which handles the violins and other musical instruments which MU members use, the fact that they should be able to take them into the cabin of a plane. It is an absolute nonsense that certain airlines do not allow them to do so. But I am afraid I have to tell you all, sisters and brothers, that it is not surprising.

In my experience, there are three types of aviation employer. There is the average employer. A number of them are national airlines which, sometimes, are sensible over the issue of musical instruments and sometimes are not. That is an attitude which is mimicked in the way they treat the people who carry on to the planes those instruments, the baggage handlers, who they employ. Then there is the poor employer. There are many of those within the aviation industry, and they include companies such as Airfield Services, which pays our members an absolute pittance

for doing very important security work in the airport, and when our members asked for a paltry pay rise of 5 per cent on a wage that is just above the minimum, they are turned down. Airfield Services, which is part of the Gate Gourmet Group, with its appalling past, refused to meet this pay rise and, rightly, with the full support of the GMB, we are taking strike action against them. *(Applause)*

But there is a third category, a category which sits all on its own in aviation, a category of company which only has one person within it and that category is the living embodiment of Nye Bevan's famous phrase, "Lower than vermin", and that company is Ryanair. This is a company that will not only not allow MU members to take their instruments onto planes, but it mistreats its staff. It charges them for their uniform, it charges them for their pass to get onto those planes and it charges them to park to go to work. It even charges them, Sisters and Brothers, to charge up their mobile phones. What an absolute disgrace they are! But I have a warning along with my comrades from the Musicians' Union for Ryanair: the drum is starting to sound for you. It may be soft at present but the roar will become louder. Michael O'Leary, do not ask for whom the bell tolls, because I can tell you it tolls for thee! *(Applause)*

Michael-Eric Schwaabe (*Association of Flight Attendants*): Mr President, Congress and delegates, I do not know I can follow that speech. The Association of Flight Attendants represents cabin crew. I am the person who puts the musical instrument into the locker on board the aeroplane, if it gets on the plane. So I suppose my concern is, really, the safety of the plane. Many airlines have clear policies for transporting musical instruments. It is very simple. You just don't put them in the exit rows. If it is this big, you have to buy a ticket for it and you have to put the seat belt round it.

I wanted to urge the TUC, when they are addressing this matter, to look at this issue in three different areas. First, there is the European Union level. EASA – the European Aviation Safety Agency – needs to make sure that all the airlines, including low cost carriers, such as Ryanair, adhere to the same regulations and that nobody gets away with it. The second level is the UK. We have a plethora of different airports and airport operators and these need to be harmonised under the CAA. Finally, and may I reiterate my previous colleague's words, you do need to go after the low cost carriers because I think that is where the bulk of the culprits are. Thank you.

The President: We now come to the vote. The General Council's policy is to support.

* *Motion 43 was CARRIED*

Maritime security and shore leave/access for seafarers

Mike Jess (*Nautilus UK*) moved Motion 44.

He said: Congress, imagine for a moment you are at your workplace day and night, not for just for weeks but months on end. That is life for many seafarers. Nearly three hundred years ago Samuel Johnson said that ships were like prisons, only with the additional risk of drowning. Sadly, not much seems to have changed since then for the men and women who sail the ships which carry more than 90 per cent of the world's trade and work in one of the toughest and most demanding industries that exists. They are away from home, friends and family for extremely long periods. It is vital that they get the chance to go ashore when the ships reach land. It gives them not only the chance to escape the workplace, even only for

a few hours, but also access to phones, the internet, to contact families, to seek welfare, social and medical support, if needed. The right to shore leave is a cherished one which has been recognised into customary maritime law as far back as the Middle Ages. It is enshrined within a series of international conventions, agreed through the UN agencies, the ILO and IMO. This is now under sustained and serious attack.

Commercial pressures mean that ships which used to spend weeks in port only a couple of decades ago are in and out in a matter of hours. Companies want faster turnarounds and that means less time on shore for seafarers who are increasingly working longer hours at sea as crews are cut to increase owners' profits.

But the most serious threat has been the new security measures brought in following the 9/11 attacks. As a consequence of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code crew members face strict security regulations in port, including movements around the port and even access to telephone booths and welfare missions are now severely restricted. For our members these restrictions have included cases where seafarers have not been allowed to get off ships to go home for Christmas because they did not have the right visa requirements. A member was not allowed off his ship for urgent medical treatment. Even an officer was threatened with arrest because he did not have permission to leave his ship to take safety measurements from the dockside. Security is also being used as a blanket excuse to prevent union officials and welfare workers from visiting ships. Some private ports and terminals have used 'security' as a means of charging exorbitant fees for escorting crews through their facilities.

Congress, all these problems are seriously degrading the quality of seafarers' lives, conflicting with their human rights, cutting access to traditional shore-based welfare services, increasing their isolation and damaging their health and emotional wellbeing. Seafarers need your support to help defend them against the persecution and discrimination which they are experiencing. We want governments, including our own, to sign up to an international convention, ILO 185 on Seafarers' Identity Documents, which seeks to ensure that all bona fide seafarers have a highly secure ID which is recognised worldwide. ILO 185 will not only enhance maritime security by setting international standards for seafarer identification documents but it will also codify crew members' fundamental rights to shore leave. So far, however, only a tiny handful of countries have ratified the Convention and, disappointingly, they do not include the UK Government. It is imperative that we secure the support that is needed to get the measures introduced across the world.

Congress, life as a seafarer is tough enough without these added problems, and with a global crisis in the recruitment and retention of skilled maritime professionals, it is essential that their rights are protected. Support seafarers and support this motion.

Alan Grey (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 44.

He said: Congress, restricting shore leave is a blatant attack upon the human rights of ships' crews and cannot be allowed to continue. The tool for imposing these restrictions at the moment is the International Ship and Port Facilities Security Code, introduced by the International Maritime Organisation in 2004 in the wake of 9/11. Interestingly, Congress, our members who work as security inspectors in the Maritime and Coastguard Agency believe that these restrictions are not a direct result of the introduction of the ISPS Code. Under normal security conditions the Code simply requires a ship to provide details of those

wishing to go ashore to the port authorities and for those going ashore to carry ID to get through port security. It is only at the highest security level, where there is an imminent threat and shore leave is not allowed, that the Code actually prohibits that access. At best, Congress, the instance listed by my Nautilus colleague in moving the motion reflects an over-reaction to the security situation after 9/11. At worst they represent opportunistic exploitation by unscrupulous employers for commercial gain.

Prospect agrees with Nautilus that the solution could be provided by the universal endorsement of the International Convention on Seafarers' Identity Documents and supports a call for ILO Convention 85 to be adopted. ILO 85 would provide reassurance to countries which are concerned about their security and remove the excuse that dodgy employers use to exploit their crews, but most of all, Congress, it would enable ships' crews to exercise their basic human rights and benefit from much needed shore leave. Prospect is pleased to second this motion and asks Congress to fully support it.

Keith Elliott (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) supported Motion 44.

He said: This motion probably does not affect many British ratings as there are not many opportunities for us to work in the deep sea sector. Even in the coastal and European sectors our jobs have been decimated, but in saying all of that the denial of shore leave for any seafarer is like a kind of mental torture. Most of the crews affected are poorly paid and unorganised, and that is perhaps why the countries which restrict or ban shore leave do not care. The crews are denied basic rights, such as facilities to ring home or internet access to contact their families, and that is even if they could afford these things.

Make no mistake, this is a human rights issue for seafarers worldwide. It is a disgrace as to what is happening and it should be sorted out. The UK should ratify this convention. Thank you.

The President: I will now move to the vote on Motion 44. The General Council's policy is to support.

* *Motion 44 was CARRIED.*

National Identity Scheme

Jim McAuslan (*British Air Line Pilots' Association*) moved Motion 45.

He said. Congress, there are five reasons why we are saying 'no' to ID cards. From the outset, let me say that BALPA members are not against identity documents. They need to have passes to cross into the restricted zone at airports but, frankly, the current system is a complete shambles. BALPA members would like to see the system improved and the UK system made substantially better for those who have to use it. Ironically, one part of government, Transport Security, said it is not down to them. They believe it is down to the local airport authorities. Yet another part of government, the Home Office, says it wants to impose a national identity scheme on all airport workers. This is a shambles in the making and we will say 'no'.

Secondly, why guinea pig aviation and airports, an international crossroads where peoples of the world swan? If there is one place least likely to have a UK ID card as a common currency, it is an airport. I am not talking here just about passengers. There will be a myriad of EU citizens working airside and in the restricted zone who will not have a UK ID card, as a BBC Newsnight investigation found out earlier this year. Indeed, many individuals working for UK airlines and flying UK registered aircraft are not UK citizens.

How will they comply with the requirement? This scheme has not been thought through and BALPA will say 'no'.

The Government claim, thirdly, that this scheme has been introduced for those who work at airports because it will reduce the threat of terrorism. We reject that claim. The truth is that an ID card does not establish an intention to carry out a terrorist act and will not prevent an atrocity. The reality is that many terrorist acts are home grown, undertaken by people entitled to an ID card. The law of unintended consequences means, as security experts have predicted, that the security system will drop its guard, may well be misled into a false sense of security because an ID card is presumed to make a person less likely to be a terrorist because they have been checked. In any event, all an ID card proves is that you have an identity. In these days of identity theft, there is no doubt that it is possible for that to be someone else's identity. ID cards will not improve security.

Fourthly, BALPA members resent the way in which they are being used as pawns to introduce what is, quite clearly, a political hot potato. They resent that it is they who are being put in the front line. They resent the fact that the Government claims that NI cards are voluntary, yet they are being coerced into having to have one if they are to maintain their livelihood and have a job. Even then, they have the privilege of having to pay for it. This is coercion and BALPA says no.

Finally, BALPA members are really concerned as to how confidential data is being kept confidential.

Reassurances that the data will be held securely counts for little when, week in and week out, we hear horror stories of information left on trains, lost in transit or sold on e-bay. It is of little surprise that only 17 per cent trust authorities, public or private, to keep their personal details personal.

Lack of trust leads BALPA, on the fifth point, to say 'no'.

Congress, those are five reasons why BALPA believes we need to resist. To be clear, in terms of the motion, resisting with all means at our disposal does not mean that we are calling for a general strike tomorrow. It does mean active lobbying in Government, active in Westminster and BALPA believes we also need to look at how we can use the law, creatively, to thwart this development. After all, creative use of the law by employers has been used against us. Does this, for instance, interfere with employment contract law if a job depends on having an NI card, and yet NI legislation does not make it compulsory? Does it, potentially, collide with the free movement of labour within the EU? Is it in accordance with the Treaty of Rome? Is it a judicial review process as to the way in which the Government is reviewing its decision in the light of stakeholder feedback, feedback that we believe says no, but feedback that is being ignored by the Government. Let's test this.

Congress, BALPA says that we cannot allow this to happen. We must not roll over. Delegates, it may be aviation today. It could be you tomorrow. We ask Congress to say 'no' and take this back to the drawing board.

Suresh Tewari (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 45.

He said: How will a national identity scheme improve security? Many of you may feel that a national identity scheme where people are law abiding would not be a problem. But let me just explore very quickly the position from a data security point of view.

We are all aware that the Government and its various departments has recently had a very poor record in keeping personal data and information secure. Allied

to this, the Government has a fairly poor record on commissioning and implementing large-scale IT systems. So if all your data is collected, including biometric data, in one place, just how secure will it be? Remember, if you can write a set of algorithms to keep data secure, you can write a set of algorithms to steal and/or modify that data to clone that data. So how secure will that data be?

If you were to have that data stolen and it includes biometric data, then you would cease to exist. It would be nye on impossible for you to prove that you are who you are. Your situation might be like the film *Trading Places* where the fellow has his identity stolen.

So the Government has decided it wants to introduce the identity cards and they will do this through the backdoor, and that is by seeking to impose it on workers in the aviation sector on the grounds that it improves security. Let us just run through a couple of facts quickly. I will just give you an example. An aircraft controller or an engineer going to work at the Heathrow Tower – as you know, the Tower is now airside – would have to have their airside pass. You have to go through all the same security checks as the travelling public. When you go through the scanner, your bags get checked, you have to take off your belt and shoes and whatever jewellery you are wearing. It all gets checked. Your lunch gets checked. You cannot take through any water, orange juice or anything like that. If your lunch has got any gravy in it, forget it because you cannot take it through unless it is frozen. Having gone through all of those checks, you then have to go through no less than seven other security doors before you get to your workplace. So you still have to do that. Identity cards are not a substitute for that kind of checking. If you have a national identity card, you will still have to go through the specific procedure at Heathrow. Furthermore, you will not have to carry your national identity card with you. You can just leave that in your sock drawer at home. However, you would still have to carry your airport pass and your airside pass as well as going through all the checks.

Please support this motion because these identity cards will not add anything to additional security.

Mick Rix (*GMB*) supported Motion 45.

He said: Congress, the GMB supports Motion 45 but with reservations. In the past few months we have attended many meetings with civil servants and ministers on the National Identity Scheme's proposals for aviation workers. GMB, obviously, shares some concerns with sister unions in respect of ID cards. ID cards will not, overall, improve airport security without also investing in better airport perimeter fences and improving and increasing police and security surveillance at airports and their perimeters. Our reservations on this motion are obvious. We cannot totally sign up to a motion that says that the ID scheme for aviation workers has no value or improvements to security that might flow from this exercise. This is, quite frankly, a flawed, dangerous and downright irresponsible statement to make on our opposition to ID cards. We cannot allow this statement to be misrepresented and then manifest ourselves as being opposed to improving aviation, airport security and any measure that adds value and helps to maintain and improve the safety and security of airports, which we would then support.

I am also not comfortable with the fact that the stance of this motion is being supported by the employers in the industry on the back of jumping on the civil liberty bandwagon. Since when has any employer in this country ever cared, really, about civil liberties?

Congress, another reason why the aviation industry is opposed to a national identity scheme is because they

do not want to pick up the cost. They also want to keep their own ID card scheme which is currently in place. That means that employers compile and maintain data on employees. It was not that long ago that complaints were being made about employers having data on employees and trade unionists and stopping them getting work. So I think we need to be careful about this one.

There are other issues as well where employer ID cards have been used on a temporary basis to ship agency workers in actually to break strikes in the aviation industry. I am concerned about some of the things that we are saying.

I am also concerned about another thing, and that is, as a union movement, being consistent. I do not think we have been consistent on this matter. To get into this Congress this week the TUC sent out a brief to everybody saying that we had to bring a passport, we had to bring identification and we had to have a photographic ID. Now the General Council is saying they do not support such measures like that. I have to say to you where is the consistency? The point is that if the motion is passed on this issue, are we now saying that next year we will not have to bring our passports; we do not have to bring identification? In fact, let's get away with delegate credentials altogether and allow six million trade unionists to come to this hall and participate in the democratic process of the TUC! I think that would be a good suggestion. (*Applause*)

The President: I think, Congress, that was a speech in favour. (*Laughter*)

Mark Campbell (*University and College Union*) supported Motion 45.

He said: I am very pleased, without any reservations, to support this motion. I am a first-time delegate, so at least I might get one round of applause. We will see. (*Applause*) At our own Congress this May we unanimously agreed to urge members not only to oppose but, importantly, to defy the Government's plans to introduce identity cards. We also affiliated to the 'No to ID Campaign', and I would urge all colleagues to do likewise. This is not just about the identity card. This is about the identity database that is going to be held on all of us. The card is the means to get information into that database. That is what it is about.

As you may know, along with aviation workers, the Government also plans to pilot the ID scheme with non-EU students. We actually believe that this could deter them from choosing to study in the UK at a time when we are facing greater international competition. However, what delegates may not know is that UK students themselves are also going to be coerced into getting ID cards in 2010. They will need them in order to apply for student loans. This nails the lie that this is a voluntary system. The Government keep saying that it will, of course, be optional. Well, this is the sort of free choice we are increasingly seeing from this Government. It is a bit like the elderly can choose food or fuel. This is not a choice. Working class students will be able to choose to get an ID card in order to apply for the necessary funds to be able to study, or they can choose not to go to university. This is not a choice.

We believe that these ID card proposals are part of a centralisation of surveillance information. The centralised database – I am a computer lecturer so I do know a little bit about this stuff – will be linked to networks on licence plates, facial recognition systems, criminal records and DNA profiles. They can store communications that will enable the searching through of patterns of travel, employment records, health history and commercial retail transactions. The

Government has failed to take appropriate advice from those academics in the field who are best placed to advise them. For example, the London School of Economics' detailed research on costings has simply been dismissed out of hand by government officials. The ID system is of itself an assault on our civil liberties and places a potentially dangerous amount of power in the hands of Government. You will be monitored on where you go, what you buy, how ill you have been and your entire employment history. These are the civil liberties that are under attack and the ID scheme is part and parcel of that attack, and we should not mistake it for just holding yet another card. That is not the case here. Support the motion as much as possible.

Jim McAuslan (*British Air Line Pilots' Association*): I would like to reply to Mick's point. Mick, I am surprised at GMB. To suggest that we are being cavalier about security is to do our members a disservice. Our members are targets day in and day out, but it does not stop us raising questions about part of the regime. When our members are told that they cannot take a pair of nail clippers or a tweezer through security, yet they fly an aircraft which they can fly into a hillside or carry an axe, these are questions that we should raise. Raising the points that you do, that we are somehow cavalier, I think it does GMB a disservice to suggest that. Yes, we want to look at some of the practicalities around that, but let us not get carried away with the way in which ID cards are being portrayed as a solution to all security problems. Indeed, as I said, bringing in ID cards will allow us to drop our guard. In your own speech, you made the point, quite validly, that giving focus on ID cards when perimeter fences are falling down is not where we should be focusing our efforts. We should be getting the practicalities on the ground of security right rather than thinking that some electronic means is going to sort it out for us. It will not. Our suggestion is that we support this motion and ask the Government to go back to the drawing boards and let's get it right. Yes, let's improve security but let's not kid ourselves that the electronic means are going to do it simply by themselves. Thank you.

The President: We now move to the vote on Motion 45. The General Council supports the motion.

* *Motion 45 was CARRIED.*

Transport

The President: Congress, let me remind you that Motion 46, Transport, in the name of the United Road Transport Union has been withdrawn and that means that the amendment also falls.

The prison system and imprisonment

Brian Caton (*POA UK*) moved Composite Motion 17.

He said: Comrades and President, I am not going to use the word 'strike' straightaway.

The President: That makes a change.

Brian Caton: I love change. You know that. Composite 17: The prison system and imprisonment. For many years we have come to Congress to talk about the state of our prisons. Often we have been criticised for saying the same thing over and over again. Let me now give you some facts as well as what is contained in the composite. As we sit here now, in England and Wales, we are locking up the equivalent of the population of the City of Bath. I have listened

long and hard today about the injustices going on around the world. We have a prison system that currently, after eleven years of a Government that I voted for and will vote for again, has failed the Prison Service, and it is continuing to fail the Prison Service. We believe that there have to be real root and branch changes. Delegates will have read through the composite, but I want to give you some real facts about what it is like to work in a prison in England and Wales.

One fact I think you should all be aware of is that this is not 'Porridge' that we are talking about. This is not 'Bad Girls'. An average of eight prison officers a day are assaulted in our very violent prisons. This is where we lock up people, 80 per cent of whom have mental health problems. We are locking up, as I said, the equivalent of a small town. When Labour came to power in 1997 there were just under 61,000 people in our prisons in England and Wales. Labour's answer to our prison problems has been to open nine private prisons. It now intends to build its way out of the problems it is facing. What we are asking them to do is to look at the Prison Service as part of what was discussed here, which is social cohesion. We have a large prison population and you have to look at where that population comes from, and what part of the population the majority of those who we lock up come from. We have an imbalance in our prisons of black and ethnic minority prisoners. We have an imbalance in our prisons of females. We lost the Home Secretary over foreign nationals. Charles Clarke resigned or was sacked, yet we still have eleven thousand foreign nationals in our prisons. We currently hold more terrorists or alleged terrorists than any other country in Western Europe.

We need the Government to stop posturing, stop listening to the *Daily Mail* and start looking at our prisons as a socialist government should. We recently had a report by Jean Corston, the former Labour MP, into women in prisons, where she said that what we needed were smaller prisons, smaller units, which we can deal with. That is on the one hand. So the Government listened to that recommendation and said that we should have smaller units. At the same time, the Labour peer, Patrick Carter, brought out a report and said that we have to build Titan prisons, prisons that will hold two-and-a-half thousand inmates. The rationale for that seems to be that it would mean we could keep people closer to their homes. Comrades, if we want to be the society that locks up more of our young people, then keep on building Titan prisons. If we are to build prisons that each hold two-and-a-half thousand prisoners, it could have the capability, if you put two people in each cell, of holding five thousand prisoners. These type of prisons are currently in operation in California, by that well-known socialist, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and there is also a similar prison, which I am going to visit soon, just outside Paris, which holds three thousand.

Of course, New Labour's answer to this is that they will be successful because they will be private prisons. We will be keeping thousands and thousands of young men in prison for profit, so how are we going to reduce the population? This week Scotland has already announced that it intends to halve their prison population. Scotland has a prison population of eight thousand.

Barlinnie Prison in Glasgow currently is locking up just short of 1,800 people. That is not a Titan prison. That is a Victorian built prison overstretched. Wandsworth Prison today is locking up more than 1,600 prisoners. This is a failed system that the Government should take away and look at root and branch and stop attacking trade unionists and start looking at the system that is failing this country. Thank you.

Mike McClelland (napo) seconded Composite Motion 17.

He said: President and Congress, this is a chicken and this is an egg (*holding up items*). This is a Scotch egg, actually, but I will come back to the Scottish connection presently. (*Laughter*) Chicken-egg, egg-chicken, I never know which came first: prison places and people who fill them. Do we need more places to deal with increasing demand or does the demand grow as the number of places increases? The Government will always come up with arguments to justify this massive building programme and others will come up with counter arguments. I believe that much of this programme is about doing deals with transnational security companies. There is a perpetual prison crisis. The problem is always the same. Speaking as Home Secretary in 1980, Willy Whitelaw said: "This country has for many years paid little attention to its prisons. The result is that they are chronically overcrowded and the Prison Service operates under severe strain." The prison population then was 44,000 and it is nearly double that now. Where do we stop?

Prisons are like motorways. We build them, we fill them and we over-fill them. The consequence is that we can never properly rehabilitate prisoners because we are always in crisis, and now we are going to build them too big and in the wrong places.

A Scottish Prisons Commission reported recently and suggested that prison is not the right place for the majority of offenders. The basic thrust of that report, as you have heard from Brian Caton, was to halve the prison population in Scotland in a decade. Although I hate targets, here is one which I would commend to you. Let's plan for a reduced prison population, not for one that forever spirals out of control. Let's develop a penal policy that reserves gaol for those who really need to be there, for the public's protection and for appropriate punishment. Let's not fill our prison with the mentally ill, the homeless, the dispossessed and chronic drug users.

On Monday of this week the Scottish Justice Minister, Kenny MacAskill, observed: "The number we imprison is, frankly, shameful." So it is south of the border. I am ashamed to be part of a country that imprisons more of its population than any other country in the European Union. It is shameful, it is counter-productive and it is a waste of money. Let's look at the money. The Prison Building Programme is larger than the construction programme currently underway for the 2012 Olympics. There are planned to be 10,000 new places by 2012. That will cost you and me £235m more each year, and that is on top of the capital building programme, which one can measure in billions. A recent report highlighted seven alternatives to prison which give better value for money when reduced re-offending is the desired outcome. For example, a probation based drug treatment programme, taking account of the costs to victims or, rather, the savings that can be made by having less victims, by having more effective interventions and, therefore, less re-offending produces savings as much as £203,000 per offender. We will always need prisons and we will always have prisons, but let us not follow America into an immoral and highly expensive penal policy that brands and excludes an ever growing percentage of our citizens. Thank you.

Alan Whitaker (*University and College Union*) supported Composite Motion 17.

He said: Congress, I want to speak to the part in the composite about prison education in the penultimate paragraph.

Sisters and brothers, people need to have faith in the Prison Service. They need to have faith that it keeps them safe; they need to have faith that the staff in our

prisons are being rewarded for the incredible work they do, and they need to have faith that the system rehabilitates offenders.

Prison educators are the people who, literally, change people's lives. Former inmates who do not reoffend not only have their lives turned around but often they are the best advocates for a life free from crime for others who may be heading down that route.

Take Neill a serial offender who developed a flair for creative writing thanks to one of our members. He progressed to an Open University course and now tours the country speaking out against drugs and a life of crime. His experience of prison and his 'Tell it like it is' approach, is one of the most effective tools society can have when it comes to stopping crime.

Since 1991 prison education has been subjected to tendering and contracting out. Education in our prisons is provided by a mixture of further education colleges and private providers. Many of these private providers, while describing themselves as 'specialist educational providers' were actually unaware of such basic facts of educational life as the need to provide books, paper and pens, or that fees need to be paid for students taking exams. The contracts are subject to re-tendering every three or five years, so that our members working in prisons are under constant threat of a change of employer and a subsequent change in their conditions of service. These change are, naturally, always for the worse, and include loss of pension rights – those working for private providers are not eligible for the Teachers' Pension Scheme – and increased working hours, sometimes as many as a thousand a year. This situation leads to instability, demoralisation and a high turnover among staff in penal education. It increases the pressure on those working in an already stressful environment.

We believe that the Government needs to end this marketisation in the penal education system. Those responsible for educating our prison population deserve security and respect in their working lives. We call upon the Government to provide this. Please support this composite motion.

Austin Harney (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 17.

He said: Congress, I work for the Ministry of Justice. On behalf of all our members in MoJ, we give staunch support to the Prison Officers' Association in this motion.

I make quite clear that, currently, nearly 80,000 men, women and children are in prison in England and Wales, a figure that has been rising steadily year on year since 1993, leading to a higher percentage of people in prison than in any other country in Western Europe. Overcrowding means, first of all, that basic standards of human dignity are compromised with more than 12,000 prisoners being held two to a cell designed for one. Secondly, prisoners are being transported all over the country in a search for spaces, costing the taxpayer millions in transportation and delays to the criminal justice system as well as jeopardising family relationships. Thirdly, the good work that the Prison Service is trying to do is being undermined as purposeful activity and re-offending programmes are disrupted by overcrowding. Fourthly and lastly, deaths in custody are increasing. A study by the Forum for Preventing Deaths in Custody in September 2007 found a link between overcrowding and self-inflicted deaths.

PCS believes that this crisis will be exacerbated, first, by the 3 per cent per year budget cuts, between 2008 and 2011 envisaged in Lord Carter's forthcoming review of the Prison Service; secondly, tendering by the private sector to design, build, maintain and finance more prison places and, thirdly, the continuation of

indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPPs) and noting the official projection that the number of these IPPs will reach 25,000 by the year 2012.

PCS believes that the solution to this crisis must include, first of all, safeguarding the budgets of the Prison Service and, secondly, ensuring that programmes which tackle re-offending, including the work of instructional officers, drug and alcohol treatments are properly resourced. Rehabilitation of prisoners to ensure that they do not re-offend again is extremely important. We do have a motion which was moved today 'Reclaim the night', and we have to make sure that we are all safe to walk the streets at night-time. I say that this Government should stop these cuts in the justice sector. Let's stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all the trade unions in the justice sector to ensure proper adequate prison reform. I ask you all, fellow delegates, please support this motion.

Pat Stuart (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 17.

She said: Congress, I thank the POA and napo for bringing these issues to our attention. We are supporting this composite because these are issues for all of us here, both as they affect prisoners and as they affect prison staff. It has to be a serious indictment to our society that one of the few areas of growth currently planned by this Government is in building prisons, when we already have the highest prison population per capita in the EU, as was just pointed out by my colleague from napo. The effects of an increasingly authoritarian government misusing the fear of terrorism has already been referred to this week. This, along with the played-up threat of crime, is exploited the Government each time it decides to seek ever greater powers to detain, scrutinise and criminalise more and more of our people. The prison population includes disproportionate numbers of young people, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health issues and members of ethnic minorities and foreign nationals. Congress, these are not only our neighbours but our members, past, potential and future, who, too often, are suffering from being pushed to the edge of an unequal society by lack of opportunity.

Young people who should be our members and should feel valued by society instead hear themselves talked of daily as if they were a problem, while the Government explores ever more measures for controlling them. Most of those who fetch up in prison are among the high percentage who leave school at 16 with no job or training place to go to.

How does the Government address this situation? For one thing, by pressing ahead with the privatisation of the youth services provided by my CYWU *Unite* members, as if the support needs of vulnerable young people could ever be met in the marketplace by money! They and other vulnerable workers have to get by with poorly paid, exploitative, insecure work, obliged to work for too many hours in spite of minimum wage legislation and inadequately enforced working hours legislation.

We say to government, "We don't want you investing our money in huge new gaols. We want you investing in our young people, legislating to improvement rights for all of our people and enforcing them." The new buildings we need are not massive new gaols but decent council housing.

Finally, we want you to repeal the anti-trade union laws which have put a ball and chain around our ankles as we organise these young and vulnerable workers. We, here, are the key to drawing people back from the edge of society before they are discarded into the prison bin by the State. Let's organise those workers. Good luck to the POA in reclaiming their legitimate rights. We support.

* *Composite Motion 17 was CARRIED.*

Miami Five video

The President: Congress, we now have a video about the Miami Five Campaign that you agreed to support earlier this afternoon. The video has been produced by *Unite* but with the support of the TUC, UNISON and other unions involved in the campaign, and also with the help of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign. (*The video on the Miami Five was then shown*)

The President: Conference, that was a very powerful video. I would urge you all to get hold of a copy of the video and make sure that your members see it so that they know why the campaign is so important. Please contact the Cuba Solidarity Campaign for copies. Thank you.

Congress adjourned for the day.

FOURTH DAY: THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH*(Congress reassembled at 9.30am)*

The President: I call Congress to order. First of all, I would like to thank Haringey Young Musicians.

I am now going to explain how I intend to take today's business. I intend to take all the scheduled business for today as published in your *Congress Guide*. After we have finished that, I will then take the unfinished business. You have been great. There is very little unfinished business. I will take Motion 23, Asylum seekers and employment, in the name of ELS. After that I intend taking Emergency Motion 1, Welfare Green Paper in the name of PCS and then, finally, I will take Emergency Motion 3, Associated train crew union, in the name of ASLEF.

European Court of Justice decisions on collective bargaining and industrial action rights

Derek Simpson (*Unite*) moved Composite Motion 3.

He said: Comrades, I remember many years ago the debates that took place in the movement about Europe and I remember many of the people who I looked up to arguing against Europe, that it was a businessmen's club, that it would be a capitalists' paradise, where companies could ride rampant and workers would be even more exploited than we felt we were at that time. However, experience during past years has somewhat mellowed that view. Many of the positive pieces of legislation have actually emanated from Europe. Cynics used to point out that many of the Labour Party's claimed achievements were actually derived from Europe. So, perhaps, we have now been lulled into a sense of false security, that Europe has been positive, as it has, in many cases, for workers, but things never stand still. It now transpires that the most recent judgments by the European Court of Justice cause, perhaps, the biggest challenge to the trade union movement in a century, far worse than Thatcher's laws, striking at the very heart of collective bargaining, damaging unions' abilities to fight for improvements in working conditions and making it not only preferable for employers but given them legal protection to introduce cheap labour into any sphere, any sector and any corner of the economy. As employers become more and more familiar with the recent rulings in the Viking, Laval and Ruffert cases, and the way in which they give the employer the advantage, there will be more and more exploitation of the advantages they offer.

Comrades, this is not a motion which will pull your heart strings, it will not lead to great rhetoric, it is very technical and it is a bit dry, but actually this is probably the most important motion in the entire Congress, because, unless we reverse the European Court of Justice's decisions, we are back in the dark days. Let me read from my notes – as you know, I do not normally read notes, but I just want to read what our research department have provided me with as to the threat: "Unions cannot take action against companies employing imported workers at rates below those for local workers. Workers' rights to collective action are less important than the market freedom of access to cheaper workers. Union members are prevented from being able to take collective action to defend industry agreements and outlawing action aimed at levelling up wages of imported workers."

Let us put some meat on the bone. What is possible under these rulings is that an employer could hire cheap labour anywhere in either Britain or Europe at rates below your collective agreements in any sector, introduce those workers in and you have no right to seek to get those improved or to challenge them because they are protected by law. We had a situation in Unite some time ago – actually, it was when we

were still Amicus – with a dispute at Wembley. Colleagues will remember it. Cheap labour was coming on the site and the workers took industrial action and, under British law, we could not have made that official. We would have had to have gone through the balloting procedures, which we did, ultimately, and that situation was resolved. However, we had a lot of flack from comrades who said, "Why doesn't the union just come straight out and make this official?", and you know the reasons why that was not possible. But imagine having to say to workers, who had balloted under British law and achieved a positive result, "We cannot make it official because it is illegal under European law." Can you imagine trying to convince those workers that unions have anything to offer when we go through our own restrictive laws and still cannot support workers?

Just think for a moment what that will do to the argument and value of trade unions; hog tied and unable to defend members even after the very restrictive laws that we face. Comrades, this is serious. This is the biggest challenge to collective bargaining and the trade union movement in my lifetime, and I think in your lifetimes. We have to work to get our Government to make clear statements that they are not prepared, after all the opt-outs they take from European legislation, to benefit big business, to accept that these ECJ cases will worsen employment law in the UK. We must work with European MEPs to try and get the European Parliament to reverse the ECJ cases – to make it a political decision. We have to work with our members to be prepared to have the understanding of the campaigns and fights we may need to achieve those objectives. So wherever we are, this situation needs drawing to all trade unionists' attention, whether it is lay activists, whether it is members, whether it is delegates to Congress, this question has to be raised. It has to be put at the top of the agenda.

There are other pressing problems, and I do not want to detract from all the motions that have been passed, but if we do not solve this problem none of the others will seem that bad against the worsening situation that we will end up in. Thank you.

Jim McAuslan (*British Airline Pilots Association*) seconded Composite Motion 3.

He said: Comrades, why BALPA? The trigger for us was a tussle with British Airways which wanted to set up a subsidiary in France without BALPA's agreement. This tussle was not about pay. We accepted lower terms and conditions for the start-up business. It was about trying to keep two pilot groups united to avoid the situation where the employer can set one group off against another. We exhausted negotiations. We exhausted the internal disputes procedure and we exhausted ACAS, almost literally, but there was no agreement. In full compliance with UK law, we asked members if they were prepared to take strike action. The company knew the stakes. In response they mounted a massive propaganda campaign encouraging members to vote and to vote 'no'. Our members heard them, because in a 93 per cent poll 86 per cent of members voted for strike action, and that is in a workforce that is over 90 per cent organised. What was the employers' reaction? It was to state that if we called a strike, they would take legal action and claim unlimited damages. We did not and do not want to do anything illegal. Our rule book does not permit it and our members' values would not allow it. That is why we sought the view of a court. I repeat: we sought the view of a court. Congress, the experience was not a happy one, because EU law permits the fundamental right to strike – terrific – but if the strike conflicts with the economic freedom for employers, its exercise requires justification, and it can only be justified if

there is a serious threat to jobs and conditions of employment. Even then, it is subject to a criterion of proportionality. Proportionality in UK labour law is a pre-requisite that judges avoid deciding the industrial merits of a dispute and confine themselves to the legal merits. Both the Viking and Laval cases changed all that. English judges are now able to give weight to the respective interests of the parties to a trade dispute. BA's estimate of the damage was £100m against the damages to the employees. In our case, there was no immediate impact but a long-term threat.

Our problems did not stop there. BA argued that their damages would not be protected by the limits that we currently have under trade union law, limits set after Taff Vale. Congress, we cry 'foul'. We met all the stringent requirements, and then the rules were changed halfway through. Congress, we will play by the rules, but let's make them clear and fair.

BALPA may appear to have suffered a setback with our case against BA but that is to under-estimate the perseverance of our members. Today, for instance, we will announce an agreement with our sister organisation in Spain that prevents either BA or Iberia setting member against member if that merger proceeds. Today I can announce that pilot associations in Italy, France, Spain and Germany are joining with BALPA in a pan-European body to present a united front to the EasyJet management. Further, I can also announce today that BALPA will be taking a case to the International Labour Organisation for a breach by the UK Government of ILO Convention 87, a case to the European Commission on Human Rights and a case to the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Congress, support the composite. Let us pull together and let us get a level playingfield.

Tim Poil (*Nationwide Group Staff Union*) supported Composite Motion 3.

He said: President and Congress, the recent decisions handed down by the ECJ in the cases of Viking and Laval run contrary to ILO Conventions on free collective bargaining and will encourage employers to reduce wages and increase working hours. These decisions give clear precedence to freedom for business in the EU over fundamental collective and trade union rights. If these decisions are allowed to stand they will sanction social dumping, undermine collective agreements and prevent trade unions from taking industrial action to protect their members' terms and conditions.

Moving forward, the ETUC has proposed the adoption of a Social Progress Protocol. I call on both the TUC and the Government to support this proposal. In essence, this protocol will ensure that economic freedoms, as established by the various EU Treaties, would not be interpreted in a way that does not infringe on the exercise of fundamental social rights as recognised in the Member States and by union law. This includes the right to negotiate, conclude and enforce collective agreements and to take collective action in pursuit of social interests and the protection of workers.

It is important that the TUC continues to work closely with the ETUC to ensure that the living standards of working people in the EU are not eroded. Colleagues, please vote for this important composite. You have already heard from both Unite and BALPA about the very real consequences of these recent decisions in the UK. Thank you for your support.

Brian Orrell (*Nautilus UK*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 3.

He said: Colleagues, as you know, the Viking ruling involved our sister union in Finland and also the International Transport Workers' Federation, so I think

it is very appropriate that we contribute to this debate. My union views the both the Viking and Laval rulings, as well as others, as a fundamental attack on our right to organise and on our rights to industrial action to protect our members' interests. That is all that the Finnish Seamen's Union was doing when they took action against Viking Line's decision to re-flag their vessels to the Latvian flag. For those of us working in the maritime world, the reaction of the courts was disastrous but predictable. Week after week shipowners around the world re-flag vessels in an attempt to get an unfair competitive advantage and week after week our family of trade unions around the world attempts to protect those seafarers affected. So this was nothing new. Many of you here will recall the Irish Ferries' dispute when my own union's members were thrown off vessels and replaced by cheaper labour. They were exploited by those exploiting the lack of any safeguards in our industry. The issues here were exactly the same as in Viking.

But, colleagues, the Viking ruling and others transcend our industry and go right to the very heart of what Europe is. These rulings attack more than just the right to strike. They attack the concept of competition on quality. Instead they open the door for a Europe where competition by being the cheapest is protected and they encourage the race to the bottom. They deal a blow to all of those who believe there is a social aspect to Europe. My union is not anti-Europe. In fact, we created the first European trade union by joining with our Dutch colleagues in Nautilus NL. Of course, I appreciate that this composite is moved by Unite and that may distress them, but there is no dishonour in being second.

This composite is absolutely right when it calls for the host nation conditions to apply. This subtle but fundamental principle must be enshrined in EU legislation. It would have avoided the Viking case and would show that Europe is about quality, not cost; about being the best and not the cheapest; about protecting skills and not eroding skills. It would enable us to create a sector of excellence, for example, in the ferry sector, and not participate in a race to the bottom.

Nautilus UK supports this motion. Let us implement it and let us also make sure people know, when they cast their votes in next year's European elections, that there can be a choice, a choice between a Europe that does not just favour business but protects inefficient companies that can only compete by being cheap, or a Europe that promotes skills, job security and quality.

It is because we in the trade union movement support these principles that Viking, Laval and the other cases have been used to attack us. Let us make sure that this is the message from the trade union movement. Let our response not just focus on the right to strike but also on the right to a Europe which is prepared to stop companies competing through social dumping and discrimination, a Europe with a social dimension. I support.

Bob Oram (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 3.

He said: Congress, Derek was spot on when he talked about the importance of this motion. I would urge everybody to visit the FBU stall and pick up a copy of *Federation News* as the summer edition is all about this. The detail in it is really useful, because we do need to get our heads round this.

UNISON believes that the ECJ is unaccountable. We believe it is politically driven. Its recent decisions undermine our collective ability and collective rights even further than the disgraceful Thatcher attacks which are still on the statute books.

The situation is quite simple, comrades. The EU is committed to extending the internal market. That is privatisation to you and me. The Court, through these rulings, has seriously undermined our ability to defend our members against further attacks. The employers' right to freedom of establishment trumps the right to strike leaving us defenceless against the EU's drive to liberalise markets and institutionalise social dumping. We need to up our game, as Derek said. We need to wake up to these threats and challenges. Viking, Laval and Ruffert are now household names in Ireland and they contributed to the loss of the referendum on the EU Constitution, revived as the Lisbon Treaty. If we do not, likewise, get to understand them and act now, the threat to democratically elected local councils making decisions about a living wage or prohibiting a two-tier workforce will be real. In the UK we have the highest level of non-domestic company ownership. What is going to stop more companies acting like British Airways, as we heard from BALPA, and switching ownership to Eastern Europe and employ UK-based staff from there?

Our movement's attempts to tackle exploitation of migrant workers could be undermined completely. Congress, these cases have demolished once and for all the idea that Europe will deliver social rights. This is the triumph of capital, the complete right to roam the globe in search of free markets and flexible workers. As the courts unpick the social agenda, capital will undermine the freedom of unions and our ability to protect terms and conditions. These recent decisions reaffirm the neo-liberal agenda, enshrine deregulation, reaffirm the fact that we have no social policy in Europe and signal a complete loss of traditional employment measures. We, like the people of Ireland, need to reject this agenda and we need to rise to this challenge now. Support the composite.

The President: There is no need for a right of reply. Derek is right. This is by far one of the most important issues affecting our trade union movement and collective bargaining in this country.

* *Composite Motion 3* was CARRIED.

Attacks on trade union rights

The President: We now move to Motion 7, Attacks on trade union rights. The General Council supports the motion, but with a reservation. I will be calling the General Secretary during the debate to explain the General Council's position.

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) moved Motion 7.

He said: Congress, I am asking you to support this motion, amended by the FBU. I appreciate that the General Council has reservations about it, but we have reservations as well. I have heard reservations being spoken about all week long. There have been more reservations this week than what the Euston Station gets for first-class business travellers on their trains up and down the West Coast. (*Applause*) I will tell you about the reservation that my union has. The reservation my union has is that we had an opportunity, this Government had an opportunity, to allow British workers to have a say in a referendum, like our Irish counterparts did, on June 13th when the result came through. You know they say that there are two sorts of people in the world: Irish and those who want to be Irish. Thank God that the Irish voters declared that vote on June 13th. (*Applause*) You can say that you do not like a European Court judgment and you can say that you like Europe, but the reality is that the European Union is about attacking work, pay and conditions. I do not want this Trades Union

Congress to forget what our motion also says. We want a repeal of the anti-trade union laws first, which have been in place since 1980. These laws which were put in place in this country in 1980 had nothing to do with democracy. Do you remember Thatcher, when she said she wanted to give the trade unions back to their members? The trouble is only half of them came back because we lost half in between. As Dave Prentis quite rightly said, this is a very important issue. It is a shame that this issue was not being debated on Monday night and Tuesday before the dinner that Gordon Brown held with the General Council, then he might have started listening to some of the things we have been saying at this Congress.

Once you go through the hoops and hurdles of finding out who you are going to ballot and, secondly, in notifying the employer, and while all this is going on the employer is out organising a scab workforce to come and do your work, the new European Court judgment decisions refer to 'disproportionate to the actions you are taking'. Therefore, if you decide democratically that you want to take a two-day strike, even if you go through all the hoops and hurdles, then the employers can come along and say, "As a result of the European Court decisions, it is disproportionate to what you want to do and it becomes illegal to take two days of action" because the judge could turn round and say "You could achieve this with an overtime ban, a one hour strike or a half-day strike" and so on. That is what these European Court judgments are going to do.

The question is how are we going to change it? I can tell you that when all nine planks of the anti-trade union legislation came in the '80s and '90s by the Tories, this Congress said, "We will oppose it, we will oppose it, we will oppose it!", but as each set of legislation came in we didn't do anything against the previous ones and they remain on the statute books. If we are not careful, all we are going to focus on is the European Court judgments and forget about what is happening at home on the anti-trade union legislation that was brought in by the Tories and has remained on the statute books under New Labour. We have to say that not only do we want to get rid of these European Court decisions but we want to get rid of all the anti-trade union legislation that has either been passed by the Tories or under New Labour. (*Applause*)

Comrades, these European decisions are about supporting the bosses and them having no frustration to free trade. A trade union stands in the way of a company making mass profits. We have to understand the nature of the beast. These European Court judgments now reverse everything that we have had in place that we took for granted since Taff Vale over a hundred years ago. What it really means is, yes, you can take strike action; yes, you can organise, but you will be totally un-immune to damages not only as a trade union but as individuals as well. That is what our colleagues in BALPA are facing; that is what our members are facing under the Irish Ferries' dispute and that is what all of us are facing at this moment in time.

Comrades, we must mobilise. We have to mobilise. We must start telling people, as we go into this credit crunch, as industries start being shut down, as legislation is going to chain us down, not that there is nothing we can do nor that there is no hope out there. I thought what this movement was about was to give hope to people who do not have hope. It is to say to those workers who might lose their jobs that we are going to campaign for them. Therefore, we need to reaffirm what this Trades Union Congress stood for more than 100 years ago when it challenged Taff Vale by mobilising workers throughout the length and breadth of Britain and throughout Europe, to destroy these European Court judgments, and more importantly to destroy all of the anti-trade union

legislation brought in by the Tory governments and kept in place by Labour. I ask for your support.

Tam McFarlane (*Fire Brigades Union*) seconded Motion 7.

He said: Congress, the FBU adds an amendment to the motion. We have tabled this amendment because we are greatly concerned with the new legislation which has been put in by the Government, which we were told was introduced to deal with terrorism in the post 9/11 world, but which will further attack and undermine the rights of the trade unions. Specifically, we are talking about the Civil Contingencies Act. It was introduced in 2004 and it gives the Government and its agencies wide-ranging emergency powers in the event of situations, so we were told, such as major terrorist attacks. At the time, good MPs like John McDonnell warned us that this Act would be used instead to undermine unions. Indeed, the first time we heard it mentioned was when the Unite tanker drivers went on strike and the Government threatened to use the Act to draft in soldiers to drive the tankers and undermine the strike action. Now, in the Fire Service, we see our Chief Fire Officers' Association, egged on by our employers and the Government, putting forward a strike-breaking plan called 'Project Fireguard' – these people like their names – and quoting the Civil Contingencies Act as the reason why they are doing it. Under this plan fire brigades would give a one-off payment of almost £10m followed by an annual retainer of more than £9m to a private company, and this private company would provide scab labour who would come in and ride our fire engines in the event that the FBU took strike action. What is the private company that they have identified to do this? It is none other than Group 4, a company familiar to us all as being responsible for the battle after battle, especially to our comrades in the Prison Officers' Association. They are now to be asked to take responsibility for emergency calls in the Fire and Rescue Service.

You heard our General Secretary yesterday outlining the difficulties which we in the Fire Service face with lack of equipment and cut after cut, so I have a message for the people who designed these plans: "If you give £10m of taxpayers' money to spend, instead of putting it into the pockets of a discredited multinational company, spend it on frontline Fire and Rescue Services because that is where the money is needed." We need better equipment, better conditions and more staff. That is what the public pays its taxes for. (*Applause*)

Isn't this just typical of these employers of today? They talk about partnership and working together to your face, whereas behind your back they are working hard putting in plans to undermine the union in the workplace. A leopard does not change its spots. Of course, it does not seem to have occurred to them that if they engaged with the union in a proper and meaningful way and treated the workers with dignity and respect, perhaps they would not have to plan for strikes in the first place. So there we have it, Congress. Anti-trade union legislation, a posturing Government, employers using belligerent tactics to undermine the workforce, compliant managers, privatised strike-breaking and taxpayers' money being hived off to multi-nationals. It is not called a struggle for nothing, is it? But together we can get behind this motion and fight it. Thank you.

Brendan Barber (*General Secretary*): President and Congress, as you indicated, I have to express support for this motion but indicate some points of reservation. This motion, fundamentally, is dealing with the issue of the legal cases, the European Court of Justice cases

which were at the heart of Composite Motion 3. You may wonder "Why was it not possible to get an entirely united position about Congress's strategy on that issue?" Again, I very much agree with Derek Simpson. This is a matter of huge importance. We need a strategy to try to press our Government to use their influence to turn around the implications of these cases. We need a European-wide strategy and, at the end of next week, the European TUC will be holding a major session to build pressure across Europe and in the European institutions to turn around the implications of these cases.

On that issue, I see no difference in essence between RMT's motion and the composite that was led by Unite. But it looks to go further in three respects, and those are the points on which the General Council has reservations. The first is the reference to the United Campaign. The wording in the RMT motion could be seen to imply an open-ended commitment to support campaign activities led by the United Campaign. It is a campaign that has done a lot of good work, which has the support of many affiliates but not every affiliate. It would be wrong to be committed in advance, in an open-ended way, to support whatever action the United Campaign decided to take.

The second is the reference to a proposed day of action, demonstration and lobby of our Parliament. We certainly need to lobby the European institutions and Unite's composite makes that absolutely clear. It may be that a lobby of the British Parliament should be a part of our strategy, but at this stage the General Council did not think we should commit ourselves specifically to that course of action.

Thirdly, and perhaps this is the most important point, the motion does refer to the Lisbon Treaty. We have yet to see exactly what is going to happen in the wake of the rejection by the Irish people of the Treaty, whether there are going to be changes negotiated. Indeed, there may be a political opportunity to win changes and to use the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Lisbon Treaty to address the issues raised by these European Court of Justice cases. But the General Council did not think that this motion was the right vehicle to determine our view of the Lisbon Treaty with all the issues that it involves. If you like, Bob, you are smuggling a bit of contraband on the back of a motion that we support around these ECJ cases. This is not the vehicle to decide our wider European strategy.

On that basis, those are the reservations from the General Council. We want to support the motion and we want to see Congress support the motion, but it is important that Congress understands those points of reservation.

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*), in reply said: Thanks, President. I will be very brief. I do not think there is a lot of difference between what the two motions are saying. It was the issue over the Lisbon Treaty. I am certainly not smuggling contraband, Brendan. I think that some of the people who decided the European Court judgments must have been on contraband. (*Laughter and applause*) These are decisions affecting working people. It is true about fundamental rights being in the Lisbon Treaty, but it can only apply so long as it does not affect domestic law. Domestic law in this country means that you do not have the right to go on strike, and we have never had the right to go on strike in this country. That is why it has always been a breach of contract. Why would this British Government want to bring in better laws than are present in Britain at the moment yet it still wants to keep the anti-trade union legislation that came in under the Tories. So perhaps there is a time for change now. If the Government really wants to reverse these European Court judgments, then the first thing it should do is act

at home by repealing the Tory anti-trade union legislation that they kept in place after the Tories had lost power. I ask you to support it on that basis.

* *Motion 7 was CARRIED.*

The protection of seafarers' employment in the EU shortsea trades

Paul Moloney (*Nautilus UK*) moved Motion 10.

He said: Congress, my union has stood at this rostrum on many occasions exposing the problems created by the globalised free market that is the modern shipping industry: a market in which low employment costs rather than quality increasingly becomes the only basis on which competition takes place. As a result, skill levels, employment security and safety are compromised as quality companies are forced to compete by being the cheapest and not being the best. Companies which are socially responsible, which do have a strategic vision, companies which value skills, safety and quality, suffer from this competition, a competition not bound by the UK minimum wage, the Race Relations Act, UK safety regulations and other measures which exist to help protect workers by enforcing minimum standards.

Colleagues, there is a real urgency in addressing these issues. This unfair competition, which is commonplace in the deep sea sector, is now a factor in the ferry sector as well. It threatens our members' job security, discriminating against seafarers not resident in the UK and compromises safety. The name Irish Ferries will forever be synonymous now with the race to the bottom but, colleagues, there are others. Companies are operating vessels sailing between two UK ports, flying flags of convenience. We are now seeing a chain of events where companies, which are fearful that they can be undercut, are starting to attack the terms and conditions of seafarers. A growing number of companies are now seeking to gain an unfair competitive advantage by discriminating against seafarers not resident in the UK, a form of wage competition that would not be possible in many other industries represented here, at least until the Viking ruling, anyway. Even Scotland's lifeline ferry services with the tendering of Caledonian McBrain, we have witnessed attempts to introduce competition on costs. Despite Caledonian McBrain winning the tender our members are now faced with the consequences of further investigations by the EU Commission in relation to the tender process.

Colleagues, it is time for a co-ordinated campaign to bring an end to this situation. Our motion sets out what needs to be done and calls on the TUC to support these measures. Passenger ferries carry thousands of people each day from the UK to the near Continent. We have to find ways of regulating competition so that investment in skills, safety and quality are key.

Workers in the ferry sector and the people who use it demand that we create a sector of excellence where skills, safety and quality not only survive but thrive, a sector which is not acceptable to discriminate on pay or to cut corners on safety, a sector where the pay and conditions on board vessels are those applicable in the countries where the vessels operate and not by reference to the flag of the vessel or the nationality of the seafarers employed. We can create such a sector in Europe. We can create a level playing field with all operators playing by the same rules, a sector that Europe can be proud of and a sector in which our members' skills can be valued. However, it will not happen by accident. The market on its own will not deliver and that is why we are calling on your support for these measures.

Colleagues, please support this motion, support our campaign to deliver job security for our members and a

safe, efficient and reliable sector for the public. Thank you.

Mark Carden (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Motion 10.

He said: I would like to touch on training and employment. As far as that is concerned, at the current time hardly any UK seafaring ratings are being trained, and both maritime unions are seeking a significant expansion of training provision at this moment. The last figure recorded for UK ratings was, approximately, fifty in 2005, and numbers have carried on falling since this time. The leading recruitment agency, Clyde Marine, has advised RMT of the need to train more seafaring deck and engine ratings. At the moment, too many companies are chasing a dwindling supply of seafarers whose age profile is steadily rising. Training provision clearly needs to be expanded and the UK shipping industry has presented a joint industry programme to the Department for Transport which seeks to provide a significant increase in central funding for training.

The number of UK seafaring ratings employed has declined to just over eight thousand today, compared with thirty thousand in 1980. The shipowners can continue to replace UK seafarers with low cost foreign nationals. One of the reasons for this is the lack of employment protection for workers in the industry. In particular, shipowners continue to enjoy an exemption from the provisions of the 1976 Race Relations Act. I would like to thank Frances O'Grady for her work on this issue. It is a magnificent piece of work.

The National Minimum Wage does not apply to seafarers on board ships whilst in UK territorial waters. The maritime unions believe that many shipowners have come to view the UK flag as an increasingly attractive tax benefit. The phrase is 'light touch employment regulations'. We want this to stop and we ask you to support.

The President: We now move to the vote on Motion 10. The policy of the General Council is to support.

* *Motion 10 was CARRIED.*

Health and safety at work

Alan Ritchie (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) moved Composite Motion 21.

He said: Brothers and sisters, health and safety is, rightly, a major issue for all construction workers. The statistics speak for themselves. Just under two people are killed every week. Since the start of this conference, another worker has been killed in the construction industry. Thousands are injured, yet the HSE estimates that more than 80 per cent of these deaths were avoidable. It appears that the best way to murder someone in the UK is to open a construction company, employ them, take a board decision to cut corners, break the Health and Safety at Work Act and kill them. Only 30 per cent of such employers are convicted. Even if they are convicted, the fines are often just a few thousand pounds to the company. That is why we welcome the Government's decision to have an inquiry into construction industry deaths. We believe that that inquiry must ask some tough questions. Questions must be asked about why deaths are so high in the construction industry. The inquiry must be independent from the Health and Safety Executive, and it should examine exactly the role of the HSE. Today, due to budget cuts and an ideological move away from enforcement activity, HSE inspectors are rarely seen in the workplace.

UCATT believes that we must lobby for a reversal of the HSE budget cuts. We must transform the ethos of

the HSE from an organisation that offers help and advice to employers to an organisation that maximises its resources in conducting inspections and prosecutes companies which break the health and safety laws.

The statement from Judith Hackett, the Chair of the HSE, that more inspections are not the answer, that more regulation is not the answer and that it is up to the industry to put its own house in order and regulate itself is giving a green light to all the cowboy construction companies out there who totally disregard health and safety.

The statistics do not prove what Judith Hackett is saying. I am a general secretary of a union with members in Ireland, where there has been a doubling in the number of inspectors which has halved the number of deaths in one year. The reason why a Labour Government brought in the Health and Safety at Work Act in 1974 was because employers were not looking after the safety of their employees, so legislation had to be brought in. This nonsense described as 'self regulation' should send a shiver down the spine of every worker in the United Kingdom. As has been already said, the facts stand for themselves. Self regulation has not worked, it does not work and will never work. UCATT believes that the trade unions must campaign to make sure that this dangerous mantra no longer corrupts the health and safety policy of this country.

It would also be remiss of me not to mention other issues relating to health and safety. I am disappointed that after eleven years of a Labour Government we do not have a statutory health and safety duty for directors. As in other areas of health and safety, the voluntary code for directors has not worked. Most companies ignore it. We believe that there would be an overnight change in attitude towards safety the first time a killer director was led away from his office in handcuffs.

Finally, I would like to mention the victims of pleural plaques. Last year the Law Lords ruled that pleural plaques victims should no longer receive compensation. This is the most class biased decision that has ever been recorded. A group of out-of-touch judges, living in the leafy suburbs of London, are telling working class people that because your employer failed to protect you from asbestos, that injury to the lungs from this exposure is negligible. I would like to say that, maybe, that is because their sons and daughters will never be exposed to asbestos, nor them. Thanks to the effort of the trade union movement, the Government is beginning to listen. We believe there can be no halfway house. There can be no selling out to the insurance industry. Those responsible must be identified, compensation must be paid and the Law Lords' decision should be overturned. *(Applause)*

This movement has constantly battled for improvements in health and safety because there is no other organisation that represents workers at the point of production. Our fathers saw health and safety as a top priority for our movement. I believe it is our heritage, it is our duty to do the same and I ask you to support this composite to give us that mandate. Thank you, delegates.

Graham Goddard (*Unite*) seconded Composite Motion 21.

He said: I am pleased to be seconding the motion that was so eloquently put by Alan Ritchie. I am sad that we still, in this day and age, have to look at composite motions around people getting killed in the workplace and the indictment on management which allows this situation to happen on a daily, monthly and yearly basis. I am not pleased to report that during the past year 228 people have died in the workplace! I am not pleased to report that on average 230 people have

died every year in the workplace during the past six years. I am also not pleased to report that the two main sectors in Unite (Agriculture and Construction) have the highest rate of deaths inside the figures that I have just mentioned. The big issue is that 70 per cent of those deaths could have been prevented on the basis that it is down to management and director failure.

The Corporate Manslaughter Bill, which was brought in through Warwick, never fulfilled what it was intended to do and we need to campaign to make sure that those directors who are the fault and the reason why people are killed at work are brought to justice in the manner that the Corporate Manslaughter Bill first envisaged. Imprisonment has to be talked about; fines have to be increased and it is an indictment that directors and chief executives of companies can be disqualified from being directors if for economic and financial reasons they break the law, but when they kill people at work that is not the case. Surely, as a trade union movement, we cannot stand by and let that happen.

The position around company directors is that we must campaign to make sure that they are accountable. They have a duty of care that everybody inside the trade union movement knows about. We must make sure that that duty of care is implemented. It is a collective bargaining issue. We all know that people join trade unions on the basis of wages and conditions, and the other main aspect is health and safety. This composite motion makes that point on numerous occasions, and I ask you to support it to make sure of our delivery in the workplace for our members, but also that we are attacking the directors and employers to make sure that justice is done for the people who we represent.

It is a fundamental right that our members can go to work, come home in a safe and sound manner and not run the risk of having to face death in the workplace. Construction is the highlight that has been raised through the motion and we accept, as a union, that is it one area that we need to campaign on to get those death rates down. Eventually, we will be able to come here in time and say that the work we do as a trade union movement has brought death rates down on the basis that it is a zero tolerance policy which is adopted through the TUC. Let's make sure that employers pay; let's make sure that health and safety is taken seriously and I ask you to support the motion.

Audrey Harry (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 21.

She said: Congress, GMB wholeheartedly supports UCATT's motion on health and safety at work, but it would like to make the motion a little stronger. Our unions both campaigned vigorously for the introduction of a Corporate Manslaughter Bill and we were disappointed that there was no real individual sanction on negligent directors. No one knows if the Labour Party will be in power in two years time, but what better legacy could they leave than to finally make fat-cat directors accountable by ensuring that they incur proper penalties for crimes of negligence by introducing statutory duties on the corporate manslaughter legislation.

Then there is the disgraceful decision taken last October by the part of the judiciary known as the House of Lords to support the decision to stop payments for victims of pleural plaques. The argument in favour of this decision is that pleural plaques is, apparently, a symptomless disease. Try telling those GMB members who are breathless because of it or who cannot sleep for fear of developing mesothelioma. When does physical injury to the body, the scaring of the lungs by the invasion of asbestos fibres, cease to

become a matter that can be taken to court, particularly when due to employer negligence?

People in many industrialised countries face the legacy of suffering from asbestos-related diseases, often from exposure many years ago. What is lacking is any comprehensive research into all the signs of how their exposure may be affecting the body. Perth, Western Australia, which is another country with a terrible death rate from asbestos exposure, has seen government investment into research to see if blood can show asbestos exposure and possible developments. If Australia can do this, why can we not?

Lastly, the dialogue between employer and worker on health issues is dire in many workplaces, even where safety reps try to engage the employers in meaningful dialogue. Safety reps can expose what actually happens in a workplace and they need to be involved in the risk assessment process. At the very least, they should have statutory rights to access the risk assessment findings on responses for information. Please support the motion. Thank you.

Paula Brown (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 21.

She said: I work for the Health and Safety Executive and I am one of the many staff that PCS represents who are involved in making policy, giving advice and guidance and supporting the role of inspectors. During the past few years you have probably heard through our campaigning activity and previous Congress motions that HSE is under-resourced. It grieves me to say that the situation has not changed.

Earlier this year we saw a DWP Select Committee inquiry into health and safety. The Select Committee went through a vigorous consultation process, heard evidence from many of the people here today, amongst other interested parties. The Committee came up with a number of recommendations. They had a wide range of ideas but behind each of these recommendations was one single issue: the need for a properly funded Health and Safety Executive.

PCS and colleagues in other unions put a lot of work into getting evidence, consulting members, researching the issues and speaking to the Select Committee. It is disappointing, then, to find that the Government basically ignored the Committee's findings. It is even more disappointing when you find out that the Government also ignored the previous Select Committee Inquiry into health and safety in 2004. That also came up with a number of recommendations, which essentially said that to reduce the number of workplace deaths and accidents, HSE needed more funding. When is the Government going to wake up and listen to its own people? By that, I do not just mean people like me and Geoff from Prospect, who you will hear next – we work for HSE so you may expect us to say that – but its own properly appointed people on the Select Committee inquiry itself.

I could get into the detail about the role of inspection and enforcement versus advice and guidance. The PCS view is that there is room for both but only when underpinned by a properly funded HSE. All the scrimping that HSE is having to do at the moment has resulted in a massive talent drain and a loss of expertise. We can see that HSE is not doing enough to replace these people. In the last few years staff numbers have fallen by about a quarter. When PCS questioned the chief executive on the future capability of HSE, given the move of jobs from London to Bootle, he said that it was not a matter of concern for HSE at this time. He probably thinks that he is going to be able to replace these staff, but in our view this is a matter of evident concern for HSE. We do not think that HSE can recruit quickly enough to be able to make

HSE meet its statutory responsibilities in the future, and that is why PCS has launched its 'Think Again Campaign'. We have leaflets downstairs and there is a petition for you to sign on-line at the PCS website. So, please, support the composite motion and show your support for all workers in the UK who, without a properly funded HSE, will face more risk at work than they should ever have to. Support the motion.

Geoff Fletcher (*Prospect*) supported Composite Motion 21.

He said: Congress, I think my speech will echo many of the points that Paula raised during her contribution. It is fair to say that Prospect welcomes this composite motion as it comes at a time when the Health and Safety Executive's own strategy is under review. So once the consultation phase is underway, there will be an opportunity for the trade union movement to influence the outcome.

Alan Ritchie, in moving the composite, referred to HSE adopting self-regulation. It is the view of Prospect that the concept of self-regulation is nothing new in the UK's health and safety framework. However, this is not open self-regulation, as the framework also incorporates the HSE to act as the oversight regulator.

If we look back to 2003 when the current Health and Safety Executive strategy rolled out the strategy to 2010 and beyond, we see that there was a shift in emphasis away from inspection and enforcement towards a more advice/guidance-driven approach. Prospect and my branch within the HSE were extremely critical of this change in emphasis away from traditional inspection as there was not then and there still is not any body of evidence that supports a light touch regulation towards health and safety.

What the available evidence does show, however, is that a mixed approach backed up by regular inspection and the fear of enforcement is what improves health and safety in the workplace. This shift in strategy is driven by one thing and one thing alone, and that is a lack of adequate resources to do a proper job. As Paula alluded to, the Comprehensive Spending Reviews of 2002 onwards have been disastrous for HSE with funding that does not keep up with inflation. Therefore, there is a resource cut year on year. This fact is particularly highlighted if we note that the percentage of GDP spent on health and safety regulation has fallen by a third since 1997. This level of funding equates to about 2¼ pence per day per UK worker. This funding cut has had a significant impact on the size of the HSE. In 2002 staffing levels were around 4,200, with a mix of inspectors, scientists, medics and the necessary policy and support staff. However, on the most recent headcount, staffing levels have dropped below 3,000, and we believe that this figure is below a critical mass to get the job done. This is more than a shift towards self-regulation. It is actually de-regulation, because a law that cannot be enforced in reality is no law at all. The Government is well aware of this, and as they have received, but largely rejected, the two Select Committee Reports which identify the drop in funding, the influences of Hampton, the Better Regulation Task Force and the business lobby are what have been winning the day at present.

The newly merged HSE is in the process of reviewing this strategy so we need to make a concerted effort to ensure that the trade union movement's voice is heard above that of the business lobby, so that there is a stronger emphasis on inspection and enforcement. Thank you.

* *Composite Motion 21 was CARRIED.*

Workers Memorial Day

Joe Marino (*Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union*) moved Composite Motion 22. He said: I am pleased to hear the General Council supports this so I am going to be really very, very brief indeed. What this composite seeks to do is to underline and support the campaigns that the TUC are launching, not just on Workers' Memorial Day, on health and safety, and welcome obviously what has happened with Composite 21, but also the issue of corporate killing. The General Council Report underlies the scope of the tragedy that we are facing, and so does the last speaker who mentioned the PCS Think Again campaign and that leaflet showing the depth of what we are talking about.

We are not just talking about people who die at work, important as that is, it is also people who die from work-related injuries such as asbestosis, pneumoconiosis, and so on. We need to look at commemorating that as well as keeping up the campaign to make workplaces safer places to be in.

There has been some opposition, we heard in the past, to a special workers' memorial day, partly on cost grounds and partly on grounds of practicality. I would say if the Prime Minister can put forward, and I do not want to get into an argument with Gordon Brown, propositions for an armed forces day to commemorate armed forces then why can we not do the same thing for workers to commemorate the tragedy of the deaths at work? If the Government can do that, that is what they should be doing here. Let's be very clear as well that we are not talking about pinching another bank holiday, or moving workers' memorial day, if that is accepted, and, say, replacing it with something else or taking something else away, and God forbid we do that with something like May Day.

This should be something special that we can campaign, unions do it now, campaign up and down the country on 28th April on the basis of Workers' Memorial Day and that is something we want to take forward, and that is what this motion seeks to do. There is the issue, and I know some colleagues have said to us during the week about one of the amendments that was there that is now part of the composite from the Association of Educational Psychologists. The argument is do we celebrate, do we bring in a day for workers' memorial day to commemorate that. We can discuss the date at a later day, the important thing is the principle of it. It is part of this overall campaign. We support the TUC campaign. We are pleased with what the General Council is doing. We are sure the General Council will take this forward. I also think we need to underline the point made by the speaker on the last composite, from PCS, that it is also about giving the enforcers the opportunity, the tools, and resources, to do it. That is why our union, like others, support the PCS Think Again campaign, and we hope all the unions and affiliates will do. (*Applause*)

Chris Murphy (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) seconded Composite Motion 22. He said: Workers' Memorial Day has become one of the most important days of our year for a worldwide labour movement and I am proud of this because it is when we remember our fellow workers killed at work. In my industry, construction, where employers continue to ignore health and safety the result was 72 workers killed last year, and the year before 79. More and more countries are recognising Workers' Memorial Day, such as Canada, Brazil, Spain, Argentina, Portugal, and Poland. We have succeeded with local authorities around Britain in holding events to mark this day of remembrance and I have to add in there that if any of you who do not live in London get to London, at Tower Hill Station there is a monument to the Unknown Building Worker, nine foot high, bronze, and

put up by UCATT, and I would say this, if it was not for Ken Livingstone when he was Mayor of London it would not have been there and I am quite sure if Boris Johnson was asked whether he would assist us I know what the answer would be.

Alongside this campaign Workers' Memorial Day must be a public holiday. As has been said, it is not about being morbid, it is about recognising those that have died at work and putting pressure on this government to improve health and safety. That is why UCATT has been running an intensive campaign to impose statutory legal duties on directors concerning health and safety which includes gaoing directors as my General Secretary touched on earlier.

As he said, quite rightly, in the first debate, after the first sentence of three years in prison for an employment, you would see health and safety improve overnight. So let's support Workers' Memorial Day and demand it is made a public holiday. Let's resolve to maintain the fight for the living and protect workers of the future. I ask you to support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: On behalf of Congress, I would like to thank the UCATT speaker for his contribution and on behalf of Congress I also want to wish him well for the future. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

Charles Ward (*Association of Educational Psychologists*) supported Composite Motion 22. He said: I will be brief. We just wish to put on record that the AEP fully supports the concept of a Workers' Memorial Day. We fully support ways to commemorate those who have died at work and we agree with all that has been said by the proposer and seconder of this composite. We also believe in the AEP that we should begin to catch up on the number of public holidays we have compared with our colleagues in Europe. Our amendment, though, is about an educational issue. It is simply this, that there are two bank holidays for Easter in late March and April, there are two bank holidays in May, and another public holiday there we feel would be yet further disruption in what is really a vital time in the educational year, particularly for those young people studying for examinations. That is why we are proposing that we do have a further public holiday in October that fills that long gap between the bank holidays in August and Christmas, but this is in no way an attempt to avoid marking Workers' Memorial Day and we hope that we can find a very effective way of doing that. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: I am now going to call the NUJ because I believe that they make express reservations. You say what you want to say, Anita.

Anita Halpin (*National Union of Journalists*) supported Composite Motion 22. She said: Sisters and brothers, I have taken a leaf out of Bob Crow's book but I am not going to have reservations, I am going to have some concerns but they are concerns about what is not in the motion rather than what is there. Of course we want more public holidays. I do not actually know why we call them bank holidays because international capitalism certainly never takes a holiday. Bank workers, and indeed all workers, deserve holidays; after all, British workers work the longest hours in Europe and have the fewest public holidays. It is not that we do not want that holiday break between Congress and Christmas, but we believe that public holidays should celebrate and commemorate workers' victories and struggles and mark events that resonate with the majority of the population. The need to make

Workers' Memorial Day much more of a high profile event is one that we would certainly support. I am very pleased with what Joe said in moving the motion that it is quite clearly not at the cost of May Day, which is reasonably close to my own heart.

Sometime ago, if you remember, colleagues, the Government said that it intended to introduce one further public holiday. The TUC then consulted affiliates twice and unfortunately had very few responses. Arising out of that the proposal that is here for the October holiday to encourage volunteering and community service emerged as latest policy, as it were. That is where we are now but the NUJ particularly thinks it is timely to remind delegates that there is already Congress policy to lobby for March 8th, International Women's Day to be a public holiday. So, delegates, the concerns are certainly not sufficient in any way to detract from our support for the motion and the original intention of the Bakers' Union to make it a public holiday, and we do support the call for more public holidays, but would remind the General Council and the TUC that in lobbying for more workers' days off they should not forget earlier decisions and aspirations of the movement in this Congress. Thank you for your time. *(Applause)*

Katrine Williams (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 22. She said: PCS fully supports the demand to increase the profile of Workers' Memorial Day and we recognise we need to put maximum pressure on this government even to acknowledge Workers' Memorial Day, let alone celebrate it and commemorate it seriously. PCS does support more holidays for workers as well as having a policy for shortening the working week. All our members are experiencing increasing pressure and workloads as our employers want to get every last ounce of work out of us. We have the fewest bank holidays in Europe. October would be a good time but, frankly, any time would be a good time.

The reason we are intervening in this debate is that we have some reservations with this motion. The good thing about May Day is that it is a holiday for workers and celebrates workers. It was also clearly brought about by the trades union movement and our struggle. Everyone is now on the bandwagon arguing for more bank holidays, even the holiday companies. We should not forget that we already have TUC policy to campaign for International Women's Day to become a bank holiday. We want to celebrate women but, more importantly, celebrate the role of the trades union movement in bringing about the positive changes we need. Given the pressure that trade union members are under in the workplace we should take care in what we are suggesting to workers. Many of our members need time off to relax and spend time with family and friends. The choice needs to remain with workers on what we do on our days off.

PCS also has concerns about the way the voluntary sector is being promoted by this government as a Trojan horse for privatisation to take over the work that should be done by public sector workers. Voluntary sector employers will be rubbing their hands in glee at the potential free labour they will be getting for this bank holiday. This is on top of the numbers of benefit claimants who will be pushed into compulsory workfare if this government gets their way. We need to be careful when we talk about voluntary work. Many of our members are already involved in community campaigns to save local services, like schools, nurseries, job centres, maternity units, but in our own time. We need to take a clear trade union approach to voluntary work. We should be promoting an alternative vision of what needs to be provided for a decent welfare state and society, and set the agenda for good quality publicly provided services rather than

promoting tinkering on the sidelines and strengthening the position of the big third sector employers to take our members' jobs in their charge to get their hands on public sector funding. Let's fight together for more recognised trade union holidays in this country on International Women's Day and in October, but leave the choice to our members for what we do on our well deserved days off. *(Applause)*

Michael Husbands (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 22. He said: I am a first time delegate to this Congress. *(Applause)* The GMB supports this motion. It is our longstanding policy to have a designated day to commemorate those who have lost their lives as a result of health and safety failings. A Workers' Memorial Day is when we remember the dead and fight for the living. We remember the dead, such as Daniel Dennis, killed at work at age 17 by the negligence of his employer. We remember the five years of campaigning that it took to secure justice for his parents. We remember all those who prematurely lost their lives because they were exposed to asbestos and we pledge that we will learn from the mistakes and never allow our reliance on a magic material to kill so many again. We remember the many professional drivers murdered for simply driving their taxi cab whose deaths are not classified as work related and are never counted or inspected by the HSE. We fight for all those who suffer from pleural plaques and whose modest compensation was taken from them to enrich the insurance industries. We fight to ensure that health and safety is enshrined as a right for every worker and not a burden on business to be abolished just as much more red tape. We fight for an effective regulator, a health and safety executive with enough inspectors and policymakers to haul employers to account, ensure justice through enforcement and prosecution.

Congress, this is not a new issue but it remains a vital one: 228 people killed at work last year, 228 too many. The International Labour Organisation estimates that worldwide one person dies every 15 seconds as a result of work related injury or disease. Congress, the only way to reduce this appalling death toll, to improve standards, and to ensure health and safety is through unity and solidarity, and the GMB sees no better way to achieve this than for the government to formally recognise International Workers' Memorial Day to make everyone aware and make everyone remember and make everyone fight. We are the army of workers. Let us fight for that day. *(Applause)*

Chris Wilson (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported Composite Motion 22. He said: Congress, the case for a Workers' Memorial Day is well proven. ATL applauds the work done by all affiliates to the TUC in promoting this event and, yes, also the case for an additional public holiday is a strong one. Congress, in supporting this composite ATL also wants the General Council to recognise the more radical implications and opportunities that this composite provides.

In passing this composite, as I am sure we will, we also have a driver for education, to educate the communities we serve in the importance and centrality of trade unionism and our core concern around health and safety, from a teaching point of view to educate our pupils and students on how active citizenship needs to include the right to join and to become active in your trade union. Obviously, I want to speak in particular from an academic perspective so I say to my teaching colleagues, it also means doing as we have already been able to do in my college, to get Workers' Memorial Day on the college calendar, and for the benefit of my good friend, Anita Halpin from the NUJ, we also have International Women's Day on it as well. So we can try to find ways to educate for social and

community cohesion by showing that the rights and responsibilities that government wants us to talk about must include the right to organise, and must include the right to share with others the benefits of trade union membership. Finally, Congress, we need to educate our politicians as well. The nation's holidays do not simply belong to the great and the good, they are not simply determined by custom and practice, but they belong to us here in this hall as well, and they belong to those we represent.

Congress, we need Workers' Memorial Day not simply as another day off but rather as a powerful opportunity to say that the cultural life of this nation must include and must reflect the interests of those who generate the country's wealth and wellbeing. (Applause)

The President: Congress, we have had seven speakers now on Workers' Memorial Day. I intend moving to the vote. The General Council support the composite motion.

* *Composite Motion 22 was CARRIED.*

Paid time off for health screening

Marilyn Morris (*Accord*) moved Motion 84. She said: What is screening? This involves testing groups of healthy non-symptomatic people to look for early signs of some cancers. This can help doctors find cancers at an early stage and in some instances spot early signs that suggest cancer is likely to develop. This makes treatment simpler and more likely to be effective. It is known that cancer screening could save more lives if uptake of screening services could be increased. It has been calculated that there will be 20,000 fewer deaths from bowel cancer over the next 20 years thanks to the rollout of bowel cancer screening. Each year nearly 46,000 women and around 300 men are diagnosed with breast cancer in the UK. Of these approximately 1,500 lives are saved every year of patients that had absolutely no idea they were suffering. I am one of those. I would not most probably be here now if it was not for the screening services of the NHS. Now we have the onset of digital mammography with images stored electronically, that is, instead of on X-rays. These digital images can be manipulated to improve the radiologists' ability to interpret them. There is the potential, therefore, that more lives can be saved now.

Congress supports the Government, the NHS, and its staff, in their continued commitment to improve breast cancer services in order to make Breakthrough Breast Cancer's vision of a future free from the fear of breast cancer a reality for all. The Screening Matters campaign by Cancer Research UK aims to build on the successes of all screening programmes to date on all types of cancers. Because of these promising results thousands of people are alive today that otherwise would not have survived. However, there is still room to do more, to ensure that as many people as possible can benefit from the best possible programmes. In some areas there is only a 35 per cent take-up rate for screening which I am sure you will agree is unacceptable. Some employees have been required to take unpaid leave to attend appointments, others instructed to work flexibly, some to take holiday - not my idea of a holiday I have to say. Others refuse to allow staff to attend at all.

I would suggest that it would actually be more cost effective to employers to encourage early diagnosis and medical treatment. I would pose the question: do employers have a right to decide who gets what medical diagnosis and care, and when? We urge the TUC to campaign amongst employers and the Government to ensure that employees are facilitated paid time off for screenings and for those diagnosed to be fully supported during their treatment and, when

appropriate, their return to work. Before you vote on this motion let me just say to you, it could be you but just not today. Please support this motion. Thank you. (Applause)

A delegate (*Community*): formally seconded the motion.

The President: I now put Motion 84, Paid time off for health screening, to the vote. The General Council policy is to support.

* *Motion 84 was CARRIED.*

Violence at work

The President: I now move on to Composite Motion 23, Violence at Work. The General Council supports the composite motion with a reservation and I will call Liz Snape to explain the General Council's position during the debate.

Zena Mitton (*Society of Radiographers*) moved Composite Motion 23. She said: Some may feel a bit of deja vu here. I know in the past 10 years there have been six similar debates. Only this week the plight of the betting shop workers was highlighted on Tuesday. Surely, things should have changed. The Society of Radiographers acknowledges that there has been considerable progress in dealing with the issues of violence in the workplace during that time. The problem has been a high priority and we receive support from many unions whose workers have now been trained in the key skills needed to deal with violence and aggression in their own workplace. But - and you knew there would be a but - healthcare workers are experiencing higher levels of abuses than ever before.

In the healthcare environment it is actually increasing, more and more of our healthcare workers are subject to verbal and physical abuse, according to the latest figures. A recent survey by the Society of Radiographers recorded that 60 per cent of our members have experienced abuse whilst just doing their job. How many incidents occur that are not recorded because being a caring profession it is not in our nature to complain about something that can be a direct result of the patient's condition. Patients are unwell, in pain, or suffering from mental health problems; others are affected by drugs or alcohol. Healthcare workers have a duty of care which influences all our actions. We do the best we can no matter what state the patient is in, no matter what level of abuse we face.

Working alone is one of the most common times for abuse to take place. Radiographers regularly work single-handed, especially at night. Many radiographers work in departments miles from anywhere with no one within calling distance. I once had a patient's relative try to break down the door from the waiting area to the X-ray room whilst I was X-raying a patient. Our doors are lead-lined which was fortunate for me at the time. He was worried about his wife, a laudable reason, but he certainly gave me a fright as I did not even know he was there. Some kind soul had told him his wife was in X-ray and he just wandered along; well, it is a public place. Who could deny a husband the right to see a sick partner?

Well, he only shouted at me and swore at me, some might argue, but latest findings show that verbal abuse is remembered and reflected upon far longer than physical abuse. I have been threatened with a knife too and, yes, I remember that very well. Do we need deaths to instigate a change to this practice? I pushed the alarm button when I needed help. It was seven minutes later - seven very long minutes - before somebody popped their head round the door to say,

"Are you all right, Zena?" I would not like to tell you what my response was. It is not repeatable here today. The rape alarms that are supplied to staff so that they may feel safer as they go home from shifts at odd times of the night came with a stark warning, "Do not use unless others are close at hand because you may further antagonise your attacker." "Oh, whoopee," I say.

We acknowledge that the call for legal prohibition on lone working is of concern to some unions, however we continue to believe that there is a need to take a strong stand on this issue. We also accept that any change to current legislation will require full consultation and comprehensive risk assessments in every workplace. It is not like a hospital gown, one size fits all. Lone working is unacceptable. We need to care for the staff in the NHS and we need to care for our members. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Julie Connolly (*Community and District Nursing Association*) seconded Composition Motion 23. She said: Sadly, I find myself here telling you this even though it has been raised at previous Congresses. It remains an issue and the risks are increasing. Let me share a piece of conversation I had with a community nurse last week.

I asked her, "have you ever experienced violence at work?" "Oh, god, yes," she said to me, "I work in a very deprived area with people with mental health issues, drug dependencies, and alcohol dependencies. I have been held by the throat, I have been shoved, I have been pushed, I have been hit, and I have been threatened by patients and carers." I asked her had she reported any of these incidences, "No," she said, "I never reported them, it's part of the job, and I had a duty of care to my patients and I didn't want to not be able to continue to care for them." Over 90 per cent of our members say it is part of the job. Like the nurse in Liverpool who had a samurai sword pulled on her and a nurse in Gloucestershire who had two hand pistols waved at her. Well, I do not think it is part of their job.

Congress, CDNA recognises the potential danger faced by community and district nursing staff when making patient visits alone. Over 72 per cent of community nurses have faced verbal or physical abuse whilst carrying out their professional duties. Not for them a protected bus service to and from their patients, or stab vests, or personal security officers. We have a member in Wales who resigned from her job as a district nurse because of the threats from a family who lived across the road from the surgery where she had to go into work every day, and she could not face carrying on doing it.

Yes, there is evidence of good practice, mainly in acute trusts, but community care is a high-risk area and increasingly so, and that is the focus for our association and the concern of our members. Community nurses' caseloads are increasing. PCTs are commissioning services with independent providers, particularly out-of-hours services. Resources are being reduced and nurses and support workers find themselves working alone more, not less. Yes, there are policies but they are not implemented, and mandatory risk assessments are not carried out or enforced. I was told when you are short of staff, as we always are, you have to go alone or the caseload will never be managed.

Let me tell you some managers' answers to that: "Well, nurses spend too long with their patients," or "They're too slow in their work." Tell that to our member in Cornwall working in an out-of-hours service covering 360 square miles alone. Mobile phones do not always work, do they? We insist that a multiple approach is taken and risk assessments carried out. CDNA ask that Congress support the motion. We want best practice

policies in place, risk assessments enforced, services properly resourced. We do not want media headlines about murdered nurses, and I do not want to come back next year to my second Congress and have to come up and raise this issue again. *(Applause)*

Hilary Hosking (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) supported Composite Motion 23. She said: I would like you to picture the following scenario. Someone comes to the window of the ticket office to report to the clerk that the automatic ticket machine is not working properly. As the clerk opens the door to go and assist the person an arm comes round the door with a gun pointing at his head. The person then forces his way into the office putting the clerk into a headlock and still pointing the gun at his head. They demand that the clerk puts all the visible cash in a bag. They then push him into a back room and tie his hands and feet. After the robber has finished ransacking the office, they leave the clerk and make off. He manages to untie his feet and shuffles across the office with his hands still bound behind his back. He has to ask someone out on the station to come to untie his hands. As a result of this attack, the ticket office clerk was absent from work for 12 weeks for post traumatic stress.

Congress, this scenario is for real and happened to one of my colleagues who is in this very hall. He was working alone in the ticket office in South East London. I wish this were a one-off incident but, unfortunately, it is not. I myself in the role of staff rep had to help another ticket office colleague who had also been held at gunpoint when dealing with her manager who was not particularly sympathetic. Eventually, she left the job because she was unable to return to work because of the emotional trauma she had suffered. I am sure all of us can think of times when they or their colleagues have been exposed to violence or situations where this could easily happen.

Earlier this week, we heard about workers having to travel home late at night and how difficult and vulnerable they felt on public transport. Well, do spare a thought for the train driver, or platform staff members who have to be there to carry out their duties sometimes in difficult situations, and alone. One of the drivers who worked for my company was driving a late train and you would think he would be safe in his cab. Youths managed to break into the cab and bottled him in the face. He was working the train alone and, fortunately, he was not badly injured.

Congress, the TSSA would like risk assessments undertaken for lone workers and as trade unions we would expect our health and safety reps to be involved in this process. Where there is shown unacceptable risk we would expect the lone working to be prohibited. In conclusion, Congress, the TSSA would like lone worker protection to be extended to all workers across all industries to enable them to carry out their duties in the knowledge that there is someone else there to help should the need arise. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Alexandra Mackenzie (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) supported Composite Motion 23. She said: President, Congress, at the 2007 Labour Party Conference the Secretary of State for Health announced that the Government would inject £97m into hospital security to help protect staff from intimidation and violence. This money is to be spent on safety alarm devices for lone workers, additional security specialists, staff training in personal safety and conflict resolution, and also measures to increase the number of prosecutions where staff have been assaulted. However, what is not clear is what measures are in place to ensure this money is properly ring-fenced and how it will be accounted for.

The NHS Security Management Service is currently purchasing 30,000 safety alarms for the NHS but with 240,000 NHS lone workers there seems to be quite a shortfall, and no guidance on who will get the devices. It is also important that everybody understands that safety devices cannot ever be more than part of the solution and not the whole solution where there is no practical alternative to lone working.

So far appropriate conflict management training for frontline staff varies widely from trust to trust. We have heard of one trust attempting to deliver this training to staff via the internet and email. This is clearly inappropriate and would fail to meet the accredited standards required. Each health body has been required under regulation since 2004 to have local security management specialists in post. These specialists are key to ensuring that protocols are in place and they are responsible for acting as liaison with the local police. We are aware, however, that the HSE has issued improvement notices against some trusts for failing to appoint local security specialists or to provide accredited conflict resolution training to their frontline staff.

The situation in England and Scotland contrasts sharply with what is going on in Wales where the Assembly is implementing a coordinated and properly organised response to the problem, including introducing a passport scheme for staff. The passport scheme is the record that each staff member has of their training in violence and aggression which they take from employer to employer.

In conclusion, whilst we welcome the fact that the Government is putting money aside for security, we are also calling for, firstly, the adoption of a passport scheme for staff training to ensure that all staff are receiving the appropriate training to the accredited standards; secondly, that the £97m for staff protection is ring-fenced and, thirdly, assurances that proper accountability mechanisms are put in place to monitor the outcomes. Please support. *(Applause)*

Sharon Holder (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 23. She said: This motion is of crucial importance to GMB's health and social care members working in frontline services, for example, our ambulance personnel, home carers, community nurses, and those working in the A&E departments. Many GMB members work alone and are frequently subjected to abuse from patients, the public, and other service users. Not all employers, however, support their hard working public service staff. The health and safety and welfare of members is a key issue for us and every employer must take responsibility for the health and safety of their employees. There is a plain duty of care on their part and employers must not be allowed to slip out of their legal net. Some employers often try to transfer that responsibility to employees and this is utterly unacceptable. Employers must be forced, if necessary, into taking appropriate action to protect their employees and our members, and they must conduct robust risk assessments wherever those employees work. These include mobile workers, especially those delivering critical frontline services, like local government workers who provide homecare and social work for those living in the community, and NHS nurses who visit patients at home.

GMB's experience of working with local authorities and NHS trusts conducting risk assessments have led directly to improvements in safety and a real reduction in violence at work. Employers must also regularly conduct risk assessments to ensure new risks are identified early and incorporated into new safer working practices. For lone workers, especially those who are mobile, this is crucial as is open communication and support from their employers. Crucially, however, where a serious risk is identified

employers must accept their responsibility to reduce the risk, including the potential to increase the number of staff, if necessary, to support them.

GMB supports this important composite in an increasingly dangerous society. Please support this composite. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Yvonne Swingler (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 23. She said: Violence and the threat of violence is placing an increasing burden on our members in many sectors. The motion gives some powerful examples from the transport and the public sector. As a worker and senior shop steward in engineering I know that violence at work is an important issue for us, too. Violence is not and never can be part of the job. No person should have to endure threat of assault or abuse as a result of their employment. All employers have a duty of care to all workers. So, health and safety policies and risk assessments must include violence and the threat of violence. They should include practical measures like providing safe transport to and from work for those who work unsocial hours, awareness training, protective screens and alarms, and protection for workers like health visitors who carry out home visits on their own at very stressful times, such as child custody cases, and domestic violence. Also, we must never forget workers who are most vulnerable to abuse like migrant workers in tied accommodation, domestic and home workers, and workers in the sex industry. As a trade union movement we do not discriminate against any worker. Violence is violence. In one year nearly three-quarters of a million workers suffered assault or the threat of violence, and many more went unreported. Just one incident is one too many so please do not just support this motion, let's act and act now. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Liz Snape (*UNISON*): I am speaking on behalf of the General Council, which had deferred its position pending clarification on the reference to lone working. On the face of it the words seemed to imply that a blanket ban on any form of lone working should be sought. If that was the case, a great many unions may well have had an issue with that; doubling up on staff would have serious implications both economically and in terms of jobs. The four unions involved have now very helpfully clarified that this is not the intention. The reference to lone working is when a formal risk assessment has taken place and lone working has been identified as unsafe. The General Council's attitude, therefore, is now to support the composite but with that reservation. Thank you. *(Applause)*

* *Composite Motion 23 was CARRIED.*

Compensation and rehabilitation

Dennis Doody (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) speaking to paragraph 74, said: Congress, some of you will be aware that UCATT attempted to submit an emergency motion on the issue of the insurance industry attacks on compensation for occupational disease. Unfortunately, it was ruled out for not being an emergency. Whilst we accept the process of the General Purposes Committee we do not agree with that decision. I will tell you why.

There is an all-out coordinated attack on workers' compensation for occupational diseases: Fairchild, and Barker, pleural plaques, and now the trigger litigation cases. This is a structured attack by the ABI on workers exposed to danger by negligent employers. What are we as a movement doing about it? I will tell you. We have no structured response. We are all doing our own campaigning, UCATT, the NUT, and others, but we

need a coordinated strategy. I will tell you something, if the judgment goes the wrong way in the trigger cases then workers will be robbed of not millions of pounds but billions of pounds of compensation. Let me explain why.

When a person claims compensation for mesothelioma, the practice of the insurance industry for decades was the insurer on cover at the time of exposure to asbestos would pay the claim. If the member was exposed to asbestos in 1960 and was diagnosed with mesothelioma in 2006, the employers' insurer in 1960 has always paid the claim. However, recently a number of insurers have refused to pay out mesothelioma claims because they now argue that the wording of the insurance policies means something very different to what they previously accepted it meant. Those insurers now argue that the trigger for the insurance policy to respond to a mesothelioma claim is not the exposure to asbestos but the development of the disease itself. The obvious benefit for the insurers who are taking the trigger issue is that if they are successful they will escape liability completely. The problem for the victims is that there may not be any insurers to pay the claim because by the time they develop the diseases, which is often 40 years or more after they were exposed to asbestos, many employers have ceased trading and no insurance exists. So, you can see the dangers.

Now, can someone explain to me why this whole issue is not an emergency? This movement needs to get its act together. Next month in all likelihood the Government will opt to introduce a no-fault scheme for sufferers of pleural plaques and that is an absolute disgrace. A no fault scheme does exactly what it says on the packet, no fault means no liability. Who will pay for the scheme? Not the insurance industry which took the premiums for decades, no, they will sit on billions of pounds saved. It will be you and I, the taxpayer who pays. Well, someone told me there was a credit crunch on. What I want to know is, where are the Treasury going to find billions of pounds needed for a state-funded no fault scheme? Congress, I say let's get organised as a movement and let's take on the callous fat cat insurance industry. *(Applause)*

The President: Thanks, Dennis. Obviously, Dennis, we cannot tell you why the General Purposes Committee deemed it was not an emergency, that is an issue for you and the GPC, but what I would like to do is reassure you on behalf of the General Council that we have noted the points you have made and will be taking them on board.

Participation of the Trades Union Councils' Conference at annual Congress

The President: I call Motion 87, Participation of the Trades Union Councils' Conference at annual Congress. The General Council have decided to leave the motion to Congress. It is all in your hands.

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) moved Motion 87. He said: I am glad that the General Council are leaving it to the delegates, so we must be okay. I think we are going to win this one. They have no reservations against this one, so we should be all right: no qualifications and no reservations.

I want to say that all items, obviously, are important to the business of the TUC whether it is the last item, the first item, or the middle item. I would like to place on record on behalf of my union all those unsung heroes out there in trades councils that fight to support workers when they are taking action. *(Applause)* Every time that we are involved in a dispute or a campaign I know one thing is for sure, you certainly

know who your friends are when you go to a trades council, working away, beavering away, and building up local support in the areas concerned. I think with the problem times that we are going to have ahead, whether it be with a Tory government, a Tory Mayor of London, ECJ decisions, or ruthless attacks on pay and conditions by big bosses, we are going to need the trades councils more than ever. I think that the opportunity is there now for the trades councils to play a fantastic role in the TUC. I cannot understand why the General Council could not give support on this one. What are they worried about?

I have the opportunity to go to the Irish TUC, like others do here, the Wales TUC, and the Scottish TUC, and the trades councils are fully involved in their congresses. I have to say what I find is that the debates have become even better because you have more rank and file involved with those decision-makers.

(Applause) It is all very good for general secretaries and presidents to start talking to other general secretaries and presidents at TUCs but, to be honest with you, we can become divorced from reality. The people I want to hear are the people that we have got to go back to on the other 51 weeks of the year who are getting it in the neck and where the bosses are putting the boot in to them, the rank and file workers.

So, let's get the TUCs fully involved and I will tell you what I think it will do. When people turn around and say, "Well, you know, my trades council is not active any more in my area. It used to be a great trades council but people are not interested," I will tell you where the gap is. People come together locally and they move resolutions, the TUC recognised the black advisory, the lesbian and gay advisory, the disability advisory, the women's advisory, it has a trades council body, but then says you cannot put resolutions up. I think to myself, if you now give them the opportunity to put resolutions up, what it will mean is people will come to trades councils, it will make the trades councils conference even bigger, and what it will do is start injecting resolutions on behalf of working people into this Congress Hall.

The TUC, in my belief, was only formed on the basis of trades councils coming together and perhaps it is our time when we start mentioning Taff Vale – I know there is nothing more boring than old soldiers fighting old battles but sometimes when you go back and you look at where you come from it is where we should start to readdress the problems that we have in the future. So, pass this resolution today. Do not be put off that the General Council is not supporting it. In fact, it is one of the last resolutions of the week and what you should really turn around and say now is this. All of you sitting here today at some stage have been involved with a trades council in some shape or form, and if you have not been involved in a trades council then get your union to affiliate at local level, let's get the trades councils right in the kidney of the movement, pass this resolution here today, and next year when we come back start getting trades council delegates not just being honorary members sitting up here this week but putting resolutions on behalf of the rank and file of workers in the British TUC. Pass this resolution and let's make this historic day the opportunity where trades councils are back in business. *(Applause)*

Malcolm Sage (*GMB*) seconded Motion 87. He said: Colleagues, we hear a lot from our friends in other unions, from the academics and from the TUC, about how much we can learn from the churches and charities about this new concept of community organising. Well, let's remember we invented community organising when our local trade union branches formed themselves into trades councils in the middle of the 19th century to work together with

other union activists to build solidarity in their local area. If we are to regenerate the shop stewards movement and make local unions a force to be reckoned with in their local communities, then we must encourage all our local reps to meet regularly and give them the resources they need to run effective campaigns. Rebuilding the trade union councils is key towards achieving this goal. Local trade union councils and trade councils throughout Britain have played a vital role in local organisations, especially during major disputes. Remember the work, the co-ordination, the organisation they did during the miners' strike, when they are at their best they bring together union activists and branches from many unions, often running campaigns, and taking up issues of abuse and exploitation by local anti-trade union companies. It is important that the collective voice, the collective thinking, and the collective energy they bring is recognised and developed for the future. Look at Battersby and Wandsworth Trade Union Council, a great example of community unionism. This motion is calling for a small change, a small change but a symbolic change. All we are calling for is for the right of trade union councils to submit one motion to this Congress. Congress, let's embrace once more the role of trade union councils and bring them back into the rightful home at the heart of the TUC. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you. Do we have a speaker speaking against the motion?

Jerry Bartlett (*National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers*) said: I come to this microphone with the very greatest regret to oppose Motion 87. Why? Because my union, NASUWT, recognises that the relative decline of the trades council movement has to a very major extent weakened us and weakened Congress. We only have to look at the historic role played by the trades councils in the General Strike of 1926, more recently at the solidarity provided to miners and their families during the historic disputes of the NUM with the last Conservative governments, and most recently what happened in Codnor Park in Derbyshire on 16th August this year when many of us, despite the magnificent organising achievements of Unite Against Fascism were vulnerable and at risk because of some of the things that happened that day, and were only made safer because of the mobilisation of the Nottingham and Derby Trades Councils who turned local people out in great numbers to support us. So, my union welcomes the fact that the affiliation of trades councils to Congress has grown in recent years from 125 to 140, we encourage our branches to participate in the work of the local trades councils, and we are proud of those of our activists who are elected to hold office in trades councils, but we say to you we have a long way to travel.

My own recent experience of going back to the Worcester Trades Council is quite typical of what has gone wrong with the trades council movement in so many parts of the country: eight delegates present, all white, all men, all late-middle aged or retired, cracking discussion on academies, absolutely nothing happening as a result, no community engagement, no campaign, no involvement.

We support very strongly the five roles identified for trades councils in this motion but we equally strongly argue that there is no legitimate role for trades councils in policymaking. Why? We do not accept the analogy with the equalities committees. The equalities committees established by Congress redress the very longstanding under-representation of black workers, disabled workers, women workers, and our LGBT brothers and sisters. Trades councils delegates in the main are already advantaged in this regard. The white

middle-aged men who dominate many trades councils already have abundant opportunity to influence the policies of Congress. Secondly, we do not want a duplicate route to get policies before Congress.

The correct route to bring motions to Congress is through the internal democracies of trade unions. We do not want the opportunity for well-organised factions to circumvent their own union's internal democracy and use the procedures to get before Congress matters that they cannot win their own members for. How do I know that, colleagues: because I did it for 10 years. I used my role as a trades council secretary, a county association of trades councils secretary, and a trades council representative on the West Midlands Regional TUC, to circumvent what I used to find as the constraints of the policies of my union, NASUWT, and get discussed issues that I could not win my own members for. I do not want that situation to continue. So, I want you to reject this motion but leave this hall committed and determined to rebuild the trades council movement. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Bernard Roome (*Communication Workers Union*) supported the motion. He said: We wholeheartedly support this motion and may I thank the RMT for giving up one of their motions to support the Trades Councils. *(Applause)*

I am also privileged to be the Trades Union Council's Joint Consultative Committee representative for Wales and I have been proud to have been a member of a trades council for many years. I believe that trades councils now have a vital role to play in our movement. The CWU is the result of being involved with a trades council because they have been active in the opposition to both postal privatisation and the closure of post offices. They always support us when we have local campaigns.

I have been privileged to have been a delegate for my trades council in Swansea for many years. It is not necessarily a privilege that the Wales TUC have enjoyed, but it is one that we have always found of benefit. It has given us the opportunity to put forward local issues from our area.

Can I just relay some information to the person from Worcester. First, the trades councils are not male-dominated. You have heard this week from the Treasurer of Cardiff Trades Council, who is Asian. You heard this morning from the President of Cardiff Trades Council, who is a woman. In Wales, we are diverse and have very active trades councils.

Brendan spoke at the beginning of the week about the way in which the trades union movement opposed the BNP in the local elections. In Wales, the trades councils collectively decided to use their trades union funds to campaign against the BNP. They produced leaflets dispelling the myths that the BNP were circulating. I am pleased to say that today the BNP is not welcome in Wales and we are a BNP-free zone. That is due to the work of the trades councils.

Let us rid ourselves of the myth that you can go to a trades council conference and put forward a motion that you are unable to submit through your own union. I wish that were true, but it is not. Every single motion that is forwarded to the trades council conference at present is vetted by the General Council first to ensure that it is mainly in line with TUC policy. This gives the local people who work tirelessly for the cause a belief that they actually belong to the TUC and that they have an important role to play.

The delegate mentioned that trades councils are actually getting bigger and the numbers are increasing. The reason for that is because they are needed. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

Mary Ferguson (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported the motion. She said: After decades of decline, trades union councils have been having a revival. They have been bringing together activists from trades union branches for lively campaigns on issues affecting working people in the community, such as health, public services, education, housing and migrant workers.

My union, PCS, has been involved locally and nationally with the trades council movement. Our campaign, 'Public service not private profit', in which PCS plays a key role, has done a lot of work with trades councils across the country, bringing together trade unions and community groups in campaigns to save hospitals from privatisation, defending council housing and fighting post office closure and job cuts.

PCS has encouraged trades councils to link campaigns to improve public services with elections and also to spread the anti-fascist message in its 'Make your vote count' campaign. Haringey Trades Council has worked with PCS and other local union branches to organise a local candidates' question-time during the local government elections. We are working together with other unions in the Stevenage area to fight the HMRC office closures in that area.

We believe that we must encourage the revitalisation of trades councils by giving them a voice in the trade union movement and at the most important meeting, the TUC Congress. Our colleagues in Scotland and Wales can play a full part in their TUC Congresses and we think that the same should be true of England.

The motion proposes allowing trades union council conferences to submit a motion and suggests arrangements already in place for the Equalities Conference. The motion is not asking for much but, if agreed, it could have a very positive effect on the future vitality of trades councils and the trade union movement. Please support. Thank you.

Nina Franklin (*National Union of Teachers*) supported the motion. She said: Congress, throughout this week we have passed a whole stack of very strong motions, but the central theme of many of the things that we have debated has been how we work together as trades unions as we all appreciate the power of the message that unity is strength.

We are all here together under our national union banners but we all know the immense value of local organising and campaigning. This is where many major campaigns actually start – in our local communities. Many of us are already active members of our local trades union councils. It is through our organisation that we are able to have the most impact on local communities as we are able to inform them of the importance of trades unions. We can also come together with our sister unions to collectively defend our rights.

When the NUT took action this year on 24th April, our regional rallies were strengthened all over the country by the support from other trade unions organised through the local trades councils. Now, more than ever, we need to strengthen and build our local trades councils, especially at a time when we see our rights under attack, not only from the anti-trades union laws and the privatisation of public services but also from the threats of racism and fascism from the Far Right.

Local trades councils are central to the work of the TUC. This motion calls for the role of local trades councils to be recognised by allowing them to have a real voice and by calling for a rule change to allow them to submit just one motion to this Congress. The NUT ask you to support this motion, which we believe will have enormous benefits for our organisational

work locally and will raise the profile of the TUC in local communities. (*Applause*)

The President: There are no more speakers so we will move straight to the right of reply, which I assume Bob is going to take. I would be amazed if he did not!

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*), exercising his right of reply, said: Jerry, I was up there with you in Derbyshire at the BNP's Red, White and Blue Festival. When you came up on the platform, I thought you must have it wrong. The only way you were going to get up here was by deceiving the President and saying that you were actually going to vote against the resolution. However, you spoke for it because you opened by saying what a great role the Notts Trades Council had played. It did play a great role in Chesterfield, it played a great role in Derbyshire and it has played a great role throughout the length and breadth of Britain.

I do not think they are all white, middle-aged men in the trades councils that I get the opportunity to go to. We leave those to the top 100 companies in Britain and their boardrooms. That is where the white middle-aged men are. They are not in the trades councils. (*Cheers and applause*)

The reality is this, Jerry. I do not believe people go to a trades council to circumvent their own democratic procedures within their own unions on the basis that they cannot get something passed. If they did do that, they would be given the opportunity to vote against it anyway. If they consist just of white middle-aged men, now is the opportunity to change it and to have black middle-aged men, black youngsters, white youngsters, women, lesbians, gays and people from every corner of society in those trades councils.

Brendan said earlier on that we were trying to smuggle something in. I think, Jerry, you have been smoking that stuff that you have been trying to smuggle in with some of the arguments that you have put up. (*Laughter and applause*) Congress, I am saying to you now that the General Council does not have a position on this so now is your opportunity to defeat it! (*Applause*) Let us hope that gets it gets defeated many more times in the history of the TUC by the rank and file.

Jerry, you have 'Justice for Colombia' on your shirt and quite rightly so. I respect your views and I expect you to respect my mine. We do not have to agree, but we must listen to other points of view. Yes, we want justice for Colombia, but let us start by giving justice to those people who go out there night and day, on a voluntary basis, to fight on behalf of working people. Please pass this resolution. (*Applause*)

The President: We now move to the vote on Motion 87 with a rare chance to defeat the General Council.

* *Motion 87 was CARRIED*

Accounts

The President: Could I draw to your attention Appendix 3 on page 197 of the General Council's Report, the TUC's accounts? The auditor is present on the platform. Does Congress accept the accounts set out in the Appendix? (*Agreed*)

Asylum seekers and employment

The President: I now call Motion 23. The General Council supports the motion. I will be calling on Gloria Mills to make a contribution during the debate.

Helen Connor (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) moved Motion 23. She said: Congress, we have debated many interesting things this week, but I think that underpinning everything is our belief in the fundamental right of everyone in this country to have a job and the right to work. Trade unions have fought for that in this country and throughout the world for centuries and yet it is a right which is denied to one of the most vulnerable groups in Britain - asylum seekers.

Before I look at what trade unionists can do to assist asylum seekers, let me deal with a few myths about them. These have been raised not only in the press but have appeared amongst some parts of the British public. Asylum seekers are often referred to as 'economic migrants' or 'illegal immigrants'. That is very misleading to say the least. They have not come to the United Kingdom for economic reasons and they are not here illegally. They have been driven from their homelands by persecution, conflict and human rights abuses. They are exercising a legal right in making a claim for asylum, a human right which we all share.

In 2002, the Government made it illegal for people claiming asylum to work. That was not because asylum seekers do not want to work as they want to support themselves and their families. They want to pay taxes and contribute to the economy, but they are being denied that chance. They are being forced to live on hand-outs which leave them in poverty or, worse still, they are denied any support, which means that they may have to return to the countries from which they fled. It is inhumane to treat people in that way and makes no economic sense.

Many asylum seekers are skilled workers - nurses, teachers, journalists and civil servants - who have often left their own countries because they have stood up for workers' rights in the same way as you and I. We can only imagine how asylum seekers feel when they come to this country and face persecution in a different form. Not being allowed to work means more than not having a job. It means that you have poor housing or perhaps no housing at all. It could also mean that you may be in poor health, you are in social isolation or you have low self-esteem with a loss of confidence.

As British trade unionists, we have a responsibility to ensure that we support them in every way we can. To do that, I would commend to you the TUC's and the Refugee Council's 'Let them work' campaign.

I would like to end, Congress, with a little story about a meeting I was at last night, which was the Refugee Council's reception for asylum seekers and refugees. I am rarely speechless, but I heard two stories last night from two Zimbabweans which made me feel very humbled. An educated, academic young woman has come to this country with her three children. Their ages are nine, six and six months. Her nine-year old is still in Zimbabwe. She came here, in her own words, "expecting a welcome, expecting to be able to contribute to society." Unfortunately, she has not received either because she is not allowed to work. However, to be fair, she did say to me that at least she is safe.

The other person I spoke to was a young man who is a maths and science graduate. He has been in this country for eight years. He expressed his anger at seeing on the front of *The Guardian* an article about the shortage of maths and science teachers in this country when he is sitting here ready to contribute.

I left that meeting with a mixture of feelings. I felt shame and humility but mainly anger that people who have come to our country can be treated in this way. I would like us to turn that anger into action and start a campaign to allow asylum seekers to work in this country. I move.

Veronica Peppiatt (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded the motion. She said: President, Congress, the NUT welcomes the opportunity to second this motion. As we have heard, asylum seekers come here in search of protection and while they are here they want to work and to contribute. However, in 2002, the Government made it illegal for people claiming asylum to seek work. Why?

Employment is one of the best ways for a person who has suffered a traumatic upheaval to start the process of rebuilding their life. It can bring order and structure to an existence that has become chaotic in the same way that attending school can help children whose lives have been turned upside down. In recent years, we have fought on this point. We fought for the children of asylum seekers to be allowed into local schools and we won.

However, instead of asylum seekers being helped to rebuild their lives, they are left in limbo as they await a decision. Innocent people are incarcerated in detention centres and treated as though they are criminals. Denying people who have skills to offer the opportunity to contribute to the economy and to our society is not just damaging to their wellbeing and their self-esteem but, as the previous speaker said, it makes no economic sense. Many are qualified people who have a valuable contribution to make so why are they forced to live on handouts rather than being allowed to make that contribution?

It seems to me that denying people the right to seek employment while their application for refugee status is considered is tantamount to giving them the message, "There is no point in you getting a job because you are probably going to be sent back to where you came from pretty soon anyway." It is as if the outcome of their application is a foregone conclusion and the British authorities are just going through the motions of considering it. Heaven forbid that we continue to give that message.

Many asylum seekers, as we know, are trade unionists who got into trouble with the authorities in their own countries and suffered persecution because they stood up for workers' rights, because they dared to speak out against injustice and because they were prepared to fight for a fairer society. As my colleague from the EIS said, as fellow trade unionists we owe them no less than that we should do just the same for them in return. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

Gloria Mills (*General Council*) supported the motion. She said: Congress, the General Council is committed to campaign for asylum seekers to have the right to work. That is why, over the last year, the TUC has joined forces with the Refugee Council to raise awareness of the issues facing asylum seekers and to build a joint campaign to get the Government to change its Draconian policy.

People who want to work, to use their skills to contribute to our communities and to pay their way in our economy are being forced to live in poverty and isolation with an adverse impact on their physical and mental health. The right to work to earn a living and to provide for themselves and their families is a fundamental human right. We believe that the objectives of this campaign are achievable and if the campaign is successful, we will have drastically improved the lives of many asylum seekers, who are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society.

This campaign has already fired the imaginations of many trade union activists and community organisations who are involved in assisting asylum seekers: Barnardos, the Migrant Rights Network, Save the Children and Student Action for Refugees. They are all committed to helping to make it a success.

However, if we are going to get the Government to change the rules, we need the trade union movement to play a central and active role in the campaign. That is why yesterday we launched the TUC's pledge, which calls on the Government to allow asylum seekers in the UK to work.

Many general secretaries have already signed this pledge and we are encouraging everyone to do so. The pledge board is located in the TUC bookshop, but will also be available at Congress House later for you to sign. Please support the motion, actively support the campaign and sign the pledge. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

Evelyn Martin (*GMB*) supported Motion 23. She said: Congress, I support this motion and would also like to acknowledge the work of the TUC General Council in supporting the cause of asylum seekers. Even as we debate this motion today, there is a section of the community, media and politicians, who are deliberately trying to fan the fire of prejudice in respect of asylum seekers and would be happy to see them left isolated and destitute.

Asylum seekers are refugees and are not new to us in the labour movement. We have a history of fighting for humanity and solidarity. We are a nation of migrants. The role of government is critical to the treatment of asylum seekers and new migrants. The Government has a responsibility to set a positive tone and positive message that asylum seekers are an asset to the country. Many are highly-motivated people with much needed skills and, to put it simply, they should be allowed to work. Make no mistake, the policy on asylum seekers adopted by the Government has its origin in a place which is a hair's breadth from outright racism.

We know that these policies are not new. We know that they have been adopted wholesale from the Australian Tories. These were the ones who organised the boarding of a sovereign vessel to prevent Afghani refugees reaching Australian territory. The Australian Tories developed a specific solution to prevent future refugees from ever reaching Australian shores. They politicised Middle Eastern refugees during an election by claiming that they threw their children overboard. Their popular slogan was, 'We decide who comes to this country and the circumstances under which they come.'

I raise these points because we keep hearing the Government talk about the 'Australian points-based migrant system' or their 'Asylum seekers policy'. The Australian policy panders to racism. Therefore, Congress, let asylum seekers work and learn to communicate in English. I urge you to support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Lesley Mercer (Chartered Society of Physiotherapy) supported the motion. She said: I just want to focus on one aspect of what Helen referred to in her moving speech and that is the link between health and work. I can perhaps share some information of which delegates may not be aware. If you are not able to work then it is very likely that you are not going to have a fixed address. Without a fixed address, it is extremely difficult to register with a GP so asylum seekers are under the radar screen in relation to normal community services like health checks, vaccinations and treatment where needed.

As a direct result of this, our members working in A&E departments are telling us that asylum seekers and refugees are turning up with serious health conditions such as TB that should have been picked up earlier. They should have been treated earlier before they get to an advanced stage with the often tragic consequences of conditions being left too late to be

treated. It is an inhumane approach – I cannot use more powerful words – and a denial of two of the most basic of human rights, namely, the right to work and the right to decent healthcare. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Pat McDonagh (*UNISON*) supported Motion 23. She said: The status of asylum seekers and migrant workers is often confused by the public at large and the differences need to be highlighted. Migrant workers rely mainly on poverty pay. They do jobs that locals will not do. They are in the service industries, providing skilled workers for the construction industry. They are not the parasites that they are portrayed as in the media as they contribute much to our economy and culture, helping to fund the pensions which economists believe we cannot afford because of the aging population.

However, they do not constantly live in fear of deportation or being locked up in prisons like Dungavel in Scotland as are asylum seekers, many of whom are anxious to contribute to society whilst awaiting a decision on their status. Many have valuable skills that would benefit our communities.

In Scotland, UNISON's Social Work Issues Group has identified many issues highlighted by our members working closely with asylum seekers. Not least of these is their vulnerability, many having mental health issues, both as a result of their previous experiences and their experience of the asylum process. Their situation is exacerbated by having to live on minimum benefits when they would rather work to support themselves and their families. Many are exploited by shameless employers who contribute to the hidden economy. Man's inhumanity to man is certainly at the forefront of our treatment of asylum seekers and their vulnerable families. Let us allow them the dignity to seek work and allow them the right of self-worth. *(Applause)*

Zita Holbourne (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported the motion and said: My colleagues and I in PCS and on the TUC Race Relations Committee are proud to support the 'Let them work' campaign and I was proud to chair this year's TUC Black Workers' Conference where the campaign was launched.

The campaign is based on a simple principle - that everyone has the right not to live in poverty and to contribute to the community in which they live. In PCS, we generated support for the campaign and our commitment at our recent annual conference and the Equality, Freedom and Justice event. Back in 2000, Bill Morris led a successful trade union campaign against the voucher system introduced for asylum seekers. He recognised that this system turned asylum seekers into second-class citizens and stigmatised them in the eyes of the rest of the community. Today, asylum seekers are excluded from the community through being excluded from the workplace. Exclusion from work means that asylum seekers become socially isolated, they are de-skilled, they have to live at sub-poverty levels of state support, in destitution, or be forced into informal working.

It cannot be acceptable that one of the most vulnerable groups in our society is denied the opportunity to earn a living. It cannot be acceptable that those who are denied asylum are left in destitution without access to housing benefits or healthcare. They are denied the opportunity to fend for themselves. It cannot be right that asylum seekers, who are denied refugee status in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe, are subjected to a deliberate policy of destitution to try to force them to leave this country. To put it bluntly, if a Thatcher government allowed asylum seekers to work then

there is absolutely no reason why a Labour Government cannot do likewise. *(Applause)*

Congress, because of their exclusion from the workplace, there has been fewer opportunities for trade unions to work with, and campaign for, asylum seekers to be treated with dignity and respect. This campaign is an opportunity for the trade union Movement to do more than oppose the Draconian legislation directed against asylum seekers and refugees and to campaign practically for something that can transform their lives. However, the campaign will only be successful if we take ownership of it and if we publicise it amongst our members. We must argue for their right to work in our workplaces and encourage activists and members to support the campaign activities. The time for talking is past. The time for action has come.

To finish, Congress, as mentioned already, yesterday the TUC and Refugee Council hosted a reception at Friends' Meeting House and I thank the local asylum seekers from the community group, Brighton Voices for Exile, for extending their hospitality to us. Those in attendance heard from speakers why we need to make this campaign a success. You can access details about the campaign from the Refugee Council's 'Let them work' campaign website. All general secretaries by now should have signed the pledge. Please check that your general secretary has signed the pledge and, if they have not, make sure that they do. Please pledge your own support for this campaign. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Shelagh Hirst (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported the motion. She said: President, Congress, I want to tell you about Gabriel. Like me, he is a primary teacher. He is passionate about education and helping children learn for life, but there is a difference. I am allowed to work, but he is not. Why? It is because he is an asylum seeker. He came to the UK in search of sanctuary in fear for his life. He came from a country in conflict with an appalling human rights record and had experienced persecution and torture. I have seen the scars to prove that. Leaving his profession, his family and home country was not a matter of choice.

Gabriel is not alone. I could tell you about many others such as Deborah, a UK-trained nurse; Salem, a mechanic; Dante and Ali, all asylum seekers, most of them living in poverty and experiencing poor health including depression.

The government policy since 2002 fosters a culture of dependency made worse by the social isolation and frustration. This was made very clear to me by those to whom I spoke. I was told, "I am losing my skills and confidence. I can't keep up-to-date. I haven't worked so I can't get a reference to be able to get work. They [the employers] only want people with experience. We are young and active and want to pay something back to the society that has given us help. We just wanted somewhere safe – not money and to be kept. Why did the policy change? We are skilled people who can contribute." They, and others, are not helped at all by the difficulty in accessing English classes and being denied the right to seek employment. The message is clear: 'You are not wanted here.'

Let me tell you about Hassan and Landri. Hassan came before 2002. He was able to work as an asylum seeker and now has a secure job at the *Yorkshire Post*. Landri came as a 17 year old. He was able to access English classes and went on to study electronics. He obtained his degree at Sheffield University and is now working at the electronics company, Siemens. They wanted me to tell you how privileged they feel to be able to play a full and active part in their community and in society.

ATL believes that those asylum seekers and refugees can make an immense contribution to our society.

Proficiency in English is key to making those connections with the local community and brings greater self-sufficiency. Denying asylum seekers access to work is a massive loss of talent, skills and potential and it is also a fundamental injustice.

So, Congress, what can we do? We can work together nationally and locally and not only support the 'Let them work' campaign, but ask those asylum seekers and refugees in our area to come to our branches and ask them how they feel. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 23 was CARRIED*

Welfare Green Paper

The President: I now call Emergency Motion 1, the Welfare Green Paper. The General Council supports the motion.

Mark Serwotka (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) moved Emergency Motion 1. He said: Can I start by saying that although it is very late in our proceedings and some of us have gone home, the terms of this motion are absolutely critical for every trade union member in the UK and for some of the most vulnerable people in our society the length and breadth of the country?

I want to start by thanking the GMB for not only seconding the motion, but for supporting our fringe meeting last night 'Defend the welfare state'. They brought that meeting to life last night and really put over what is at stake. I also want to thank Kate Green from the Child Poverty Action Group, with whom we look forward to working very closely if this composite is carried.

Congress, this issue that we are now about to debate exposes the depth to which the New Labour Government has sunk more than any other raised this week. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that all of us, in carrying the motion (hopefully unanimously) agree to the terms in the action points and you should particularly get your organisations to respond to the consultation by 22nd October.

Congress, these proposals contained in the Government's Green Paper implement the agenda of David Freud in full. David Freud is a merchant banker, someone who I cannot think is less qualified to talk on the welfare state, as he wants us to shred up some of the fundamentals that we have held dear since 1948.

Congress, our approach has to be to defend the welfare state and to stand up for the vulnerable, the sick, the old, the disabled and for lone parents, all of whom are attacked in this Green Paper. It is also to stand up for the unemployed people who want to work, but who are the victims of economic forces. They are not responsible for it. They need our support and not the penalties and the stick that the Government is actually threatening them with.

Let us look in detail at what the Government's proposals are. First of all, staggeringly, this is the only government since 1948 to consider abolishing the safety net which is now known as income support. They want to impose obligations, i.e. workfare, on those people unfortunate enough to be unable to work for two years. Think about it. We will have people doing menial tasks in our communities, forced to work to get benefit. It is absolutely disgraceful and turns on its head the Government's rejection of such a policy in 1997. It includes compulsory training, the extension of privatisation of delivery of the welfare state and giving everybody the opportunity to bid for contracts currently undertaken by PCS members in the public sector. It proposes cutting benefits to single parents, cutting benefits to the long-term sick and

disabled and requiring the parents of young children to seek work.

Congress, these represent not only a fundamental attack on the welfare state, but a U-turn on what Gordon Brown and Tony Blair argued for in 1997. They then explicitly rejected the proposals for workfare and indeed went down the road of the New Deal. New Deal is one of the successes of this Government, delivered by PCS members in Job Centre Plus, which has already seen over one million lone parents helped into the job market on the basis of partnership. It is seeking to help people and not threaten them.

Therefore, why is James Purnell, probably the most disgraceful member of the Cabinet – and I say that even though I am thinking of John Hutton at the same time – so obsessed with this approach of forced labour, based on a return to 19th century values which distinguish between deserving and undeserving people? It is based on a logic that sees people as scroungers, getting things they do not deserve.

If you think that this is rhetoric on the last morning of Congress, look at what has already happened in that disgraceful newspaper *The Sun*. *The Sun* carried an article recently attacking the community of Merthyr Tydfil, a community in which I was proud to go to school, but a community which is one of the most deprived in the UK. By placing an advert in the local press for a cleaning job that only one person applied for, they denounced the 20,000 people unlucky enough to be on benefit as scroungers. This is the agenda that Purnell will unleash, supported by the Tories, UKIP and the Daily Mail.

We have to say that we, the organised labour movement, will stand in their way. We have to say that it is incredible that proposals for Workfare, rejected specifically by Geoffrey Howe and Margaret Thatcher in 1985, are now the policy of the Labour Government and the Secretary of State, James Purnell. Congress, I hope you share with me and PCS members, who do a marvellous job delivering for people in very difficult circumstances in DWP, our outright opposition, anger and indignation at these proposals. We hope that you will support the motion unanimously and reject the Government's proposals. We hope that you will respond to the consultation and support PCS members who will fight against the privatisation of the welfare state in order to keep our offices open, keep our jobs in the public sector and to serve the sick, the old and the vulnerable.

We hope that you will all join us, if we carry the motion, in linking up with other campaigning organisations to put on the regional events around the country in order to say one thing. We reject the Tories, we reject UKIP, we reject this Labour Government's ripping up of the welfare state and we will do everything we can to oppose them. Congress, these proposals are sickening and it is up to the labour movement to force the Government to think again. Congress, we urge your support. *(Applause)*

Phil Davies (*GMB*) seconded Emergency Motion 1. He said: Congress, the GMB is opposed to the privatisation of Job Centre Plus. This Government makes great claims for involving the private sector in the delivery of public services but when challenged they find it almost impossible to produce any hard facts to support their argument that private is best.

James Purnell and Anne McGuire, DWP Ministers, are the new Bonny and Clyde of the welfare state, not robbing from banks and from petrol stations, but from the most vulnerable in our society. *(Applause)* The GMB agrees with our colleagues in PCS that Job Centre Plus is under-resourced. Let Job Centre Plus have the same flexibilities and resources as given to the private

sector and public servants will produce the same results, if not better.

What is the brave new world of the private employment agency? I can tell colleagues that two years ago the then Labour-run Croydon Council closed its supported employment factory. Over 80 disabled workers were thrown onto the scrapheap. The council told those workers that they would be found jobs. A private sector employment company was hired and supposedly no stone would be left unturned to get disabled workers new jobs. That is what we were told. Nearly two years later, all but a handful are back on state benefits with the exception of one GMB member who had worked at Crossfields for three decades. Without his daily work routine and his workmates' companionship, his life was empty. Sadly, that individual was dead for six months before he was even discovered - neglected and forgotten by the private sector employment agency.

Look at what happened to Remploy's 2,500 sacked workers - £68m wasted on redundancy; £32m put aside to pay workers to stay at home; disabled being sold to work free of charge in charity shops; workers who once had a decent job thrown on the scrapheap. Gordon Brown, you misled the GMB and the workers. Tracy Clark at York was found a job in Age Concern, but was dismissed after three months.

Let me say that the GMB will continue to fight for our Remploy workers as well as other workers in the protection of their jobs. The GMB is not surprised at Tory support for the aims of this Green Paper. At its core is 'Rest a brain' culture. Not having a paid job is your fault. It is nothing to do with the prevailing economic conditions. The unemployed are being treated like villains. Only the jobseekers have rights and responsibilities. No such responsibilities are being placed on the employers. It is all stick with very little carrot to show for it. The unemployed have always been required to actively seek work, but now that duty is being extended to more groups – those with disabilities and young children.

Moreover, state benefits are paid at a pittance of around 11 per cent of average weekly earnings. Our economy is being battered by the credit crunch. We all suffer the effects in our pockets. Food, energy and petrol prices have rocketed. What about those on state benefits? How are they expected to manage or even survive at a time of steep rising prices?

Congress, our members in PCS are under pressure in the same way that the Remploy workers have been for the last two years. The GMB will stand shoulder to shoulder with our colleagues to fight for their jobs. We are not going to have workers thrown on the scrapheap. We are not going to have the private sector taking over the running of our employment services as our people would do a great job. I second the emergency motion. *(Cheers and applause)*

* *Emergency Motion 1 was CARRIED*

Associated Train Crew Union

The President: We now have Emergency Motion 3, supported by the General Council.

Cliff Holloway (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) moved Emergency Motion 3. He said: I did not realise that I would end up as a new delegate speaking in the grimmest debate, but here we are so I will get going in order for you all to get away. *(Applause)*

Most of you in this Congress have never heard of the organisation referred to in this motion. As paragraph 2 indicates, this is a breakaway organisation consisting of a ragtag collection of disaffected ex-officers and, sadly, ex-members of my own trade union, loosely

management-backed, whose general agenda is to have no policy at all apart from one, namely, an enthusiasm to undermine the efforts of all railway unions and any trade union directly or indirectly involved with the railway industry.

The supporters of this organisation are dubious. They are accountable to nobody. Its leaders are more concerned with elevating their own personal profiles, egos and kudos than representing anybody. It is our view that this is a union-busting organisation dressed up in the respectability of insider knowledge of the rail industry. We are trying to contain this organisation at every level as trade unions in the workplace, but we urge Congress to view it with the same suspicion as we do at work. We ask that you support this motion to preclude their involvement in this Congress.

There have been some good speakers and it has been an inspiring congress, but if you look at the words above us that inspire us and give us courage as trade unionists, those words have no place at all in the structure of this association of which we speak. I ask you, please, to support this motion unconditionally so that we do not let odious organisations and outfits into this Congress. ASLEF moves. Thank you, colleagues. (*Applause*)

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded the motion. He said: I have pleasure in seconding this resolution, taking into account the tremendous contribution that Cliff has made for ASLEF. This affects everybody in the railway industry and some people might say, "Don't you think you are giving them oxygen by coming here anyway?" That is a fair argument. However, this group is far from being just a small ragtag group who have come together. They are not some kind of new organisation which is set up to look after working people. What they have on their side are the employers.

There is a newspaper called *Rail News*, to which all the employers of the railway companies contribute and support. The person who is the acting General Secretary of the ACTU was given a whole front page in order to put his case to the railway industry as to why this new organisation is in place and why it is asking for members. Secondly, it is raising the question of becoming an independent trade union. They have already been given status by the Certification Officer to become a trade union and now they are asking to become an independent trade union.

Some people may say that I am paranoid, but I do get paranoid when employers start putting notices up on the boards in their mess rooms and allow this organisation to put their information up for workers. I also find it hard to take when a personnel director of one of the train operating companies addresses their meetings. You become paranoid because there is no necessity for this organisation. I am not going to mention the name of anybody who is in that organisation because they live on the basis of libel and slander in order to get money off trade unions so that they can become even bigger in the future.

There is no place for that organisation within the TUC. In my opinion, they are doing what the UDM did after the mineworkers' strike. They are trying to divide the railway industry. (*Applause*) I want to say this. Three railway unions are operating in Great Britain and between the three of us we have 110,000 members. When nationalisation of the railway industry took place in 1947, there were 120,000 railway workers just working between Euston, Scotland and North West Britain. I would like to think that one day we will kill off the opportunity for this organisation to ever become an affiliate. I would like to think that one day the three railway workers' unions will not be coming to this rostrum just on the basis of stopping a renegade

organisation seeking affiliation, but because there will be one railway workers' union representing workers in Great Britain. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: I will now put Emergency Motion 3 to the vote. The General Council support.

* *Emergency Motion 3* was CARRIED

Adoption of the General Council Report

The President: I will now call Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 4. That completes the formal business of Congress. I now ask Congress to adopt the General Council's Report.

* *The General Council Report* was ADOPTED

Votes of Thanks

The President: I now have a number of votes of thanks to make to those who have contributed to the smooth running of Congress. I move a vote of thanks to the staff of the Brighton Centre for all that they have done to ensure that the Congress has run smoothly and to the stewards, who have assisted everybody during the week. (*Applause*)

I would like to thank the stage crew, the crèche workers and a special thank you to the team of sign language interpreters and verbatim reporters, who have worked so hard throughout this week. (*Applause*)

Award of Congress Gold Badges

The President: Congress, there are a number of colleagues who are leaving the General Council. Judy McKnight has been a member of the General Council since the year 2000 and has led the TUC's work on women's equality. Judy, I have great pleasure in presenting you with the Gold Badge of Congress. I will call upon Judy to say a few words. (*Presentation made amidst applause*)

Judy McKnight: Thank you, Dave. Can I just say what a huge honour it is to receive this Gold Badge. It was far beyond my wildest dreams when I started in the CPSA Research Department in 1972 that I should ever receive such an honour.

I feel very privileged to have spent almost my entire working life working for what I believe in - the trade union movement. I would like to thank all the unions I have worked for over the years. I started in CPSA, but subsequently I worked for the Society of Civil and Public Servants and the National Union of Civil and Public Servants, now part of PCS. Thank you to all the colleagues that I worked with over those 21 years in the civil service unions.

For the last 15 years, I have worked for NAPO, a small but great union. Thank you so much, NAPO. You are a fantastic union.

Can I give particular thanks also to Brendan and all the TUC staff. The TUC staff are so professional, so dedicated and so committed to the work of this movement. They have given me personal support as well support to my unions.

May I also thank the women in the trade union movement, particularly the women of the TUC Women's Committee. It is very much the women in the movement who have kept me sane. They have allowed me to keep my sense of humour and kept me going. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Finally, I thank all of the members of the trade union movement. I have always been, and will remain, deeply committed to the trade union movement and to the principle of coming together to fight for working

people's rights, for equality and for a better society for all. I have always had a huge buzz from coming to this Congress every year where we bring all of that together. Getting this Badge is the icing on the cake. I thank all of you. Keep up that important fight!
(Applause)

The President: Tony Dubbins has served on the General Council for 24 years, almost a quarter-of-a-century. When Tony joined the General Council in 1984, Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister, Norman Willis had just become General Secretary of the TUC and a young lad called Brendan Barber was running the TUC Press Department. Tony was President of Congress in 1997 and he has been an elder statesman for virtually the whole of the time that I have been on the General Council. He has led on learning and skills and provided sound advice on that and many other subjects over a very long period of time. Tony is not with us today, but I am sure that we can all wish him well for the future. (Applause)

Also leaving the General Council is Lesley Auger. She has made an important contribution to the General Council since she joined us in 2005. We also wish Lesley all the best for the future. (Applause)

Congress President 2009

The President: Finally, Congress, I can announce that the next President of the TUC, who takes office from close of Congress, is Sheila Bearcroft of the GMB. I wish her well. (Cheers and applause) I hope that she enjoys her year as President as much as I have done.

Vote of thanks to the President

Alison Shepherd (Vice President): It is my very pleasant job to finish Congress by proposing the vote of thanks to Dave Prentis, our President this year. I think that those of us who know Dave were looking forward to seeing how he would enjoy sitting in one seat for the whole of Congress. I think he has enjoyed it and he has been great to work with.

This morning, the General Council commended Dave very warmly and thanked him for his chairing of Congress. I think that one thing upon which Congress can agree with the General Council is that Dave has done a great job in chairing Congress. It gives me great pleasure to present the Gold Badge of Congress and Congress gift, the Congress Bell, to our President. (Presentation made amidst applause)

Vote of thanks to the media

The President: Congress, there is a little bit of sadness in the next item. It is a change in tradition and the start of new traditions. It is always very difficult for somebody of my age. In a moment I will call upon the General Secretary to give a vote of thanks to the media. This is something of a historic moment because after 87 years the General Council and the Industrial Correspondents Group have agreed that the time has come to end the tradition of concluding Congress in this way. As you know, the industrial correspondents are a bit of a declining breed. We have seen the rise of political correspondents. It is a little bit like the grey squirrels taking over from the brown squirrels, and we go along with the changes. To mark the occasion, we have actually invited Geoffrey Goodman, widely recognised as the doyen of industrial correspondents to give a fitting final address, but before that I invite Brendan to give his vote of thanks to the media.

Brendan Barber (General Secretary): President, as you say, I am moving, for the last time, this vote of thanks

to the media, and as ever our proceedings this week have received extensive media coverage.

As some of you may have seen, I was described in last Sunday's *Observer* as "The TUC leader who is not afraid to have a go, but who sometimes infuriates some of his colleagues with his reasonableness." So, just to prove them right yet again, let me begin by saying:

The Revolution is here,

The Revolution is now,

The Trades Councils are rising up.

Comrades, let us rally with them and go to the barricades,

But could all delegates please form an orderly queue!
(Laughter and applause)

As you may have seen, Gordon was not able to join us in the Congress hall this week, Gordon Taylor, that is, the General Secretary of the Professional Footballers' Association. He sent his apologies earlier. He said something about having to support his members in Zagreb last night, and it is amazing what you can achieve with union support. (Applause)

But what a week it has been. According to the press, the world was due to end at 8.30 am on Wednesday when an experiment was conducted in Switzerland that some scientist feared would create a black hole that could swallow the whole solar system. The GPC considered whether this was appropriate for an emergency motion but decided that it was not, as the issue could be raised on a General Council Report paragraph.

I can now reveal that the world did end on Wednesday, in fact, and we are now living in a parallel universe. I cite as evidence Wednesday's *Daily Telegraph* which contained a headline – I know there are lot of *Telegraph* reads out there – saying: 'Class war is back as Labour bows to the unions.' That is clearly not quite the same universe that I think we have been living in.

How different from the media coverage of earlier days. The first vote of thanks was in 1921 at the Cardiff Congress. The President of that day was hugely enthusiastic about this new idea. He said, and I quote verbatim: "I do hope the delegates will stay because the organist is going to finish with the Welsh National Anthem and Auld Lang Syne. Mr Thompkin is very proud of his organ because it is one of the best in the country." (Laughter) In response, Mr Bob Peaker of the *Morning Post* thanked Congress and said: "Nothing could have been done better than the arrangements made for our comfort this week." So no change there, then. In conclusion, he offered this gem: "We have listened to all the speeches, which is more than can be said for some of the delegates." (Laughter)

But one person who has recorded Congress with total accuracy has retired this week, and that is Betty Willett of the verbatim reporters, Marten Walsh Cherer, who has covered Congress since 1973 and provided verbatim reports of many other union conferences, as well, I know, including the T&G, NALGO as was, GMB, ASLEF and UCATT. Betty, we wish you all the best for your retirement and with thanks for all of your diligent work. (Applause)

Congress, as we have said, this year is the last in which we are having this feature of a vote of thanks and a reply from the Industrial Correspondents' Group, as Dave has said. There are a few specialist industrial reporters left, and such is the high pressure world of modern journalism that they are often called back before the final morning of Congress. So we and the remaining members of the Industrial Correspondents Group agreed that this was the time to end this long and noble tradition. Over the years many industrial correspondents have addressed us, and among the last was Andy Taylor of the FT, one of the few full-time

industrials now employed by a national daily. A couple of years ago Andy told us of how in his early days he went to interview a group of dockers who kindly provided him with excessively generous quantities of liquid refreshments before putting him into a taxi with strict instructions that he was to be delivered direct to his editor's office. But despite that he stuck with industrial reporting and, in what I think was one of the most telling speeches of our 2006 Congress, he told us of the contrasting stories between two friends of his, one a union member at the FT who was able to get crucial help from his union at a time of restructuring, and the other without a union who found himself absolutely defenceless at a time of change. There have been many like Andy in past years, good journalists and good trade unionists, who understand what we stand for and what we do.

As Dave has said, replying for the press this year will be Geoffrey Goodman. Geoffrey has often, and I think rightly, been described as the 'doyen of industrial reporters'. After serving with the RAF during the war, Geoffrey started his journalistic career as a reporter with the *Manchester Guardian*. He began covering political and industrial affairs when Clement Attlee was Prime Minister, and being an enterprising type he approached the great man at breakfast in the hotel to seek his views on some of the great issues of the day, only to be told to return later as the Prime Minister was fully occupied in doing *The Times* crossword. Geoffrey has also worked for the *Daily Herald*, *The Sun*, he joined the *Daily Mirror* in 1969 and was assistant editor from 1976 – 1986. Amongst other things, Geoffrey wrote that special biography of the T&G General Secretary, Frank Cousins, and a history of the 1984-85 miners' strike. Geoffrey is a lifelong trade unionist and during the past six decades there has been no better friend of this movement.

Congress, I am proud that Geoffrey is here to address us today. I am proud to move our last ever vote of thanks to the media. (Applause)

Geoffrey Goodman (*Industrial Correspondents Group*) said:

Congress, you are very patient. I said to Brendan, it takes a long time for an old man to reach this rostrum. We used to have seats in the front and it was much easier to come to the rostrum then. Anyway, to those of you who have been patient enough to remain, comrades, brothers and sisters, Brendan, President, General Council and all those around you, Brendan, in Congress House, thank you very much indeed for giving me the honour at this rather sad moment to make this speech.

As he said, I am a life member of the NUJ and, indeed, a member of the T&G as well. They still call it that, don't they, I think. (Laughter) My newspaper history, as Brendan has listed, goes back to the days when *The Guardian* was called *The Manchester Guardian*, *Sunday Express*, *News Chronicle*, *Daily Herald*, *Daily Mirror* and most of Fleet Street in fact. I have been coming to this Congress for a long time, more than 50 years of Congress. But what a week you had this week! Consider the most right-wing Republican Government in the United States has nationalised capitalism. Alistair Darling, our Chancellor, has been talking to the TUC about the dangers of inequality, a speech, I think wrongly described, by one *Times* journalist, as 'indescribably dull'. I think it was descriptably dull, actually. (Applause)

Some other observer from my colleagues in the media has described you as the 'brothers Grimm'. That is a pretty grim comment from a rather inadequate reporter. I am surprised that one of my colleagues should be so ill-advised as to call you the 'brothers Grimm'. The obviously don't know you. They have

never been in the bars until the early hours of the morning with so many of you, and many people are not here today. The last thing I would call any trade union delegate is "grim".

Then again, in the week we saw Tony Woodley actually getting a fair coverage from most of the national newspapers. Well, I think fairer than he has had in the past, anyway. Beware, Tony.

Now, me, the Methuselah of industrial journalism, making yet another final appearance thanks to you, Brendan, scheduled as the finale that I have been honoured and invited to keep you from rushing out to the doors to listen to a few words.

Indeed, it is a remarkable tradition and custom that is now ending. Frankly, I do find it sad, deeply sad, that the media has come to this moment, in agreement with the TUC, to end what is a remarkable tradition, as Brendan said, going back to 1921, the year I was born, the year Lloyd George was Prime Minister, the year Ernie Bevin formed the General Council. As Brendan has mentioned, the man who gave the first response from the press in those days was a man from the *Morning Post*, not the *Morning Star*, a man called Bob Peaker. The *Morning Post* was, of course, absorbed into the *Daily Telegraph* in 1935/1936. Bob Peaker gave the response for the press every year as nobody else was prepared to face you until 1936. He stood here in front of you until he was superseded by one of the great writers of industrial journalism, one of the great writers of Fleet Street, in fact, Ian McKay of the *News Chronicle*. Apart from that it was Bob Peaker.

So there has been a long tradition in which there has been a love affair (I have to say that) between one of the most distinguished group of journalists going back into the 1920s and 1930s. The Industrial Correspondents Group was formed in the 1930s. It developed a core of journalists which, at one time, before and after the war, were regarded by their editors as the most important specialist journalists in Fleet Street. They had a reputation then and a status in their own offices of national newspapers higher, at least equal but often higher, than the political lobby correspondents. They used to cover all the political conferences, in particular the Labour Party Conference, the TUC Conference and the Tory Conference, unless they could escape it. Now that corps has disappeared and very few remain. Hardly any national newspaper now has a regular team of industrial reporters. I think it is not only an indication of the decline and the quality of the media but in the judgement of editors and newspapers nationally. I say to my colleagues now, okay, you have come to an agreement with Brendan and the TUC to end this tradition. I think it is wrong. I do not accept the idea that my colleagues in the media should take this lying down.

Your trade union role, in my view, is as important, significant and great as ever, arguably more so. The problems that face working people today in this country and across the globe are enormous. The idea that we no longer have a regular responsible coverage in our national media -- that includes television, radio, newspapers and regional newspapers as well, not just the national press, but a widespread, responsible and serious coverage of the working life of the British people -- is appalling. I do not think it should go unchallenged. (Applause) It should not go unchallenged from you. Bob Crow had an echo of this in what he was saying a few minutes ago about the whole nature of working life in this country. That should be reflected far more in our media, on television, radio and newspapers. I do not think that the trade unions should allow to go unchallenged the denigration, this collapse, almost of the coverage of working life in this country. That was the role of industrial reporters or whatever fancy label they were

given by their editors and so forth. I have had them all in my lifetime.

The most important thing is to report. That is the real role of a journalist, to report, and report as industrial specialists on the working life of the British people. That is what is now missing. That is what I deeply resent, regret and find so sad about this moment.

You have given me the honour of making this finale and it is an honour I do not like taking, frankly. I prefer it otherwise. I would prefer this tradition not only to continue but to grow and develop as it should. There are so many issues now, not only nationally but internationally. Yesterday I heard Brendan speaking at the mid-day reception for Justice for Colombia. It struck me so forcibly there how much this situation resembles the problem that my generation had to face during the Spanish Civil War. Your description of what is going on in Colombia today is hardly reported anywhere. You try and find a mention of that in any newspaper of the day or any reference on radio or television. That, in my view, is a disgrace to my profession, my trade (*Applause*) and to the editors and those people who run our media. That is what you should be challenging more and more.

Let me reflect now on some of the former colleagues of mine who used to grace this platform at the end of Congress and at the dying embers of Congress. Let me just mention a few in the roll of honour. Trevor Evans was among the founders of the Industrial Correspondents Group in the early 1930s. He came from a miners' family in south Wales and was one of the greatest industrial reporters we have had. You may find it difficult to believe that anybody on the *Daily Express* would be a great reporter, but Trevor was, an outstanding one.

Let me continue with our roll of honour. There was Gordon Shaffer of *Reynolds News*. I will tell you an interesting point about Gordon Shaffer. Gordon Shaffer was at this rostrum to reply on behalf of the press on September 3rd, 1939. Congress was closed. It was just a short, brief Congress as war had been declared, so Gordon had to wait 12 months until 1940 before he could reply for the press. He was a great reporter.

I will refer to other names. Eric Wigham of *The Times*; Harold Hutchinson of the *Daily Mirror*; Hugh Chevens of the *Daily Telegraph*. You may find it difficult to believe that anybody from the *Daily Telegraph* would be a good industrial reporter, but he was an outstanding reporter. George Sinfield of the *Daily Worker*. That was before the *Morning Star*. There was Mick Costello of the *Morning Star*, and more recently the roll of honour has included Keith McDowell of the *Daily Mail*. That is right – the *Daily Mail*. They were all wonderful reporters on the industrial scene. John Cole was, first of all, with the *Manchester Guardian*, *The Guardian* and then the BBC; Bert Mycroft with the BBC; Peter Sissons, now a television newsman, who was a very excellent ITV man. He was an industrial reporter for ITN. We must not forget John Elliott of the *Financial Times*, Andy Taylor's predecessor. That was a long time ago. The *Financial Times* is a paper which talks to the financial elite of the City. The *Financial Times*, believe it or not, used to have a full-time team of six industrial reporters who did nothing else, and often brilliantly, but report on the working life of Britain. Andy Taylor is now the lone voice.

We must remember Keith Harper of *The Guardian*. *The Guardian* does not have a labour correspondent as such now, although they have some very fine reporters who cover this Congress. Kevin McGuire, Paul Routledge and Christine Buckley labours away at *The Times* now, which is a very different *Times* to the one which Eric Wigham used to inhabit. Many of them are/were outstanding journalists in their own right whatever they covered. It happened to be industrial affairs. It

could have been political affairs. Often they were foreign correspondents as well. They were outstanding journalists. That corps has disappeared.

As part of my appeal to you is to challenge the decline of this corps, I would also appeal to my colleagues, those fine industrial reporters who are on the fringe of Congress today – they used to be at the front. I can only assume that you removed them to the fringe because when delegates used to come to the rostrum then and the press was in the front here they used to swear at some of their less favoured reporters. So you removed them to the sidelines. Was that why?

I look back now at Congresses where there were five hundred media in attendance, where your General Secretaries were Walter Citrine – I still remember Walter Citrine, believe it or not – the great George Woodcock, Vic Feather, who was an even better humorist than many journalists, Norman Willis, John Monks and now Brendan. We journalists have been privileged and I want to thank you for providing us with such tremendous stories about your own history, your own work and your own creative contribution to the life of this nation.

In winding-up and in thanking Brendan and Congress House, including the whole team around you, of Nigel Stanley, Mike Smith – I go back a long time – and in thanking my wife, who is in the gallery for her long support, and my granddaughter is also in the gallery (*Applause*), let me finally repeat: do not be misled. There are not many of you here today, a lot of you have gone now, quite rightly. Do not be misled, disheartened or weakened and limited by the inadequate coverage that you now get, unfairly, from the modern media. There have been revolutionary changes, and a lot of it for the worse, in the state of the media. The quality of the media has been transformed, particularly in the last decade. There is very little resemblance to the media that I came into as a young reporter, very little at all. We now talk about the web, mobiles and all the new technologies which have transformed the whole culture of our trade. But there still remains the great trade of journalism. There are many young, fine journalists ready and committed to write about what is happening in the life of this country, and there should be more about what you do. It is up to you, and I appeal to you all, to Brendan and the TUC, not to allow what has been happening in the national press coverage to dishearten you. You must go out from this hall today, not defensive, and challenge the new media, whatever their role is now, to use their new technology, to use the ability that the journalists have today to write about your struggles. They have to play a far more responsible role in covering Britain's working life. You still have a vital role to play and a vital story to tell. You are the largest, most important and, in my view, most influential voluntary organisation in a democratic society. That is the role of the trade unions. Go out and tell the media that story, challenge them to write about what is happening. Do not let them get away with it. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. Good luck to you and thank you. (*A standing ovation*)

Close of Congress

The President: That was a brilliant speech and a fitting end speech to many years of history. Conference, it has been great charring Congress this week. I have really enjoyed it. I also cannot wait to get back to my UNISON delegation as well.

That just about brings us to the end of Congress, but another tradition now goes out of the window because we are no longer singing Auld Lang Syne. We are not even singing Show Them the Way to Go Home.

We are modernising. We are becoming part of the 21st Century. We are ending with a little video, to remind

you of some of the highlights and lowlights of the last few days. (*Video of the highlights of Congress was shown*)

Congress closed at 1.30pm

Section 3

Unions and their delegates

Accord

Simmons House, 46 Old Bath Road
Charvil, Reading Berks RG10 9QR
t 0118 934 1808 f 0118 932 0208
e info@accordhq.org
e (officials and staff)
firstname.surname@accordhq.org
www.accord-myunion.org
m 9,571 f 20,844 total 30,415
main trades and industries the Halifax Bank of
Scotland Group (HBOS)
Gen sec Ged Nichols
Delegates
Carley Anderson Thomas Bell
Julian Bickerstaff Chris Goldthorpe
Marilyn Morris Ged Nichols
Doug Scott
Male 5, female 2, total 7

ACM

**Association for
College Management**
35 The Point, Market Harborough
Leicestershire LE16 7QU
t 01858 461110 f 01858 461366
e admin@acm.uk.com
e (officials and staff) firstnamesurname@acm.uk.com
www.acm.uk.com
m 1,739 f 2,134 total 3,873
main trades and industries representing managers
in the learning and skills sector
Chief exec and gen sec Peter Pendle
Delegates
David Green Peter Pendle
Male 2, female 0, total 2

ADVANCE

(formerly ANGU)
2nd floor, 16/17 High Street
Tring, Herts HP23 5AH
t 01442 891122 f 01442 891133
e info@advance-union.org
www.advance-union.org
m 1,651 f 5,112 total 6,763
main trades and industries All staff employed in the

Abbey and Santander UK-based companies
Gen sec Linda Rolph
Delegates
Peter Gruenewald Linda Rolph
Male 1, female 1, total 2

AEP

**Association of
Educational Psychologists**
Units 4&5, The Riverside Centre,
Frankland Lane, Durham DH1 5TA
t 0191 384 9512 f 0191 386 5287
e sao@aep.org.uk
www.aep.org.uk
m 782 f 2,442 total 3,224
main trades and industries educational
psychologists in local educational authorities and other
public and private organisations (England, Wales &
Northern Ireland)
Gen sec Charles Ward
Delegates
Beth Pollard Charles Ward
Male 1, female 1, total 2

AFA

**Association of
Flight Attendants**
AFA Council 07, United Airlines Cargo Centre
Shoreham Road East, Heathrow Airport
Hounslow, Middx TW6 3UA
t 020 8276 6723
e afalhr@unitedafa.org
www.afalhr.org.uk
total 610 (male/female split not available)
main trades and industries airline cabin crew
LEC president Saad Bhatkar
Delegates
Michael-Eric Schwaabe
Elisabeth M Cronier-Schwaabe
Male 1, female 1, total 2

ASLEF

**Associated Society
of Locomotive Engineers
and Firemen**
9 Arkwright Road, London NW3 6AB
t 020 7317 8600 f 020 7794 6406
e info@aslef.org.uk
www.aslef.org.uk
m 17,438 f 595 total 18,033
main trades and industries railways (drivers,
operational supervisors and staff)
Gen sec Keith Norman
Delegates
Alan Donnelly Richard Harrison
Cliff Holloway Keith Norman
Male 4, female 0, total 4

ASPECT

**Association of
Professionals in Education
and Children's Trusts**

Woolley Hall, Woolley, Wakefield
West Yorkshire WF4 2JR
t 01226 383428 f 01226 383427
e admin@aspect.org.uk
e (officials and staff) firstname@aspect.org.uk
www.aspect.org.uk
m 1,690 f 2,180 total 3,870
Gen sec John Chowcat LI.B (Hons)
Delegates
John Chowcat Alan Heinzman
Male 2, female 0, total 2

ATL

**Association of
Teachers and Lecturers**

7 Northumberland Street
London WC2N 5RD
t 020 7930 6441 f 020 7930 1359
e info@atl.org.uk
e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@atl.org.uk
www.atl.org.uk
m 32,840 f 87,694 total 120,534
main trades and industries teachers, headteachers,
lecturers and teaching support staff in nursery,
primary,
secondary schools, sixth form and further education
colleges
Gen sec Dr Mary Bousted
Delegates
Andy Ballard Sam Bechler
Suzanne Beckley Mary Bousted
Andy Brown Steven Crane
Paul Day Christine Gregory
Shelagh Hirst Mark Holding
Phil Jacques Martin Johnson
Pat Kyrrou Julia Neal
Jacinta Phillips Carla Powell
John Puckrin Kate Quiqley
Hank Roberts Ralph Surman
Daniela Wachsening Lesley Ward
Chris Wilson Joan Yarker
Male 12, female 13, total 25

BACM-TEAM

**British Association of
Colliery Management –
Technical, Energy and
Administrative Management**

6a South Parade, Doncaster DN1 2DY
t 01302 815551 f 01302 815552
e gs@bacmteam.org.uk
www.bacmteam.org.uk
m 2,631 f 152 total 2,783
Gen sec Patrick Carragher

Delegate
Patrick Carragher
Male 1, female 0, total 1

BALPA

**British Air Line
Pilots Association**

BALPA House, 5 Heathrow Boulevard
278 Bath Road, West Drayton UB7 0DQ
t 020 8476 4000 f 020 8476 4077
e balpa@balpa.org
www.balpa.org
m 9,191 f 443 total 9,634
main trades and industries airline pilots, winchmen
and flight engineers (commercial)
Gen sec Jim McAuslan
Delegates
Lynne Clark Jim McAuslan
Male 1, female 1, total 2

BDA

British Dietetic Association

5th floor, Charles House
148/149 Gt Charles Street
Queensway, Birmingham B3 3HT
t 0121 200 8080 f 0121 200 8056
e ir@bda.uk.com
e (officials and staff) initial.surname@bda.uk.com
www.bda.uk.com
total 5,768 (male/female split not available)
main trades and industries the science and practice
of dietetics in the private and public sector
Head of employment relations Debbie O'Rourke
Delegates
Dennis Edmondson Debbie O'Rourke
Male 1, female 1, total 2

BECTU

**Broadcasting, Entertainment,
Cinematograph and
Theatre Union**

373–377 Clapham Road
London SW9 9BT
t 020 7346 0900
e info@bectu.org.uk
e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@bectu.org.uk
www.bectu.org.uk
m 18,049 f 8,161 total 26,210
main trades and industries broadcasting, film,
video, theatre, cinema and related sectors
Gen sec Gerry Morrissey
Delegates
Jack Amos Luke Crawley
Peter Cox Tony Lennon
Turlough MacDaid Jane Perry
Male 5, female 1, total 6

BFAWU

Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union

Stanborough House, Great North Road
 Stanborough, Welwyn Garden City
 Herts AL8 7TA
 t 01707 260150 f 01707 261570
 e bfawuho@aol.com
 www.bfawu.org
 total 23,291 (male/female split not available)
 main trades and industries food
 Gen sec Joe Marino
 Delegates
 Violet Carr Ian Hodson
 Joe Marino Tony Richardson
 Male 3, female 1, total 4

BOSTU

**British Orthoptic
 Society Trade Union**

Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square
 London WC1H 9HX
 t 020 7387 7992 f 020 7383 2584
 e bos@orthoptics.org.uk
 e (officials and staff)
 membership@orthoptics.org.uk
 www.orthoptics.org.uk
 m 42 f 979 total 1,021
 main trades and industries orthoptists
 Chair Rosie Auld
 Delegates
 Rosie Auld
 Male 0, female 1, total 1

BSU

Britannia Staff Union

Court Lodge, Leonard Street
 Leek, Staffordshire ST13 5JP
 t 01538 399627 f 01538 371342
 e bsu@themail.co.uk
 e (officials and staff)
 firstname.surname@britannia.co.uk
 www.britanniasu.org.uk
 m 922 f 2,475 total 3,397
 main trades and industries finance sector union
 representing staff working in Britannia Building Society
 and its group of companies
 Gen sec John Stoddard
 Delegates
 Lisa Beverley John Stoddard
 Male 1, female 1, total 2

CDNA

**Community and
 District Nursing Association**

Thames Valley University, Walpole House
 18-22 Bond Street, Ealing, London W5 5AA
 t 020 8231 0180 f 020 8231 0187
 e info@cdnaonline.org

www.cdnaonline.org

m 76 f 2,808 total 2,884
 main trades and industries community and district
 nurses, health care assistants and everyone working
 within community health
 Chair Rowena Smith
 Delegates
 Julie Connolly Anita Ralli
 Male 0, female 2, total 2

COMMUNITY

The Union for Life

Swinton House
 324 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8DD
 t 020 7239 1200 f 020 7278 8378
 e info@community-tu.org
 e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@communitytu.
 org
 www.community-tu.org
 m 55,644 f 11,844 total 67,488
 main trades and industries industries in and around
 steel and metal, knitwear, lace, textiles, hosiery, dyeing
 and finishing, footwear and leather, gloving, made-up
 leather goods
 Gen sec Michael J Leahy OBE
 Delegates
 Keren Bender Peter Crowe
 Gareth Davies Keith Davies
 Pat Donnelly Tom Donnelly
 Kevin Edwards Pat Keenan
 Michael Leahy Joe Mann
 Christine O'Sullivan Roy Rickhuss
 Mark Spencer
 Male 11, female 2, total 13

CONNECT

**The union for
 professionals
 in communications**

30 St George's Road, Wimbledon SW19 4BD
 t 020 8971 6000 f 020 8971 6002
 e union@connectuk.org
 e (officials and staff)
 firstname.surname@connectuk.org
 www.connectuk.org
 m 15,479 f 3,837 total 19,316
 main trades and industries telecommunications,
 information technology and related industries
 Gen sec Adrian Askew
 Delegates
 Adrian Askew Carla Banks
 Leslie Manasseh Denise McGuire
 Male 2, female 2, total 4

CSP

**Chartered Society
of Physiotherapy**

14 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4ED
t 020 7306 6666 f 020 7306 6611
e enquiries@csp.org.uk
www.csp.org.uk
m 4,030 f 31,020 total 35,050

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is the professional, educational and trade union body for the country's 49,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and assistants. Physiotherapy is Britain's fourth largest health profession and continues to grow

Director of employment relations

Lesley Mercer

Delegates

Phil Hulse Alexandra Mackenzie

Naomi McVey Lesley Mercer

Cliff Towson

Male 2, female 3, total 5

CWU

**Communication
Workers Union**

150 The Broadway, Wimbledon
London SW19 1RX
t 020 8971 7200 f 020 8971 7300
e info@cwu.org
e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@cwu.org
www.cwu.org

m 189,133 f 47,546 total 236,679
main trades and industries Royal Mail Group, British Telecom and other telephone companies, Cable TV, Accenture HR Services, the Alliance and Leicester and other related industries

Gen sec Billy Hayes

Delegates

Lee Barron Eddie Beese

Davie Bowman Pat Clouder

Debbie Cort John Donnelly

Jeannie Drake Maria Exall

Billy Hayes Mick Kavanagh

Tony Kearns Martin Keenan

Peter Keenlyside Bobby Kelly

Vera Kelsey Andy Kerr

Joanne Lawton Lesley McClean

Bernard Roome Amarjite Singh

Tony Sneddon Mark Walsh

Dave Walton Dave Ward

Dave Wilshire Claire Wright

Male 18, female 8, total 26

DGSU

**Derbyshire Group
Staff Union**

The Lodge, Duffield Hall, Duffield
Derby DE56 1AG
180

t 01332 844396

e deirdre.smith@dgsu.org.uk

m 107 f 389 total 496

Chairman Deirdre Smith

Delegate

Deirdre Smith

Male 0, female 1, total 1

DSA

**Diageo Staff
Association**

Sun Works Cottage, Park Royal Brewery
London NW10 7RR

t/f 020 8978 6069

e diageo.staff.association@diageo.com

e (officials and staff) firstname.surname@diageo.com

m 239 f 154 total 393

main trades and industries staff grades in Diageo in the UK

Chair Tara Kelly

EIS

**Educational
Institute of Scotland**

46 Moray Place, Edinburgh EH3 6BH

t 0131 225 6244 f 0131 220 3151

e enquiries@eis.org.uk

e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@eis.org.uk

www.eis.org.uk

m 14,516 f 45,023 total 59,539

main trades and industries teachers, lecturers, associated educational personnel (Scotland)

Gen sec Ronald A Smith

Delegates

Helen Connor Kirsty Devaney

David Drever Marion Ross

Ronnie Smith Ken Wimbor

Male 3, female 3, total 6

Equity

Guild House

Upper St Martin's Lane

London WC2H 9EG

t 020 7379 6000 f 020 7379 7001

e info@equity.org.uk

e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@equity.org.uk

www.equity.org.uk

m 17,878 f 17,649 total 35,527

main trades and industries performance workers in theatre, film television, radio and variety; fashion models

Gen sec Christine Payne

Delegates

Natasha Gerson Graham Hamilton

Corinna Marlowe Christine Payne

Andy Prodger Stephen Spence

Sally Treble

Male 3, female 4, total 7

FBU**Fire Brigades' Union**

Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road
 Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 7AE
 t 020 8541 1765 f 020 8546 5187
 e office@fbu.org.uk
 e (officials and staff) firstname.surname@fbu.org.uk
 www.fbu.org.uk
 total 45,410 (male/female split not available)
 main trades and industries local authority fire
 brigades
 Gen sec Matt Wrack
 Delegates
 Dave Green Vicky Knight
 Tam McFarlane Alan McLean
 Micky Nicolas Jerry Pagan
 Mick Shaw Matt Wrack
 Male 7, female 1, total 8

FDA

**The union of choice for
 senior managers and
 professionals in public service**

8 Leake Street, London SE1 7NN
 t 020 7401 5555 f 020 7401 5550
 e head-office@fda.org.uk
 e (officials and staff) firstname@fda.org.uk
 www.fda.org.uk
 m 9,367 f 8,050 total 17,417
 main trades and industries civil service, public
 bodies and NHS
 Gen sec Jonathan Baume
 Delegates
 Jonathan Baume Terry Cook
 Marisa Howes David Watts
 Male 3, female 1, total 4

GMB**Britain's General Union**

22/24 Worple Road
 London SW19 4DD
 t 020 8947 3131 f 020 8944 6552
 e info@gmb.org.uk
 www.gmb.org.uk
 m 326,037 f 264,088 total 590,125
 main trades and industries public services –
 primarily NHS, local government, care education; also
 engineering, construction, shipbuilding, energy,
 catering, security, civil air transport, aerospace,
 defence, clothing, textiles, retail, hotel, chemicals,
 utilities, offshore, food production and distribution
 Gen sec & treasurer Paul Kenny
 Delegates
 Brian Adams Richard Ascough
 Rehana Azam Sheila Bearcroft
 Allan Black Elizabeth Blackman
 Ed Blissett Jude Brimble
 Brenda Carson Edward Clarke

Naomi Cooke	Phil Davies
Veronica Davison	Neil Derrick
Harry Donaldson	James Donley
Alan Dudson	Roy Dunnett
Gerry Ferguson	George Fraser
Allan Garley	Gordon Gibbs
Margaret Gregg	Tommy Hall
Audrey Harry	Colleen Harwood
Paul Hayes	Keith Hazlewood
Sharon Holder	Michael Husbands
Kamaljeet Jandu	Paul Kenny
Charles King	Ann Leader
Maria Ludkin	Rory MacQueen
Kath Manning	Evelyn Martin
Joni McDougall	June Minnery
Joe Morgan	Pete Murphy
Dolores O'Donoghue	Lorraine Parker
Daniel Randall	Mick Rix
Edna Rolph	Malcolm Sage
Jennifer Smith	Gary Smith
Rosemary Sowerby	Brian Strutton
Bernie Taylor	Eileen Theaker
John Toomey	Mary Turner
Kathleen Walker Shaw	Robert Watson
Michael Widdison	Andy Worth
Margaret Younger	
Male 36, female 25, total 61	

HCSA

**Hospital Consultants
 and Specialists Association**

1 Kingsclere Road, Overton
 Basingstoke, Hampshire RG25 3JA
 t 01256 771777 f 01256 770999
 e conspec@hcsa.com
 www.hcsa.com
 m 2,609 f 499 total 3,108
 main trades and industries hospital consultants,
 associate specialists, SpR grade and staff grade
 Gen sec Stephen Campion
 Delegates
 Stephen Campion Ian Smith
 Male 2, female 0, total 2

MU**Musicians' Union**

60/62 Clapham Road, London SW9 0JJ
 t 020 7582 5566 f 020 7582 9805
 e info@musiciansunion.org.uk
 www.musiciansunion.org.uk
 m 24,141 f 8,533 total 32,674
 main trades and industries employed and selfemployed
 musicians including live and recording
 artists, writers, composers and teachers
 Gen sec John F Smith
 Delegates
 Kathy Dyson Tom Edwards
 Isabelle Gutierrez Danny Longstaff

John Smith Horace Trubridge
Barbara White
Male 4, female 3, total 7

NACO

**National Association
of Co-operative Officials**

6a Clarendon Place, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 2QZ
t 0161 351 7900 f 0161 366 6800
e (officials and staff) initials@nacoco-op.org
m 1,554 f 611 total 2,165
main trades and industries retail distribution,
insurance, dairy industry, funeral services, motor
trades (retail), retail pharmacy, travel industry,
agriculture
Gen sec Neil Buist

NACODS

**National Association of Colliery
Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers**

Wadsworth House, 130-132 Doncaster Road
Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 1TP
t 01226 203743 f 01226 295563
e natnacods@aol.com
total 336 (male/female split not available)
main trades and industries mining
Gen sec Ian Parker
Delegate
Terry Fox
Male 1, female 0, total 1

NAPO

**The Trade Union
and Professional Association for
Family Court and Probation Staff**

4 Chivalry Road, London SW11 1HT
t 020 7223 4887 f 020 7223 3503
e info@napo.org.uk
www.napo.org.uk
m 2,862 f 6,142 total 9,004
main trades and industries probation officers,
including hostel assistant wardens and community
service sessional supervisors and family court staff
Gen sec Jonathan Ledger
Delegates
Jonathan Ledger Mike McClelland
Judy McKnight
Male 2, female 1, total 3

NASUWT

**National Association
of Schoolmasters
Union of Women Teachers**

5 King Street, London WC2E 8SD
t 020 7420 9670 f 020 7420 9679
e chris.keates@mail.nasuwat.org.uk
www.teachersunion.org.uk
m 75,601 f 189,601 total 265,202
182

main trades and industries education
Gen sec Chris Keates

Delegates

Keith Anderson	Jerry Bartlett
Lynn Bayliss	Julian Chapman
Brian Cookson	Tim Cox
Lena Davies	Nigel De Gruchy
Kathy Duggan	John Girdley
Amanda Haehner	Julia Harris
Alan Homes	Karen Hopwood
Mary Howard	Mike Johnson
David Jones	Chris Keates
Chris Lines	Maurice Littlewood
Mick Lyons	John Mayes
Jennifer Moses	Mary Page
Jim Quigley	Ilana Rapaport
John Rimmer	Patrick Roach
Paula Roe	Sue Rogers
Peter Scott	Tracy Twist
Chris Weavers	Steve White
Jo Wright	

Male 20, female 15, total 35

NAUTILUS UK

Oceanair House
750/760 High Road, London E11 3BB
t 020 8989 6677 f 020 8530 1015
e enquiries@nautilusuk.org
e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@nautilusuk.org
www.nautilusuk.org
m 15,950 f 324 total 16,274
main trades and industries merchant navy and all
related areas
Gen sec Brian Orrell
Delegates
Mike Jess Peter McEwen
Paul Moloney Brian Orrell
Male 4, female 0, total 4

NGSU

**Nationwide Group
Staff Union**

Middleton Farmhouse, 37 Main Road,
Middleton Cheney, Banbury, Oxon OX17 2QT
t 01295 710767 f 01295 712580
e ngsu@ngsu.org.uk
e (officials and staff) firstname@ngsu.org.uk
www.ngsu.org.uk
m 3,760 f 10,132 total 13,892
main trades and industries all staff within the
Nationwide Building Society Group, including
Nationwide, Nationwide International Ltd, Nationwide
Life Ltd, Nationwide Trust Ltd and UCB Home Loans
Gen sec Tim Poil
Delegates
Bill Blumson Glenys Britton
Tim Poil
Male 2, female 1, total 3

NUJ**National Union
of Journalists**

Headland House, 308 Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8DP
t 020 7278 7916 f 020 7837 8143
e info@nuj.org.uk
e (officials and staff)
firstnameandsurnameinitial@nuj.org.uk
www.nuj.org.uk
m 19,379 f 13,030 total 32,409
main trades and industries journalists
Gen sec Jeremy Dear
Delegates
Jeremy Dear Donnacha Delong
James Doherty Anita Halpin
Tim Lezard Rotimi Sankore
Michelle Stanistreet
Male 5, female 2, total 7

NUM**National Union
of Mineworkers**

Miners' Offices, 2 Huddersfield Road
Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2LS
t 01226 215555 f 01226 215561
e chris.kitchen@num.org.uk
total 1,618 (male/female split not available)
main trades and industries coal mining
National sec Chris Kitchen
Delegates
Chris Kitchen Ian Lavery
Male 2, female 0, total 2

NUT**National Union
of Teachers**

Hamilton House, Mabledon Place
London WC1H 9BD
t 020 7388 6191 f 020 7387 8458
www.teachers.org.uk
m 67,708 f 214,881 total 282,589
main trades and industries teachers
Acting gen sec Christine Blower
Delegates
Helen Andrews Lesley Auger
John Bangs Marilyn Bater
Christine Blower Amanda Brown
Chris Brown Ellie Campbell-Barr
Kevin Courtney Caroline Cowie
Hazel Danson John Dixon
Judith Elderkin Barry Fawcett
Nina Franklin Baljeet Ghale
Jerry Glazier Gill Goodswen
Nick Grant Ian Grayson
Bill Greenshields Marion Halfpenny
Dave Harvey Janey Hulme
Max Hyde Roger King

Gary Lewis Tim Lucas
Nuala McGinn Andrew Morris
Ian Murch Veronica Peppiatt
Martin Reed Elizabeth Taylor
Peter Triggs
Male 17, female 18, total 35

PCS**Public and
Commercial Services Union**

160 Falcon Road, London SW11 2LN
t 020 7924 2727 f 020 7924 1847
e (officials and staff) firstname.surname@pcs.org.uk
www.pcs.org.uk
total 304,829 (male/female split not available)
main trades and industries government
departments and agencies, public bodies, private
sector information technology and other service
companies
Gen sec Mark Serwotka
Delegates
Jane Aitchinson Chris Baugh
Dave Bean Mark Benjamin
Sue Bond Alan Brown
Paula Brown Tony Conway
Rachel Edwards Mary Ferguson
Cheryl Gedling Janice Godrich
Nigel Green Austin Harney
Zita Holbourne Emily Kelly
Ravi Kurup Hugh Lanning
Fiona MacDonald Kevin McHugh
John McNally Jackie McWilliams
Glenys Morris Phyllis Opoku Gyimah
Gordon Rowntree Steve Ryan
Mark Serwotka Katrine Williams
Garry Winder
Male 15, female 14, total 29

PFA**Professional
Footballers' Association**

20 Oxford Court, Bishopsgate
Manchester M2 3WQ
t 0161 236 0575 f 0161 228 7229
e info@thepfa.co.uk
e (officials and staff) initialandsurname@thepfa.co.uk
www.givemefootball.com
m 3,694 f 0 total 3,694
main trades and industries professional football
Chief executive Gordon Taylor OBE
Delegates
Bobby Barnes Nick Cusack
Male 2, female 0, total 2

POA

The Professional Trade

Union for Prison, Correctional and Secure Psychiatric Workers

Cronin House, 245 Church Street
London N9 9HW
t 020 8803 0255 f 020 8803 1761

www.poauk.org.uk

m 26,631 f 9,541 total 36,172

main trades and industries persons employed in any penal or secure establishment or special hospital as a prison officer, a nursing grade, operational support grade, a non-industrial stores grade and NHS secure forensic staff

Gen sec Brian Caton

Delegates

Brian Caton Stephen Gough

John Hoey Jackie Marshall

Peter McParlin Colin Moses

Brian Traynor

Male 6, female 1, total 7

PROSPECT

New Prospect House
8 Leake Street, London SE1 7NN
t 020 7902 6600 f 020 7902 6667

e enquiries@prospect.org.uk

e (officials and staff)

firstname.surname@prospect.org.uk

www.prospect.org.uk

m 79,764 f 22,938 total 102,702

main trades and industries engineering, scientific, managerial and professional staff in agriculture, defence, electricity supply, energy, environment, health and safety, heritage, industry, law and order, shipbuilding, transport

Gen sec Paul Noon

Delegates

Dave Allen Beryl Brine

Philippa Childs Mike Clancy

Catherine Donaldson Sue Ferns

Simon Finney Geoff Fletcher

Daniel Gray Alan Grey

Charles Harvey Tony Hole

Neil Hope Collins Alan Leighton

Craig Marshall Paul Noon

Suresh Tewari Nigel Titchen

Male 14, female 4, total 18

RMT

National Union of

Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

t 020 7387 4771 f 020 7387 4123

e initial.surname@rmt.org.uk

www.rmt.org.uk

m 66,862 f 9,044 total 75,906

main trades and industries railways and

184

shipping, underground, road transport

Gen sec Bob Crow

Delegates

Mark Carden Janet Cassidy

Robert Crow Keith Elliott

Alex Gordon Peter Hall

Mark Harding John Leach

Gordon Martin Stephen Metcalfe

Frank Murray Peter Pinkney

Nick Quirk Peter Rowland

Steven Skelly Ruth Strong

Male 14, female 2, total 16

SCP

Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists

1 Fellmongers Path, Tower Bridge Road
London SE1 3LY

t 0845 450 3720 f 0845 450 3721

e enq@scpod.org

e (officials and staff)

initialoffirstnameinitialofsurname@scpod.org

www.feetforlife.org

m 2,417 f 6,363 total 8,780

Chief executive Ms Joanna Brown

Delegates

Joanna Brown Gary Gibson

Male 1, female 1, total 2

SOR

Society of Radiographers

207 Providence Square, Mill Street
London SE1 2EW

t 020 7740 7200 f 020 7740 7233

e (officials and staff)

firstnameandsurnameinitial@sor.org

www.sor.org

m 2,944 f 15,651 total 18,595

main trades and industries National Health Service

Chief exec officer Richard Evans

Delegates

Nicholas Barlow Richard Evans

Sandra Mathers Zena Mitton

Male 2, female 2, total 4

SURGE

(formerly the Skipton Staff Association)

1 Providence Place

Skipton BD23 1HG

t 01756 692000 f 0870 6013230

e brianmcdaid@hml.co.uk

www.skisa.co.uk

total 1,366 (male/female split not available)

main trades and industries the unions representing staff employed by the Skipton Building Society and wholly owned subsidiaries

Chair Brian McDaid

Delegates

Lynda Kemp Brian McDaid
Male 1, female 1, total 2

TSSA

**Transport Salaried
Staffs' Association**

Walkden House, 10 Melton Street
London NW1 2EJ
t 020 7387 2101 f 020 7383 0656
e enquiries@tssa.org.uk
e (officials and staff)
surnameandfirstnameinitial@tssa.org.uk
www.tssa.org.uk
m 20,602 f 8,500 total 29,102
(excludes members in Republic of Ireland)
main trades and industries administrative, clerical,
supervisory, managerial, professional and technical
employees of railways, London Underground, buses,
road haulage, port authorities and waterways in Great
Britain and Ireland. Also employees in the travel trade,
hotel and catering industries
Gen sec Gerry Doherty
Delegates
Andy Bain Gerry Doherty
Dave Hillan Hilary Hosking
Jill Murdoch Amarjit Singh
Male 4, female 2, total 6

UBAC

**Union for Bradford
& Bingley Staff and Associated
Companies**

UBAC, H/13, PO Box 88, Croft Road
Crossflatts, Bingley BD16 2UA
t 07721 978154 or 07747 756214
e ubac@bbg.co.uk
m 433 f 940 total 1,373
main trades and industries All staff within
the Bradford & Bingley and associated companies
Gen sec David Matthews
Delegate
David Matthews
Male 1, female 0, total 1

UCAC

**Undeb Cenedlaethol
Athrawon Cymru**

Pen Roc, Rhodfa'r Môr
Aberystwyth SY23 2AZ
t 01970 639950 f 01970 626765
e ucac@athrawon.com
m 818 f 3,043 total 3,861
main trades and industries education – teachers
and lecturers
Gen sec Gruff Hughes

UCATT

**Union of Construction,
Allied Trades and Technicians**

UCATT House, 177 Abbeville Road
London SW4 9RL
t 020 7622 2442 f 020 7720 4081
e info@ucatt.org.uk
www.ucatt.org.uk
m 127,106 f 1,959 total 129,065
main trades and industries construction and
building
Gen sec Alan Ritchie
Delegates
Dennis Doody Patrick Dowling
Wilf Flynn Kevin Hinde
David Hinnigan Lawrence Hunt
Andrew Jones John Kemp
Tom Lannon Godfrey Lee
Chris Murphy Alec Nicol
Alan Ritchie Nigel Salt
Frank Tyas
Male 15, female 0, total 15

UCU

**University and
College Union**

27 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JP
t 020 7837 3636 f 020 7837 4403
e hq@ucu.org.uk
e (officials and staff) initialsurname@ucu.org.uk
Membership and subscription enquiries
membership@ucu.org.uk
www.ucu.org.uk
m 60,242 f 54,470 m/f split not available 2,316
total 117,028
main trades and industries academic and academic
related staff in higher education, further education,
adult education, land-based education and prison
education
Gen sec Sally Hunt
Delegates
Sue Blackwell Paul Brown
Sasha Callaghan Mark Campbell
Alan Carr Jean Crocker
Mary Davis Oliver De Peyer
Sheila Deare Joe Gluza
Anne-Marie Greene Jim Guild
Terry Hoad Sally Hunt
Alastair Hunter Brian Ingham
Stephanie Lang Michael Macneil
Lesley Mansell Linda Newman
Bertha Ochieng Pat Roche
Sean Vernell Alan Whitaker
Male 12, female 12, total 24

UNISON

1 Mabledon Place
 London WC1H 9AJ
 t 0845 355 0845 f 020 7551 1101
 text tel 0800 0967 968
 e (officials and staff) initial.surname@unison.co.uk
 www.unison.org.uk/
 m 403,200 f 940,800 total 1,344,000
 main trades and industries local government, health care, the water, gas and electricity industries, further and higher education, schools, transport, voluntary sector, housing associations, police support staff

Gen sec Dave Prentis

Delegates

Bob Abberley	James Anthony
Dave Auger	Roger Bannister
Sarah Barwick	Kenny Bell
Mandy Berger	Susan Brealey
Richard Buckwell	Malcolm Cantello
Jane Carolan	Mark Clifford
Steve Cooper	Louise Couling
Rosemary Cunningham	Rosa Davies
Ruth Davies	Lincoln Davis
Lesley Discombe	Ann Donnelly
Christine Durance	Derek Earnshaw
Cath Elliott	Neelo Farr
Sue Forster	Mark Fysh
Bernadette Gallagher	Gerard Gallagher
Peter Gaskin	Paul Glover
Angela Gorman	Dettie Gould
Sandra Green	Moz Greenshields
Mike Harriman	Mike Hayes
Susan Highton	Paul Holmes
Graeme Horn	Helen Jenner
John Jones	Glenn Kelly
Mike Kirby	Vicki Lang
Conroy Lawrence	Maureen Le Marinel
Diana Leach	Mary Locke
Angela Lynes	Lilian Macer
Ann Macmillan-Wood	Colm Magee
Annette Mansell-Green	Christina McAnea
John McDermott	Pat McDonagh
Lucia McKeever	Bev Miller
Gloria Mills	Iain Montgomery
Sushil Munakhya	Kevin Naylor
June Nelson	Caryl Nobbs
Bob Oram	Susan Orwin
Sonia Palmer	Mary Pearson
June Poole	Lynn Poulton
Dave Prentis	Ann Price
Khi Rafe	Davena Rankin
Hamid Rasheed	Rod Robertson
Julie Robinson	Jon Rogers
Emma Rolland	Helen Rose
Patricia Rowland	Jessie Russell
Tom Sexton	Alison Shepherd
Kim Silver	Pam Singh
Roshni Singh	Fiona Smith

Eleanor Smith	Liz Snape
Keith Sonnett	Irene Stacey
Brian Steele	Norma Stephenson
Tim Sutherland	Chris Tansley
Sofi Taylor	Paul Thompson
Gill Thwaites	Mike Tucker
Steve Warwick	Win Wearmouth
Linda Wilkinson	Clare Williams

Male 42, female 62, total 104

Unite

Amicus Section
 35 King Street, Covent Garden
 London WC2E 8JG
 t 0845 850 4242
 TGWU Section
 Transport House, 128 Theobald's Road
 Holborn, London WC1X 8TN
 t 020 7611 2500
 www.unitetheunion.com
 m 1,506,057 f 446,453 total 1,952,510
 Joint gen secs Derek Simpson, Tony Woodley

Delegates

Anne Abbott	Lindsey Adams
Rana Mohammed Akmal	Patricia Bailey Lawton
Les Bayliss	Ian Beeby
Alison Beesley	Paul Boskett
Pauline Bradburn	Bob Braddock
Jennie Bremner	Marjory Broughton
Tony Burke	Rawle Burke
Jeff Burn	Gerry Campbell
Martin Carroll	Gail Cartmail
John Clarke	Richard Clifton
Danny Coleman	Doug Collins
Niki Constantinou	Collette Cork-Hurst
Adrian Cowley	John Craig
Richard Crease	Stewart Dack
Hitesh Dave	Steve Davison
Tim Davison	Ged Dempsey
Jim Donaghy	Michael Dowds
Jack Dromey	Tony Dubbins
Christopher Elliott	Lorene Fabian
Jan Faherty	Dermot Finn
John Fitzpatrick	Dave Fleming
Jennie Formby	Bob Fromant
Nigel Gawthorpe	Gill George
Cid Gibbs	Graham Goddard
Kevin Graham	Michelle Greaves
Maureen Green	Russell Greig
Jimmy Grime	Michael Hague
Lesley Hammond	Charles Harding
Barry Hartshorn	Ian Hawley
Georgina Hirsch	Diana Holland
Brian Holmes	Sharon Hutchinson
Brenda Irvine	Roger Jeary
Mick Johnson	Ray Johnson
Adrian Jones	Gillian Kearns
James Kelly	John Kelly

Carol Kirk	Ray Kirton
John Knight	Joanne Lambert
Dave Lawson	Tony Lewis
Frank Llewellyn	John Locke
Dave Lovelidge	Mary Lynch
Jim MacKay	Mohammed Malik
Lisa Mannion	Keith Mansfield
Chris Matheson	Martin Mayer
Len McCluskey	Linda McCulloch
Les McDonald	Helen McFarlane
Sean McGovern	K McGrellis
Jim McIlwee	Donald McLellan
Jackaleen McMonagle	Ann Morgan
David Morgan	Bernard Moss
Andrew Murray	Barbara Murray
Dawn Nelson	Paul Noakes
Brian Norbury	Philip Norton
Dave Oldfield	John O'Regan
Tony Owen	Hyacinth Palmer
Steve Parkin	John Parry
John Peat	Tamsin Piper
Sally Pirrie	Phyllis Preece
Caroline Price	Graham Pyatt
Tom Riddle	Doug Rooney
Gerry Sawdon	Anita Shelton
John Sheridan	Peter Simpson
Derek Simpson	Sulinder Singh
Bryan Smith	Cath Speight
Billy Spiers	Darren Stead
Graham Stevenson	Jane Stewart
Joyce Still	Pat Stuart
Yvonne Swingler	Marlene Sykes
Mike Tabb	Mohammed Taj
Paul Talbot	Jayne Taylor
Monica Taylor	Mark Thomas
Frank Thompson	Phyllis Thompson
Dave Trubshaw	Jennie Twydell
Scot Walker	John Walsh
Nazerin Wardrop	Charlie Whelan
Keith Willmer	Dennis Wilson
Ronnie Wilson	Arnold Wilson
Tony Woodhouse	Tony Woodley
Linda Yarwood	

Male 105, female 51, total 156

UNITY

Hillcrest House, Garth Street
 Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 2AB
 t 01782 272755 f 01782 284902
 m 4,094 f 2,282 total 6,376
 main trades and industries the ceramics industry (all areas)
 Gen sec Geoff Bagnall
 Delegates
 Wendy Grieveson Harry Hockaday
 Male 1, female 1, total 2

URTU

**United Road
 Transport Union**

Almond House, Oak Green
 Stanley Green Business Park
 Cheadle Hulme SK8 6QL
 t 0800 52 66 39 f 0161 485 3109
 e info@urtu.com
 m 14,300 f 307 total 14,607
 main trades and industries drivers, warehousing,
 ancillary workers in the logistics and food sectors
 Gen sec Robert F Monks
 Delegates
 Paul Forrester Brian Hart
 Robert Monks
 Male 3, female 0, total 3

USDAW

**Union of Shop, Distributive
 and Allied Workers**

188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ
 t 0161 224 2804 f 0161 257 2566
 e enquiries@usdaw.org.uk
 www.usdaw.org.uk
 m 150,374 f 205,672 total 356,046
 main trades and industries retail, distributive, food
 processing and manufacturing, laundries, catering,
 chemical processing, pharmaceutical, home
 shopping, warehouses, insurance agents, clerical,
 milkround and dairy process, call centres
 Gen sec John Hannett
 Delegates
 Nigel Barber Maureen Bowen
 Jeff Broome David Brown
 Ann Buttle David Cartmill
 David Chadwick Paula Colbourne
 Terry Cummings Michael Dixon
 Sonia Foster John Hannett
 Lisa Hesse Roy Hewings
 Margaret Hughes Clare Jones
 Shaun Jones Maria King
 Paddy Lillis Ann Lloyd
 John McGarry Mike Parsonage
 Michelle Roberts Jane Rogers
 Sandie Rowlands Stephen Rydzkowski
 David Stokes Sheila Thomas
 Pamela Thompson Richard Ward
 Paul White Barbara Wilson
 Fiona Wilson
 Male 17, female 16, total 33

WGGB

**Writers' Guild
 of Great Britain**

17 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JN
 t 020 7833 0777 f 020 7833 4777
 e admin@writersguild.org.uk
 www.writersguild.org.uk

total 1,298 (male/female split not available)
main trades and industries television, radio, film,
books, theatre and multimedia
Gen sec Bernie Corbett

YISA

**Yorkshire Independent
Staff Association**

c/o Yorkshire Building Society
Yorkshire House, Yorkshire Drive, Rooley Lane
Bradford BD5 8LJ
t 01274 472453
e kmwatson@ybs.co.uk
m 387 f 827 total 1,214
Chair Karen Watson
Delegates
Sue Hampson Debbie Hughes
Male 0, female 2, total 2

SUMMARY
Number of affiliated
unions: 58
Membership:
m 3,412,541
f 2,738,162
male/female split not
available 386,842
total 6,537,545

Section 4

Details of past Congresses

Section 5

Members of the general council 1921- 2008

Names of members of the Parliamentary Committee which functioned from 1868 to 1921 are included in Reports up to 1976. From 1921 the General Council became the executive body of the TUC. Dates given below are of the year of the Congress at which appointment was made to the General Council, or in the event of election to fill a casual vacancy the year in which it took place.

Abberley, B – 2005-08
 Adams, J - 1992-98
 Airlie, J - 1990-91
 Alderson, R - 1984
 Allen, AW - 1962-78
 Allen, J - 1994-95
 Allen, S - 2000 -01
 Allen, WP - 1940-47
 Anderson, D - 2000 -04
 Anderson, WC - 1965-72
 Auger, L – 2005-07
 Baddeley, W - 1963-72
 Bagnall, GH - 1939-47
 Baird, R - 1987
 Baker, FA- 1976-84
 Bartlett, C - 1948-62
 Basnett, D - 1966-85
 Baty, JG - 1947-54
 Baume, J – 2001-08
 Bearcroft, S - 1997-2008
 Beard, J - 1921-34
 Beard, WD - 1947-66
 Bell, J - 1937-45
 Bell, JN - 1921-22
 Benstead, J - 1944-47
 Berry, H - 1935-37
 *Bevin, E - 1925-40
 Bickerstaffe, R - 1982-2000

Biggs, J - 1991
 Binks, G – 1998-2002
 Birch, JA - 1949-61
 Birch, R - 1975-78
 Boateng, AF - 1994
 Boddy, JR - 1978-82
 *Bondfield, M - 1921-23, 1925-29
 Boothman, H - 1921-35
 Bostock, F - 1947
 Bothwell, JG - 1963-67
 Bottini, RN - 1970-77
 Bousted, M - 2003- 08
 Bowen, JW - 1921-27
 Bowman, J - 1946-49
 Boyd, JM - 1967-74, 1978-81
 Brett, WH - 1989-97
 Briginshaw, RW - 1965-74
 Britton, EL - 1970-73
 Brooke, C - 1989-95
 Bromley, J - 1921-35
 Brookman, K - 1992-98
 Brown, J - 1936-45
 Brumwell, G - 1992-2004
 Buck, LW - 1972-76
 Buckton, RW - 1973-85
 Burke, T - 1993-2002, 2008
 Burrows, AW - 1947-48
 Bussey, EW - 1941-46
 Cameron, K - 1981-83, 1991-99
 Camfield, B - 2000 - 06
 Campbell, J - 1953-57
 Callighan, A - 1945-47
 Cannon, L - 1965-70
 Carey, M – 1998–2005
 Carolan, J – 2005-08
 Carr, J - 1989-92
 Carrigan, D - 2001
 Carron, WJ - 1954-67
 Carter, J - 1989-92
 Cartmail, G – 2005-08
 Caton, B – 2001-2008
 Chadburn, R - 1981
 Chalmers, J - 1977-79
 Chapple, FJ - 1971-82
 Chester, G - 1937-48
 Chowcat J - 1998
 Christie, L - 1988-92
 Christopher, AMG - 1977-88

Coldrick, AP - 1968-71
 Collinridge, F - 1961-62
 Collison, H - 1953-69
 Conley, A - 1921-48
 Connolly, C - 1995
 Connor, Sir Bill - 1997-2003
 Cook, AJ - 1927-31
 Cooper, J - 1959-72
 Cooper, T - 1996-99
 **Cousins, F - 1956-64, 1966-68
 Covey, D - 1989-98
 Cramp, CT - 1929-32
 Crawford, J - 1949-32
 Crawford, Joseph - 1960-72
 Crow, R - 2003 - 04, 2006
 Curran, K - 2003 - 04
 Daly, L - 1971-80
 Daly, JD - 1983-89
 Dann, AC - 1945-52
 Davenport, J - 1921, 1924-33
 Davies, DG - 1986-96
 Davies, ED - 1984
 Davies, DH - 1967-74
 Davies, O - 1983-86
 Deakin, A - 1940-54
 Dean, B - 1985-91
 Dear, J - 2002-08
 De Gruchy, N - 1989-2002
 Dhamrait, M - 1995-2000
 Doherty, G - 2004-08
 Donaghy, R - 1987-99
 Donnett, AM - 1973-75
 Doughty, GH - 1968-73
 Douglass, H - 1953-66
 Drake, JLP - 1990-2007
 Drain, GA - 1973-82
 Dubbins, AD - 1984-2007
 Duffy, D - 1988-91
 Duffy, T - 1978-85
 Dukes, C - 1934-46
 Dunn, V - 2001-2002
 Dwyer, P - 1992-94
 Dyson, F - 1975-78
 Eastwood, H - 1948
 Eccles, JF - 1973-85
 Eccles, T - 1949-58
 Edmonds, J - 1986-2002
 Edmondson, LF - 1970-77
 Edward, E - 1931-46
 Ellis, JN - 1988-91
 Elsom, R - 1996-97
 Elvin, HH - 1925-39
 Evans, AM - 1977-84
 Evans, D - 1991-99
 Evans, L - 1945-52
 Evans, RL - 1985-91
 Evans, W - 1996-99
 Evans, WJ - 1960-62
 Exall, M - 2006 -08
 Farthing, WJ - 1935-43
 Fawcett, L - 1940-51
 Fenelon, B - 1998
 Ferns, S - 2005-08
 Figgins, JB - 1947-52
 Findlay, AAH - 1921-40
 Fisher, AW - 1968-81
 Ford, SWG - 1963-70
 Forden, L - 1958-65
 Forshaw, W - 1933-34
 Foster, J - 1999-2003
 Foulkes, P - 2006
 Fysh, M - 2001-08
 Gallagher, G - 2007-08
 Gallie, CN - 1940-46
 Garland, R - 1983
 Garley, A - 2005-08
 Gates, P - 2001,2003
 Geddes, CJ - 1946-56
 Geldart, J - 1991-94
 George, E - 1988
 Gibson, A - 1988-99
 Gibson, G - 1928-47
 Gilchrist, A - 2000 -04
 Gill, K - 1974-91
 Gill, WW - 1983-86
 Gladwin, DO - 1986-89
 Godrich, J - 2003-08
 Godwin, A - 1949-62
 Golding, J - 1986-87
 Gormley, J - 1973-79
 Gosling, H - 1921-23
 Graham, JA - 1982-83, 1985
 Grant, J - 2002
 Grantham, RA - 1971-74, 1983-91
 Gray, D - 1982-83
 Green, GF - 1960-62

Greendale, W - 1978-85
 Greene, SF - 1957-74
 Gretton, S - 1969-72
 Grieve, CD - 1973-82
 Griffiths, AE - 1963-69
 Guy, LG - 1977-82
 Hagger, P - 1988-94
 Haigh, E - 1982
 Hall, D - 1996-97
 Hall, E - 1954-59
 Hallsworth, J - 1926-46
 Hallworth, A - 1955-59
 Halpin, A – 1996, 1999, 2001- 08
 Hammond, EA - 1983-87
 Hancock, F - 1935-57
 Handley, RC - 1938-39
 Hanley, P - 1968-69
 Hannett, J – 2004-08
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