

144th ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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Held at:

**The Brighton Centre,
Brighton**

on

**Sunday, 9th September 2012
Monday, 10th September 2012
Tuesday, 11th September 2012
and
Wednesday, 12th September 2012**

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Congress President:

PAUL KENNY

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**PROCEEDINGS – DAY TWO
(Monday, 10th September 2012)**

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SECOND DAY: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

MORNING SESSION

(Congress assembled at 9.35 a.m.)

The President: Morning, colleagues. I will try again, morning colleagues. (*Good morning!*) Morning, Congress. Many thanks. Sorry for the belated thanks to *The Tradlads* who entertained you while we were delayed. Best wishes and thanks to them. (*Applause*) They are backstage.

I have a few announcements. Delegates, in a change to the published business I will now be taking Motion 5 in the name of the POA on Tuesday afternoon as business allows.

The video presentation on London 2012 will be taken at the close of this morning's session.

Delegates, we start today by returning to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report, Economic and Industrial Affairs, from page 76. I will be calling Composite Motion 13, the NHS. The General Council support the composite motion. Fire away.

Economic and Industrial Affairs

The NHS

Jim Fahie (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) moved Composite Motion 13.

He said: Thank you, President, Congress. The Health & Social Care Act, misconceived, complicated, expensive, utterly unwanted, and without a mandate yet it was pushed through parliament in March and now we have to deal with the consequences. It is a tsunami of bureaucracy, a myriad of conflicting policies with the focus away from patient care and onto the competitive market, all at a time when health staff are struggling to meet patient needs due to financial constraints. This is not political point scoring. Health workers are deeply and genuinely upset by cuts that are impacting on patient care.

Let's not forget the end game here, turning the NHS into a US-style insurance based system where your personal wealth decides the care that you receive. Some argue for such a system because the NHS is broken, a child of its time. I tell you as a health worker the NHS is not broken. (*Applause*) I would also add that people in positions of influence are doing the country no favours by talking the NHS down. I have worked in the US system. I worked in Chicago. I have seen firsthand how it lets patients down. I had an amputee who was refused the opportunity to walk again because his insurance company disputed his level of cover. Six months later they decided he was covered. It was too late. He had contractures that were irreversible.

Rationing of treatments, debates over the merit of top-up charges in the NHS, they are chipping away from the NHS which is free at the point of need, as is giving hospitals the freedom to turn up to 49% of their business into private care. Another form of competition in health in its early days is any qualified provider. It is already reducing patient access to physiotherapy and it has also removed the patient's choice to refer themselves for physiotherapy. Yet there remains strong public support for our NHS.

You just need to look at the reaction to the Olympics opening ceremony to see that. I am proud of the CSP members who took part in that ceremony. I am also proud of the hundreds of physios who volunteered through both Games.

I will give a few examples of what can happen if you do not get the care you need. When you have a stroke it does turn your life upside down. You will not know how important the NHS is to your care and to your injury, and to the rest of your life, until you do not get your rehab. When you are off work after an accident, if you do not access your rehab early enough you may never return to work.

Trade unions and the TUC have such an important role in describing the value of NHS services in ways that can resonate. The NHS is not perfect; it has to continually look at how it can improve. I work in the NHS and it is proven to be one of the fairest, most cost-efficient and effective healthcare systems in the world. Why else does this Government want to talk about exporting the NHS brand overseas?

With the Health and Social Care Act a reality, NHS staff must be at the heart of the new commissioning arrangements, they must be at the heart of local campaigning to protect our NHS services where all else fails. They must be recognised for the valuable work they do, recognised for professional autonomy, and allowed to develop their skills for the benefit of our patients. Congress, never again must this NHS be subjected to the turmoil of this kind of morale sapping, money wasting reorganisation that is the Health and Social Care Act. I move. (*Applause*)

Roz Norman (*UNISON*) seconded Composite Motion 13.

She said: Congress, as the composite points out, the NHS has been left reeling by the cuts, fragmentation, and privatisation that this Government is attempting to force upon the services, the patients, and the staff. Remember, Congress, this is not an NHS that was failing, in fact quite the opposite. It is the most equitable health service in the world and, crucially, the most efficient.

If there was any doubt about the esteem in which the NHS was held you need to look no further than the wonderful Olympic opening ceremony. Only a country such as ours with the NHS will choose to celebrate the health service while the eyes of the world are watching us. It is something we are rightly proud of. Of course, it was deeply ironic that the ceremony took place against a backdrop of the massive unnecessary structural reorganisation which is sapping the morale out of the people that serve it and the people that Danny Boyle wanted to celebrate.

The Health and Social Care Act represents the single most damaging piece of legislation ever aimed at the NHS by a government. It is quite open in its plans. It wants to break up a nationalised service into little pieces, ripe for plunder by the Tories and their private healthcare industry. The cost in human terms will be immense: for NHS patients they will find themselves waiting in longer queues; for the public they will find services cut and reduced; and for staff they will find that their terms and conditions of employment have been eroded away, that is if they still have a job and not one of the thousands that have been made redundant.

On the subject of job losses, I suspect that no one in this room will have shed too many tears last week when Andrew Lansley was finally booted out of his office of

Health Secretary. (*Applause*) Unfortunately, Congress, there are two big problems with this: firstly, Lansley should have been booted out of his post years ago so that the Social Act would have been taken out and scrapped; secondly, Lansley's replacement, Jeremy Hunt. Oh dear. Clearly, even Lansley was not sufficiently in the pockets of the private interest so Murdoch Medicines here we come, or even Virgin Care here we come. Virgin has recently been given a five-year contract to run seven hospitals. It is almost as if Cameron looked round the Cabinet table and tried to pick someone worse than Lansley: Michael Gove was not available so we chose Hunt. This is a man who apparently subscribes to the Tory notion that the NHS is a 64-year mistake. He co-authored a pamphlet calling for the denationalisation of the NHS and he tried to stop Danny Boyle from celebrating the NHS at the Olympics.

Congress, it is not all doom and gloom. The unions working together with the TUC and various charities, campaigners and patient groups, fought hard. We will continue to fight. This is our watch. We must defend the NHS. Please support. (*Applause*)

Stephen Heard (*FDA*) supported Composite Motion 13.

He said: This is my first time at Congress so go easy on me. I am from MIP, the FDA section for healthcare and managers. We have a new Secretary of State who has taken ministerial responsibility for delivery of the greatest Olympics in history. May I remind him that the success of these Games was very much due to the team work of the backroom staff and volunteers, as well as the athletes. It is a bit like the NHS, which is not just about the clinicians but also about the staff, managers, and volunteers as the frontline clinical team cannot get medals and accolades for their

performance without the support of those behind the scenes. It is the whole healthcare team who keep the NHS show on the road.

There has been much talk about Team GB but what about Team NHS and the everyday medal winning performances of all staff regardless of where they are in the process? They are the greatest asset of the NHS and work tirelessly in an increasing challenging environment. It is no surprise that it took centre stage at the Olympic opening ceremony.

We now have a new Secretary of State, Jeremy Hunt (spelt with an “H”) who describes leading a campaign to save Royal Surrey NHS as his proudest achievement. Let’s hope for more proud moments. We must build on the very good staff engagement and partnership working we have developed in the NHS, and that includes involving staff in decisions about service design and delivery, about how to shape our health services to fit the needs of service users today and in the future. This is not only good working practice, there is an increasing body of evidence to show a correlation between staff engagement and health outcomes, so it is not just good for the staff, it is good for patients too. That means it has to be good for efficiency as well so it is a win-win scenario.

The main motion wording states “keeping alive the vision of a publicly funded, publicly provided National Health Service”. I think this should also include a publicly planned and commissioned NHS. This is important because commissioning staff in English PCTs may well end up on the transfer list with no multimillion pound transfer fees as the private sector enter the premier league of healthcare, leaving the

NHS relegated to the lower divisions. Please support your NHS by coming to the Central London march on 20th October and by supporting Composite Motion 13. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Liz McInnes (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 13.

She said: Congress, I want to tell you a bit about what it is like to be a workplace rep in the NHS today, constantly having to represent members at disciplinaries over issues that in the past would have been properly managed and resolved informally. Now I am in unfamiliar unfair dismissal cases and having an in at the deep end education on employment tribunals, areas I have never had to go to before yet this is the reality of working in today's NHS. Staff are scared and demoralised and managers who are under instructions to make savings are exploiting this.

When I started as a workplace rep 15 years ago I never thought I would be in meetings with managers talking about making skilled and experienced staff redundant yet this is the reality of the working in the NHS today. The Health and Social Care Act threatens the very fabric of our NHS and opens up the door to privatisation. In my own trust sexual health services have been privatised and taken over by Virgin Healthcare. One of my members, a nursing sister, who works in the sexual health services, said something very telling to me which explains Virgin Healthcare's interest. She said, "Our service brings a lot of money into this trust. I can't understand why we have been privatised." I think that explains it all. That money, which previously would have gone into patient care, now goes into the pockets of Richard Branson's shareholders.

I was in a meeting with management last week. Our HR director asked if there would be any changes given the political change at the top. I am sorry, Congress, but I do not see that exchanging Andrew Lansley for Jeremy Hunt represents a political change. Jeremy Hunt, who has bent over backwards for powerful private interests, has been put in charge of our National Health Service. Congress, it is like putting the fox in charge of the chicken coop.

Finally, Congress, I want to leave you with the words of Nye Bevan in 1952: “No government that attempts to destroy the Health Service can hope to command the support of the British people. The Health Service has now become part of the texture of our national life. No political party would survive that tried to destroy it.” Congress, support Composite 13. (*Applause*)

Brenda Fraser (*GMB*) supported Composite Motion 13.

She said: I would like to quote from a recent report by the Care Quality Commission into the standards of patient care. A key theme that emerged from inspections, said the CQC, was “the lack of time staff had to spend with patients and attend to individual care needs”.

Demand for services is rising, Congress. We need to invest in the NHS to achieve the staffing levels that patients deserve but, instead, look at the damage the Tories’ spending squeeze is doing. Trusts are freezing recruitment and deleting posts. Ambulances are queuing outside hospitals and patients are being treated in corridors. The Government’s ongoing reorganisation is making a bad situation worse. As you know, hospitals will soon be allowed to reserve more and more beds and theatre time

for private patients. It is not only a loss of resources, it is social injustice. We are convinced, Congress, that spending cuts and privatisation is no way to raise standards in a life-saving service.

Andrew Lansley was a disaster and now the NHS has been blessed with Murdoch's mate, Jeremy (I will say this carefully) Hunt. Congress, Jeremy Hunt in his previous job at Culture, Media & Sport, was there at the opening ceremony of the Olympics where we showed the world how proud we were of the achievements of the National Health Service. How ironic was it at that time when the Government he belongs to is hell-bent on destroying it.

Congress, we must make a tremendous effort to campaign at local and national level to protect the NHS, our NHS, not an NHS run by profiteering companies, and call on the Government to give the NHS the fair funding settlement it was promised. We, the GMB, support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

* *Composite Motion 13 was CARRIED*

The President: It now gives me great pleasure to call the General Secretary, Brendan Barber, to give his address to Congress. Thank you, Brendan. (*Applause*)

Address by the General Secretary:

The General Secretary: Thanks, Paul. Congress, well it's been quite a summer.

For just a few short weeks we put our economic problems to one side and adopted the gold standard, not the failed economic orthodoxy of the early twentieth century but the standard of Olympic gold.

Today our Olympian and Paralympian stars are being saluted in London, but here in Brighton we can join in the celebrations. Everyone wants to claim their share of Olympic glory but we have good reason to be proud of our contribution to the Games.

It was eight years ago that Seb Coe came to this hall and told us of the importance he attached to our backing for London's then uncertain bid to host the 2012 Games. He told us of his aim to inspire a generation and we told him of our ambition that a world-class sporting event should bring with it world-class employment standards.

Since then unions and the Olympic bodies have been working together to realise our shared ambitions. Let us applaud the construction unions for paving the way, both literally and metaphorically, with their Memorandum of Agreement with the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), ensuring that the Olympic Park was delivered on time, on budget, and with a safety record far superior to the industry average.

Let us praise Barry Camfield, the former Assistant General Secretary of Unite, whose work on the ODA board ensured that union values were there at the heart of the Games. In 2008, you endorsed the principles of co-operation agreed between the TUC and the Olympic bodies. They played a big part too in putting the London Living Wage on the agenda and helping us ensure that training, equality, diversity and trade union rights were all embedded in the 2012 project.

We should not forget the practical work done by the staff of the Community and Trade Union Learning Centre in Stratford, nor the immense contribution of the Games volunteers, among them many trade unionists. Many of them were teachers, and how often did you hear medal winners praise the teachers who had recognised early potential and encouraged them to go on and do great things? We don't say it often enough in this country, but day in, day out, it's the teachers who inspire each generation and it's high time we celebrated the success of our teachers, our schools and our young people.

Naturally, the Olympics and Paralympics weren't all plain sailing. Despite the protocol we agreed with the Games organisers the distinction between volunteers and workers was not always policed as well as it might have been – as the Musicians' Union motion you will debate later makes clear — and like many others, we had serious objections to some of the 2012 sponsors, but we can say with confidence nevertheless that the Games were better because of our involvement.

Of course, there is still much to be done as we enter the legacy phase. We have already made contact with unions in Brazil to see that London's gains are not just a one off but become embedded in the Olympic movement, and we are continuing to fight for decent working standards for the workers all around the world supplying sportswear and Olympics merchandise. The agreement that we made with LOCOG on supply chain standards prompted by our Playfair campaign – allowing inspectors into factories in China and elsewhere to root out labour abuses – may only have come late

in the day, but it provides a vital template for future Olympics and I hope the organisers of Rio 2016 respond positively.

I think what London 2012 showed was what we can achieve when we have the courage to do things differently; rejecting those who say we have to do things on the cheap, and instead doing things right; engaging trade unions as partners, giving workers a voice as well as business.

Let's not forget how it all started, with that fantastic opening ceremony. Politicians have struggled for years, haven't they, to define what they mean by Britishness. Well, Danny Boyle got it at his first attempt. It's about our shared history, our struggles, the suffragettes, unions, the Jarrow marchers, the Windrush voyagers, the visionaries who, in the aftermath of war and amidst austerity, built our NHS. It's about our inventiveness, the Industrial Revolution, street culture, music, our brilliant creative industries, and Tim Berners-Lee giving the world – not the Patent Office – the Web.

And it's about our diversity, something that has always been part of our national heritage and character. It's a Britishness that isn't against others in a crude jingoism, but one that recognises how many people and traditions have fused to give us the identity we were proud to support during the rest of the Games.

It's no wonder that some commentators on the right looked so isolated. To Tory MP Aidan Burley, who criticised the ceremony as “leftie, multicultural crap” and who also happens to chair the sinister Trade Union Reform Group, let us say: you are wrong about modern Britain, just as you are wrong about the Trade Union Movement.

(Applause) But our opponents on the right had more setbacks to come. Let's just go through those tablets of stone so many ministers hold dear.

You can't pick winners. Tell that to Bradley, Jessica, or Mo, all supported by targeted funding.

Markets always trump planning, they say. Well, look at the Olympic Park, the result of years of careful planning and public investment.

Private is always better than public, they argue. Not true, as we saw all too clearly when it came to Olympic security.

Those summer weeks were a time when we really were all in it together, not because we were told to be but because we wanted to be, athletes, workers, volunteers, spectators, residents, communities, all pulling together, the same spirit we have just seen during the Paralympics, and as we reflect on the wonderful achievements of our disabled athletes let us not squander the potential of disabled workers. Today, let us again say to the government that its decision to close those Remploy factories is utterly disgraceful, and it's not too late for ministers to rethink their plans. *(Applause)*

Congress, I think it's right to celebrate the Olympics but it's even more important to learn from them. For the central lessons of this summer – that private isn't always best and that the market doesn't always deliver – surely need to shape our future policy. We can't muddle through greening our economy, we need investment, planning and an Olympic-style national crusade. We won't build up our industrial strength unless

we work out what we do best as a country, whether it's cars, pharmaceuticals, aerospace, or the creative industries, and help them to do even better, and just as the Olympics needed new infrastructure, so does the rest of the country, not just new transport schemes or energy kit but new schools and colleges to nurture world-class skills, and new housing to provide affordable homes and get people back to work.

So, let's build the council housing Britain is desperately crying out for and while we're at it, let's build a new banking infrastructure as well with a state investment bank, regional banks, and a financial transactions tax to fund our national regeneration. Let's have proper regulation of our financial system too, because what the masters of the universe in the City need isn't a light-touch but strong clear rules and powerful penalties for those who break them.

Congress, nowhere is the case for change more urgent than when it comes to economic policy. It's clear that austerity simply isn't working. There has been no growth — no growth — since the Government came to power over two years ago. In effect the economy has become a gigantic laboratory.

Ministers are forcing through cuts the IFS says are, “without historical or international precedent”. Economic beliefs that failed in the 1930s and the 1980s are being applied once again. Any scientist will tell you that an experiment that produces clear negative results is as useful as one that succeeds, but then scientists are rational because if an experiment fails then they will try another approach. It was Einstein who said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Sadly that not's something this Government comprehends.

The Chancellor says fiscal contraction will boost the private sector. Instead, it has brought about a double-dip recession. He says cutting public spending in the middle of a recession will reduce the deficit. Instead, borrowing is set to go up by £150 billion. The target for closing the deficit has already had to be extended by two years and most expect that target to go even further into the future. His response to these failures: even more of the same.

Congress, since this Government came to power its economic assumptions have been proved wrong time and time again. It forecast growth of 2.8 per cent this year, yet if we get zero per cent we'll be lucky. It boasted of a march of the makers, yet manufacturers are suffering their worst conditions in years. It promised an export-led recovery, yet our trade deficit is at its widest level since 2005. When it comes to economic policy, the lesson is clear: don't believe a word this Chancellor says.

What about David Cameron? He tells us that scrapping employment rights will boost jobs but without a shred of evidence to back his claim up. At least he has not got all his own way on this and it is right to acknowledge Vince Cable and his Liberal Democrat colleagues for resisting the full Beecroft bundle, including no-fault dismissals but we have still seen reduced protection against unfair dismissal and fees for employment tribunals, blockages in the way of workplace justice; many threats remain. Yet despite all of that I see no investment boom. I still see big companies on an investment strike and workers afraid to spend.

Frankly, if the Prime Minister really believed in sacking underperforming workers, how is it that George Osborne still in a job? (*Applause*)

Congress, it's time for change. The government's strategy is failing Britain, the economy is on its knees, services are being devastated, and our society is becoming more fractured as benefits are cut for the poor while taxes are slashed for the rich. Austerity isn't just some temporary sacrifice, it could be with us for the duration, a self-perpetuating economic nightmare, and it's already beginning to happen.

Beyond the boutiques of Notting Hill and the mansions of Kensington there is another country, a Britain of boarded-up high streets, pawnbrokers and food bank, a Britain of stratospheric inequality where the rich float free and the poor sink further into penury, a Britain of hopes denied for millions of our young people. With more than one in five under-25s without work, it's time to stop talking about the risk of a lost generation: they're with us now. Congress, our level of youth unemployment is a national scandal and the Government's response has been pathetically, shamefully, and woefully inadequate. (*Applause*)

Congress, when I addressed you in Liverpool in 2009, I warned that the economic crisis could fuel social disorder. Two summers later, we experienced the worst rioting in a generation. I worry desperately about the country we are becoming. What we are staring in the face is many years of stagnation, our own lost decades. It won't be the West London rich who suffer. No, it will be the rest of us, the victims of a government that thinks it can buck the central lesson of economic history, that

austerity simply begets more austerity. Of the 173 austerity packages carried out around the world since 1973, the IMF concluded that all led to recession, not growth.

When you're driven by ideology, like so many in power today, the facts don't matter, but too anybody who has lived in the economic real world the pitfalls are obvious. When wages don't rise and jobs are made insecure, workers won't spend, and when workers won't spend, confidence goes, and when confidence goes, growth dies. That's where we are now.

Congress, Britain deserves better than this. That's the message we'll be taking to the British people on 20 October as we hold our Future that Works demonstration. I really hope this will be a momentous day, a worthy successor to our magnificent March for the Alternative last year, an occasion when we not only changed the terms of the debate, but when we reach out to the millions of people who share our concerns.

When I address the rally in Hyde Park, it will be one of my last engagements as General Secretary. I've worked for the TUC for 37 years and it's been a privilege to spend my working life in the service of working people, but no task we have faced in that time is more important than the one we face now. Britain is at a historically important crossroads and the choice we face is clear: in one direction is decline, depression and despair and in the other is recovery, regeneration and renewal.

So, at this defining moment, let it be our Movement that shows the way. Let it be us who give working people a sense of hope about their prospects, who show that a

better future can be within our grasp, and together let's build a new Britain we can actually all be proud of. Thanks for listening. (*Standing ovation*)

The President: Thank you, Brendan. I think we all now know this is going to be your last Congress and I think there will be some further tributes paid later in the week, so I will not overdo it but merely to say I think that was a fantastic speech. I think Congress recognises the contribution you have made and that standing ovation I think was from the heart worthy of your contribution to this Trade Union Movement. Thank you very much, Brendan, for an inspiring speech. Thank you very much indeed. (*Applause*)

Delegates, we now turn to Chapter 1 of the General Council Report, please, A Future That Works Campaign, from page 5. I am calling paragraphs 1.1 to 1.6 and Composite Motion 1, A Future That Works Campaign. The General Council will be supporting Composite Motion 1.

A Future That Works Campaign

Dave Prentis (*UNISON*) moved Composite Motion 1.

He said: At the start I want to pay tribute, like Brendan, to the fantastic athletes who made the Olympics so successful and the volunteers who made the Olympics so possible. Congress, I also want to pay tribute to the 80,000 women, men, and children, in the Olympic Stadium last week who showed George Osborne exactly what they thought of him — (*Applause*) — the day George Osborne was rumbled and the crowd that spoke for all of us were not booing pantomime villains but real life

villains who are destroying Britain, Tory Britain, an economy in crisis, the longest recession for 50 years, 650,000 public service jobs going every single day of this Coalition, a public service job going every 45 seconds, and more to come.

We have the worst child poverty record of any government in a generation, a Britain where last week Save the Children, an international charity, launched an appeal to help UK families plunged into poverty by cuts and recession. We have stories of kids going without hot meals, winter clothes, missing out on school trips, working families struggling with rocketing prices, and plummeting pay. We have an Oxfam report borne of inequality in Britain not seen since Victorian times, heart-rending stories that shame this Government and anyone who supports it.

In Britain, walk down any high street, open any newspaper, turn on the TV, and you will see legalised loan sharks offering pay day loans, interest rates reaching 4,000 percent, an industry now worth £2bn a year, and six in 10 using money to pay household bills or to buy essentials, trapping families in a downward spiral of debt and despair, our people, our kids, with the cost of food going up by over 10%, the cost of gas and electricity even more. We know, Congress, that it will just take a £50 rise in monthly outgoings and that would plunge two-thirds of families into financial ruin.

We have a Britain changing beyond all recognition with employment rights under attack, sacking workers made easier than ever before, a Britain where sit-alone judges, not tribunals, decide unfair dismissal claims, where zero hours contracts are

all the norm, and where bankers with no shame announce speculating on food prices as millions face starvation.

We have a Britain where everything is up for sale, our NHS, our care services, our education services, with essential services being privatised, £27bn of contracts to be signed in the coming year despite the scandals, despite the failures, A4E, Southern Cross, G4S, ATOS and its discredited benefits tests, and failed council contracts.

The Tories, with no road to recovery, knowing that their policies are not working are using the austerity agenda, the recession, to destroy our public services, to destroy our welfare state, and without austerity they could not privatise our NHS, without austerity they could not privatise policing, close libraries, and attack the hard won rights of working people. It is the Coalition that has declared war on our people and now we are facing a three-year pay freeze with living standards slashed while the rich and the powerful remain untouched.

Congress, this is the point, it is our job to lead that fight back. It is our job to protect our heritage, to defend that fairer society that those who went before us fought for, to fight for a future that works, to ensure that 20th October is the biggest anti-cuts demonstration in our history, a day when we will give hope to our people, hope for a better, fairer society, and 20th October has to be much more, much more than just a march. It has to be a launch pad for our campaign against austerity. After that day we must march on united, coordinated.

The Tory posh boys think our members are afraid, afraid of losing their jobs, afraid to ask for higher pay, but as trade unionists we must raise them up to show our members what they are really worth and as unions and through the TUC we must be out there campaigning, organising, building our Movement, building alliances, and we are never stronger than when we coordinate industrial action. Yes, we will seek decent pay, fair pay, and we will negotiate. That is what our members ask us to do. Make no mistake, if the employers refuse to negotiate, if the attacks continue, we will move to coordinated action which is called for in this composite. Now is the time for action. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Len McCluskey (*Unite*) seconded Composite Motion 1.

He said: Conference, this composite is of course about our alternative to the Government's austerity programme, which is leading our nation on a path to poverty. What a disgrace, as David said, in 21st century Britain that for the first time in their history the Save the Children Fund are making campaign funds available to help poor children in Britain, as well as Africa and under-developed countries. *It should not happen here*, is their slogan. That is the depths of the recession that this Government's policies have brought us to and everybody knows it, that Tory austerity has failed. The crowd who boo'd George Osborne at the Paralympics certainly know it. The economists lining up to denounce these policies know it. Of course, we know it too because we have been exposing its deficiencies for over two years. Others are now catching us up as they talk about rebalancing the economy.

Our alternative for growth and social justice is spelled out in the composite. It is one that makes Britain a fairer and more equal place to live and our alternative reflects those values. So, let's see if they can listen and catch us up on a few more ideas. For a start, I am calling for an increase in the Minimum Wage by an extra £1 an hour from 1st October. This will tackle poverty, boost the economy, and not cost the Government a penny. And before the bosses start bleating about job losses, they should remember that they said the same when the Minimum Wage was introduced and not a single job was lost. In fact, this will help to create jobs. Let's also have a cap on energy bills this winter so that ordinary families can sleep a little easier. Let's take this message to the streets in our hundreds of thousands on October 20th, and make that demonstration a catalyst of a mighty campaign of protest, direct action, civil disobedience, and strike action, to save our nations and our communities. Please support. (*Applause*)

Mark Serwotka (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 1.

He said: Congress, we have heard this morning about the full extent of how the Government's austerity agenda represents the biggest attack on working class people this country has ever seen. The PCS believes as we come to this Congress that we need a sense of urgency. We need a sense of urgency to turn the words in these resolutions into action before it is too late. Why do we say there is a sense of urgency? On jobs, 700,000 public sector jobs to go; unemployment predicted to reach three million; record levels of youth unemployment bringing real despair and destitution to our communities. On the pension age, we will have the longest pension

age of any country in Western Europe. Why can they reduce the pension age in France from 62 to 60 and in Britain we are told to work to 68, and it will rise from there? In terms of pay, we have a situation where PCS members in a recent survey told us their average income had fallen over £100, 88% of them have had to reduce their spending and 77% of our members tell us their money runs out in the third week of the month and they have to borrow.

Congress, we have to be clear fighting for a living wage is one of the basic things we need to do. While we are at it, we need to tell Ed Balls tomorrow that Labour's support for the public sector pay freeze is shameful and instead of trying to convince us what redistribution is they should reverse their policy on public sector pay. *(Applause)* So, too, on welfare, a welfare state that is now under siege, cuts to disability benefits, compulsory work fare, benefits being reduced in a way that we have not seen for decades. On top of that, as Len has pointed out, Save the Children telling us now that 25% of all kids in the UK live in poverty. One in seven struggle to get new shoes or a coat in the winter when they need them desperately.

This situation is appalling but I want to finish on this. We all agree it is appalling but what we now need to agree is what we are going to do about it. We need October 20th to be the biggest demonstration this country has ever seen. Congress, PCS believes that the way to really shock the Government is to follow up the demonstration on October 20th as quickly as we can with mass coordinated strike action across the public and private sector to show them that we are serious. *(Applause)* Congress, when we prepare for it we have to learn the lessons of what went brilliantly well last

November 30th but also face up to some of the weaknesses that we need to do better next time.

Congress, I leave you with this thought. For those who tell us, like some continually do, strikes do not win, we are not going to get anywhere, we have to wait for the next general election, in PCS I can tell you in the most difficult circumstances our members in the last months have won magnificent victories. In the Home Office before the Olympics when we were vilified by every politician and media outlet, as a result of our brave men and women voting for strikes 1,100 new jobs created in the public sector. In Britain's tax offices, as a result of strike action in recent weeks, a thousand new jobs, more work rights for 4,000 temporary staff, and a commitment to recruit another 3,000 extra staff in the months ahead. (*Applause*)

If we can win in those departments thousands of new jobs, imagine what we could win if we march together, we strike together, we consign the Government's austerity to the dustbin of history, and we give hope and inspiration to the millions who look to us. Congress, support the resolution but, more importantly, turn words into action later this year. We support. (*Applause*)

Harriet Yeo (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) supported Composite Motion 1. She said: As a trade union president I pretty much thought that I had seen what cuts could do, but even I was surprised recently. I am the Labour Police & Crime Commission candidate for Kent. Now, you may not agree with that but we will have

that argument later. Recently, I have been to parts of Kent I do not often go to and I have discovered Kent's very own Bhopal in the waiting. Why a Kent Bhopal? What do you mean, you may say.

In a beautiful village called Grain is a massive national grid gas facility. Because the local authority and National Grid are cutting costs they will not do an offsite test to make sure that residents and workers are safe in the event of a gas leak. Add to these local cuts the cuts in police, less officers to police an event and keep lives safe, the kind of job they had to do recently at the Olympics with the G4S debacle where private is always better, less fire-fighters to deal with the aftermath of a leak, cuts in the NHS, less hospital beds, less doctors, less nurses, less ambulances.

A collective combination of these cuts could lead to the death and destruction of a rural village in Kent but cuts are not just economics, cuts can and are costing lives, and not only are the cuts killing people already and putting Grain and other communities in danger, they are not even working economically. We must not lose sight of the fact that there is an alternative and an alternative that will build and not destroy. Trade union members and non members, community groups and pre-school groups, march with us on 20th October and let's make the final cut and cut the cuts dead. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, although we are running up against a time issue, I want to extend this debate a little, if you agree, as I know a number of people who want to speak. This is an incredibly important debate.

Martin Levy (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of the composite:

Congress, composites risk losing impact by being broad in order to please everyone, and with all due respect that was the case with Composite 4 on the Alternative economic strategy at the 2011 Congress. Despite its good intentions, there was little on specifics.

This composite, Congress, is a million miles better. It pulls no punches about government policies, it congratulates striking trade unionists for their actions on pensions, reaffirms support for the principles of the People's Charter and the Charter for Women, and it includes a whole list of clear campaigning points.

It was the absence of specifics in 2011 that prompted UCU to submit amendments, now composited in the People's Charter for Change and the Women's Charter. The six main headings of the People's Charter mirror the six points of the original 1840's People's Charter, which led to universal suffrage. I do not need to go into details of the People's Charter – it's a work in progress – and, in any case, much of the detail is reflected in the bullet points at the end of the motion and in other motions before Congress. However, there is fringe meeting organised for tomorrow at the Brighthelm Centre.

The composite marks an important statement of where this Movement stands and what, among other things, we are going to campaign on over the next year. It is absolutely correct to point to austerity not working, but the composite makes clear that this is a deliberate policy aim of the Government. This is, in fact, class war on

working people on behalf of a tiny minority of super wealthy, who are doing extremely well out of austerity. For them austerity is working. But when we take our campaign against those policies out to a wider public, it is useful to have a comprehensive and positive programme to highlight, and the People's Charter is such a programme. It is coherent and integrated for the protection and development of jobs and skills in industry and public services.

At this time of austerity, with women bearing the brunt of public spending cuts, the Charter for Women takes on added importance. It calls on the movement to highlight the feminisation of poverty and expose the ideologies which are used to perpetuate women's inequality. It aims to campaign to reduce the gender pay gap, reduce job segregation, improve maternity leave and pay and tackle under representation of women in the labour and trade union Movement. These campaigns must be built from the bottom upwards. It is particularly appropriate that the People's Charter forms part of the work programme of trade union councils, and provides a basis for local campaigning in communities throughout the country, campaigning for jobs, industry, skills and public services.

I urge support for the composite, and I urge you to take the fight for the People's Charter and the Charter for Women into your own localities, to affiliate and participate in trade union councils and build and campaign in the communities. This Congress is a battle for making the values of our Movement the values of society as a whole: equality, fairness, co-operation and solidarity, not the big society but the good society. I urge support.

Rose Jones (*Fire Brigades' Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1.

She said: David Cameron, we know, has said that the cuts will go on to 2020. Indeed, 2020 may be an aspiration as, in a recent debate at Westminster on funding for metropolitan fire brigades, John Hemming^{^^}, a Lib-Dem MP, said: “My personal view is that because of various constraints we are going to face austerity for some time beyond the next general election and possibly into the 2020s.” So how do we answer that? We answer that by turning out en-masse on 7th October in Birmingham where the Tory Party Conference is being held. We answer that on 20th October with the biggest mobilisation this country has seen. We need to show them that workers cannot and will not continue to pay the price for their mismanagement of the economy, but there are two substantial points I want to make.

The first is that we must support all workers taking action. In recent months, Essex fire fighters have been taking strike action. They have been fighting against planned cuts. We know the authority has the cash in its reserves, they don't need to make the cuts but still they ploughed on. Our members responded with a magnificent series of strikes, demonstrations and protests. We had great solidarity and support from other trade unions, including local oil refinery workers, who were also in dispute, who spoke at our rally in a warm show of solidarity and unity. We should applaud the action taken by Remploy workers up and down the country defending our jobs, and let us not forget that today East Coast Mainline cleaners are taking strike action for a living wage. (*Applause*)

My second point is on local campaigning. We need to see campaigning in every locality, defending the NHS, defending our schools, defending our welfare state and

fighting against the cuts. We need co-ordinated local campaigns with trade unions at the centre of the action but working with trade councils, who can play that vital co-ordinating role and who are the obvious, natural focus for these campaigns and local alliances. In my local area, the trade council has been reinvigorated and has more energy and passion than ever to support and work with trade unions. Trade unions, with strength in numbers, expertise and solidarity, can work together with trades councils to exert our influence, power and unity to show solidarity in rejecting the Government's austerity measures. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

Andy Olsen (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) spoke in support of Composite 1.

He said: Congress, it is this Government's ideological pursuit of deficit reduction and its cuts agenda, with no coherent economic strategy, that is preventing growth. Claims that private-sector jobs would be created to replace those lost in the public sector have been shown to be entirely hollow. Ask the millions who are unemployed. Look at the construction industry, which accounts for almost 8% of GDP in the UK. We have witnessed over 400,000 redundancies in four years, not to mention the agency workers and the self-employed workers. They make up 50% of the industry, but often they don't show up in the official statistics. This Tory-led Coalition, backed by the shameful Lib-Dems, are austerity zealots, who have cut housing projects, school projects and road projects, each and every cut a bloody blow for the construction industry. The Government is by far the biggest client, so it took the recent rumblings inside the Conservative Party to force this Government into any form of support for construction. However, it is too little, too late. This despite being told for the past two years that their economic policies were wrong.

Congress, the construction industry is a useful marker for the performance of the private-sector economy. The facts lay bare the Government's failure to stimulate growth and demand. A 3% reduction in the first quarter of 2012 tipped us into a double-dip recession. A further contraction of 3.9% in the second quarter of 2012 further damaged the whole economy. We are seeing medium-sized building companies falling by the wayside. There is also a domino effect for smaller firms, resulting in the horrific consequence of mass unemployment. With skilled workers faced with little hope of getting back into the construction industry any time soon, it is sadly all too predictable – a social consequence of Tory mismanagement of the economy – and starving vital industries of investment. Congress, we must maintain the campaign of supporting the alternative economic strategy, together united. With arguments based on investment and growth in key areas supported by fair taxation, we must support all members in both the private and public sector who are equally feeling the pain of this Government's demented ideology. We must fight for the future, a future that works. Congress, support the composite.

Tim Roache (*GMB*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1.

He said: The dictionary defines “austerity” as “difficult economic conditions created by government measures to reduce public expenditure.” How woeful is that? To us, “austerity” means that working people, pensioners and young people are paying the price for a capitalist economic system that is in crisis, caused overwhelmingly by the greed of its star performers – the bankers. The price we will have to pay is more unemployment, lower wages, lower quality jobs, poorer pensions and worsening

public services. In short, it means stunted, blighted and meaner lives for millions of ordinary people.

Congress, we have been here before. The 1930s saw the longest depression experienced by working people that left an indelible mark upon the memory of our movement. But grasp this fact: the depression has already lasted longer than the 1930-34 depression, and many experts are saying that this depression is going to go on to 2015 at least. We cannot stand idly by and let this happen to another generation. The various calls for action and a new direction contained in this composite shows that our proud movement is well aware of this. We learn from history that the simplistic idea that cuts as a way for tackling our economic problems is simply wrong. They make the problem worse, as increasing numbers are recognising that the politics of austerity discourage recovery. They did so in the '30s and they are doing so again today. It is an economic historical fact that austerity cuts have never, ever successfully turned round a country's recession.

The central problem with the economy is the lack of demand. People don't have the money, let alone the confidence to spend. Companies are sitting on £700 billion of potential investment funds but they are refusing to invest. How about that: the capitalists on strike! This leaves the Government as the only other agency with the potential to kick-start the economy. All the fine talk about bringing forward capital infrastructure projects is hot air, and what's their latest innovative idea? Cameron and Osborne are pinning their hopes on us all building conservatories to get the economy out of the shit. Congress, how disappointing is that. Where is the innovation? Where are the ideas? We see an utterly clueless Government lurching from one U-

turn to another. Yes, it's funny, isn't it? But, no, Congress, it's anything but funny, because all the time it is devastating working people, our members, their families, their futures and our communities.

When Labour won the election in 1945, the deficit was far bigger than it is today, and what was their response – austerity and cuts? Of course it wasn't. It was innovation, creation, the introduction of free state education, social housing, the proud nationalisation of our industries and, of course, the birth of the NHS. We need to get off our backsides and campaign, comrades. We must campaign against the cuts and campaign against austerity. We must get our members angry and keep them angry. I saw a couple of days ago that trade union numbers are at their lowest for a generation. I am not surprised because we've kept our heads down for far too long. Let's get off our backsides, let's campaign and fight. Our members deserve nothing less. Support this motion. (*Applause*)

Darren Ireland (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 1.

He said: Here in the UK and right across Europe the working class and the trade union Movement are under attack from the ideological right-wing views of this Government, all of which are creating misery. The European Union is driven by the same capitalist ideology, with the troika providing bail out after bail out to prop up a failed economic system, which makes working people pay for a crisis that they did not create. It is vital as a movement that we mobilise for October 20th, and to fight to defend all jobs, all our services, communities and rid society of the greed of the bankers and the big business who seek only to protect their own interests.

My union in past months has taken strike action for its public sector workers on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and also in the north-east on the Tyne & Wear Metro. Today we have our cleaners and vulnerable workers, who have been attacked by the austerity measures, fighting for better pay and conditions on the East Coast Mainline on strike at King's Cross, Peterborough, Doncaster, York, Newcastle and Edinburgh Waverley, right up and down the country, from London to Scotland. These vulnerable workers are seeing their benefits attacked. They earn just over £6 an hour, being absolutely exploited and we will continue as a movement and as a trade union ourselves to fight for better terms and conditions for all cleaners, be they employed in the rail industry, the shipping industry, the offshore industry or road transport. They need better pay and better conditions. Austerity is creating mass unemployment, pay freezes, attacks on terms and conditions, attacks on pensions, attacks on all our services, more of our families being made homeless and families being unable to feed themselves. Where I live in Liverpool, there are eight food banks alone, which is an absolute disgrace. We must continue to fight austerity. To do that we need to stand together. We need co-ordinated action, including a general strike to defeat these policies that are attacking us right across Europe.

So, in coming back to the point, what is Labour doing? Ed Miliband has attacked public-sector workers for taking strike action. Up and down the country, we have Labour council after council that are carrying out Tory cuts. My own union was expelled from the Labour Party in 2003, and in the last local elections, the RMT, following requests from its branches and regional councils, supported candidates opposed to cuts, standing for the Trade Unionists and Social Coalition and the

Scottish Anti-Cuts Coalition. We need to elect candidates who will fight the cuts and who will fight for a society that represents us and our beliefs, and that is a socialist society. That is a future that works. Support Composite 1, and when we get to it support Motion 77. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, colleague. It is not particularly usual to move motions at one go, but that was a good try. We will move to the vote on Composite Motion 1.

* *Composite Motion 1 was CARRIED.*

The President: Delegates, let us now return to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report: Economic and Industrial Affairs, and to the section on the economy from page 46. I call paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 and Motion 26: Fair and Just Taxation. The General Council supports the motion. I want to reiterate that if colleagues could, please, when the red lights comes on, make your exit, because you are eating into the speaking time of other delegates.

Economic and Industrial Affairs

Fair and just taxation

Kevin Flanagan (*GMB*) moved Motion 26.

He said: Congress, Benjamin Franklyn said: “There are only two certainties in life – death and taxes.” Well, without wishing to depress you, we are all going to die, but when it comes to taxes it is a different story. Some of the Non-Taxpayers’ Alliance members, like the sports stars, the non-doms and the big enterprises all have ways of avoiding their obligations and responsibilities. They have ways of getting round the

system. Sir Phillip Green, surely the master of avoidance, paid his wife, who resides in the tax haven of Monaco, £16 million last year, yet his company handed to the Exchequer just £2.6 million. Vodafone takes hundreds of millions of pounds from its UK customers every year, but not a penny goes to the Exchequer. These well-known examples are just the tip of the iceberg. Tax avoidance is systematic, endemic and it contributes to a divided society, and we are not convinced that a Cabinet of multi-millionaires are interested in rocking the boat or, should I say, their yachts. Billions are lost to the Treasury each year which should rightly be coming into the public coffers to support our public services, build schools and hospitals and get Britain working again.

Surely, Congress, no company which has offshore, tax free status, should ever be allowed to buy into PFI projects, such as hospitals and schools. Congress, outside my local supermarket people are collecting for those who cannot afford to buy the basic essentials for the food banks: milk, tinned food, biscuits and tea. Why, in this society today, do we have people who don't have the basics while the millionaires are sat in their tax havens sipping their Champagne and paying nothing to this economy. Why is it those same millionaires can actually use this country, use the workforce and use the police to protect their services and not pay a penny into the coffers? The time has got to end when we say that enough is enough. Pay your fair share! (*Applause*)

Congress, who are the scroungers? I think you know who they are. It is those who refuse to pay morally what is due to this society. I ask you, Congress, to pass this motion and sign the TUC petition on its website and show them that we are concerned with people getting away with paying tax by using tax avoidance methods. I applaud

the TUC for its 10 point plan to deal with tax avoidance and to deal with it. Look at it on line, support it and campaign for it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Lorna Merry (*PCS*) seconded Motion 26.

She said: Congress, PCS commissioned a report from Richard Murphy in 2008 which calculated that the tax gap in this country was around £120 billion a year. This consists of £25 billion a year lost through tax avoidance, £70 billion a year lost through tax evasion and £25 billion a year sitting on HMRC's books, uncollected because the Department no longer has the staff to go out and collect it. PCS believes that a fair and just tax system can only exist when action is taken to close the tax gap, but this can only happen with a political will to close loopholes and to staff HMRC properly to tackle tax dodging.

When HMRC was formed as a department by Gordon Brown it had 97,073 full-time equivalent staff. By November 2010 the staff figure had fallen to 66,992, and by the end of the Comprehensive Spending Review, put in place by George Osborne, this figure will have fallen to 56,100 staff, an effective cut of 44% over a decade. No wonder the tax gap exists and no wonder it is getting bigger.

In April of this year Cameron claimed that the Con-Dems have actually increased staff levels at Revenue & Customs. As Channel 4's *Fat Cheque* found, this is smoking mirrors. They reinvested a sum of money into HMRC's compliance activity but, in real terms, this only reduced the cut that HMRC was being asked to make under the Comprehensive Spending Review from 25% to 16.5%. Although activity is strengthening in HMRC's compliance activity, it is coming at the cost of the services

that exist for the people who comply with the system. No wonder that in 2010-11 we were only able to answer 48% of calls made by customers to HMRC.

The Treasury Select Committee has found that a cut of 3,300 jobs this year is likely to have cost the Treasury £1.1 billion in uncollected and unidentified tax. Conference, this makes absolutely no sense. We believe that expansion in HMRC would create jobs and help to close the tax gap. There is absolutely no logic in cutting the numbers of staff who are responsible for filling the public purse. We support. Thank you.

Nigel Gawthrope (*Unite the union*) spoke in support of Motion 26.

He said: Chair and colleagues, a few weeks ago I saw a report in the press about a group of 20 tax dodgers, who have collectively cost the Treasury over three-quarters of a billion pounds through cigarette and alcohol smuggling and illegal tobacco production. David Gawp, the Exchequer Secretary,^{^^} said: “This Government is absolutely committed to tackling tax evasion and fraud, and the HMRC will pursue them relentlessly.” Quite right, too. Yet the Exchequer, along with the same press that printed this story, failed to raise their voices with the same indignation when presented with the real tax cheats and frauds who cost this country not three-quarters of a billion pounds but a staggering £120 billion every year. So I say, “Forget the small fry. Why not go after the big boys?” These are the rats who deprive our children of a decent education; the bastards who cause our hospitals to close, and the scum who are to blame for the disabled and the elderly being denied proper care. Why not go after Phillip Green for dodging personal tax bills of almost £300 million? Why not go after Vodafone, who were left off a whopping bill of £4.8 billion? Why don’t we go after George Osborne, who has the audacity to smash our welfare state on

the grounds of deficit, while dodging £1.6 million in personal taxes himself? Look at the PM himself, whose own father was the first to use offshoring to cheat on his taxes? Indeed, that is where Cameron's own wealth comes from. It is quite right for them to go after the ones that they have in their sights, but don't take the piss and leave the big fish to swim safely to their tax havens.

What is needed is for legislation to be put in place to close these offshoring loopholes, to make sure that everybody pays their fair share. After all, there are no loopholes in PAYE. Support this motion and support it unanimously.

Terry Hoad (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Motion 26.

He said: President and Congress, what do we need a tax system to do? Two things, above all. It must bring in the money that is needed to pay for a modern, prosperous, health, educated, safe and harmonious society, and to support those unable to provide adequately for themselves, and, secondly, it must ensure a fair and just sharing of the burden by all, with those who can contribute most doing so. What a difference there is between those aims and the ones that underpin and are reflected in the present Government's approach. Cameron and Osborne's austerity programme, by failing to generate growth and increase employment, stands no chance of increasing tax revenues. It will just lead to bigger demands on the benefit system as more and more of our citizens fall into poverty.

The scandal of the Government's incompetent economic policies is compounded by its failure to ensure that even that taxes that should be paid actually flow into the nation's bank account. Instead of blaming and hammering the poor, the Government

should be going after big revenue sources to fill the gap. It loses billions every year through inefficiencies in tax collection, together with deliberate evasion, and tax avoidance – the supposedly legal stratagems resorted to by too many – cost the UK economy many tens of billions a year, many times more than the wildly exaggerated costs of benefit fraud. What has happened to any sense of social responsibility?

The TUC's witty on-line magazine *Kerching* has highlighted the many ingenious ways that the "haves" have discovered to keep their money from going to taxes that would help the "have nots". As you have heard already in this debate, it sets out ten ways in which the Government could get a grip on tax avoidance, if only it was minded to.

Internationally, our sister unions in Europe and other parts of the world, in the global union federations and campaigns, such as *Europeans for Financial Reform*, are putting the case for a financial transactions tax, a so-called 'Robin Hood tax', which is an obvious way to recoup some of the wealth currently being creamed off by the people making fabulous profits on the mostly unproductive money-go-round.

Two years ago UCU argued for a small increase in the UK's low rate of Corporation Tax as an alternative to charging university students for their tuition. We showed that the state gets economic benefits worth six times what it invests in UK universities, and we showed that graduates cost the community less in social security benefits, in the calls they make on the NHS and in other ways. How much the country stands to gain by investing public money in the education of our young citizens! How short-sighted to have erected financial barriers limiting the aspirations of so many.

What does the trade union Movement stand for if it is not the achievement of a fair society? Vote wholeheartedly for this motion, and let's go back and harness the energies of our members to force a change in our tax system for the benefit of society as a whole. The time is ripe and the goal is achievable.

James Anthony (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Motion 26.

He said: Congress, I am glad to be supporting the GMB in this motion. Taxation and tax justice are at the cornerstone of our economic alternative, helping to tackle the massive economic divide in our country. That was at the heart of the crash in the economy, not public sector workers. Of course, taxation is incredibly important to me. I am a nurse in the NHS, so, thank you, it pays my wages. The millionaires inside and outside of the Cabinet complain that high taxes aren't fair. Why shouldn't they get to keep all what they have worked so hard for? But, Congress, if hard work led to earning millions, then some of my members would be rolling in it. The ones who have two or three jobs, who work cleaning a pub in the morning, their hospital in the afternoon and then caring for their kids and sick and disabled relatives in the evening, must be rolling in it. I am going to go and ask them for a tenner when I get back to work.

Those who oppose the top rate of tax don't seem to get this. It's our hard work that makes their wealth. It is not only the people who we represent in this hall that make their products and sell them, but those who maintain the roads that get them to the stores, that educate and care for their workforce and that keep them and their businesses safe. It is us, Congress, who are the workers, who are the wealth creators,

and it is us who should get some of that wealth. It is unlikely that this will convince the tax dodgers to change their ways. Neither will condemning celebrities for avoiding their tax, particularly when we only condemn those celebrities who don't pay any money to the Tory Party. So the TUC has pointed out clear and practical ways that this Government can tackle tax avoidances, not least by not sacking staff in the HMRC. The only way we can collect taxes is to ensure we have tax collectors in place to do it.

Congress, we must make those people pay their taxes so that we can invest in our public services, and that must be a key part of our economic alternative, a key part of what we will be saying on 20th October on the streets of London. We need your taxes. We are not asking. We are telling you to give them now. Thank you.

The President: Colleagues, I am going to move directly to the vote on Motion 26.

* *Motion 26 was CARRIED.*

The President: We now continue with Chapter 4 of the General Council's Report, and I will now take the debate on banking reform. Firstly, I intend to call the General Secretary to introduce the General Council's Statement on banking reform. I will then call paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 and then the mover and seconder of Motion 27 on Public ownership of banks. I will then open the debate to other speakers. After the debate, I will give the right of reply to the mover of Motion 27, and I will then give the General Secretary the right of reply. We will then move to the vote on the General Council's Statement and then Motion 27.

General Council Statement on the banking industry

The General Secretary: President and Congress, I am pleased to move this General Council Statement on banking reform because, as our statement makes clear, and indeed so does Motion 27, to be moved by the FBU, it is the banks that lie at the heart of so many of our economic problems, not just in terms of the financial crash and subsequent slump but also in terms of the chronic imbalances that have been allowed to build up in our economy and that now hinder our chances of recovery. We face three central challenges. First, we need to avoid a repeat of the turmoil of 2008, and the TUC welcomes changes in the regulatory regime for banks, but we need to get even tougher. Second, we need to curb excessive reward. It was one of the root causes of the crash with the bankers taking outrageous risks in pursuit of obscene pay packages. Third, we need to build a banking system that meets the needs of real people and real businesses in the real economy. If there is one statistic which shows how dysfunctional our banking system became during the boom, it is that of the £1.3 trillion lent by UK banks between 1997 and 2007, around 85% of that went to financial firms and the property market, fuelling the speculative bubble that burst so disastrously in 2008. Small businesses and manufacturing, frankly, didn't get a look in. With lending needed to more than double to meet our long-term investment needs, there is a compelling case for new kinds of banks that deliver for the real wealth creators in our economy; a state investment bank to fund the infrastructure and regeneration; a properly funded green investment bank to finance low carbon growth and more mutually-owned banks to channel credit to households and SMEs.

Our aim is straightforward. It is to build a more diverse and more accountable banking system, but I do have one important caveat to make, one reservation from the General Council, to register on the terms of Motion 27. While new public banking institutions undoubtedly have a vital role to play, the wholesale nationalisation of our banking system as called for in Motion 27 cannot be seen as a panacea. Would we be able to afford it? With the shares in the big-5 banks alone valued at £180 billion, it certainly would not come cheap at a time when the public purse is under strain. What would it mean in practice? Not just public ownership of the likes of HSBC and Barclays, but the state controlling other bits of the banking system, the Nationwide and other mutuals, the Co-op and even our own Unity Trust Bank. Is that really what we would regard as desirable?

Congress, none of this is to deny the scale of the change we need. For far too long, Britain's banks have behaved as a law unto themselves leaving a trail of destruction in their wake. An economic necessity now demands bold, radical reform. It is what the British people are crying out for. Now, more than ever, we need a banking system that works for us, not for itself.

So I commend the General Council's Statement to Congress and support Motion 27 as well, but with that reservation taken into account. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Brendan. I call paragraphs 4.4, 4.5 and Motion 27, Public ownership of the banks. The General Council supports the motion but with the reservation already set out by the General Secretary when moving the report.

Public ownership of the banks

Matt Wrack (*Fire Brigades' Union*) moved Motion 27.

He said: We want a wide-ranging debate on the lessons of the economic crisis and the impact it has had on our lives and the lives of working people in Britain and across the globe, and we want clear political conclusions drawn from it. We all know that the banks were a big part of the reason why the world economy crashed in 2008. We also all know that the banks have failed to help the economy out of the crisis, and we have concluded that the failure of the banks is not simply about regulation or lack of regulation, but there is a wider structural explanation. The problems lies with the ownership system; the private ownership of the banks and the banking system existing for the purpose of profit and profit alone. We think that the answer is for public ownership and for democratic control of the banking system, to end casino banking and to replace it with a public service run in the interests of the vast majority of the population. That is the argument that we believe our Movement needs to take up over the coming years.

Let's look at some of the major scandals of the past few years. In the bail out, the taxpayer – you, me, your families and colleagues – advanced cash of some £133 billion to restore the capital of the banks. So far only £14 billion has been recovered. As even Mervyn King truthfully has said, “Never in the field of financial endeavour has so much money been owned by so few to so many.” We need to say that enough is enough. We want our money back! We want it invested in economic recovery, we want it invested in public services and in improving standards of living. We believe for that, we need public ownership. It is a disgrace that Bob Diamond collected £17 million in pay and bonuses last year, and even got his £5.7 million tax bill paid for as

well. That is equivalent to something like six hundred fire-fighters, nurses or five hundred teachers. Barclays' 278 elite traders and top executives took £1 billion home between them as an incentive for that gambling. That would pay, by the way, for something like a third of the total of the UK Fire & Rescue Service at a time that we are paying for cuts. So don't tell us that there is not the money for public services.

The truth is that with private ownership of the banks, as in any big business, profit is the priority. Shareholder control, shareholder competition, greater competition and greater regulation will not end that system. The answer to stopping these inflated salaries, bonuses and gambling, we believe, is public ownership and democratic control of the banking system.

The Libor scandal broke this year, starting with Barclays, but some 20 banks are now under investigation for fixing interest rates. US investigators have estimated that it has affected something like £350 trillion worth of contracts, financial instruments, mortgages and loans, and yet the fine is just 4% of Barclays' profits. That is no deterrent. Again, to put an interest to those fiddles and that fixing, we believe that public ownership of banking needs to be put on the agenda. We need banks to get the economy going. Most of us have our wages paid into banks, small businesses need loans and cash to invest, and to deposit their savings safely. We need to be able to get at our money, and sometimes we need to borrow money. We need to save. These are the services of a banking system. But currently the banking system is failing to lend to industry. The banking system is failing to assist the economy to get us out of the recession.

Let's look at some of the objections to public ownership. Some people argue that because we have "too big to fail" banks, the answer is smaller banks and greater competition, but it wasn't just big banks that caused the crisis in 2008. We also had smaller banks, such as Northern Rock, which crashed spectacularly. The truth is that the banking system is so inter-dependent that a crisis in one sector will affect the whole sector in the end, in any case. So we believe that democratic accountability and change comes with public ownership.

In terms of regulation, the record demonstrates very clearly that every system of regulation is bypassed, so we believe that this debate needs to be put on the agenda. Our money has bailed out the banks. We now want a say in the future of those banks by public ownership and we must take control of the banks. We want our money back. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Fran Heathcote (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Motion 27.

She said: Congress, I am proud to second this motion from the FBU. Banks hold our wages, our savings, if we are lucky enough to have any, our mortgages, and the finance sector invests our pensions. Much of the banking sector was nationalised by Labour in 2008, not in the interests of working and middle-class people but to prop up the broken financial system that was brought to the verge of disaster. To date this has cost £500 billion in total, but what have we got to show for it?

I live in the north-east, and Northern Rock was taken over in 2007 after selling dodgy sub-prime mortgages and the scandal that created the credit crunch. I am sure we can all remember the queues of people trying to get their savings out. But last November,

four years after being bailed out, the profitable half of it was sold to Virgin for £747 million, less than half of what the taxpayer injected into it when it was split in 2010. We know that 80% of RBS has been nationalised, yet it is being investigated as part of the Libor scandal, which fixed interest rates between banks, but it also affected the mortgages and loans of ordinary people and penalised them. Small businesses have been swindled with one person reportedly being paying back an extra £70,000 on her loan because of the illegally fixed interest rate.

Incidentally, these are the people that can be won over and stand behind the trade union Movement when we take joint action and show that we are the most powerful force that can resist the Con-Dems and their friends. Even RBS fat-cat boss, Stephen Hester^{^^^}, was forced to refuse his £1 million bonus, but the real scandal is that we, the taxpayer, own it and he gets a bonus of that size, whilst ordinary people suffered despite RBS being publicly owned. It is still about making a huge profit at our expense. Even Lib-Dem peer, Lord Oakshott, said last week: “It’s time we used the stick on the banks we own and nationalise RBS instead of force feeding them carrots.”

PCS is clear, Congress, that our anger is not directed at ordinary bank workers who have been demonised in the media because of the irresponsible actions of their fat-cat bosses. Our anger is directed firmly at those who make huge profits, even whilst being owned by the taxpayer, whilst ordinary working people suffer the detriment of a Government for millionaires and by and of millionaires. Millions of our members who are struggling to pay their mortgages and small businesses that are ripped off by the banks who cannot get credit would not think that this is a radical motion. If we

are to create a future that works, we need to control what we invest in. We want to see public need, not private greed, dealt with through publicly-owned banks. If the banks were nationalised and democratically run and taken out of the control of the greedy fat cats, it would not just open up the door to cheap mortgages and loans. It could be the platform for a totally different type of society that represented the 99% of us who would benefit from the type of socially useful investment on a massive scale that could ensure decent jobs, housing and public services for all. This is our alternative to Cameron's austerity. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Gail Cartmael (*Unite*) spoke in support the General Council's Statement on banking reform and of Motion 27.

She said: President and Congress, the financial crisis and dealing with its consequences is one of the greatest challenges we face, and the reform of the banking sector is at the heart of that challenge. The reckless behaviour of irresponsible executives and dodgy traders has led to justifiable anger. I have to tell you, as the largest union in the finance sector, it has also led to intimidation and abuse for many, many ordinary finance workers. Our members in bank branches and call centres have unjustly been caught in the crossfire. They did not cause the crisis, but we are determined that they will be a part of solving it. They are integral to a properly reformed banking sector and have a wealth of knowledge and experience in serving customers and their communities.

The General Council's Statement, rightly, identifies excessive remuneration in the banking sector as one of the major issues that public policy on banking must address. Let me tell you that the story of pay in the banking sector is not just about massive

and unjustified bonuses at the top, as scandalous as that is. It is also about the poorly paid at the bottom. Contrary what you might hear, not everyone who works in banking is a fat cat, and that is why Unite has condemned the inequity of pay distribution in the centre, and that is why we have called for an increase in the National Minimum Wage as a move to a real living wage.

It is also about a sector with the greatest gender pay gap, calculated to be 55% by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. It is also about oppressive targets and performance-related pay systems that reward sales over service and fail to deliver for customers and employees. The failure to consider remuneration systems in terms of reference of the Independent Commission on Banking was a major omission and must be included in any new inquiry.

Let me also say something about the issue of competition in the banking sector. We support a diverse banking sector, including mutuals and credit unions, but we oppose a kneejerk rush to sell off bank branches. Too often such moves neglect any proper consultation with the staff affected, who risk paying the price in terms of attacks on their jobs, terms and conditions. It also neglects the needs of customers and communities. A new banking model, a model that puts the banks at the service of the people, needs to recognise the role that bank branches still play in providing access to financial services.

Finally, Congress, Unite supports a democratically and accountably managed banking sector that is publicly owned, including full control of RBS, and we will also be supporting Motion 27 on the public ownership of banks. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Ged Nichols (*Accord*) spoke in support of the General Council's Statement and in opposition to Motion 27.

He said: Some Accord members work in Lloyds Banking Group, which is 42% owned by the taxpayer – by all of us – and we understand the anger with the banks. We understand the anger perhaps more than anybody, when 40,000 employees of the Lloyds Banking Group have lost their jobs since the crash. They have had their pensions cut, their pay reduced and the difficult time that they have been working through has been enormously burdensome for them.

The General Council's Statement calls for more diversity of ownership in the banking industry. It calls for effective competition and effective regulation, more accountability for management and penalties against some of the faults that they banks have been guilty of. We want more genuine customer care and more lending. We want to see less bonuses, less ripping off of customers and less short termism, but is the wholesale nationalisation of the industry the answer? As Brendan pointed out, the cost will be enormously significant, and do we really want to include the nationalisation of the Co-op and the mutuals? I think that passing this motion would be giving a hospital pass to Frances and the new leadership of the General Council, because it is a Utopian position that is unlikely ever to be delivered.

Speaking in July, Ed Miliband said that the Labour Party was committed to separating retail and investment banking, to give more alternatives for the consumer on the High Street and to developing a British Investment Bank to help small businesses, to develop a new culture which stops the annual bonus round, and sell-what-you-can

short termism, and to build banks which serve the British people, not just themselves. We support that view and we support the General Council's Statement but we oppose Motion 27. Thank you.

Maria Exall (*The Communications Union*) spoke in support of Motion 27.

She said: We agree that a major change of direction is needed in the banking and financial sector. The market model is a failure and it is there for all to see. Banking and financial services should be developed as a key public service and modern society needs a financial sector that supports the real economy, not one that looks like a casino. We welcome the development of a state investment bank and a green investment bank but, further, we need a banking and financial sector controlled for the benefit of all, and issues of control and long-term planning inevitably raise the question of ownership. We are concerned that the current proposals discussed by the Coalition Government not only fail to meet the challenges raised by the financial crisis of 2008 and the on-going crisis, but will actually make things worse.

The market model, regulated by industry insiders, has been a licence for greed. They have speculated with our money and made mega profits for their senior executives, not for their ordinary workers as Jed and Gail have explained, and they have massively destabilised our economy. Giving more power, not only over monetary policy but swathes of fiscal policy too, to the Governor of the Bank of England will not deal with this. A technocrat free from political control cannot be accountable to us. Do we really want an unelected Governor who is more powerful than an elected Chancellor? Also, can we expect such a person to deal with the excessive remuneration of his or her senior colleagues in the industry, not to mention getting the

policy right on QE, Libor and dealing with the absurdity of banks laundering drug money and dealing with the major financial institutions implicated in that.

We are also sceptical of the split between investment and retail banking as an answer to the problem. Is it actually realistic? What we need is to reign in the shadow banking system, not set it free. If we want a safe banking and financial services sector, a sector that delivers for ordinary people and for economic growth, we need, as a trade union Movement, to make the case for public ownership and democratic control. We support. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, I think there is definitely a right of reply for the FBU. Matt, do you want to exercise that right of reply? It is pretty obvious you do.

Matt Wrack (*Fire Brigades' Union*): Yes. There were, clearly, a couple of objections to the points that we were raising in the motion. We see the motion as the start of a debate, not the conclusion of a debate, and we look forward to engaging with those colleagues in further discussions.

One point raised was the risk of wide-scale public ownership or nationalisation and how that might impact on mutuals, building societies, the Co-op, Unity Trust and so on. I think that is a matter that needs to be discussed. Let me say that any part of the banking system is at risk from collapse if we allow casino gambling in the banking system to continue, including those organisations that were mentioned. In terms of providing better support to such organisations and better support to regional banks

and so on, we need control of the main levers of the banking and finance sector. I think that is a matter to discuss.

Secondly, we seek the full involvement of those unions that have members and expertise within the banking and finance sector. Clearly, banking is not a matter just for those who work within it. It affects every single one of us but, clearly, those who have members working within the sector have expertise which the Movement should draw on, and we mentioned the question of a TUC-led inquiry into that.

The second objection was around the question of costs. Let me say that the *Financial Times* has reported that even the Tory-led Con-Dem Coalition Cabinet has been discussing the full nationalisation of RBS. So if they can discuss it, then, to be honest, we are slightly behind the times if we are not even discussing those options and possibilities. We believe, again, that there are a range of options available to the Movement to discuss. There are lessons to learn from 1945 and the nationalisations that took place. There does not necessarily need to be cash to be handed over. In that situation, Government bonds were exchanged for shares.

Let me raise a point on the question of compensation. The truth is that the taxpayer has already subsidised and bailed out, to a wide extent, the majority of private banking. Why should we subsidise them twice; first of all, by bailing them out and then by giving them exorbitant compensation? I suggest that one option we might want to consider is some sort of means testing. People who are on benefits get means tested. How about having Bob Diamond in front of a committee of local communities

and people on benefits to discuss what compensation he needs if we take over his banking shares? There is a debate to be had. Conference, please support Motion 27.

The President: Brendan, I am not sure that there was anything for you to respond to, so perhaps you could waive your right of reply. We now move to the vote on that debate. First of all, we will take the vote on the General Council's Statement, moved by Brendan. All those in favour, please show? Is anyone against the General Council's Statement? I record one against.

* *The General Council's Statement on the banking industry was ADOPTED.*

We now move to Motion 27, with the reservation that Brendan mentioned from the General Council. Will all those in favour, please show? All those against?

* *Motion 27 was CARRIED.*

The President: I now call Composite Motion 5 – Youth unemployment. The General Council supports the composite motion. Many organisations have indicated that they want to be called to speak. It is not going to be possible to get to you all, I am sorry. I call the NUT.

Youth unemployment

Marilyn Harrop (*National Union of Teachers*) moved Composite Motion 5.

She said: Congress, while I am privileged to be moving Composite 5 on Youth unemployment, as a parent and teacher, I am devastated that in the 21st century it needs to be moved at all. I am starting with your maths lesson for today. The June youth unemployment figures showed that 1.01 million – that is one thousand and ten thousand! – 16 to 24 year olds are out of work or, more likely, never have been in work at all. To get that situation into perspective, delegates, please look around you. The Congress information says that if you are all here there are 565 delegates in the hall. Picture that two thousand times over, and that is the number of 16 to 24 year olds out of work. Each one of them is an individual. Each one is someone's sister, brother, daughter, son or grandchild. They all have their dreams, many of which are being crushed, and they are our young people. The average unemployment rate for 16 to 24 year olds is 21.9% and for 16 to 17 year olds that figure rises to 37.6%. As we all know, that is an average. Youth employment is even more prevalent in those areas of the country that experience the greatest social deprivation – I am from Sunderland. I know that – and among young people who are the most socially disadvantaged and vulnerable, including ethnic minorities and the disabled.

Congress, in a developed country these figures are an absolute disgrace, and alone provide a strong motivation to be rid of this pernicious Con-Dem Government. I wonder how many of those thousands and thousands of young employed are the daughters and sons of Cabinet ministers and Cabinet members? If you can find one, and if I have a hat, I'll eat it.

Some years ago David Cameron assured us that we were all in it together. Well, we are not, are we? This is a them and us situation. The specific attacks on young people

through austerity measures and reductions in public spending don't impact on the children of the wealthy. They impact on the children of people like us. Many of us here belong to the first generation of parents in living memory who cannot guarantee their children better education, better prospects and a better standard of living than those we have enjoyed ourselves.

I am here today because of state education – high quality, free, local state education. I guess a lot of you are here for the same reason. I can just about remember what being 16 felt like. At 16 I had done my O-Levels and I was looking forward to going on to A-Levels, to university and then to train to be a teacher. I am trying to imagine what it is like to be 16 and just to look forward into a black hole. It's incredibly depressing. The austerity measures, and we are told that we have seen the tip of the iceberg, literally, impact most on the education and employment prospects of young people from aged 16 in many ways, including cuts to the EMA, the cuts to the Connection Service and the cuts to the Careers Education Service, as well as the rise in university fees up to £9,000 a year. Where I live, £9,000 could be a year's salary to someone, and for senior citizens anywhere it is nearly two years of State pension.

Reductions in entitlements for young people risk alienating a generation and leading to young people being unable to gain an initial foothold in the labour market in the longer term. These developments mean that existing inequalities between young people are likely to be exacerbated in the longer term as a result of opportunities to proceed further are cut. It is all right taking an unpaid internship if mummy and daddy have millions. It is not so good if you are on benefits.

To conclude, the effect of the Government's stance on education reform represents a two-tiered or even multi-tiered approach to education, where some qualifications are valued highly while others are not. This will restrict the life chances of many young people, our young people. Many young people, especially the least advantaged and the most vulnerable will struggle to navigate the education system that is beginning to emerge and, ultimately, will find it even more difficult, if not impossible, to achieve an education, to enter the job market or to survive within an increasingly hostile benefits system.

Congress, support Composite 5 and the six points towards progress. Thank you.
(Applause)

Alan Donnelly (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) seconded Composite 5.

He said: Congress, it is a privilege to second the National Union of Teachers' composite motion because the trade union Movement was founded by helping fellow workers. When you look at today's unemployment levels, many of the young unemployed have nobody. They have no power if they are unemployed. They are relying on the likes of us for their futures. If you look round this hall, how many people are under 25? That is the reality of what is taking place.

In looking at my own trade union along with the RMT and TSSA, ten years ago we decided to create employment in the rail industry and we moved from a working week of 39 hours to 35 hours. Just in the driving grade alone, we created over five thousand jobs. So jobs can be created.

When I look at youth unemployment, it takes me back to when I started on the railways. When I started on the railways you had to be under 23 to be a train driver. Every train driver in the country started under 23. Today, we haven't got 23 train drivers under 23! That's the reality of what has taken place in the rail industry. I have to say that if there is a job for somebody over 65, there's a job for somebody under 25.

We have got ourselves into a state where you can be drawing your State pension, your work pension and a salary while there are people on the dole. Is that right? Also, you are not paying National Insurance. What is happening is wrong, and there is no one to defend the people who are unemployed, except the unions. If you go back to 1979, the then Tory government got elected by saying, "Labour isn't working". There was a dole queue of a million. More people under 25 are unemployed now than were in the dole queue then. That is the reality. That is not counting the people on the pocket-money pay packets, who have to work 16 hours, or are contracted for 16 hours. What does 16 hours mean? I'll tell you what it means. If they get holiday, they get 16 hours. If they are fortunate enough to be in a pension, they get 16 hours. But what are they doing really? They are working 16 hours, because it is exploitation. When you look at Tesco, you could say that Tesco has been nationalised because the wages they pay to their staff are so low that they have to be made up by the state, which are paid for by us. So, basically, we are financing the profits of Tesco, and it is wrong. What does the future hold? What are the chances of proper jobs being created within the retail industry when shopowners can get three workers working 48 hours in total? I think my maths are okay.

Will Thorne was right what he said a hundred years ago, that we must not run away. Now, a hundred years later, the GMB must not run away. Let's help the people who need help, the people who are unemployed, those who have nothing. We hear it said that the young are our future. They are not just our future. They are our past, our present and everything. They need assistance and they need it now from this floor. Thank you.

Kev Henman (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 5.

He said: Congress, I am from the Community and Youth Workers Section of Unite. This composite, rightly, highlights the deplorable situation that young people find themselves in due to the deliberate neglect and attacks on them by this Government. The composite focuses mainly on employment, but touches on some other key areas impacting on young people. The unprecedented ideological attacks on all support services affecting young people not only endanger their employment chances but they are endangering their life chances. We have seen the abolition of Connections, a service designed for young people by young people; the demolition of youth services across the UK, depriving young people of meaningful, social and life-skills education, life-change activities and professional youth workers trained to provide individual and group support to young people when they need it and where they need it.

There are deep cuts in charities, charities that provide advice around substance misuse, sexual health, domestic violence, housing difficulties and anything else young people are facing. For many young people, even if a job was waiting, some or all of these support services are needed to enable them to step into those jobs. We have

heard the word “legacy” banded about for six months during the course of the Olympics, and yesterday we heard the President record that it is this Congress over the years that has shouted out loudest against the injustices of Government policy and whim.

So what sort of legacy is going to be left by this Government and us if we don’t stand up for young people now? Even during the euphoria of the Olympics, the Government are scrapping benefit for under 25-year olds; they are selling off more and more playing fields to private gain.

Congress, we are gathered under the banner of a future that works, but with the next round of cuts looming during the autumn, young people are facing an even bleaker future. More of the services that help young people contribute to our society, both in and out of the workplace, are destined for more destruction.

Comrades, the first line of the composite reads: “Congress, is deeply concerned”. It should read: “Congress is petrified”, because if young people’s hopes, aspirations and opportunities are further eroded, the legacy being created has dire consequences for our society. Let’s collectively work harder to give young people some dignity and hope, whether in or out of work. Let’s us proudly support this composite. Thank you.

Bertha Ochieng (*University and College Union*) supported Composite Motion 5.

She said: The UCU is very pleased to support this motion. Youth unemployment threatens to scar a whole generation of young people and entrench further inequalities and undermine the gains that we have made in past years. There are now almost one

million young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not in education or training. This figure remains the highest since records began in 2000 and represents around one in six young people out of employment.

The Government continues to say that it is taking the issue of youth unemployment very seriously, but I fail to see how scrapping support like the Educational Maintenance Allowance and tripling the prices of tuition fees are going to help young people back into employment or advance equality amongst them.

We all know that employment plays a very major role in young people, giving them a choice to make informed decisions that will help them obtain a better lifestyle. It also feeds into their self-esteem. However, as aspects of the motion have demonstrated, one section of young people which has been disproportionately affected is young black men and women with nearly half of those available for employment out of work.

I have witnessed this personally in my role as a social justice activist within the union and also from working in West Yorkshire in one of the most deprived cities in the North. I am also a black mother myself with young children struggling to get employment. The high percentage of young black men and women excluded from employment is just another element of how this Government continues to persistently discriminate and marginalise the weakest and most vulnerable section of our society.

Not only has the number of young black men and women without employment continued to rise since the recession began in 2008, but it should not come as a

surprise to the majority of us that there are currently more young black men in our prison systems than study in all the Russell Group universities, which are 20 in number. We have more young black men in prison now than in our higher education institutes.

This process of discrimination and exclusion of young people in general from employment positions them with feelings of conflict, alienation and misunderstanding, the consequence of which is sustained deprivation, which spirals into the vicious circle that we witnessed last year. Unless this Government provides more public funding and financial support for young people to enable them to get the necessary skills that they need, the long-term scarring effects of youth unemployment will continue to impede not only the desired economic recovery, but also the hopes of a whole generation. Congress, let us ensure that the dreams and hopes of our young people continue. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Conroy Lawrence (*Unison*) supported Composite Motion 5.

He said: An important element of this composite is that it acknowledges that young black people are especially disadvantaged as a result of being disproportionately represented in the ever-rising levels of youth unemployment. The current economic crisis has had a severe effect on the livelihoods and futures of young black workers in particular.

Research has shown that since the recession started, an alarming 48% of black people are currently unemployed compared with 20% of white youths in the same age range. Unemployment is widely recognised as a major life event. High levels of

unemployment do not just affect those who are unemployed, but also breed fear of losing their jobs in those who are still currently employed.

Unemployed black people interviewed by Roots Research reported feelings of stress, depression and worthlessness as a result of being out of work. Young black children are still confronted with low expectations and face challenges of poverty and racism. For young black people, this often happens within the context of lifelong experience of racism with nearly 50% of young black children experiencing child poverty.

Government policies on access to higher education have built further barriers to their futures, closing off the avenue traditionally seen by many black people as a way of softening the effect of racist discrimination in the workplace. It is vital that all young people in all our communities grow and develop as the gifted young people we know them to be.

Many black parents have a hard job telling their children that they can be anything or they can do anything they want in the face of low expectations. Negative stereotypes and barriers of discrimination stand in their way when it comes to getting a good job. We must stand against spiralling youth unemployment, particularly the impact that this has on young black workers. Please support the composite. (*Applause*)

* *Composite Motion 5 was CARRIED*

Industrial infrastructure

The President: We move to Motion 30, Industrial Infrastructure. The General Council recommend support for this motion.

Tom Butler (*Community*) moved Motion 30.

He said: “Save our steel”. I do not know what it means to you, but I will tell you what it means to me. It means 400 jobs at Thamesteel on the Isle of Sheppey. It means people given just two hours’ notice that they are unemployed. I remember watching a young mother well up when it was left to the union to tell people the bad news because the management were not to be found. The impact was devastating.

I keep hearing Tories talking about food banks as if it is some wonderful example of the Big Society. How out of touch can they get? I will tell you what the food banks are like. I had one guy come to see me with tears in his eyes because he was forced to ask for a food parcel and was unable to feed his family. On another occasion, I remember the wife of one of the members turning up at the union office with her kids to ask about food parcels because her husband was too proud to ask for a handout.

Thamesteel workers have got steel in their blood. We want to make steel and put food on the table ourselves. All we get from the Government are warm words and cold comfort. I am sick of hearing Vince Cable and other ministers talking about how the Redcar Steelworks is some great sign of the Government’s industrial policy. It was not the blue and it was not the yellow Tories who saved our steel at Teeside. It was a massive union-led campaign, the local community and the Thai company, SSI. Sadly, it is one of those good news stories which are few and far between.

British manufacturing is suffering from the depression made in Downing Street. Heavy industry, like steel, is hit even harder when faced with carbon taxes which are so much higher than those of our competitors. When we asked the Government what they were going to do about it, they said that they could not do anything because it was breaking the law. When the French only pay half of the carbon tax, are they breaking the law? When the Germans set aside billions of euros to support heavy industry, are they breaking the law? All we want is a level playing field.

There is a lot of talk and a lot of jargon around in this area, but I do not care about that. I care about the young kids on the Isle of Sheppey with no hope of jobs on the horizon. I care about my colleagues from Thamesteel, who are in their forties and fifties, who are worried that they will never work again. We are talking about people's lives and it is time that this Government did something. If they cannot do that, they should call a General Election and let somebody else have a go. Please help save our steel. Please support this motion. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

Tony Burke *(Unite)* seconded Motion 30.

He said: The Coalition's lack of an industrial strategy is an absolute disaster for the UK. Their promised March of the Makers has not taken a step forward with the exception of the automotive industry. The rebalancing of the economy has not happened. The increase in promised jobs in manufacturing to replace those jobs lost in public services has proved to be a cruel hoax. Congress, we now have a part-time Britain a double dip recession. The only industrial strategy the Government has is to attack employment rights.

What we really need is a Plan B, a real interventionist industrial strategy. We want help for small and medium-sized companies. We need a strategic investment bank. We need a new skills framework and we need a national procurement policy to get the UK manufacturing again. Such a strategy would mean that we will not face another Bombardier or another Petroplus at Coryton or the ending of manufacturing at BAE Systems in Brough, breaking up a highly-skilled workforce. We need to learn our lessons from elsewhere. The fact is that in Germany, they do not sacrifice the long-term future for the sake of short-term gains.

Congress, the motion also refers to the problems of our industry which are heavy energy users. As Tom said, steel, glass, papermaking and ceramics oil refineries have to cope with the CO2 emissions policy and the carbon floor price. In the UK, we are getting just £250 million over a three-year period. In Germany, the government has committed Euros 5 billion per year, year on year.

I understand that Vince Cable intends to unveil an industrial strategy tomorrow. Vince, if you are listening, let us have an interventionist industrial manufacturing strategy with no gimmicks, no mini jobs with tax exemption, no enterprise zones, no more youth opportunities programmes and no more messing around with health and safety. In order to be successful and for the economy to grow, we need to have Britain being the workshop of the world again with well-paid skilled jobs and stable employment.

Congress, support the motion. Support the future for manufacturing on 20th October. Support UK manufacturing with decent jobs for the future. I second. (*Applause*)

Bryan Hulley (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 30.

He said: Congress, we are only too well aware that British manufacturing has been in decline for more than 30 years. It was allowed to wither on the vine by successive governments in the mistaken belief that the magical powers of the financial market would create and sustain prosperity.

The GMB is pleased to have played a major part in the fantastically successful trade union campaign which led to the resurrection of the Redcar Steel plant. That is just one example of what could be done. Last month, the opening ceremony of the Olympics reminded us of the birth of the industrial revolution when Britain became the workshop of the world. Now, we are the shopping centre of the world.

Congress, there is a unique opportunity for a new industrial revolution presented by the low carbon economy with a new manufacturing base supplying the steel for offshore wind farms, onshore power stations and shipbuilding rather than importing it. We have the biggest coastline in Europe. We have manufacturing heartlands crying out for work. We have young people leaving school without hope of work. It is not rocket science.

The depletion of oil and gas reserves places an absolute necessity to redeem our traditional skills that meet future business and domestic consumer demands for energy. We can do this by producing the steel for building power generators offshore, power stations onshore and shipbuilding. It can kick-start the economy into the next industrial revolution. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 30 was CARRIED*

Effective procurement

The President: We move to Composite Motion 6, Effective procurement. The General Council is recommending support for this composite.

Lew Schaffer (*Community*) moved Composite Motion 6.

He said: This is my first Congress. Congress, each year public procurement spending exceeds £80 billion. When UK industries and businesses are suffering, this money should be used to give them some much-needed support.

The Coalition does not have the vision or the political will to make the most of procurement to help and it is not just in Westminster where they are getting it wrong. In Scotland, we had the shameful situation of the Forth replacement crossing. 90% of the original Forth Road Bridge was made with British Steel. Guess how much British steel will be in the new bridge? You are right — not one ton.

The cynical and the ignorant out there might say that we are not competitive and we cannot supply the best quality or we cannot deliver on time. I say to them, “You are wrong. We are up there with the best. All we need is a level playing field.” You have got the DL Steelworks just 40 miles down the road from the Forth. (133545) Chatile Steel has recently invested £7 million into the plant. It is a works that is more than capable of supplying some of the tonnages of plate required for the bridge. But

no, in their wisdom the Scottish government has ended up with steel supplied from China, Poland and Spain. What a disgrace.

It is not just my colleagues in DL who lose out as there is a knock-on effect of the supply stream. I work in Scunthorpe and it would have been our steel which could have been rolled for such a major construction project — another opportunity missed.

Congress, Community is proud to represent disabled people working in supported employment. Delegates will be well aware of the attacks on Remploy and no doubt comrades from the GMB will talk more about that vital campaign. There would be far more opportunities for support of businesses if Article 19, which allows public bodies to favour businesses which employ a majority of disabled people, was used properly. If governments and councils were more creative and determined in their procurement policy then we would see more jobs for disabled people. It is not happening.

It is not all bad news. There are some good examples of procurement around. Take Welsh Labour's approach in government in Wales. They put a far greater emphasis on community benefit clauses. This means more jobs for local people and a bigger emphasis on skills and training. It is about value for people and communities and not just value for money.

I want HS2 rails to be made in Scunthorpe. I want to see wind turbines end to end manufactured in the UK and I want to see more sustainable supported employment for

disabled people. Congress, UK manufacturing is a proud industry. I want it to have a secure future. Please support the composite. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, colleague. May I say that that was a first-class contribution from a first-time delegate. It can be very nerve-racking so, to all the first time delegates, congratulations for taking the plunge and I hope we see many more.

Phil Davies (*GMB*) seconded Composite Motion 6.

He said: The GMB support the right of public authorities to decide how they organise and deliver public services and works and promotes the right for this to be done in-house, therefore exempt from formal procurement rules and processes. When public contracts are put out to tender, public authorities need to remember a simple fact. This is not any old money that they are spending. This is taxpayers' money, our money, and we believe that this comes with strings attached which make sure we provide more jobs.

Government spending across the UK is close to £100 billion a year and we are fed up that not enough of this money is used for the benefit of those who have paid into the pot in the first place. Public procurement is a key tool to promote jobs and growth and we suggest that the Government starts using it before there are no UK industries, businesses or jobs left to promote.

Successive governments have claimed that they are constrained by strict EU rules, but the real constraint is political will. Nowhere has that been more evident than in their failure to promote the use of Article 19, reserved contracts for supported employment

factories such as Remploy. The GMB and other trade unions, not the Remploy management, worked for ten years to get the legal provision yet neither government nor management use it effectively. Iain Duncan Smith should admit that it was not our members, but rather the vastly overpaid Remploy management who were sitting around drinking tea and coffee.

Had this provision been properly promoted and used instead of closing Remploy factories, we would have been opening more and helping more disabled people into the decent work opportunities that they so badly want. Instead, they colluded in a conspiracy to fail, leading to the vicious destruction of Remploy that we are seeing today. People with severe learning difficulties are now without a job and without hope. Our hardworking, committed Remploy members are being thrown on the scrapheap.

Congress, this is not just a missed opportunity but a crime. The 24th August saw 23 factories close. People with mental health problems and severe learning difficulties have been left on their own. Out of the 480 senior management and board members in Remploy, not a single one attended a factory and put their arms around the people, thanking them for 35 years' service.

Congress, there are still 27 sites left in Remploy and, make no mistake, the GMB and other unions intend to fight for every single one of those factories to stay open and provide employment for our disabled members. We invite you to come and join us on 17th September at Chesterfield where a week's strike is going to take place. Come and support our disabled members who are fighting like tigers to save their jobs.

The Welsh Assembly government shows us that where there is a will, there is a way. They are maximising the use of community benefit and procurement policies. Together with our European trade union colleagues and MEPs, the GMB is pushing for stronger social employment and environment clauses in the current revision of the EU rules. Tax payers want their money to work for them and to deliver jobs and growth. The sooner this Government understands that, the better.

Congress, may I conclude by thanking Paul Kenny, Len McCluskey and Michael Leahy, the three general secretaries of the unions in Remploy for their massive support. Most of all, could I finish by thanking the delegates in the TUC, the branch secretaries, the trade councils and all the other people who have supported, physically and financially, our members in Remploy. The fight goes on and it will continue until we get justice for our disabled people. Congress, I second Composite Motion 6.
(Applause)

The President: Colleagues, it is my sad duty to tell you that Phil will be retiring shortly after this Congress. I think it is right and proper to pay tribute to someone who has fought all his life for workers' rights and his passion for disabled workers' rights in Remploy is a standard for all to follow. Thank you, Phil. *(Applause)*

Mike Carney (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) supported Composite Motion 6.

He said: On 4th July 2011, unions at Bombardier in Derby were warned to expect up to 1,500 job losses due to the awarding of a £3 billion contract to a European rival

rather than to former British Rail Engineering Limited workers in Derby. Derby is a traditional working-class city. As with many other northern cities, it has always relied upon its manufacturing base. Successive governments of all colours have eroded this. We mobilised and 50,000 signatures were gathered. We marched. The rail unions and others took to the streets in Derby. We were applauded every step of the way.

Congress, it was uplifting. People were prepared to stand up for their working base. The outrage was felt. What did the Tories do? They did nothing. They ignored us. As unionists, we were not too surprised. They ignored 50,000 who demanded a review, but again it was not a surprise. However, they ignored the socio-economic cause of throwing 1,500 proud manufacturing workers and up to 20,000 supporting staff on to the scrapheap. Another northern working-class town has had its heart ripped out. Are we too surprised? Not really. Just ask the miners.

The Tories hid behind procurement. They said, “We had no choice. It was Labour’s choice. We could not get out of the contract. Our hands were tied.” It was excuses and lies. The French and German governments still enact protectionism. They understand the cost of destroying manufacturing bases in their countries. It is just yet another example of the lopsided European trade agreement. Why wouldn’t the governments of other EU countries allow their manufacturing bases be affected in this way? It is because they know the reaction they would get from the electorate and quite right too. Membership of the EU means different things to different countries — just ask the Greeks — but as ever, across Europe, it is the working people who suffer.

Congress, the railways are a green industry. The one million climate jobs rallies across the country demand sustainable train building along with energy housing and alternative energies. It will revive communities and create the jobs we need. In Sweden, 90% of their high-speed trains run on sustainable energy. We should be building these trains in this country.

Congress, I do not stand to support the interests of big business, be it Bombardier, Siemens or whoever. I stand to support the working people and the best way to do this is to take back BREL and for the Labour Party to enact their own policy of putting in their manifesto for the next election to renationalise the railways. I support.

(Applause)

Simon Weller (*Aslef*) supported Composite Motion 6.

He said: “In post-war austerity Britain, we had a mantra, “Export or die”, and export as a nation we did. Motorcars were exported and motorcars were also exported as CKD, completely knocked down, a sort of flatpack engineering. They were sent away to what formerly were the colonies, almost like the crumbs from the master’s table.

Where are we now in this austerity? Are we saying, “Export or die”? It is an austerity which is not borne of fighting fascism. This is an austerity borne of capital irresponsibility. We are not exporting and we are not even keeping the skills in Britain. Rather than having a strategy which develops growth, local communities and skills, we are now simply importing the CKD trains where they are just assembled in the UK. These are low-skilled jobs and low-waged jobs. This is leading to the death

of the high-tech and highly-skilled workforces which came out of the former British Railways.

We have a government which knows the price of everything, but the value of nothing. We have two huge rolling stock contracts coming, Merseyrail and Crossrail. With these two big contracts, if we keep them in Britain, we can back our communities and our skilled workers. We can hand a real manufacturing future to those communities. I support. *(Applause)*

* *Composite Motion 6 was CARRIED*

Power of the supermarkets

The President: We now move Motion 32, the Power of the supermarkets. The General Council is also supporting this motion.

Ronnie Draper *(Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union)* moved Motion 32.

He said: The subject of supermarket power has haunted the food industry for more than 40 years. It has been at the forefront of our campaigns. We started with a debate on below cost selling, we moved on to the realms of discounting and by natural progression we are now talking about the power of supermarkets. Of course, that also embraces the new grocery adjudicator.

Every single action taken by supermarkets seems to have a detrimental effect on the manufacturing industry, in particular the food and textile sectors. Not so long ago, a

supermarket group called Farmfoods was selling brands like Hovis two for £1.00 to entice people to come and buy in the store. You may say, “There is nothing wrong with that” and I am not suggesting for one minute that Hovis was selling the product at that price. However, there has to be a contribution towards knocking those prices down and guess where that money comes from? It comes from our members by taking lower terms and conditions. The money is coming from the people we represent.

Likewise, when it comes to tendering for business, every trick in the book is used by supermarkets to get product at the cheapest price. There is blind bidding on the internet, sealed envelope bids and financial inducements to encourage supermarkets to buy the product, never knowing how much your competitor has bid and whether you will be able to match it. Every one of these scams has had a detrimental effect on the profitability of manufacturing companies and with it inevitably a devastating effect on our members’ working hours and take-home pay. All the time, the profits to the supermarkets spiral upwards.

The sad reality is that the manufacturing industry cannot operate as a cartel. It cannot do price fixing. It is unable to expose the damage that has been done for fear of losing even more business. I have no doubt that in the baking industry there is excess capacity, but this has been exploited to its fullest by the supermarket buyers. They are strong negotiators who have the ultimate power to take away that business from the manufacturer.

That is a situation that cannot last for ever. If things do not change, they most certainly, in this case, will not stay the same. Discounting has become the nemesis of the baking industry, a Chinese water torture of decline, drip feeding demise and despair on the industry.

In 1979 when Spillers went out of business, that was supposed to herald the end of discounting. Not a bit of it. The power was supposed to be back with the manufacturer. No chance. Companies got greedy. They built bigger plants so that they could produce the product cheaper with fewer people and then hand the money back, in discounts, to the supermarkets. Competitors got bigger so we ended up with even more competition.

The Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union is not Luddite. We are not against technology and we are not against companies making profit because that is good for workers. However, we do object to companies committing economic suicide by offering discounts that are not there and that they cannot afford.

Last year, we saw Marks & Spencer taking product at one fell swoop out of one company in Leicester and putting it somewhere else because they got it a penny cheaper. That would not result in a penny discount to the customer. It just meant there was more profit going into the hands of the greedy supermarket. The reality is that the actions of Marks & Spencer cost 200 people in Leicester their jobs. There were 200 families who were devastated and the local community was irreparably damaged. Did M&S care? No chance.

In the past, governments have been reticent to legislate against supermarkets but now, thanks to the work that the trade unions and NGOs have done, they have announced that they are going to have a grocery adjudicator. The supermarkets clearly do not want regulation unless it is self-regulation, but we have formed a pretty broad coalition of our own, which involves charities like Action Aid and War on Want. We have brought together the Federation of Convenience Stores, the National Union of Farmers and other sympathetic organisations. We have spoken with other trade union colleagues to ask for their assistance and, to date, that looks very positive. However, we need all the unions involved, even those with close ties to the supermarkets, to come out with their objections.

Congress, we face a war with these mega-retail organisations if we are to protect our members' jobs. We will continue to put pressure on the Government to give the adjudicator teeth and independence rather than a cushy, well-paid job for one of their cohorts. This could be one of the most important motions on the agenda because when the competition has gone, watch the prices soar. The decisions we take today will determine how we operate in the future and indeed, in some sectors of industry, whether there is a future at all. Please support the motion.

Ivan Monckton (*Unite*) seconded Motion 32.

He said: For supermarkets, it is a time of record profits, record growth, huge pay, bonuses for some and low pay for others, but what is the cost of this? For a start, we have a huge loss of small independent shops. We have workers all over the world on low pay, with job insecurity and casualisation is the norm.

Supermarkets are brilliant at PR. You cannot help but notice it. Everywhere you go you see their vans, their lorries, their billboards and their buildings, all with the same message, saying what a great organisation they are for helping the shoppers and the environment and all the rest of it. They tell customers that they can get special offers and “Buy one, get one free”. They sell Fairtrade items. They claim to stick by the ETI Code of Practice. However, what happens downstream? What happens to the manufacturers, the producers, the packers and the processors? I will tell you what happens. They are all screwed and the people who get screwed the most are the people who work for them. There are minimum wages, zero hour contracts and migrant workers sleeping in shared beds in crappy little houses or clapped out caravans. That is the standard. That is becoming the norm for people downstream from the supermarkets.

Let me tell you this. The BOGOF, or “Buy one, get one free”, is funded by the suppliers. They are not funded by the supermarkets. The supermarkets are doing you no favours. If you go in there and there are two chickens for the price of one, it is because they have instructed the poultry suppliers, “Next week, you will be supplying two chickens for the price of one.”

Let me tell you what they do with farmers. Lettuces and fresh crops can be cancelled two weeks before harvest so you have to find somewhere else to sell your orders because the supermarkets have found somebody else who will do it for a halfpenny cheaper. You must have read about the milk prices in the last few weeks. They are set at below the cost of production.

So, what is to be done? There are several things. Within Unite, we have set up combines and we have our leverage strategy which has seen real benefits for some of the workers that I have described. More unions need to do that and we ourselves need to get our act together even better than we have.

Secondly, firms and workers who are affected by the supermarkets need to work more closely together. It really disappoints me that ten years after publicly offering the National Farmers' Union the chance for the farmworkers' section of a trade union movement to work with them by going to the supermarkets, they have still not taken up our offer.

Thirdly, the grocery adjudicator needs to have real power, including regarding the sale of fuel. Fourthly — and this is where you come in — customers need to be educated. When you get your “Buy one, get one free”, just realise that you are screwing some worker somewhere else down the line. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 32 was CARRIED*

The President: Staying with Chapter 4 of the General Council's Report, Economic and industrial affairs, we turn to the section on health from page 76, paragraph 4.14, and Motion 56, Mental health diversion service.

Mental health diversion service

Steve Bostock *(POA)* moved Motion 56.

He said: Congress, probably the most far-reaching and sensible report on the plight of those with mental health and learning disabilities was produced by Lord Bradley. The good Lord recognises that there needs to be liaison between all criminal justice agencies in order to bring about a worthwhile diversion process which will hopefully provide alternatives to prison sentences.

Prison officers deal day in, day out with a severely overcrowded population, the vast majority of who suffer from mental illnesses or learning difficulties, often with dual diagnosis, coupled with drug and alcohol abuse. These inmates are rarely, if ever, dealt with by healthcare professionals, but they live on normal prison landings for 24/7 of their sentence, often supervised by two prison officers — three, if we are lucky these days — to every 100 prisoners.

Despite this, prison officers have the skills — albeit unrecognised by academic standards or even by the officers themselves — to react, interact and, using great interpersonal skills, to help individuals through their sentences. This skill requires recognition and needs to be used properly. Prison officers make prison a link in the chain of progression. It is not a broken link to be picked up at a later date.

All professionals need to recognise the work of one another and begin to manage a more trusting and respectful stance in dealing with each other. Lord Bradley greatly understands this simple logic. Our trade union supports Lord Bradley and continues to do so as we have gained a seat on the consultative group, aptly named after Lord Bradley himself.

However, you cannot continue to take away frontline staff who deal day in, day out, with the most difficult clientele imaginable by efficiencies, budget cuts and the like. We can do the job and we will continue to do the job. Recognise our work by supporting us as professionals. Together we can succeed.

Remember that Lord Bradley reported in April 2009, “Since June 1995, the prison population has increased by 60% where 95% suffer from mental disorder, substance misuse or both.” That is the scale of the problem, colleagues. The POA ask for your support and recognition of this proposition. Together we can make a difference.

(Applause)

Tim Wilson (*NAPO*) seconded Motion 56.

He said: Congress, let us not be too curmudgeonly about £50 million but, let us face it too, five years between the Bradley Report and 2014, when this mental health diversionary service will be fully functioning, is far too long. Bradley’s Report is sound, progressive and humane, an analysis which took apart the shortcomings and the lack of a joined-up mindset among the police, the Crown Prosecution Service, probation and prisons.

In a way, you can understand why it took so long to come to fruition — there was a change of government, policy planning blight, saving money for the bankers etc. — except when you look at the statistics and examine the bleak landscape of misery, wasted resources and personal tragedy for the mentally ill in prison, then you think, “There is no more time for patience now.”

This diversionary service will be doing a vital job in the face of desperate need. Of course people with mental health problems should not be behind the bars of correctional institutions. It stands to reason, does it not, that their symptoms and manifestations could not be treated, even with the best will in the world, by prison staff and yet the statistics have been telling this story for decades now.

In our prisons, we find men and women with childhood histories of neglect, abuse and emotional and mental damage. We find army veterans with undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder and individuals with bipolar disorder or autism. For many years, mentally ill people have been processed through the criminal justice system by default. The signs are that they represent an ever-increasing proportion of the prison population.

In 2003, one study showed that 72% of prison suicides had a history of mental disorder and women in prison are 36 times more likely to take their own life.

It is true that over the past three years to 2010, the number of prison suicides has decreased. The most recent figures are 58 for that year and this is due in no uncertain measure to the skills and awareness of prison officers on the wings and in reception. However, we need interagency joined-up thinking with a diversionary mindset across all the offender-processing agencies with a brief to identify those who are vulnerable and to stop making things worse for them.

Lastly, a society with pretensions to be seen as civilised cannot, once having been warned about and understood the wrongness of detaining the mentally ill in prison, afford to pretend that it just does not see, or allow itself to lapse through policy

amnesia or indeed austerity cuts. That is why this motion is so important and the General Council must take an active interest in following up the future of government funding and be ready to prick the conscience of those in the justice and health ministries who must remain accountable. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 56 was CARRIED*

The President: I now call Motion 57, Multiple Sclerosis Society — end of care crisis. The General Council are recommending support for the resolution.

Multiple Sclerosis Society — end of care crisis

Sue Johnson (*Society of Radiographers*) moved Motion 57.

She said: Haven't the Olympics been fantastic? I know I am not the first to state that this morning, but that does not make it any less valid. I think that even the most cynical amongst us have been impressed at how they have achieved so much. The drive and the energy of the competitors have been awe-inspiring. It is clear that our disabled athletes are getting all of the support that they could possibly need to live fulfilled and happy lives.

But is that reality or am I just being carried away on a wave of emotion? Very few of us here would swap places with the disabled athletes even if we gained their fitness and they passed on their gold medals. For example, Stephanie Millward won two silver and one bronze medal in the swimming. She has multiple sclerosis. Would you swap your life with her uncertain future?

There are some here who understand the challenge of living with, or caring for, someone with a disability, but for the vast majority disability affects others and not us. Being the best requires drive and energy, a drive and energy that few of us possess. How many of us do possess the drive and energy to live our lives with a disabling diagnosis such as that potentially faced by people with multiple sclerosis?

The MS Society estimates that the number affected is between 85,000 and 100,000 people in the UK. Access to suitable care, worries about their financial future and concerns for their family are very real issues for the many disabled people. Do they have any spare energy to navigate the complex and unfair care support system, care that is in such short supply?

We agree with Simon Gillespie, Chief Executive of the MS Society and Chair of the Care and Support Alliance, who has described to us how he believes that the social care system in England is woefully inadequate. Hundreds of thousands of people now either miss out on the basis care that they need or they face enormous bills in paying for care that is sadly often of very poor quality.

The Society of Radiographers is bringing this motion at what could be a critical turning point for our care system. We would like to add the weight of the trade union Movement to the efforts of the MS Society in persuading Cameron and Clegg to act now, to commit at least to implementing the proposals of the Dilnot Commission and the Law Commission. Let me quote Simon Gillespie again: “Congress’s strong support for this motion will show that you are standing with the hundreds of

thousands of older and disabled people who are being let down by our crumbling care system. We cannot afford to let the pressure drop now. If the Government continues to avoid biting the bullet on this reform, they will be shamefully failing one of the crucial tests of a civilised society.”

Congress, let us not be shameful failures. I move. (*Applause*)

Michael Pearson (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Motion 57.

He said: Congress, whilst this motion centres around the campaign specifically spearheaded by the Multiple Sclerosis Society, please be under no illusion that its remit is not isolated to those suffering with MS, but will have much wider-reaching consequences for all people requiring social care — your parents and grandparents or your friends and family members with long-term medical conditions. We are all, at some time in our lives, likely to need social care.

As a physiotherapist specifically working with the older person in an acute hospital, I am sad to say that, on a daily basis, I see the injustices that the chronic underfunding of the social care system brings to some of our country’s most vulnerable people at their greatest time of need. These are our older generations who have contributed so much to our country, fought in our wars, built our industries, worked hard and paid their way, making their contribution to society, but when they need our help, we have seemingly abandoned them.

Each day, I see patients stuck in hospital beds for days, weeks and sometimes months, waiting for a social worker or those elusive care packages so that they are able to go

home. Our care agencies are underfunded and understaffed. Sadly, some patients wait so long in hospital that they pick up a hospital-acquired infection and never make it home.

Even when the patients do get home, the postcode lottery of services that they receive are often woefully inadequate. For a vulnerable person living on their own, needing help with the basics of washing, dressing and meal preparation, how much use is it that they only receive one or two calls a day which may only last ten minutes before the carer has to rush off to the next person? Sometimes, because of the demand on limited resources, a morning call to help someone out of bed might not happen until midday or an evening call to get someone into bed might happen too early, at 5.00 p.m. Where is the dignity in that?

For the privilege of receiving these inadequate services, many have to pay towards the care out of their own pocket, some having to sell their homes and possessions to be able to afford basic care provision. When the social care services fail to deliver, what happens? The patient is bounced back into hospital. I have lost count of the number of times that I have seen “Unable to cope” as a reason for a hospital admission. This is an unnecessary and inappropriate use of healthcare resources.

Now do not get me wrong. There are some excellent intermediate care services out there which try and avoid crisis admissions, but cuts across health and social care mean that there is not enough to go round. There needs to be proper joined-up thinking across health and social care systems for this to work. So I urge you to push the Government to get this implemented. Let us treat those in need of social care with

dignity and respect, not as second-class citizens or as an embarrassment to society.
Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 57 was CARRIED*

The President: We are not going to get through all the business this morning, but I am going to take Motion 58 on diabetic care.

Diabetic care

Katie Collins (*The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists*) moved
Motion 58.

She said: Diabetes is a condition that most people have heard about, but unfortunately very few fully understand. Most health experts agree that the UK is facing a huge increase in the number of people with diabetes. Since 1996, the number of people diagnosed with diabetes has increased from 1.4 million to 2.9 million. By 2025, it is estimated that five million people will have diabetes.

Most of these cases will be Type 2 diabetes because of our aging population and lifestyle choices. More and more of these cases are also in younger people of a working age and a recent study has shown that young people with Type 2 diabetes lose around 15 years of their remaining life expectancy. The figures are alarming and confirm that diabetes is one of the biggest health challenges facing the UK today.

If we are to curb this growing health crisis and see a reduction in the number of people dying from diabetes and its complications, we need to increase awareness of the risks, bring about wholesale changes in lifestyle, improve self-management among people with diabetes and improve access to integrated diabetes care services. This makes diabetes a ticking time bomb which will put pressure on an already overstretched NHS to educate and treat this illness.

As chiropodists and podiatrists, we treat people with diabetes every day. Diabetes can cause damage to blood vessels leading to poor circulation in the feet and legs. It can also cause nerve damage, which may cause pain or uncomfortable tingling, but may also lead to numbness or even complete loss of feeling in the feet and legs. These circulation and nerve problems can result in sores, injuries or ulcers that get infected easily, bone swelling or deformity, mobility difficulties which can affect the way you walk and, in some unfortunate cases, gangrene leading to amputation of the foot or lower leg or even death.

Prevention is therefore the best approach and chiropodists and podiatrists, in conjunction with our other health professional colleagues, try to educate our patients to reduce their risk factors while also treating those who have developed these complications already. However, with the increasing amount of people with diabetes coinciding with services under increasing strain to reduce costs, this is becoming more and more difficult and we will soon reach a crisis point.

According to Diabetes UK, worldwide diabetes-related complications result in the amputation of a lower limb every 30 seconds. It is also estimated that people with

diabetes are up to 30 times more likely to have an amputation compared with the general population at a cost to the NHS of between £600-700 million per year in England alone. The likelihood of death following amputation or foot ulcers within five years is greater than that faced by colon, prostate and breast cancer sufferers. These conditions rightly attract huge publicity and public finance to increase the awareness and fund treatment, but unfortunately diabetes does not.

The effects of this illness on employment can also be devastating. Diabetic patients with neuropathic symptoms such as numbness or tingling in the feet or hands are twice as likely to be unemployed as those without symptoms. People with diabetes can face discrimination in the workplace due to lack of understanding of their condition. Employers are often unsympathetic to the treatment regime which further puts diabetes sufferers at risk as they cannot attend their appointments as regularly as they have to. If a person with diabetes has a foot ulcer, for instance, they may have to attend to get it redressed at least once a week, quite often during working hours. Due to this, they live under the constant fear of losing their livelihood, especially if an ulcer or amputation has occurred.

It is therefore even more imperative to educate the population on their lifestyle choices to prevent diabetes in the first place. This can only be done if there are enough resources to be able to see, educate and treat these patients, which is more and more unlikely with the Government's economic policy. We therefore call upon the TUC to campaign to increase awareness of diabetes and to campaign to stop funding cuts in the NHS which will put many more thousands of people at risk of losing their jobs but, more importantly, their limb or life. I move. (*Applause*)

Sharon Holder (*GMB*) seconded Motion 58.

She said: Congress, as austerity measures cut back on jobs and the retirement age continues to creep up, we are expected to work harder for longer and under increasing pressure. It is no surprise that this is having a detrimental impact on dietary habits and that we are seeing an explosion in diabetes as a result.

However, it is a facile and convenient explanation to blame the overworked and stressed individual. We are only now beginning to understand the hidden salts and sugars contained in everyday foods, particularly in so-called healthy options, which are nothing of a sort. We need a clear system of identifying the nutritional value of our food. At present, there are varied and confusing systems on food packaging, such as traffic lights, wheels, colour coding. Hands up, anyone in the hall, who even understands it all? Tucked away in the tiny writing at the back, there are nutritional details that only the hawk-eyed could possibly read, let alone interpret.

This is not an accident. There are food labelling regulations, but the food manufacturers can interpret them as they wish. It is essential that there must be a single universal standard that every manufacturer and retailer uses so that we can compare food products on a like-for-like basis. We can then educate people of the long-term impact and consequences of the food that they put in their bodies, avoiding the unnecessary develop of diabetes.

Congress, employers have a critical role to play in this process. As the motion rightly points out, diabetes can carry a stigma in the workplace, particularly if your work

involves driving or heavy machinery. Employers must do more to drive eating standards up by adopting healthy eating policies and replacing the chocolate, chips and fried foods in their canteens with fresh fruit and vegetables.

Employers must also develop health screening programmes at work, like we do at the GMB, to allow for the early signs of diabetes to be identified or, at the very least, to allow workers to participate in a local NHS equivalent. These are vital services for detecting and preventing diabetes and they should be expanded and not face cutbacks.

Congress, this is a ticking time bomb which will explode unless we act now. Diabetes is in many cases avoidable if the right dietary and lifestyle choices are made, but this can only happen if better information and education are made available and employers provide crucial support. Congress, this is a time when we can diffuse. I support. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Sharon. I must get round to reading that healthy eating policy at the GMB as I have obviously missed it! We are not going to get through all the business and there is a little bit left. I hope to be able to take the two resolutions we have not reached later this afternoon.

Earlier today, Brendan referred to the trade union role in the Olympics and Paralympic Games. Eight years ago, Sebastian Coe came to Congress and spoke of his vision for the Games, seeking critical trade union support in getting the Government behind the bid. Today, as our Olympic and Paralympic champions hold their parade in London, Lord Coe has sent this message to Congress thanking the

whole of the trade union Movement for our support. It is only a couple of minutes' long so if the lights can be dimmed, we will play it.

*(Message of thanks to the TUC from
Lord Coe played to Congress)*

The President: Congress, we have much to be proud about from our contribution to the Olympics. That brings us to the end of this session. I am sorry we have run over slightly. Can I remind delegates that there are various meetings taking place at lunchtime. The displays can be found at pages 11-14. Please note that there is a TUC Race Relations Committee fringe meeting, "Stephen Lawrence, the legacy", to be held during this lunchtime in Room 6 here at the Brighton Centre. We now adjourn until 2.15 p.m. Thank you for your patience.

(Congress adjourned)

MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress reassembled at 2.15 p.m.)

The President: If you were asleep you certainly shouldn't be now. Thank you very much, *The Tradlads*; brilliant. *(Applause)* Thank you very much indeed.

Delegates, I would like to call Congress to order and I will just deal with one small outstanding item from this morning. I made a deliberate mistake in order to see how many of you were listening and watching. Obviously 400 of you were, and even though some of you were not even in the hall you reminded me that I forgot to take

the vote on Motion 58. We will do so now. Thank you very much for getting me off the hook. I mean for putting it right!

* *Motion 58 was CARRIED.*

The President: I now call on Peter Hall, Chair of General Purposes Committee, to give the GPC report. Welcome, Peter.

Peter Hall (*Chair, General Purposes Committee*): Good afternoon, Congress. I can report that the General Purposes Committee has approved the following emergency motions: Emergency Motion 1 on London Met will be moved by the UCU and seconded by UNISON; Emergency Motion 2 on the West Coast Mainline will be moved by ASLEF and seconded by RMT. The President will indicate when these motions will be taken. I will further report to you on the progress of business and other GPC decisions when necessary throughout Congress. Thanks.

The President: Thank you, Peter. I thank the Committee for their work. Colleagues, I intend to try and take those emergency motions that Peter just outlined as soon as the programme of business allows. Congress, I also intend to try and take the business that was lost this morning after the scheduled business this afternoon. That business is Motion 59, Mind the Hunger Gap campaign, and Motion 68, Future psychiatric diagnosis in children and young people. Will the unions involved be prepared to speak to those motions providing we can fit them in at the end of business today. Thank you.

Delegates, we now return to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report, Economic and Industrial Affairs, the section on Public Services, from page 71. I will now explain how I intend to take this debate. I will take Composite Motion 12, Motion 53, and Motion 54 as a single debate, along with paragraph 4.13 of the General Council Report. First, I will call paragraph 4.13, then the mover and seconder, and supporters, of Composite Motion 12, Austerity pay and public service reform. I will then call the mover and seconder of Motion 53, Regional pay. I will then call the mover and seconder of Motion 54, Stop the cuts. I will then open the debate to other speakers. After that the mover of Composite Motion 12, Motion 53, and Motion 54 will have the right of reply in that order. We will then vote on Composite Motion 12, Motion 53, and Motion 54, in that order. Is that clear? Is that okay? Is everybody clear? Good. In that case I call paragraph 4.13 and Composite Motion 12, Austerity, pay and public service reform. The General Council is supporting Composite Motion 12.

Austerity, pay and public service reform

Jane Carolan (*UNISON*) moved Composite Motion 12.

She said: Congress, comrades, let's be quite clear, this composite is one of the most important topics on the agenda this week. Entitled, "Austerity" and the pay freeze, the composite raises some of the most crucial questions that as trade unionists we need to face up to. The composite raises the issue of the pay freeze that is cutting the living standards of the working people of this country. We need to call it exactly what it is, a programme of pay cuts.

We have never all been in this together. While merchant bankers and the Bob Diamonds of this world continue to receive annual bonuses more than many in this Movement will earn in a lifetime, our members know that their pay packets no longer meet their basic needs. Whether it is food prices, travel costs, either petrol to get to work or the train fare, childcare costs or energy prices, members know that the wages they earn do not go as far as they used to.

Do not talk to our members about the effect of inflation on the marginal rate of consumption. They know that they are skint. They face the difficulty and the dilemma of whether to heat or to eat. It is a fact that those on the lowest wages have seen their wages fall by the greatest amount. Most of the money they receive is spent on basic essentials and it is the price of those basic essentials that is rising fastest. For public sector workers as living costs rise they have seen a pay cut of 13% in their wages; 13%. For local government workers the majority of whom earn less than £27,000 a year, the magic £250 promised by wee Georgie Osborne has never materialised. For this government those who caused the crisis get to carry on as usual. Those who were blameless suffer the consequences. To use two words that are not in the Tory vocabulary, that is both “immoral” and “unjust”.

This composite also raises the issue of workers’ rights. A fundamental right is the right to a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work. As Dave Prentis noted this morning in his speech, Save the Children appealed last week to assist poor families in the UK struggling without basic essentials. Appallingly, some of the families that featured in that campaign were working families, the working poor, and that is why this is not a fight about the private sector or the public sector.

In the General Council Report they quote the statistic that the share of national income going to wages has fallen by 14% in the last 30 years. Our share of the national pie, shared by all workers, is now a little over 52%. We are all getting less and it is time we started to redress the balance. That is why a decent living wage is an essential part of the fight, as this composite demands. No worker should be earning less than they need to have a decent standard of living. This composite highlights that, fundamentally, if there is to be an answer to recession in this country then we need to be an essential part of the solution: us.

Competent economists, but not wee Georgie, believe that economic activity is driven by demand. To create jobs and goods businesses need to be able to sell and to be able to sell consumers need to have the money in their pockets and income to spend. There is therefore a very simply way to increase demand and that is to put money into people's pockets, increase wages, and say no to local variations that make no economic sense, and unlike the bonuses given to merchant bankers, wages are not squirreled away in an overseas tax haven.

The case against austerity and the pay freeze is difficult to answer but it will not be won by rational argument alone. To challenge the pay freeze we must do so as trade unionists taking collective action. We need to start sector by sector raising claims that mean real increases for our members. We are prepared to negotiate but we cannot afford to take no for an answer, and that means getting members to believe in our cause. Let's face it, the General Council could take indefinite general strike action and by the time anybody noticed they would have fossilised. Coordinated strike

action by millions of union members does have an impact. We have representatives in every workplace. We need competent educated shop stewards on the shop floor and canteen. We need to get back to basics, to educate, agitate, and organise. In a climate where many are insecure about the future of their jobs we need to build confidence. There is no magic button that will lead to a big bang of strikes. Challenging the pay freeze means sustained industrial action that UNISON is committed to but we need to show our members that there is another way, that wage cuts are not inevitable and they can do something about it. That is our greatest challenge and I would ask you to support the composite. (*Applause*)

The President: Congratulations to Mike, duly elected as the new General Secretary of Prospect.

Mike Clancy (*Prospect*) seconded Composite Motion 12.

He said: Thank you very much, President. Congress, cuts, austerity, and continued pay freezes produce a landscape that is as unfair as it is unimaginative but this Government does have a labour market policy. It can simply be summed up as equality of misery. This is the workplace reality of the phrase, *All in it together*. Government have contrived the idea that public servants are a cosseted group, a drag on efficiency, and they refer to the private sector workers, whose pensions, take-home pay, and work has been under unrelenting pressure as justification for cuts in the terms and conditions of people in the public sector.

We say this to the Prime Minister, you can create equality of misery in public and private sector workplaces but it is a befuddled and failed economic prescription.

However, there is an alternative and in our report, entitled, *Government that can needs people who know how*, we set out a vision for a professional Civil Service, one that embodies the values of Civil Service reform but is not just a basis for outsourcing. The Government plans are for further cuts, more outsourcing, and the promotion of an assured services model which has proved to be inefficient. It appears also that their targets on job cuts will be achieved through a discredited performance assessment system that will penalise people who just do not get on with their manager. This is despite the latest evidence from the CIPD that the real issue is about how we find the right people for public service, the right skills, and at the right time. It would be better that they focused upon that rather than equality of misery.

Also, we cannot rest easy that the Government's pay policy and proposals for regional pay that will penalise the poorest workers as colleagues in UNISON have pointed out, and will also hit professionals too, is off the agenda. We have demonstrated through a research produced by IDS for Prospect and the FDA that the medium pay for our members lags behind between 21 to 33%, the appropriate comparator in the private sector.

The Public Accounts Committee highlighted recently the words of a Conservative member of that committee, although departments have moved quickly to reduce staff numbers, few appear to be giving thought to how they are going to operate permanently with lower numbers of staff. It is a delicious irony that the MoD, one of the fastest cutting departments, has recently consulted us on the appointment of a temporary civil servant to undertake Civil Service reform because they do not have anybody in the department to do the work.

In Prospect we like evidence, we like facts, and we like to proceed on the basis of that evidence so we asked our members what their views were of Civil Service reform. They did say they like the idea of further CPD but what they did not like was the references to nudge economics and crowd sourcing over expert advice, perhaps better characterised as public house policy-making; it lacks credibility and could weaken governance and accountability.

Our prescription is fourfold. We wish to have a pay review body for the Civil Service, a reward strategy for specialists, greater flexibility for arms-length bodies to determine pay, and fundamentally a skills audit for the Civil Service. If I may say finally, our members are closer to that Yes box on the ballot form. It is a last resort but they are closer and closer to it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Dave Penman (*FDA*) supported Composite Motion 12.

He said: Congress, we have heard many times in this hall already the impact the Government's austerity measures are having on our members. Living standards will fall by a fifth for many public servants by the end of this parliament and that is just those fortunate enough to remain in employment.

The Civil Service is due to shrink by 25% over the five years of this Government with half the job cuts still to come, economic madness when it comes to a plan for growth but also symptomatic of an approach that does not value public service or public servants. Public servants are dedicated professionals doing an extraordinary job for

the common good yet they are viewed by some as simply a drain on tax revenue or a luxury we can no longer afford.

FDA members protect our national security, manage our public services, promote our interests abroad, prosecute crime, and are on the front line in the war on tax avoidance. FDA's campaign to defeat the deficit demonstrated the value to the taxpayer of dedicated tax professionals and helped secure additional investment and staffing in HMRC. That is only half the story. Many dedicated public sector professionals are now turning their back on a career in public service. FDA members are faced with pay levels half they could earn in the private sector, a devalued pension, and the constant drip feed of attacks on their professionalism and competence from the Government.

We have a government that says up to 10% of them should be sacked every year and asks them to gamble a pay cut for any hope of getting a pay rise, all this against a backdrop of greater political interference and micromanagement from ministers, many of whom have only ever managed their own private office. Many senior public servants have already had enough and are leaving. We have seen turnover rates of a third in some areas and that is in the middle of a double-dip recession.

Congress, as the policies of this Government cause pain and real hardship in households of public sector workers up and down the country, they are also storing up a crisis for the future, a public sector where the brightest and best no longer want to dedicate their careers, where the offer of public sector employment is only taken when there are no better alternatives. Congress, we need a government that has a vision for

public servants beyond austerity and attacks on their pay and conditions. It is time this Government demonstrated it values public services and the public servants who deliver them and, if not, we will see an exodus of talent that no reform plan or workforce reengineering will be able to hide. Congress, I ask you to support the motion. (*Applause*)

Kevin McHugh (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 12.

He said: Congress, the effect of a two-year pay freeze has had a devastating effect on PCS members and trade union members throughout the land. We recently did a survey of our members and PCS members are, on average, £100 a month worse off and some members report a need to borrow up to £300 per month to keep their heads above water. That is 70% of members are experiencing high levels of stress with our female members with family responsibilities saying that they are even more stressed.

One PCS member, a single parent with a 10-month old baby, and all bills going up, and having to pay, of course, an extra £40 per month in pension contributions, finds her outgoings now exceed her income along with many members. The loan companies and loan sharks are now exploiting the situation with workers having to take out loans which have outrageous interest rates of up to 1,000 percent, or more in some cases.

In the Civil Service we have been told to maintain, and indeed improve, service whilst at the same time the workforce has been cut and many offices closed. These staff provide vital services for the UK: DWP staff providing benefits and support, HMRC,

where I work, collecting tax and VAT, and trying to collect the £120bn that is avoided, evaded, and fiddled each year. If the Government had the political will and if they gave us the resources, we will find the tax dodgers and we will nick them. Half of them will probably be George Osborne's mates but that is the way it goes. In the UK Border Force, staff there are still facing heavy cuts in jobs so it will be interesting to see now that the Olympics and Paralympics are over if the Government cares what size the queues are at Heathrow, and the rest of our ports and airports.

All civil servants and public sector workers have suffered a pay freeze for two years and now a meagre 1% increase over the next two years. Contrast this, Congress, with the recent appointment of the head of a very well known bank given a salary of £1.1m but with a potential bonus of £4.4m, if he achieves whatever he is supposed to achieve, a bonus of four times his salary. Congress, at a time when parents are struggling to put decent food on the table for their children and facing massive rises in gas, electric, and water bills we have to condemn such bonus schemes as totally obscene. They like to say we are in it all together. Well, we are not. I will tell you who we should be in it with, we should be in it with the unemployed, the pensioners, the disabled, the dinner ladies, the nurses, the bin men, and all the workers who are suffering this Government's policies.

Point six of the motion calls upon the General Council to coordinate unions to take strike action to challenge austerity policies. The General Council should coordinate but also give full support to those unions who strike against low pay, pensions, or job cuts. I also say that PCS calls upon the Labour leadership to reverse its misguided support for the Government's public sector pay policy. Labour should not condemn

workers who take strike action to try to fight back. They should be supporting those workers. *(Applause)* Finally, Congress, austerity is not working. There is an alternative, vote for the motion. *(Applause)*

The President: We are now going to take Motion 53, Regional pay.

Regional pay

Eddie Saville (*Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association*) moved Motion 53. He said: Congress, what do we mean when we talk about regional pay? It means to the HCSA two hospital consultants or specialists with the same experience and the same skills doing the same job but getting different levels of pay simply because they work and live in different parts of the country. In the NHS we now have the spectre of regional pay looming on the horizon.

In South West England a group of 20 NHS trusts have formed a pay cartel and they have set out what they call a range of elements that they say will produce a fit for purpose set of terms and conditions and, yes, all of which mean worse terms and conditions for NHS staff living in the South West and would see cuts in their take-home pay. Congress, this cartel has spent hundreds of thousands of pounds of public sector money setting up and running their cartel, money that could have been much better spent on caring for patients.

For HSA members U represent these proposals would mean cuts in payments when consultants are on call and slashing the time that consultants have to support their

professional activities by 80%. This would mean less time for CPD, less time to keep up to date with the latest innovations and practice as well as assisting their revalidation. It would mean less time to provide training for the consultants and specialists of the future and the countless other tasks that consultants do continuously to improve quality: the audits they do, the governance, the research and the clinical management, all of which are there for a reason, to ensure high standards, building robust assurance and, most importantly of all, provide quality care for patients. It would mean reducing sick pay and sick pay entitlements, and annual leave entitlements as well. There are 28 different elements that make up this foray into our terms and conditions.

The NHS should be a model employer. It should be the employer of choice where highly skilled and motivated staff want to work. Sadly, the motivation is disappearing. The morale is hitting rock bottom and the actions of this cartel will see the thin layer of goodwill erode even further and eventually probably evaporate. Congress, research has shown us that an NHS workforce whose morale is high and who feel valued create a good patient experience and, of course, the reverse is the case, staff will feel vulnerable and insecure and that will adversely affect the patient experience. Congress, hospital consultants tell me that their morale is hitting rock bottom. Some may opt to go early, some even have said they will leave the UK all together, but if you do not believe me, over half the trusts in this cartel are in the worst 20% of employees feeling satisfied with the patient care and the work they are able to deliver.

Ultimately, regional pay could have an effect on recruitment and retention as NHS staff look for jobs elsewhere at pay nationally agreed rates. That will be a disaster. As we already know, in the South West they have some of the greatest health demands with nearly 20% of the population over the age of 65. These, Congress, are the real consequences of these ill-judged and ill-thought out proposals and it is the public and the staff who will suffer.

Congress, that is not all. There is also the impact on the local economy. NHS staff are key consumers in the South West. Taking money out of their pockets could well put local jobs at risk and damage local business. Colleagues, this is also an attack on our national collective bargaining mechanism, a mechanism that is tried and tested in the NHS and has stood us in good stead for many years. Congress, hospital consultants and many others in the NHS have had to bear the brunt of years of pay freezes, a raid on their pensions, and now it is our terms and conditions that are under attack. Of course, we recognise that there is a need for financial constraint in the NHS but regional pay is not the way forward.

Congress, the HCSA stands firmly with all other NHS unions in resisting a move towards local pay and I want you to send a message loud and clear by voting unanimously for this motion that we do not want regional pay. Finally, Congress, a message to all those non-union members in the NHS in the South West, join the union today and join our campaign. I move. (*Applause*)

Brian Strutton (*GMB*) seconded Motion 53.

He said: Let's be clear, Congress, when George Osborne and the rest of the Tory right talk about regional pay it is nothing to do with creating jobs or releasing funds for investment, it is not even about cutting the deficit. It is a blatant attack on workers and unions by people who do not like workers or their unions, and it makes a nice convenient distraction. Do they want to talk about a million young unemployed or the 12% rise in homelessness on their watch? No, they want to put the blame on school dinner ladies and social workers, and teachers, and nurses, and every one in this hall.

That is why they put public sector national pay on the agenda and they line up a constant stream of credible sounding reports from the growing band of so-called independent think tanks, like Policy Exchange, like the Centre for Policy Studies, Reform, the Institute for Economic Affairs, and not forgetting the Tax Dodgers Alliance, all of them right-wing lobby groups set up and run by Conservative ministers, ex-ministers, or Conservative staff to churn out respectable looking diatribe, always attacking the public sector and unions. They are funded by the very businesses that stand to gain from the break-up of the public sector. Many of these clearly political lobby groups have the gall to claim charitable status, that is to say, they moan about taxation and public spending, whilst happily exploiting charitable status effectively to gain a public subsidy. It is a shameful hypocrisy and we are calling for it to be brought to an end.

Although naming and shaming these groups is necessary, it is not sufficient. We also have to refute the arguments about regional pay and in doing so we have a powerful ally, it is called evidence. The evidence says that most major private sector employers have similar national pay structures with some local flexibility just as the public

sector. The evidence says that public sector jobs on a like for like comparison are not generally better paid than their private sector counterparts. The evidence says that public sector pay does not crowd out private sector employers in the local economy and for those who do not want to listen to the inconvenient evidence here is what they need to consider.

Figures published by the GMB today and research carried out for the TUC show that if you did reduce the pay of public servants in the regions the effect on local economies would be devastating. Private sector pay would also be dumbed down and thousands of private sector jobs would be lost. So, please support Motion 53 and fight for all we are worth to defend decent national pay and conditions. Thank you.

(Applause)

The President: We are now moving to Motion 54, Stop the cuts. The General Council is also supporting this motion.

Stop the cuts

Matt Wrack (*Fire Brigades' Union*) moved Motion 54.

He said: Congress, we are supporting the other motions and composites in this debate but this particularly is around the impact of the cuts on the service that we are able to deliver in the Fire and Rescue Service. On the night before the General Election David Cameron attended a fire station in Carlisle. It is always a good PR opportunity, isn't it, talking to public sector workers, talking in this case to fire fighters, discussing

the job that they do, and that evening he made a promise that he was going to protect front line services.

First of all, I think as we have discussed before, we do not accept the artificial division between front line and so-called backroom public services. All public service workers perform an essential part of delivering decent public services to the public we serve. In any case, it was of course all lies. In year one of the local government settlement 1,500 fire service jobs were lost and the Fire and Rescue Service is a small public service: 1,500 jobs is a huge amount, whole time fire fighters, retained fire fighters, control staff, members of our union, jobs wiped out as a result of centrally driven cuts in public expenditure and grants to fire authorities, and so on.

Of course, we heard from the Coalition that we have this so called bloated public sector. Under the last government, I have to say, we also suffered job cuts. We also suffered cuts and for the last five years of that government expenditure on the Fire and Rescue Service did not even keep pace with inflation. There was no bloated public sector, certainly not in the Fire and Rescue Service, and indeed we do not believe anywhere. There was nothing to cut and the cuts now are eating into our ability to perform the most basic of tasks that the Fire and Rescue Service needs to do. Even now, chief fire officers, some at least are beginning to wake up to how serious the situation is. The chief fire officers and politicians from the English Metropolitan Fire Services have recently been lobbying politicians and recently attended a select committee where they outlined some of their concerns of the threat of 2,500 further fire fighter posts to go in those Metropolitan authorities, of 50 fire stations to close in

those Metropolitan authorities, and 100 fire engines being taken out of commission. Remember, that is in just six out of 57 of the UK's Fire and Rescue Services. That gives you a flavour of the scale of cuts that we are facing.

In London we have had the discussion and report on the Olympics, the London Fire Brigade made a lot of preparations for working to prepare to make sure that people attending the Olympics were as safe as possible. Extra work needed to be taken on, and so on. Up until now the London Fire Brigade has been protected. We now hear huge cuts coming in the London Fire Brigade, something like 10% of jobs under threat under various options that we have been presented with by officers in the London Fire Brigade.

What does this mean in terms of the service that we are able to deliver to the public? Like all public services, the Fire and Rescue Service is labour intensive. It relies on the people who deliver that job. It relies on those people and when people dial 999 what they expect is to get fire engines turning up as quickly as possible. It seems quite a reasonable demand if you are paying your council tax to get a Fire and Rescue Service. Unfortunately, over the past 10 years attendance times, that is how quickly we are able to get to emergency incidents, have slowed down and they call this modernisation of the Fire and Rescue Service.

What these cuts will mean — will mean — is that people's lives will be put at risk. People will be injured who did not need to be injured. People's homes, properties, and businesses will be damaged and destroyed that did not need to be damaged and destroyed. People facing floods on a huge scale will be at greater risk.

We are campaigning, alongside other unions, in terms of all areas of public service. We want the Government to start listening to the voice of the professionals, in the Fire Service and elsewhere. The people who know our service are those who deliver it on the front line day in and day out, and it is about time the Government started listening to them. Our communities know who to trust on the Fire Service or on education, or in the health service, it is those people who dedicate their lives, their careers, to delivering those services to our communities. We have an opportunity to try and influence the Government over the next stage of local authority settlements. We urge you to support us. We will be lobbying politicians. We will be lobbying at local and national level. Please give us your support. I move the motion. (*Applause*)

Ralph Valerio (*POA*) seconded Motion 54.

He said: I am a first time speaker and speaking on behalf of the POA. (*Applause*) I am very proud to show solidarity in support from one emergency service to another, the FBU. Emergency service is a category that is often robbed from the POA because we are considered to be all sorts of things by the people in charge, but you do not have to look very much further, really, than August 2011 as to why prison officers should be considered as an emergency service. Prison officers in London and around the whole of the estate dealt with an increased population in thousands and worked 24 hours round the clock to keep in custody the people being arrested as a result of the riots in London yet at that time we were expected to do so with far less staff than we have ever done before as a service.

As a trade union we, the POA, are faced with efficiencies such as national benchmarking of staffing numbers irrespective of the clientele that we are dealing with in our establishment or the geographical structural make-up of that establishment, 3% cuts year on year for what seems to be an indefinable period, and of course a right-wing ideology of market testing, privatisation, and dare we say profiteering from the incarceration of people in our society.

The POA are quite clear in our belief that this is utterly abhorrent. How can we, the POA, the FBU, and the fellow emergency services, make our society a safer place when we ourselves in our place of work are not being allowed to be safe in carrying out our work, so there presents a problem for us. We have to work hard to stop the cuts. We have to work hard engaging with our own members.

This is my first Congress, as I said earlier. I was at an interesting fringe meeting yesterday. Mr. McCluskey of Unite made it quite clear, these are extraordinary times and extraordinary people must do extraordinary things. Well, FBU by bringing this motion are basically giving us a framework to do extraordinary things. The POA join the FBU in the call to organise. Let's educate, let's invigorate, and let's get back down to the grassroots of the people that we work hard to represent and get them to work hard for us in our collective plight, and together we can do extraordinary things. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Joyce Still (*Unite*) supported Composite Motion 12.

She said: Congress, I work as a health visitor delivering much needed support and services to women who are new mums. I wanted to speak to this motion because of

the impacts of this Government's policies throughout public services. Where I work staff are expected to work even harder and we are often asked to cover for colleagues who are not replaced when others leave. At the same time, many public service workers are themselves struggling with the cost of living and fending off attacks on their pay and other terms and conditions.

We are being expected to deliver better services and work much more effectively but with fewer resources. We used to run a listening service for women who were experiencing postnatal depression. We went out and visited them for six weeks and we supported them in their own home. Now we are told we cannot do this. We have to refer them to other services.

I went into the nursing profession because I wanted to deliver health services to people who needed them and not tell people they had to go elsewhere. I did not go into nursing for the money, there's a surprise, but to be constantly pilloried and criticised in the media as a featherbedded public sector worker who is just sitting around waiting for my gold-plated pension is demoralising to the extreme and, in my opinion, morale in the public sector is at an all-time low.

I call upon the Labour Party in opposition to do more to stand up to these unwarranted attacks and defend the hard work displayed every day by public sector workers like myself. I fully support this motion in opposing the moves to regional pay and call for a positive future for all our public services and all our public sector workers. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Bob McGuire (*CWU*) supported Motion 53.

He said: Congress, the issue is about enforced regional pay and it ain't just a problem in the NHS. The CWU have held this policy since at least the 1990s, if not before that, because of the attacks on the CWU literally every two to three years by the employer. Any trade union within this hall that currently has national pay bargaining and national agreements is under attack and under threat if regional pay bargaining is pushed through.

Whether you work for the NHS, the Fire Brigade, British Telecom, or Royal Mail, regional pay will drive down pay, it will threaten national agreements, and it will damage local communities. The introduction of regional pay over nationally agreed terms and conditions will be and is a race to the bottom. Regional pay is not wanted by our members. Regional pay puts workers in fear; they start looking round wondering if they are going to be able to afford where they live. Livelihoods are threatened and, quite frankly, what regional pay does is actually drive the north/south divide.

We urge Congress to carry this motion unanimously. The simple fact of the matter is whether you are a nurse, a postal worker, whether you work for the Fire Brigade, or British Telecom, you all do the same job whether you are in Newcastle, Edinburgh, London, Liverpool, or Bristol. Congress, we deserve our national agreements. We deserve to protect terms and conditions that are negotiated nationally. Reject regional pay bargaining. We support. (*Applause*)

Nicky Ramanand (*UNISON*) supported Motion 53.

She said: Congress, we have seen attack upon attack on our terms and conditions, terms and conditions we have fought hard for. The newest attack, the introduction of regional pay, is driven by ideology that is abhorrent by a government we detest. The idea that by driving down wages and breaking down national pay structures will bring economic growth is ludicrous. The impact this will have across the country will be huge, the effect steep, the damage long lasting.

In the northern region 2,000 public sector jobs are being lost each month. This region has a heavy reliance on the public sector as a core employer. This is having a disastrous effect. Let's be clear, the strategy that there will be private sector growth is a nonsense. There is no private sector growth. This is not a credible alternative.

UNISON has responded and has been successful in challenging and campaigning against the threats we face. Our young members in UNISON so concerned about the impact of regional pay have made an excellent DVD, Regional Pay Does Not Add Up. It is a refreshing informative view of the dangers it can bring and is available for anyone to watch on both Twitter and Facebook.

I am sure we are all scandalised that in the South West 20 trusts are working together as a cartel to explore and develop regional alternatives to NHS terms and conditions, in particular, Agenda for Change is under scrutiny; Agenda for Change which has meant less inequality in our pay, less inequality in our workplaces. UNISON is campaigning heavily to oppose such an approach and it is crucial that unions work together to build alliances so we can fight against such attacks because there will be a ripple effect, and this has already started. We know that such conversations were

being held with trusts in the North East but through local campaigning we have been able to halt these.

However, attacks on terms and conditions continue and today occupational therapists are out on strike as part of continued action against the trust that has cut car allowances to some of our lowest paid members who could lose up to £3,000 a year. Regional pay is an issue for all in the public sector and we must oppose it together. In the northern region through the Northern TUC and the Northern Public Services Alliance, all the Northern Labour MPs have come out against regional pay.

Congress, regional pay must be exposed for what it really is. It is an attempt to make the wrong people pay for a recession not of their making. It is an attempt to drive down wages. It is an attempt to fragmentise and destroy the public sector. This is a fight we must win. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

* *Composite Motion 12 was CARRIED*

* *Motion 53 was CARRIED*

* *Motion 54 was CARRIED*

The President: Colleagues, I just have to make a short announcement. There is an Irish Night tonight in celebration of Irish workers and trade unionists' contribution to our economy and to the history of the British Trade Union Movement. That will be taking place in the Fortune of War Bar, and it is also intended to help build for a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Dublin Lockout in 2013. Austin Harney is selling tickets and is seated with the PCS delegation at the back of block 2.

With that announcement out of the way it is with great pleasure, delegates, we now welcome Bernadette Segol, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation. Many of you will remember that Bernadette spoke at our mass demonstration for an alternative last year. Last year also Bernadette won the nomination of the TUC, and others, to become the General Secretary of the ETUC succeeding John — I should say, Lord — Monks to the post. Bernadette has championed campaigns on the EU Services Directive and for Temporary Agency Workers Protection. She is leading the EU-wide fight against austerity.

Bernadette, you are very welcome here today and we look forward to hearing your contribution and invite you to address Congress. Welcome, Bernadette. (*Applause*)

Address by Bernadette Segol, General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation

Bernadette Segol: Thank you, President, and delegates. I am honoured and delighted to address your congress on behalf of the European Trade Union Confederation. By the way, I am also a first-time speaker to Congress. (*Applause*)

In previous Congresses the ETUC General Secretary delivered his speech with a Manchester accent. Today, you will have to adapt to a southern French way of handling your language but whatever the accent your campaign call, A Future That Works, exactly reflects the aspiration of the workers I meet.

Hardly a day passes without our being asked for support from our affiliates, from the Baltic States to Spain and Portugal; from Ireland to Greece; and throughout Eastern Europe. The result of austerity policies, deregulation and privatisation is all too clear: rocketing unemployment, economic stagnation, rising inequality, the emergence of a new class of precarious workers and, ultimately, social despair.

This is an explosive cocktail. Leaving aside the social issue, democracy itself is being jeopardised as right-wing nationalists gain ground throughout Europe. But, delegates, remember, the European social model, including welfare states, decent public services and social dialogue, was a social deal reached in Western Europe after the last War. In Britain, it issued from the Beveridge Report and the work of your first post-War Labour Government. In all countries, it aimed at preventing a return to the disasters of the 1930s and at bolstering our social democracies in their various forms. That historical deal is being challenged throughout Europe and we must meet this challenge.

In June, the ETUC leadership unanimously backed a new Social Compact for Europe. It is now on the table for discussion. It is also there to mobilise along clear lines our own members and civil society at large. The new deal we propose is to be based on three pillars: on social democracy, on sustainable economic governance, and on social justice.

In the first pillar, social democracy, we include in particular the respect for collective bargaining and rights at work. They are at the core of our social compact. It is totally unacceptable that the so-called Troika can coerce countries under their programmes

into tearing up collective agreements in breach of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and ILO conventions.

In Europe, through dialogue as well as legislation, we have built up a foundation of rights at work that we must single-mindedly defend and work to improve. In your motions I found these foundations. It is TUPE and collective redundancies, working hours and holiday entitlements, health and safety, equality, parental leave, part-time work, fixed-term contracts, agency work, information and consultation. Your youth members call them “huge achievements”. They are anchored in EU legislation. I bet that these legal foundations will be first in the line of fire in the review of European competences announced by the British Foreign Secretary. Their loss would harm not just British workers since right-wing governments and employers in Europe would seek to follow the British example.

Delegates, we have had our reverses. The European Court of Justice’s decisions on Viking and Laval were a very serious blow. The Monti II proposal would have made those decisions worse but we managed to get it on hold under the so-called “yellow card” procedure. Now, I am not a football aficionada. That will certainly come next time the French team wins the World Championship. I know it may take a while but you can still be hopeful! I do know, though, what a red card is and Monti II does deserve a red card and thanks to our efforts I might say that I believe it will get it very soon.

At the same time, the ETUC will continue to press for a Social Progress Protocol to ensure that our collective rights are not trumped by economic market freedoms. The

second pillar of our Compact calls for economic governance that serves sustainable growth and quality employment. We are caught in an austerity trap. Budget cuts deepen the recession, the recession worsens deficits, and governments use this to redouble austerity measures, attacking social protection systems, wages, labour law, and fundamental rights. We must break out of this vicious circle.

Our Social Compact is responsive to the will of the people, based on sustainable prosperity through decent, well-paid jobs. It supports coordination of economic policies and investments that promote a low-carbon economy. Our Social Compact must be a central part of the new European political and institutional framework. We are encouraged that growth is back on the EU agenda. Mr. Draghi seems to be listening but what we need now is action, action for growth.

That brings me to the third pillar of our Compact, economic and social justice through redistributive taxation policies and social protection. Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher truly let rip world finance. Since then the share of wealth has slid inexorably from labour towards capital. Eight percent of Europe's active population now faces extreme poverty. This, delegates, is a full shame. The global super-rich elite have exploited gaps in cross-border tax rules to hide as much as the American and Japanese GDPs put together. Since the 2008 financial crisis we have seen revealed, bit by bit, the depravity of casino capitalism and the corruption that lay deep in financial conglomerates.

We call for a much more determined fight against tax havens. The financial transaction tax must be implemented rapidly. There are no national solutions to it.

Europe must take the lead. Proposals to introduce a financial transaction tax before the end of the year are on the table but, very unfortunately, some governments will not sign up, with the UK to the fore. In December, you and I will have the sorry sight of David Cameron, again, going on about his red lines of defence around the City while insisting that the integrity of the single financial market be respected. Congress, when talking about the world of high finance, the word “integrity” is really a bad joke.

Next year the ETUC will celebrate its 40th anniversary. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the TUC for all the support you have given us in that period. Our first President, Vic Feather, came from the TUC. Together with Jack Jones, then Chair of the International Committee, he took a major part in shaping the ETUC. We would be a very different organisation if they had not worked at it with all the pugnacity you would expect.

Norman Willis was our President during much of the Thatcherite period. Her downfall was caused by the European question highlighted at the TUC by Jacques Delors. Norman, together with Ron Todd, took the TUC in a resolutely European direction. My predecessor, of course, was General Secretary of the ETUC, John Monks. In eight years he drove the ETUC forward with a fantastic sense of direction, with determination, and a unique sense of humour. However, a slight weakness that I would like to point out, his French remains work in progress. (*Laughter*) I am not sure he is taking lessons in the House of Lords.

Congress, I would like to thank Brendan for all the support he has given the European Trade Union Movement, and to me personally since I have had the privilege to lead the ETUC. Apart from being one of our Vice-Presidents, he has chaired our campaign group and given us his invaluable experience for the hard battles ahead. Brendan, may I take this occasion to congratulate the whole British Trade Union Movement on your achievement in regard to the London Olympics. I am French so you can take this as a heartfelt compliment. (*Applause*)

Frances, of course I am looking forward to working with you. Tom Jenkins explained to me that in London buses were late but then three of them arrived at the same time. Well, like London buses, women General Secretaries have been late in making it but you are getting them now. (*Applause*) Delegates, these are not the easiest of times but, Frances, I am sure that the TUC is in the best of hands towards A Future That Works and you can count on the ETUC.

All our best for 20th October, and well beyond. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Bernadette. That was great.

Colleagues, we now turn to Chapter 3 of the General Council's Report to the section Equal rights. I call paragraphs 3.1 – 3.6, and starting off with Motion 17: Equality and human rights cuts. The General Council supports the composite motion.

Equality and human rights cuts

Diana Holland (*Unite the union*) moved Motion 17.

She said: Chair and Congress, the cuts to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the EHRC, are shameful and shocking. By 2014 it will have lost almost three-quarters of its staff and two-thirds of its funding. Will there be three-quarters less discrimination? Will there be two-thirds less inequality? No, there won't. There will just be three-quarters fewer people to turn to and two-thirds less support. In the bizarre twisted logic of Con-Dem land, as they press ahead with their devastating cuts, they continue to claim that equality is fundamental to the Coalition government. The likes of Cameron, Clegg and May are not the first to distort the meaning of equality.

It was Margaret Thatcher who said, and I don't often quote her: "Equality means nothing unless it includes the right to be unequal." This Con=Dem government is not only making sure that we are unequal, as in health and safety and in so many areas, it is also weakening and undermining the very body set up to help us challenge inequality and tackle discrimination. They are not just cutting funds to staff, horrifying though that is, as the unions involved – PCS and Unite – are campaigning really hard, but they are also cutting the Commission's fundamental commitment to *Action for Equality*. So in May of this year the Government announced their decision to repeal a core duty of the EHRC. Let me say that I've read that duty and I think it should be reproduced and stuck on the wall of every government department and every workplace, not repealed. The duty is to encourage and support a society based on five key priorities: (1) freedom from prejudice and discrimination; (2) individual human rights; (3) respect for the dignity and worth of each individual; (4) equality of opportunity to participate in society, and (5) mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing diversity and shared respect for human rights. Those are

powerful commitments to equality, decency and justice, at first belittled as bureaucracy or so-called political correctness, but now cut. How dare they!

Anyone who has struggled for equality knows that saying “We are all equal” is not enough. You need to take action to make it happen. That’s what the Equality and Human Rights Commission was set up for and, together with unions and a wide range of stakeholders committed to equality, the EHRC has done just that, leading to new rights for six million carers, exposing horrifying exploitation of migrant workers in the meat processing sector and pay and equality in the finance sector, advising thousands of people – ringing them – in fear and worry, and funding equality action in local and devolved communities. All are vital and all are being cut. Yet another race to the bottom.

This Government say they have a new approach to equality, which recognises people’s individuality or, in other words, an approach that means “You’re on your own”. The message from this trade union Movement must be loud and clear: “You aren’t on your own. Our movement is with you.” We know that none of the advances have been handed to us on a plate. Every single one, including the achievement of the Equality and Human Rights Commission itself has been struggled for and won. Now is the time when the alliances forged to achieve these advances need to come together again, like never before, on 20th October on the march *For a Future that Works* and beyond, with a short message of: “Get your Con-Dem hands off equality”. Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much, Diana.

Michael Pearson (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Motion 17.

He said: Congress, let's remind ourselves of some of the achievements of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Without the support of its staff, both in its present form and the separate commissions that existed before the merger in 2007, Sharon Coleman would not have been supported in taking her case to the European Court of Justice, which now means that six million carers in Britain are protected against discrimination in employment. George Osborne would not have been taken to task for failing to carry out the impact assessment over his first Budget, which penalised already disadvantaged groups, particularly women. One hundred and thirty-six thousand businesses would not have received the advice and expertise they needed to help them ensure that they avoided acting in a discriminatory way during the economic downturn, nor would the 70,000 people, the victims of discrimination, who called its helpline each year.

Even the United Nations has expressed concern about the cuts, threatening to remove the Commission's A-status as a national human rights institution, because it would become too small to qualify. In the run-up to the last general election, both the Conservatives and the Liberal-Democrats gave strong commitments to make Britain a fairer country. The destruction of the EHRC to a shadow of its former self can only have the opposite effect. The closure of its regional offices will create what has aptly been described by the TUC as "advice deserts" where no other advisory services will exist. There will be just one office in Scotland and one in Wales, each with just nine staff members, and the newly privatised helpline service will have no presence in either country.

The planned cuts to the EHRC will also breach the very equality rights it is supposed to defend, by leaving nearly all of its black and disabled staff out of work. Staff themselves have already raised their concerns that virtually no equality analysis of the impact of losing these staff or the wider effects of the planned changes has been carried out. There has been barely any consultation with external stakeholders or service users on these proposals, and the expertise and experience of staff built up over the years will be lost for ever.

Conference, we call on you to support the EHRC staff in their demand for a meaning consultation process to be carried out with them, their trade unions and other stakeholders, and to work together to build a Commission that is fit for the 21st century. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Dee Luxford (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 17.

She said: Congress, as a student I went on a visit to the Commission for Racial Equality and what I saw was a real commitment to doing good and protecting the vulnerable. These are values which I know resonate with all of us and influence our work as trade unionists. Aware as I am of the problems it had, I was still grateful as a student, and now, that it existed, and I grateful that we have the EHRC.

The Olympics and Paralympics have shown that we are a diverse society, eager to embrace that diversity in all its forms, yet we are treated to the disgraceful spectacle of a Prime Minister who is committed to cutting until we all bleed, whose policies are

killing 32 disabled people a week. Well, at least Miliband would kill them more slowly and not so deeply. We have a Prime Minister who thinks that multiculturalism is an experiment that has failed, handing out medals to Paralympians, and this disgusting specimen of humanity wants to cut the very body that protects against discrimination to less posts than the total of the Legacy Commission, with 11 lawyers to cover the entirety of Great Britain, with not a single case worker and with no grants programme.

What with A for E being in the bad books and the CAB pulling out, third choice private company, Citel, has already taken over the helplines. We know in PCS that this is a disgusting company. It is a company that treats its staff appallingly while refusing to recognise trade unions. But you may rejoice for there is a consultation on the new design. This consultation is by consultants for consultants, because, funnily enough, the new design manages to find work for them. You could not make up this turn of events. Decisions are being made without an equality impact assessment being carried out on the stakeholders in breach of the equality duty. Words almost fail me.

Not only do we need to save the body that enforces the law on equality, we need to make sure that it is properly resourced, empowered and can function in a way that makes it approachable and effective. Congress, vigilance must be our watchword. We cannot allow equality groups to be shunted to the back of the bus while bosses are allowed to discriminate freely. This should be the legacy of the Olympics, that the body charged with promoting equalities in our society should retain the muscle to do so. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, I am going to be Motion 17 to the vote. It is being supported by the General Council.

* *Motion 17 was CARRIED.*

The President: I now call Motion 18 – Public Sector Equality Duty Codes of Practice. The General Council is supporting this motion.

Public Sector Equality Duty Codes of Practice

Paula Roe (*NASUWT, The Teachers' Union*) moved Motion 18.

She said: “We will put equality at the centre of the Government, making sure that government departments lead the way, working with other businesses and groups to make real change happen.” Congress, where do those fine words come from? They come from a Coalition Government which has no intention of fulfilling them. This statement is taken from the Home Office website, but Ministers, who once in power, took immediate steps to water down the Equality Act 2010, actions which reflect their total lack of care and total disrespect for the equalities issues. Before the ink was even dry on this paper, this Act was included in the Coalitions *Red Tape Challenge*. The work of the Equality and Human Rights Commission was then seriously curtailed. In March 2010 the EHRC had to announce: “The Government feels that statutory guidance may place too much of a burden on public bodies and is keen to reduce the bureaucracy around the Equality Act 2010.” What this really meant was that the EHRC could not now produce statutory codes but was only allow to produce non-statutory codes.

Statutory codes have a crucial and absolutely valuable role to play in making it clear to employers what is needed to comply with the Equality Act. The Coalition Government's decision not to proceed with them is absolutely deliberate. Now the Commission cannot issue codes of practice without the approval of the Secretary of State. This is a real blow to an already weakened Equality Act and a deadly blow to chances of the Public Sector Equality Duty being an agent of change.

Yet refer back to those words that I said from the Home Office webpage. They want to make real change happen. Well, they have. Their actions have watered down the Equality Act, have removed meaningful accountability, giving the Secretary of State more powers to oversee the EHRC's business plan and management. The actions of this Coalition Government have allowed many employers to ignore equality issues, and this will be further exacerbated by the lack of statutory codes. Employers are failing to examine the impacts of their own policies because no one is checking up. The Coalition Government have cut the EHRC budget by 60%. Its helpline is being closed, its regional offices face closure, staff jobs are under threat and its grants programme already ended. The remit of the EHRC is being altered and its functions divided, while a new support service will be contracted from the private or voluntary sector. Also, yes, there has been real change, but for the worse. The clear message from this Coalition Government is that there is no enforcement of the Equality Act 2010. There is no monitoring and no sanctions are applied if the law is broken. The real change is that there will be no specific intervention on a structural or strategic level, or any enforcement by the EHRC, if they can help it. All this Government want is voluntary enforcement.

Employers could show compliance with their public sector duties by carrying out an equality impact assessment with the involvement of the trade unions but, as it is no longer compulsory to do so, many do not.

The NASUWT has expressed our deep concerns about the Coalition Government's appalling attitude to equalities. We have made specific responses to these proposals and their actions, voicing our extreme opposition to the deliberate move to disenfranchise the most vulnerable groups of workers.

We should not expect the EHRC to be the only organisation tackling racism and other forms of prejudice. We and other trade unions will continue to tackle these issues, but because of the deep cuts to the EHRC it has been rendered a toothless watchdog. Schools and employers feel that they can just ignore the equality duties with impunity.

Since March 2010 around 600 cases have been pursued by the EHRC's enforcement team, a staggeringly low number because of Government constraints, not because of the staff's lack of commitment. Is there a need for enforcement? Of course there is. Under the Coalition Government, women, young people, black and minority ethnic groups face the highest levels of unemployment for years. The gender pay gap is widening and there is evidence of increased homophobia and racism within our society. Low paid workers in these groups are under attack. Pay is frozen, they are being forced to work until they drop, paying more for their pensions, and none of these changes have been equality proofed.

The NASUWT believes that the TUC must put pressure on the EHRC to do everything within their power to make the Codes of Practice statutory, to fight for their role so that it is not further reduced and we, all of us, should continue to expose the Coalition Government's weakness in tackling prejudice and discrimination, and their blatant lack of care for vulnerable groups. Thank you. (*Applause*)

John McCormack (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Motion 18.

He said: Colleagues, there has been a lot of talk about legacy during the past few weeks, and I think it is fair to say that one of the legacies from the last Labour government was the Equality Act. It is not perfect but, nevertheless, a positive piece of legislation. It extended the rights to all the protected characteristics of members, the most vulnerable within our workplaces and communities. Now what we have, sadly but all too regrettably, is a government that is carrying a major onslaught against that legislation. We have seen their attacks on the Equality Act, their attack on the Public Sector Equality Duty and equality impact assessments. Of course, we have just heard resigning the Equality and Human Rights Commission to little more than an ineffective and impotent pressure group. The latest example is the announcement of another review on the Public Sector Equality Duty. UCU believes that unions, and in particular the public sector unions, should play their full part in putting forward our views to make sure that those views are heard by the Government, and that the Government's consequences of what have put forward are made known and opposed by the trade union Movement.

We all, of course, want to see good, positive and constructive laws, but the trade union Movements knows that that is not the be all and end all. Of course we want to

see laws that reflect the values and principles of the society they serve, that are a litmus test of what is and what is not acceptable within our society. But we know all too well that the law is rarely the friend of the trade union Movement, and where good laws exist they can never be allowed to be the norm. They must be the springboard, the starting point, of good negotiations with our employers to get better deals for our members. Where bad laws exist, that work just becomes more difficult but it never becomes impossible.

As someone who has a serious visual impairment, when I started work many, many years ago, I experienced discrimination from my employer. It was the government or legislation that won my case and protected me. It was committed, hardworking trade unionists represented me, to get me a deal and to stop that discrimination. It was experiences like that that made me and brought me to the trade union Movement.

Laws, yes; good laws, better. But, at the end of the day, whether they are good or bad, this trade union Movement will negotiate on behalf of all its members because we are the TUC and it's what we do. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, I am going to call for the vote on Motion 18. The General Council is supporting the motion.

* *Motion 18 was CARRIED.*

The President: I move immediately to paragraph 3.11 of the General Council's Report and to Motion 19 – Government attacks on the Equality Act and EHRC. The

General Council is supporting the motion. This motion will be moved by Maria Exall on behalf of the TUC LGBT Conference.

Government attacks on the Equality Act and EHRC

Maria Exall (*The Communications Union*) moved Motion 19.

She said: Conference, I move Motion 19 on behalf of the TUC LGBT Conference. As has been referred to in the previous debate, requirements on public sector duties have been cut back and, ominously, are to be reviewed in 2013. The EHRC, the Government's equality watchdog is being slowly strangled. It has suffered 60% cuts and the helpline has been suspended. What is clear is that the Equality Act 2010 is being uprooted before it has even had time to grow. There was a massive going back on the positive agenda on equalities by this Government. This is a matter of concern for all trade unionists, but for LGBT trade unionists it is an even bigger deal.

The Equality Act 2010 was the first time that our discrimination has been dealt with equally with other strands. We should be looking forward to more positive initiatives to mainstream our issues, with effective action against homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, but it is not happening. This Conservative-led Government has come very late to the party of LGBT equality, and it is talking the talk but it's not walking the walk.

Adding insult to injury, they are also using LGBT issues as a socio-liberal cover for their brutal economic policies. David Cameron is sending out deliberately mixed messages saying, on the one hand, he is for gay marriage but, on the other hand,

appointing a Justice Minister who does not believe in equality, and an Equalities Minister who has a record of opposing positive laws on LGBT equality.

The *Red Tape Challenge* of the Tories and their Lib-Dem lackies will tip the scales against LGBT employees and others by removing statutory discrimination questionnaires. It will also tip the scales against those who take employment tribunals on discrimination matters with their proposals for cheque-book justice. Also, by removing third-party harassment, allowing employees, who are customer facing and providing services to the public, to be forced into potentially discriminatory and harassment situations, it will actually put LGBT employees in a very unfair and impossible situation just to retain their jobs.

This motion calls for the TUC to campaign against the effects of the *Red Tape Challenge*, and that means that we have to tackle the myths that justify it, the myths that deregulating and liberalising the labour market will unleash the potential for economic growth when, in reality, it will hold back progress and the development of our diverse human potential. The *Red Tape Challenge* lets employers off the hook. Employers can turn their face against the increasing diversity of their workforce. They can ignore the requirements that ensure respect for all, and they can continue to refuse to take the persisting homophobia, transphobia and biphobia that still blights the lives of many LGBT employees seriously.

The Equality Act 2010 was key for us as LGBT workers. It gave us an equal platform. We know that equality on civil rights is not enough. They do not mean that discrimination and prejudice immediately disappears. As a comrade earlier said,

it's only a springboard that we can use. Sex discrimination and race discrimination legislation has been in force for several decades, but sexism and racism are, unfortunately, still prevalent in our society. What we need is positive action to make our rights real, and this Government's attack on the Equality Act and the EHRC turns the clock back on our equality agenda. We all should be very concerned. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Sue Stelfox (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 19.

She said: Our rights in this country have been hard fought for over a number of centuries. It is the rights that we have won as workers and as individuals that make this country a decent and civilised place to live. However, this Tory-led Government, pushed from behind by its billionaire supporters, are now seeking to dismantle and water down these rights, calling them "red tape". It has nothing to do with red tape. It is all about their profits.

We heard yesterday how health and safety protection is being attacked. We are now talking about how equality legislation is being attacked – our basic rights. This motion deals with the Government's attack on equal rights and, in particular, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender workers' rights. The motion comes from the LGBT Conference, representing a group long discriminated against and who have only recently won protection but in employment and in the wider society. Now we are facing the possibility of having these protections snatched away.

The single Equality Act that was passed in 2010 has its flaws, but it introduced a wide range of protections against discrimination, both inside and outside of employment. It

also established the EHRC to bring together existing equality bodies and to provide assistance and protection to the equality strands that were not previously covered. This was to be welcomed in a civilised country where everyone has a right to achieve their full potential. So what has this Government done? We heard in the debate on Motions 17 and 18 how the Equality Act provisions have been dismantled and watered down and how the EHRC has had its budget cut and its teeth pulled. This Government also plans to introduce fees for industrial tribunals, putting yet more obstacles in the way of the right for our equality rights.

While this motion comes from the LGBT Conference, its intent could very well extend to all equality strands: gender, race, disability and so on. What price the Paralympic legacy now? We need to raise public awareness of these issues, to raise awareness of how these changes will impact the most vulnerable sectors of society. We need to campaign vigorously to oppose these changes. We must not let them take our rights away. Thank you.

Terry Duffy (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Motion 19.

He said: Congress, like all Equality Act motions, Motion 19 concerns us all, not just the LGBT community, who raised it at the TUC Conference. A tokenistic Equality Act and EHRC puts us all at risk. New tribunal fees will bar hundreds, even tens of thousands, from demanding their right to a tribunal hearing. We must strongly oppose these changes.

I have dealt extensively with LGBT casework. UCU knows how difficult it is under the Equality Act or even by the EHRC to take a case against homophobia, transphobia

or biphobia. A lame duck EHRC or a financially inaccessible tribunal system scuttles even the tough chances of bringing discriminators to justice.

An emasculated Equality Act and EHRC threatens everyone's right to justice. For the LGBT community, it will be an assault on protections that they have barely begun yet to enjoy. Let's look at some of the many personal testimonies of discrimination I have helped just in the past year. I think of an 18-year old college student who tells me that she would never have come out at college had it not been for the benefit of the Equality Act. I think of a 35-year old bisexual lecturer who resigned because he felt isolated to the point of suicide by the homophobic atmosphere in his college. I think of a 45-year old trans-sexual librarian whose manager told her to use the disabled toilets. I think of another trans-sexual worker who was told not to wear a dress during her transition. We won both cases because of the benefit of the Equality Act.

Finally, I often think of a retired professor who came 'out' in his very last years at university and found it a big mistake, even in the supposed tolerant, free-speech atmosphere of a college. He was suddenly the butt of homophobic jokes, implying that he was not safe to be students. He had a mental breakdown and he retired early. These human tragedies would never have reached the public eye without the Equality Act and the EHRC.

Congress, the UCU is proud to support the motion and urges the TUC to oppose this Coalition Government's attack and proposed abolition of much of the Equality Act and the EHRC. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

The President: I now move to the vote on Motion 19.

* *Motion 19 was CARRIED.*

The President: We return to Chapter 4 of the General Council's Report: Economic and industrial affairs. We will be dealing with the section on Transport, from page 69. We will begin with paragraph 4.12 and Composite Motion 11 – Action for Rail. The General Council supports the composite.

Action for Rail

Manuel Cortes (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) moved Composite Motion 11.

He said: President and Congress, I am very proud – no, incredibly proud – to be moving Composite Motion 11, as it carries the support of all the rail unions. I am also convinced that it also carries the support of working people up and down the country who are fed up with having to pay record fares. The reality is – you know this, Conference – that since the railways were privatised, passengers and commuters, in particular, have become cash cows for the Government and greedy private operators. If you are a commuter, all that you have got to look forward to are fare increases above inflation year after year after year. Those are the plans of the Coalition Government. They intend to increase wage fares way above inflation. When you look at the very public spat that is taking place between Branson and the First Group over the future of the West Coast Mainline, you wonder what lies behind it. So let me tell you what lies behind it. It is not about providing a better service for passengers. It is about maximising the profits that these rail companies are going to make. That is

why Branson looks determined to keep the West Coast Mainline, and that is why First Group wants to get its hands on it.

Let us be very clear. The railway unions commissioned some research into the structure of the railways. The *Rebuilding of the Railways* report actually shows the waste that privatisation has created. A conservative estimate is that more than £1.2 billion a year is being wasted in having a fragmented and private railway. I am sure that your members would agree with me when I say that this money should be used to cut rail fares. The point is that £1.2 billion could cap rail fares by 18%, and if you were to use that money to cap those fares that are most socially useful, such as the fares that commuters have to pay, fares could be cut by about 30%. I am sure that people would be rejoicing if we were to do that. That is why we need to make this a political issue in the run-up to the next general election. We want Labour to win the next election, but we want them to do so with a firm commitment that the railways will be returned to where they belong – the public sector. They should have never been privatised in the first place and, frankly, it is high time that they were brought back into the public sector. (*Applause*)

I said before at my own union's conference that this is a wider issue than just railway privatisation. This is a battle of ideas between the neo-liberal privateers and those of us who want public services for the benefit of the people. I am absolutely convinced that if we bring the railways into the public sector you will be asking the question: why not those other public services that have been privatised? Why can those services not be brought back into public ownership? Why not the utilities, when people are being ripped off with their gas and electricity bills? Why can't we have

them back in public ownership? That is why this issue transcends well being the railway.

The issue at stake here is what kind of a world do we want? Do we want a world that is run for profit or do we want a world that is run for the interests of ordinary people? I know which world I want. I think you know which world you want. Please support this resolution, Congress. (*Applause*)

The President: Well done. Let me say that that was a shining example of not going through a red light. I hope your colleagues follow suit. I call ASLEF.

Bernard Kennedy (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen*)
seconded Composite Motion 11.

He said: Congress, I am a first-time delegate so please bear with me. (*Applause*) I am proud to stand in front of you and second Composite 11 and follow the brilliant address from the General Secretary of the TSSA.

Action for Rail came about in response to the McNulty *Value for Money* report. The one thing I do have some experience of, Congress, is working on the railways. I have spent 32 years working on the railways, and 15 of those years was under British Rail, which was no a perfect model, but when you look at the railway we have today it was not too bad. We had some problems but it was not as bad as the mess we find ourselves in at the moment. More of that in a minute.

We heard this morning during the debate on Composite 13 on the plight of the NHS – on the railways we substitute Lansley for McNulty – as I have said before, like Lansley, McNulty is trying to save money, and McNulty is doing that by recommending further privatisation, which will be a disaster. Twenty thousand rail workers, Congress, could lose their jobs as a result of these recommendations. That could be station and ticket staff, on-train staff and other supporting roles right across the industry.

The railways, unlike the NHS, as we heard this morning, are broken, derailed and disintegrated. That is as a result of the 1993 Railways Act. Furthermore, the rail industry has become a gigantic scam for siphoning off public money. I refer also to the remarks made by the GS of the TSSA earlier. Just look at the soap opera of the re-franchising of the West Coast Mainline. Even Richard Branson thinks that the system is unworkable. Someone has taken his train set off him, and that's just the passenger side.

I want to talk a little bit about the freight sector, because that is part of the industry I know very well, but before I do I want to give a big shout out to the 1,300 Aslef and RMT train drivers who are currently taking industrial action on DB Schenker, (*Applause*) on the issues of pay, abrogation of rostering and working conditions.

I also want to mention Bro. Simon Weller, who is Aslef's National Organiser, who is doing a brilliant job in leading this dispute from the front. Well done, Simon. Keep up the good work. I would also like to give a shout for and send fraternal greetings in

solidarity to the East Coast cleaning workers who are in dispute between Edinburgh and King's Cross. (*Applause*)

So going back to freight ----

The President: I don't think you are. You have run out of time, colleague.

Bernard Kennedy: Support the composite motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Owen Herbert (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 11.

He said: Congress, the privatised railway system is in utter chaos. Twice privateers – that is GNER and National Express – have defaulted just on the East Coast Mainline alone. First Group is ending the First Great Western franchise three years early, avoiding over £800 million in premium repayments to the Government. That is taxpayers' money, money that is owed to the taxpayers and money taken out of the railway system and put into the pockets of First Group's dividends.

Over the next three years, East Coast, West Coast, Essex, Thameside, Great Western, Transpennine, Great Anglia, Northern, Scotrail, Southeastern and East Midlands are all due to be re-franchised. These franchises represent 70% of all journeys made, but these franchises are costing the taxpayers millions just in the franchise system itself. RMT thinks it is time that we need to be taking back the keys.

The RMT has a clear position of a nationalised railway network, but a fully-integrated and publicly-owned network, with train, track, rolling stock and train manufacturing, in particular, publicly owned. No train operators own the trains and the rolling stock owners – Evershed, Angel Trains and Portabrook – are all linked to high street banks. They fleece the taxpayer. In relation to some trains, the taxpayer has to pay more than ten times over their original worth. In 1985 Class 142 trains, which some of you may know, were built by British Leyland for a total of £375,000. Now they are hired back to the companies at a price of £150,000 per year. It is an absolute obscenity.

The McNulty report and the Government Command paper is a concentrated attack by the Government to make railway workers and passengers pay for the failure of privatisation. Over 20,000 railway jobs are at stake as the Government seeks to cost of running the railway by 35%. Instead of blaming privatisation, McNulty wants to close booking offices, leading to de-staffing of stations, leaving passengers vulnerable and leaving people with disabilities and old people unable to get assistance. Maintenance is also being cut, making it a less safe railway. McNulty also proposes to move safety-trained guards from the trains for increased driver-only operations. Only recently with the derailment in Carlisle we see the importance of having guards on board all of our trains.

Privatisation caused the disaster at Potters Bar and Hatfield, and now they want to take us back there by bringing back the bad old days of Railtrack. A fragmented, privatised network costs the taxpayer over £1.2 billion extra per year. Over £12 billion has been taken out of the system since privatisation. The RMT fully supports

the joint-TUC Action for Rail campaign along with other railway unions in fighting McNulty on all fronts.

Let us get something straight. McNulty is not a report from the Con-Dem Government. This report was actually asked for by the last Labour Government, and Labour needs to learn from this. Support the composite and support Action for Rail.

The President: Does anyone wish to speak against? (*No response*) In that case, I will move to the vote on Composite Motion 11. The General Council is supporting the composite.

* *Composite Motion 11 was CARRIED.*

The President: We now move to Motion 48: Maritime policy. The General Council is supporting the motion.

Maritime policy

Martin Troman (*Nautilus International*) moved Motion 48.

He said: Congress, last time I spoke to Congress I started with a quote from Winston Churchill. I hope you will forgive me for repeating it today. These were Churchill's words when he spoke about the Merchant Navy's vital role in keeping the country supplied during the Second World War. He said: "We are an island nation and we understand the call of the sea." Some 70 years after Churchill's comments, Nautilus International fears that Britain is now deaf to the call of the sea, even though shipping

remains an essential industry. With 95% of our imports and exports moving by sea, our Government has developed a severe case of sea blindness.

Twelve years ago we thought we had finally succeeded in the long battle to end what seemed like the terminal decline of the British merchant fleet, when former seafarer, John Prescott, introduced the Tonnage Tax Scheme with associated seafarer training requirements. I am sad to say that the maritime sector has seen nothing more since then by way of policy initiatives, other than cutting back the few measures that we have to promote seafarer training and employment, and the steady erosion of the paltry budget for the safety net for shipping in UK waters, with damaging cuts in the budget for the Maritime & Coastguard Agency and the Marine Accident Investigation Branch.

Churchill's words now ring hollow as the Royal Navy is stripped back so far that the UK has had to scale back its commitment to counter piracy because we no longer have enough warships to support year round counter-piracy operations off Somalia. I served for over 40 years as an officer in the civilian-crewed Royal Fleet Auxiliary, spending my last tour or duty of six months on counter-piracy operations in the Middle East. However, while Ministers have praised the RFA for its humanitarian and disaster-relief work worldwide, it has helped to counter drugs and people smuggling and its support of security missions to protect key trade routes, they have not spared the service from cuts in ships and seafarers.

Although the sea is important to us economically, environmentally, strategically, and still for employment, there is simply no strategic vision in Government for the

maritime sector. Instead, we witness one department undermining the work of another thanks to the lack of joined-up thinking and an absence of any detailed policy targets for UK maritime industries and services. This is a sector which contributes some £26½ billion a year to the economy, supports more than half-a-million jobs and provides almost £8 billion a year in tax revenues. The Department for Transport's website claims it aims to make the UK ship register attractive to owners. Yet two-thirds of British-owned tonnage continues to operate under foreign flags. It claims that the Government are seeking to promote UK-seafarer employment, yet ministers continue to oppose proposals to protect pay and conditions in our waters. Even the DfT's own research estimates that on current trends the number of British seafarers is set to decline by more than one-third over the next two decades.

We believe it to be essential that the Government come up with a new long-term and integrated strategy for Britain's maritime sector, setting clear targets for the development of the UK seafarer skills base and the sustained growth of our merchant fleet. This country's need for ships and seafarers is as strong as it was in Churchill's time. Indeed, in this era of globalisation, it is probably as strong as it ever has been in history. We must have a vision, a sea vision, to make sure that we continue to have the ships and seafarers required to meet that need now and in the future. It is the time for the Government to come up with a proper policy package that reflects the importance of the maritime sector for an island nation, and treats the shipping industry with the importance it merits. To use a nautical analogy, we are sailing in dangerous waters yet there seems to be no safe passage plan and no chart for the way ahead. Support this motion and help us to cure the Government of its sea blindness.

(Applause)

Richard Crease (*Unite*) seconded Motion 48.

He said: Chair and Conference, it is clear that this Con-Dem Government has no clear policy within the maritime and port sector. Large cuts are taking place within key organisations connected with the sector – the Department for Transport, Maritime & Coastguard Agency, Marine Accidents Investigation Branch and the Health & Safety Executive – and we have experienced the loss of the emergency towing vessels around the UK coast that provided a service to protect our coastline from potential environmental impacts and the loss of life.

Under the previous Labour Government, the Shipping Taskforce was set up, which allowed trade unions, shipping companies and civil servants to discuss the policies which affected them and their industry. For example, Tonnage Tax was put in place thereby allowing shipping companies which flew under the UK flag to have favourable taxation on the basis of employing cadets. But there has never been a clear policy for UK ports. The EU has already made two failed attempts to liberalise our ports, creating a port licence across all sectors, and now they are about to try again. The port workers of Europe mobilised last time and they will do so again this time to defend their terms and conditions.

The Government are now seeking evidence to increase the number of Pilot Exemption Certificates granted to ships entering UK ports at the expense of highly trained pilots, who are now seeing larger ships carrying in excess of 14½ thousand containers coming into UK ports. We fear that, with the opening of the Thames Gateway later

this year, we will see a rate war between ports and a race to the bottom of our members' terms and conditions.

We call upon the TUC to co-ordinate a campaign for a fair maritime ports policy that can build the pressure for the application of the Maritime Labour Convention and the full protection of labour and equality laws for all. Please support. Thank you.

The President: Let me move to the vote, colleagues.

* *Motion 48 was CARRIED.*

The President: We now move to Motion 49: Aviation policy. The General Council supports the motion but with an explanation, and I will call the Deputy General Secretary during the debate to explain that position.

Aviation policy

Jim McAuslan (*British Air Line Pilots' Association*) moved Motion 49.

He said: Congress, Motion 49 asks that we develop an aviation policy that will be good for jobs, good for growth, caring of the environment and to campaign for it in an unashamed way.

Our Association was founded at the Greyhound Hotel, Croydon, in 1937. This year is our 75th anniversary. Croydon was London's airport, and we were formed because an exploitative boss was forcing pilots to operating when, in their professional judgment, it was not safe to do so, and safety still beats deeply within our soul. However,

aviation is a lot younger than most of the trades in this hall, but in our brief history we have come to play an ever-increasing role in the nation's life and that of its individual citizens.

For the nation, UK aviation contributes over £50 billion in GDP, £8 billion to the Exchequer, directly employs one million people in running airports, in engineering, services and actually operating the aircraft, and it supports a further 2.5 million in the broader economy, such as in tourism. For citizens we have shrunk the world and spread opportunity. In 1937 50,000 people used airports. It was the preserve of the rich. Today more than 230 million people use airports – your members – and that number is anticipated to exceed 460 million by 2030. We are an industry that prides itself on safety. If the accident rate of 1937 were to apply to today's operations, there would be 7,000 fatal air incidents per year, compared with the 17 global hull losses in 2010.

Furthermore, we take our environmental impact seriously. While generating 6% of the UK's CO₂ emissions, this is being tackled by our entry into the European Emissions Trading Scheme on Aircraft Fuel Efficiency, which the independent Committee on Climate Change estimates could see UK flights rise from the two million of today to 3.4 million by 2050 and still meet our demanding climate targets, but we are an industry that has become a political football.

Look at runway capacity. In 1965 the plan was to develop a six-runway airport on the Isle of Sheppey to replace Heathrow. The plan was abandoned as too difficult. In 1971 the Roskill Commission recommends Cumblyington as a new London airport. The

Government selected Maplin Sands. The plans were abandoned as too difficult. In 2003 the White Paper proposed new runways at Heathrow and Manchester. The plans were abandoned as too difficult. Now, in 2012, the Government announces a review under Howard Davies to report by 2015, just after the next election. Forgive us if we say, “We’ve seen all this before.”

How do politicians get away with it, such that a policy, directed by MPs in 12 west London constituencies, is forever being kicked into the long grass? We are now faced with the nonsense of a Government-sponsored review of airport capacity, quickly followed by one set up by their nemesis in Boris Johnson. I just wish Howard Davies all the best in refereeing between those two. How do politicians get away with portraying aviation as a beast that has tarmac’d over the green and pleasant land that we live in, when in truth there has only been one new runway in this country since the Second World War? How do politicians get away with allowing our near neighbours to beat us hands down? We have built one new runway in 65 years, yet in the past 20 years Schiphol, Frankfurt, Charles de Gaulle and Barajas in Madrid have added 13 new runways? How come we do not build commercial aircraft in this country? Brazil and Canada build good ones. China is not far behind. We do wings, engines and avionics. How come we cannot put that lot together to build the aircraft. How does the Government get away with loading billions of pounds in Air Passenger Duty, which adds £260 to a holiday? How do they get away with it? We let them get away with it.

However, there is a mood for change, a mood that we all get dewy eyed about when Danny Boyle parades Isambard Kingdom Brunel to show what Great Britain can be

right. How sad that we have to go back two hundred years to look at those grand plans. Yet it was a mood that was surprised and impressed by what happened at the Olympic Park. Congress, let us turn our hands to that, not just to defend things as we have been doing this week so far but actually to promote things that sit squarely in a future that works for all.

We are asking you, Congress, to join together in tapping that mood, not just on runway capacity. This is not a secret plot to get a third runway at Heathrow. My own Association's views are split on this matter, but by working together we can promote aviation, a policy that is good for jobs, good for growth and cares for the environment. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Jim. You landed exactly on time.

Dai Hudd (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 49.

He said: Congress, the UK airspace is some of the busiest in the world. I am paying tribute to the air traffic controllers and engineers, the people who fly our aircraft, the ground crews and all those who support that activity are also some of the safest in the world. As Jim as described this is a complex industry that has two pressing problems that it faces now which need to be resolved and resolved with the broadest possible basis of consensus, namely, investment and capacity. However you do the sums, capacity is an issue. It is not simply the case that objecting to the debate on capacity on environmental grounds is a simple answer to the problem. Although there is a very impressive track record in relation to our arrangements for aviation in the UK, stacking still occurs. Over the very airspace where we are having this Conference

now, stacking to support Gatwick takes place and that is a waste of CO² emissions and has practical consequences, all caused by a lack of capacity in our airspace.

Like Jim, we are cautiously welcoming of the Howard Davies Commission, but let me put three caveats as to what that cautious support would mean. First, Davies is an economist and has very strong business links. The Commission has to be broader based. It has to take into account the social and environment consequences of any policy going forward. Secondly, the review should not be artificially constrained by a timescale set by politicians. Davies and his Commission should be allowed to follow the evidence and publish his information to inform public debate as it becomes clear in the deliberations that that Commission makes. Thirdly, that Commission should be broadly based. It should include the environmental debates, the people who can bring forward the social consequences as well as the economic ones. It should not be driven solely by business interests.

This motion enables the TUC to take an active part in that debate. With those caveats, we support the setting up of the Davies Commission. I hope that you will be able to support the motion and take this valuable work forward. Thank you.

Fiona MacDonald (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 49.

She said: PCS wish to support this motion which calls for the development of an aviation policy framework. The aim of the framework is to produce a document which we can use to exert pressure on all political parties and create a clear and rational consensus for sustainable growth. However, we do have reservations about

aspects of this motion which relate to unsubstantiated assertions within it. I would draw Congress's attention to these. For example, we do not agree that the Government should see flying as a sin to be disapproved of, like smoking or drinking. Moreover, the claim within the motion that we are the most heavily taxed country in the world is erroneous. In fact, unlike petrol and diesel fuels, aviation fuel is not taxed at all. For those who say that the impact falls more heavily on our members, the fact is that the most environmentally damaging flights are long haul, generally enjoyed by the more privileged elite.

PCS has about 30,000 members who work directly in air traffic control, BAA, CAA or, indirectly, in immigration and Customs offices at Heathrow, Gatwick, Glasgow and other airports across the UK. Our interest is twofold. We wish to support our members' jobs and services and encourage the development of policy which encourages green and sustainable integrated transport systems. Our hope is that in the development of this framework we take into account the Unite report, *Sustainable Transport and Environment*, which makes some important points and contributions to the debate. For example, the report highlights measures which will significantly reduce CO² emissions, reducing taxi-ing and stacking periods, the practice of utilising runways for both take off and landing, introducing cruise height limitations and shortening journey times. However, of crucial importance is ensuring that the framework is contextualised effectively. They must push for the development of airports to be carried forward within an integrated transport network.

My own local airport at Glasgow has no rail link and a very limited bus service to the city in which it is located. Lastly, we must provide alternatives to flights, where we

can, with shorter plane journeys to be replaced by high speed rail links. We must also turn our attention to greening our existing transport networks, as well as developing further transport networks, and create green jobs in the process. That is why PCS supports the campaign for a million climate jobs.

The Stern review highlighted that the impact of climate change is the greatest market failure the world has ever seen. The importance of emphasising the development of public transport systems that do not rely on the inadequacies of market forces will produce a framework that promotes a green, sustainable and integrated transport system that meets the needs of our members and provides hope for a cleaner future. Please support.

Roy Khan (*Unite the Union*) supported Motion 49.

He said: Congress, I am a first time delegate. (*Applause*) My union, Unite, has 70,000 members working in the aviation industry direction and thousands more in engineering, design, research, aircraft manufacturing, the supply chain and the wider service industries. Hundreds of thousands of people work in the aviation industry and it brings in billions of pounds to the Government. It is the industry in which I work and I am very proud to say that it has had a major trade union influence throughout its history. Thank you very much to people in the past and those who are there today.

We agree that we do need an integrated transport strategy, a strategy that links air, road and rail because this is of benefit to all of us as we are using transport every single day. As part of this, Unite supports the HS2 railway line and the re-nationalisation of the railways to create the better integrated railway system that we

need. We also support a third runway at Heathrow. We demand that it is paid for by the industry rather than the taxpayer because the taxpayer is paying enough already. We do support environmental restrictions on its use as well as controls to overall noise levels and carbon emissions along with our inclusion in the Emissions Trading Scheme.

At the moment, Heathrow is running at 99% capacity. My colleague talked about the holding stacks for Gatwick. We have four holding stacks above London. Each of these contributes to noise pollution and emissions. It takes 40% longer to fly from Paris to London than it did in 1979 due to this congestion. There is also talk of airlines making Paris, Frankfurt and Schiphol alternative transport hubs and, due to this, we could be in the process of losing thousands of jobs. An aircraft held on the ground for 40 minutes to depart will burn more fuel for its slot than when it is flying to New York. Therefore, we need a clear policy.

Aviation is an important industry to our economy. I am sure we have all used the aviation industry in order to fly on holiday. Heathrow is the largest employer in West London, a lifeline. Tourism, as we have seen with the Olympics, is a huge influx of capital to our country. We need a clear and comprehensive aviation strategy that addresses all the opportunities that this industry creates as well as concerns. It should involve the unions and ordinary users as well as operators in business. We have to address the tax penalty. There may not be anything on the fuel, but we have the highest airport departure tax in the world and that penalty is affecting all of us as most of the corporates get it paid through tax. Thank you very much.

Frances O’Grady (*General Council*) spoke in support of Motion 49.

She said: Congress, the General Council has asked me to give a few words of explanation on its behalf as to why it supports Motion 49. Aviation is right at the top of the political agenda at the moment, notably on the issue of the expansion of airport capacity in the South-East of England. It is absolutely vital that we, as a Movement, shape this important debate.

When it comes to aviation policy, it is fair to say that the Government is in total disarray. Just last week, Justine Greening, an opponent of a third runway at Heathrow, lost her job as Transport Secretary, perhaps the only time that a Cabinet minister has been sacked for sticking to agreed Government policy. The motion before you does not explicitly call for additional runway capacity at Heathrow or anywhere else in the UK, but instead calls for a coherent, long-term aviation strategy which meets Britain’s needs for the future. It is consistent with existing Congress policy, including that on air passenger duty, carried in 2009, and it is supported by all the aviation unions.

Congress, there can be no doubt that aviation is vital to our economic prospects as part of an integrated transport system. It directly accounts for nearly one million jobs across the UK, not just in airlines, airports and related services, but in our world-class aerospace industry in companies like Rolls Royce, BAE Systems and Airbus UK — good jobs, skilled jobs, unionised jobs and apprenticeships that are crucial to our manufacturing future. It is an industry which sustains countless thousands of jobs indirectly, whether it is attracting tourists into the UK or inward investment in our economy.

Congress, Motion 49 also makes absolutely clear that growth must be compatible with wider environmental and climate change concerns. Here in the trade union Movement, we have a record that we can be proud of. Unlike business, we have consistently called for environmental concerns to be at the heart of aviation policy, raising that issue repeatedly with government and employers alike. We have not only called for significant reductions in carbon emissions, but also for cuts in local noise and air pollution, and for much better public transport access to our airports. So, Congress, whether it is for environmental or economic reasons, the case for a progressive, objective, long-term aviation strategy is overwhelming. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

The President: I think all of the speakers were in favour of the motion. I do not think there is a right of reply, Jim, unless you wanted to pick up on any of those points.

Jim McAuslan *(British Air Line Pilots' Association):* No, other than to thank my colleagues in the PCS for engaging in discussion. We look forward to dealing with the facts when we get into the review. We welcome the important comments from the General Council. As we believe that Congress moves forward both in terms of the public sector and the private sector and being able to work with both parts of this great Movement of ours, we feel very positive. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

The President: We are now going to put Motion 49 to the vote.

* *Motion 49 was CARRIED*

Address by Michael Cashman MEP, Labour Party fraternal delegate

The President: Congress, it is now my great pleasure and a very pleasant duty to welcome this year's Labour Party fraternal delegate, Michael Cashman. Michael is this year's Chair of the Labour Party National Executive Committee — so I know how he feels occasionally — and a Member of the European Parliament for the West Midlands since 1999. He is a long-standing and proud member of Equity and Unity, a trenchant critic of any form of discrimination, a relentless campaigner for human rights and the Labour Party's MEP spokesperson on international development. Michael, you are very welcome here this afternoon and we look forward to hearing your contribution. I invite you to address Congress. *(Applause)*

Michael Cashman MEP: Thank you very much indeed, President. Congress, I have to say that I am delighted, but a little bit astounded, to be here today. Coming from my background, I would never have imagined that I could ever have undertaken a personal journey that has me addressing you, but I will come to that a bit later.

Let me firstly recognise, as Paul said, my current trade unions: the British actors' Equity and Unity, the ceramics trade union. Mind you, I have also belonged to Unite, the GMB and, in the distant past, NUPE, when I worked as a porter in the National Health Service. Chair, it might be easier to outline the trade unions that I have not belonged to but, importantly for me, for every single day of my life since the age of 15, I have belonged to a trade union so allow me today to thank them all for the

support and the solidarity that they have shown me during the last 47 years.

(Applause)

I am particularly proud of serving as Honorary Treasurer of Equity. In the early 1990s, shortly after I was elected to the Council of Equity, we had to address the tricky business of electing our officers. As you would expect of us in Equity, we decided to have a caucus meeting in a pub, but in the upstairs room where alcohol would not be a temptation. Sadly, it did not work. As the evening went on, the role of Honorary Treasurer was being particularly difficult to fill. With an annual deficit in the millions, it had few attractions. Finally, it was decided to put the issue to the assembled gathering and it was Miriam Karlin, that great trade unionist and campaigner, sadly no longer with us, who raised her voice in the call for nominations. “Nominations”, they said, “for Honorary Treasurer.” She boomed out, not “Karlin” but “Cashman”. I resisted. I said, “No, no, Mim, I’m too busy. I’m not quite mad enough to say ‘Yes’”, but she would have none of it. “You would be fantastic”, she said, “absolutely right for the job, and besides you have got the right name for it: ‘Cash-man.’” That was it. She delivered the vote the next day.

Subsequently, I served as Honorary Treasurer for four years. We eradicated the deficit and I am proud to say that I came up with the idea and helped negotiate the Equity pension scheme, the scheme that was resisted initially by the employers and a pension scheme that they, and many members, said would not work. It was a pension scheme that is now one of the most successful in the trade union Movement and of which I, and Equity, are deeply proud.

Yet, as I stand here before you, I cannot help reflect on how I came to be here. My dad was a docker when he could get the work in the port of London. My mum was a proud office cleaner who earned such a pittance that for her paying tax or dreaming of a pension was impossible. I remember well her going all-night cleaning even when suffering from pleurisy, coming home, sending us off to school and then going out to work again when we came back from school.

My father's family were ex-immigrant Irish stock and I remember — and we must never forget — the postcards in the shop windows in the 1950s which offered a room to let, but said “NB NI”, “No blacks, no Irish”. Congress, that is why I want today to pay tribute to the generations of immigrants and immigrant communities from across Europe, Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and elsewhere which have come to the United Kingdom and made, and continue to make, our country the great, thriving, multicultural, multiracial country it is today. *(Applause)*

So, in 1950, I was born into a country fashioned by the Labour and trade union Movement. It was the Labour Party of Kier Hardy, who dreamt of a minimum wage, the Labour Party of Atlee and Bevan. It was Bevan, in the face of great opposition — never forget that great opposition — who introduced the National Health Service and the welfare state which is still the envy of the world today. I was born in an NHS hospital, brought up in a council flat built under a Labour government and if I had gone to university, I would have had the financial assistance in the 1960s, afforded and dreamt up by Labour.

Why do I tell you all of this? It is because, Congress, we are the sum total of our experiences. Where we come from, where we are born, to whom we are born and indeed where we live often dictates how our lives will be led. When I was first born, the immediate thing my dad did was to put my name down at the Dock Labour Board so that as soon as I left school, I would follow him into the docks.

But fate, at the age of 12 and after an impersonation of Eartha Kitt, threw me into a career in the theatre that would last for 37 years and a chance, Congress, to achieve my unique potential. It would see me leading the campaign against Section 28, founding Stonewall, and eventually getting elected to the European Parliament and on to Labour's National Executive. I have had 14 years working on the National Executive, working with trade union colleagues dedicated to serving the Party and the trade union Movement. Congress, allow me to mention one person who has been there ever since my first day, that undiminished and incredible defender of public service workers, Mary Turner of the GMB. *(Applause)*

As Chair of the NEC, it has been a privilege working with the leader, Ed Miliband and Iain McNicol. Iain, you are doing a brilliant job. I have been working with them to create an open, representative and more inclusive party, a party dedicated to serving the people of this country and a party united and determined to see Ed Miliband as the next Prime Minister of this country. *(Applause)*

Congress, what a country it is. Over the last few weeks and the last ten days in particular, I have stood back in awe and disbelief as we have witnessed Team GB achieve staggering results culminating in 65 medals at the Olympics and 120 medals

at the Paralympics, each and every member of our teams striving for, and achieving, their own unique brilliant potential. Who could not be proud of hosting the Olympics and the Paralympics with the opening and closing ceremonies which celebrated Britain and which some had the audacity to label as “leftie” or “partisan”. Since when has the celebration of our excellence, including the excellence of our public services, been partisan or leftie? If it is, then I am happy to embrace that label wholeheartedly.

Congress, maybe the real issue is that some politicians would rather demolish and demonise our public services than praise them. During those Games, who could not have been humbled and inspired by the Paralympians, who showed us courage beyond imagination and determination almost beyond human endurance? It truly made me proud to be British and proud that we brought the Games to Britain.

But the amazing number of medals we won, those determined competitors and the opening and closing ceremonies did not happen by accident. Mr. Cameron and Mr. Clegg, if you are listening, they did not happen because we cut investment in sports education and sports facilities. They did not happen because we cut the Educational Maintenance Allowance. They did not happen because we cut child tax benefits and they certainly did not happen because we refused to build new schools, new hospitals, new sports and arts facilities. Those achievements, humbling and powerful as they were by our Paralympians, were certainly inspiring and moving, but they did not happen by withdrawing support, and financial support, from people with disabilities or their families. *(Applause)*

Those achievements happened because we, a Labour government supported by the trade union Movement, invested in the people of this country, invested in diversity and celebrated difference. We invested in our public services, in those communities and in those individuals in order to give the people of this great country the opportunity to excel. It is called investment and if you put nothing in, you get nothing out.

Talking of investment, it is a fact worth recalling that those amazing opening and closing ceremonies were largely realised, conceived and carried out by designers, directors, choreographers and performers who were nurtured and supported and developed their unique potential within subsidised theatre. It was theatre subsidised by the State to nurture and develop talent. It all connects. If only all politicians had the imagination to see it.

If you cut investment in arts, education, the NHS, sports, welfare support and rehabilitation, family support and the public services which support us all, you will eventually damage the fabric of this country and deny opportunity to future generations. That is why we recognise in the Labour Party, born out of the trade union Movement, our shared values and our shared principles. Unlike this Coalition government, which is an accident waiting to happen, I really do believe that we are all in this together because what happens to others is as important as if it is happening to us. No woman and no man is an island. Whether affiliated to the Labour Party or not, everyone in this room, and in the trade union Movement and beyond, share a vision of the future.

The statue outside the TUC headquarters in London illustrates this — the lifting up of other people. Lift up and support and offer rights and protections, which are the litmus test of any civilised society. Yes, that is why I am proud of the Labour legacy of equalities and human rights. Once we lift up the individuals, we should hold them aloft, hold them high, in order to show what can be achieved when we enable and support individuals and communities, regardless of difference, to achieve their own unique potential and therefore make this country, and this world, a better place.

This is our task. This is our vision. It is up to us to achieve it. So I bring fraternal greetings from the Labour Party in that spirit and in the recognition that through our common principles and our common efforts, we can achieve much more by working together than we can ever achieve by acting alone. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause and standing ovation*)

The President: Thank you very much. I present you with the Gold Badge of Congress which we give to you with great thanks, love and affection. It says on it this year, “Union and proud” and you have demonstrated that. We are delighted to present this to you, Michael. There is one small thing you could do for us, if you would. I was intrigued by your story so a quick rendition of any Eartha Kitt song would be appreciated. I think you would win the hearts and minds of the Labour Movement so away you go.

Michael Cashman: As Mary Turner will tell you, I am weak-willed and easily led and the one thing I can never resist is temptation so you will have to bear with me.

(The speaker impersonated Eartha Kitt in song) As I am getting no repeats on this, that is where the performance ends. *(Laughter and applause)*

The President: Congress, we now return to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report, Economic and Industrial Affairs. This section is on the arts, media and culture from page 79. This is going to cover one of the most serious and long-running issues that we have seen unfold on our television screens over recent months. I call Motion 71, the Leveson Inquiry. The General Council supports this motion.

Leveson Inquiry

Chris Frost *(National Union of Journalists)* moved Motion 71.

He said: For those of you who have been struggling to cope in a world led by a government that seems determined to take us back to the 1700s and beyond, the Leveson Inquiry may just have passed you by. You just might not have noticed the outcry over revelations of phone hacking, not just of celebrities but also of the innocent and the bereaved. There have been shocking tales of wholesale invasions of privacy of ordinary working people.

The Inquiry has also heard truly appalling revelations about police corruption by journalists, lavish dinners of lobster and champagne, invitations to prestigious receptions and inevitable demands by editors that the officers concerned return the favours. There really is no such thing as a free lunch. Nor did politicians escape the grilling, having to confess to the less than savoury dealings with industry moguls.

So those of you who have only dimly heard of the Inquiry, you have probably considered that this plays a very poor second to the destruction of the country's economy, but you would be wrong. For those of us who have long thought that big business is too big, too often too venal, sometimes corrupt and occasionally even criminal, here was the evidence. The Leveson Inquiry heard witness after witness tell of practices perpetrated by powerful media that comes to think of itself as being above the law, things that are simply unacceptable in any democracy.

So what is to be done? What follows the Leveson Inquiry as we wait for his report? We are calling for three things. The first is a conscience clause which will be inserted into the contracts of employment of journalists, allowing them to refuse unethical assignments without detriment to their careers. We are calling for the right of all workers to be represented in their workplace by their union. We are also calling for a change in the system of regulation of the press to allow for all stakeholders to be involved in a system that will hold the press to account.

Let me go through those in more detail. Why a conscience clause? First of all, we need to identify what the real problem has been behind Leveson. It is not the journalists, often condemned and traduced by all sides, but the system and the employers who prevent journalists doing the job that they signed up for. No journalist trains for years, works for a pittance and struggles to get into an industry just for the money, fame and glamour because, frankly, whilst there may be just a tiny bit of glamour, there is very little of the rest. They took up their pens and recorders in order to find things out, to inform the public, to hold the powerful to account and to expose

the corrupt and the criminal, in other words, to do what we are all doing here, trying to make a better society.

Most journalists and most of my colleagues want to behave ethically to produce stories that will produce a better world, a more just world. It is fashionable to consider journalists as the lowest of the low, but that is to tar them with the standards of their employers. We have already heard at Congress about bullying in the workplace. Unfortunately, it is not something that is new to us. I am here to tell you that bullying in newsrooms is as bad as it is anywhere else. The national press, in particular, is rife with totally unacceptable workplace practices. The NUJ gave a large amount of evidence to the Leveson Inquiry on behalf of journalists too scared to speak up in person. We are seeking a conscience clause and to reduce the levels of bullying in the workplace. We also need a system of regulation that involves all stakeholders — the public, the journalists as well as the employers and the media barons.

Finally, I know that you are going to support the motion. It is an important motion and we need to drive it on, but I also need you to do something else. That is to work with us to campaign to ensure that what happens once Leveson comes back with his report does not get lost. Already, the Government is showing its cold feet. Cameron has had his ear bent and it is pretty certain that his will will follow. We do not want the Leveson Inquiry buried. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

John McDonnell (*GMB*) seconded Motion 71.

He said: Congress, last year, Tom Watson MP was a guest speaker at the GMB Congress. He told us a chilling story of power cruelly wielded at News International. Let us not forget the terrible lies that Murdoch's son told about the 96 Liverpool fans that died at Hillsborough — disgusting. Tom also told us that his family was tormented because he stood up to Murdoch. However, it took the revelation that the phone of murdered teenager, Millie Dowler, had been hacked, God rest her soul, to bring the story we heard to the public's attention.

The row over phone hacking led to the closure of the *News of the World*, the establishment of the Leveson Inquiry, an MPs' inquiry and the launch of three police investigations. More than 4,000 have been identified by the police as possible victims of phone hacking by the *News of the World*. The forthcoming prosecutions specify 600 alleged victims. Their alleged targets have included politicians, celebrities, actors, sports people, relatives of dead UK soldiers and people who were caught up in the 7/7 London bombings. Congress, this is not news: it is sensationalism trawling for dirt.

We watched the Inquiry unfolding day by day, opening up for public view the disgusting practices of the Murdoch media empire — the phone hacking, the cosy relationships between the press and the police, the even cosier relationships between the Murdoch press and the politicians at their beck and call, destroying the lives and reputations of anyone who challenged them.

Congress, the free press is one of the defining characteristics of a free society, but our press is not free. It is under the influence of a media mogul with a political agenda.

Journalism in this country has a long, proud record. Press campaigns have exposed corruption, exploitation and criminality. *The Sunday Times*, before Murdoch took it over, launched an investigation into the causes and consequences of the thalidomide disaster. It led the campaign for compensation and fought a long and hard battle on behalf of the victims. That is journalism, not scrabbling around in the bins of celebrities or hacking into the phones of bereaved families.

To conclude, journalists are put under pressure to deliver titillating stories, behaving unethically because the goal is profit and circulation, not to inform, entertain, educate and campaign. Therefore, Congress, please support the motion. Support the call for the conscience clause in journalists' contracts, the right for workers to be represented in their workplace and regulation of the press to bring about high standards and ethical behaviour. Congress, I proudly second the motion. (*Applause*)

Tony Burke (*Unite*) supported the Motion 71.

He said: Last year was the 25th anniversary of the News International dispute at Wapping when over 5,000 of our members were sacked by Murdoch overnight. I am not going to go through the details because the story is well-known. However, the News International scandal and the Leveson Inquiry have exposed alleged corruption and illegal activities at the very heart of the British political system. It has exposed a global company who, because of its power to destroy lives, reputations and careers, saw the laws that apply to the rest of us not applying to it. We have to look at how it happened. It did not happen overnight. A culture at NI was set at the very top.

Unite and the NUJ would argue that the absence of trade unions contributed to that culture of wrongdoing. Our unions warned about the consequences of a de-unionised workforce. The immunities from trade union recognition in the Employment Protection Act 1999, paragraph 35(4), given to Murdoch by New Labour, have ensured that strong, independent unions can never get recognition at News International. Let us be clear, the News International Staff Association was not, and is not, an independent union and in fact was denied its certificate of independence by the certification officer. Touched away in the legislation is paragraph 35(4), an incomprehensible provision which gives immunity from the duty to recognise a trade union where they have a pre-existing agreement.

It is true that we could get NISA de-recognised, but it is a non-starter. We would have to use a mirror image of the legislation that is in existence. It would be like turkeys voting for Christmas. It is an affront to free trade unionism and we believe that some of the appalling activities of journalists and management at News International would not have happened if there were free and independent unions at Wapping and at other editorial sites. We believe that free and independent unions could have, and would have, stood up to the wrongdoing that has happened at News International. Congress, we can only do that if Leveson also makes a recommendation to get rid of paragraph 35(4). We could consign it to the dustbin of history along with the whole sorry lot of them — Rebekah Brooks, Andy Coulson, James Murdoch, and the spooks and private eyes who have shamed a free and independent press in this country. I support the motion. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 71 was CARRIED*

Media, Entertainment and the Digital Economy

The President: Could we now move Paragraph 4.17. Prospect is going to raise a point on this paragraph.

Leslie Manasseh (*Prospect*) spoke to Paragraph 4.17 of the General Council's Report.

He said: Congress, I am going to speak specifically on the expected Communications Bill. Although the paragraph focuses very largely on issues around media regulation, that Bill will also cover the roll-out of a fast broadband network and it is that issue that I want to talk about in order to highlight the shortcomings of a government which is very big on broadband promises and rhetoric, but very weak on delivery.

We have been promised the best super-fast broadband network in Europe by 2015. We are a very long way from that now so the key issue is how do we get there? Here, the story is frankly threadbare. For the 65% of households who live in urban areas and who represent a good commercial investment, we can rely upon the market to provide a good service. However, for the other 35% who live in rural areas — 80% of the landmass of the UK — that will not happen. The market alone will not provide it, it never could and it never will. Without the right mix of investment and regulation, millions of households will be left behind.

The Government's response has been to allocate £530 million to local authorities and require them to reach agreements with local suppliers to provide appropriate

networks, but that funding is inadequate. Estimates vary, but meeting that ambition will cost billions, not millions, and it would be money well-spent on an infrastructure which we know will drive economic growth. The Government is, of course, in complete denial about the funding requirement. It is a classic case of parading and regularly repeating an ambition and then requiring others to meet it (in this case local authorities), but not providing them with the means to do that so that when they fail, as so many will, they will be the ones who are blamed.

Even the House of Lords recently described the Government's approach as based on a flawed prospectus, creating the spectre of a widening digital divide. Their report argues for a universal coverage by a fundamental strategic asset and key utility. I could not agree more. Broadband is not an optional extra; it is a fundamental strategic utility which can deliver enormous benefits to people as individuals, consumers and citizens. However, unless the Government regulates more effectively and invests more, people will miss out and we will be a nation of the connected and the disconnected, yet another form of disadvantage when we already suffer too many.

Time is running out on this. We can all play a role in highlighting the key issues behind the slogans and holding the Government to account for them. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

BBC cuts

The President: We move to Motion 72, BBC cuts. The General Council recommend supporting the Motion.

Donnache Delong (*National Union of Journalists*) moved Motion 72.

He said: You have just heard one side of the story of the UK's media, what was going on in News International under Murdoch's control, but the BBC has long represented the other side of the story. It is publicly funded, publicly owned, uncommercial (no advertising or connections with big business) and independent. It has public service broadcasting at its core, which is to give the public what it needs from the media.

Unfortunately, and very much connected to the story you have just heard, the BBC is under attack. The BBC has been under attack by the Murdoch family and News International for many years. You can go back to 2009 when James Murdoch, in his fairly unenviable tones, droned out a long speech of Right wing dogma and free market promotion. This is a quote: "The only reliable, durable and perpetual guarantor of independence is profit." Obviously, that statement is incredibly ironic given what we now know about News International.

Unfortunately, we know that the Tories were listening because if you look at what they were promising before the election, it was almost as if it had been written by James Murdoch and once they were in power, there were negotiations on the BBC licence fee. We do not know what those negotiations were because they took place behind closed doors between the Director-General of the BBC and the Government. We are absolutely convinced that at that time, just before the phone hacking allegations came out, the Murdoch family absolutely had the Government's ears. The new licence fee deal is a deal that threatens the BBC to its absolute core. It has frozen

the licence fee for six years. Not only that, but it has lumped many extra costs on to the BBC. It has moved over to the BBC payment for the World Service and a range of other things.

Since 2004, the BBC has now, in total, lost 7,000 jobs and these cuts are continuing. Under the ironic title of “Delivering quality first”, the BBC management has been cutting into its own services and its own capacity to service a lavish agenda dictated by the Government, clearly influenced by Murdoch. In July of last year, I stood on a picket line outside the BBC building at White City and I asked which side were management on. I knew which side the NUJ were on and we were joined by John McDonnell and Tony Benn. We were on the side of the BBC, but it was very clear that the BBC management, particularly Mark Thompson, was showing itself increasingly to be on the other side, lining up with the Tories and the Murdochs to destroy the BBC.

We now have a chance as Thompson is going. There is going to be a new Director-General of the BBC, George Entwistle. This motion is calling on the TUC is to join us, as one of the unions in the BBC, to put pressure on the new leadership. We hope to influence them to come over to our side in support of public service broadcasting. We demand that the licence fee deal that sold the BBC down the river is renegotiated to give us back a BBC of which we can all be proud. Please support. *(Applause)*

Christine Payne (*Equity*) seconded Motion 72.

She said: It is worth reminding ourselves that the BBC is unique and has a very special place in people’s hearts. I do not think many of us in this room very often

defer to the *Daily Telegraph*, but I have to agree with what they said in August about the Olympics. On the Olympic coverage, they said, “A national broadcaster free from political interference and free from advertising is a treasure we only really appreciate when it can be directly compared with its foreign counterparts.”

Free from commercial pressures, the BBC serves audiences who are not catered for and can be forgotten by other broadcasters and nowhere is this inclusiveness and public mission more apparent in the BBC than in the radio services. We do not celebrate enough the fact that the BBC leads the world in radio drama and short stories. In recent years, my members have been here at Congress speaking about this problem and right now there is a real danger that we are sinking below the critical mass that will keep these forms of entertainment viable. Arguably, this has already happened with the BBC World Service, which no longer features any radio drama at all.

For my members, the BBC is instrumental in nurturing and developing their talent. It gives them the opportunity to work with great material from new and established writers and to appear in high-quality programmes which are only possible with the involvement of the best production and creative workforces in the world. In the Midlands, my members are fighting very hard to hang on to what is left of BBC Birmingham. They fear that it will only be a matter of time before *The Archers* and the daytime drama *Doctors* are moved away from the region. 19% of the licence fee comes from the Midlands, but by the end of 2012, less than 3% will be spent there.

There is no doubt that these cuts will weaken the BBC and a BBC weakened by these cuts will be much more vulnerable to its enemies, the enemies who have consistently argued for the BBC to be privatised. However, there is an alternative and the Federation of Entertainment Unions has set out their alternative in this publication. The future of the BBC should not be to manage decline, nor should it be entail any more quick and nasty deals done without a chance for licence fee payers to have their say. The future of the BBC can, and should, be about retaining and creating decent jobs throughout the UK and continuing to lead the world in broadcasting as our public service broadcaster.

As Michael says, “You have to invest in success”, which is Equity’s slogan for the 20th October march, whether it is in theatre, film or in the BBC. I hope you will all join us in supporting this motion wholeheartedly. (*Applause*)

David Wilshire (*The Communications Union*) supported Motion 72.

He said: I am here to talk about the effects that the BBC cuts have had on CWU members working for a private company called Capita. These were CWU members who formerly worked for the Post Office and collected the TV licence fees.

We have discovered that Capita is what you get when you privatise Post Office jobs. That is why the CWU is committed to fighting privatisation in any form and will continue to do so, as was outlined in *The Morning Star* today by our General Secretary, Billy Hayes. Post Office members were transferred to Capita on 1st July 2002 when this company was awarded the contract. These members, up until that

point, had enjoyed the Post Office terms and conditions that had been negotiated by the CWU.

The first thing that Capita did when they were awarded the contract was to open a new site in Darwen in the North-West of England and employ the majority of people on that site on the minimum or just above the minimum wage. In fact, we had a case last year when Capita had to implement a small pay rise in order to get above the minimum wage as they were running very close to it. Following the freeze on the licence fee, a tendering process began for a new contract. On 5th December 2011, it was announced that Capita had regained this contract for a period of eight years, the contract starting on 1st July 2012. The contract was gained on the proviso that over the eight-year period, there would be £220 million worth of savings made, which equates to £22.5 million a year.

On 8th January 2012, as people were returning to work, Capita announced that it was going to decimate the main site in Bristol, where the majority of staff had been employed for a number of years, as well as closing a site in Glasgow. There was to be a loss of 300 jobs in Bristol with more job losses at the Glasgow site. This was following a national pay dispute where staff in Capita had been out on strike for four days, the last of which they timed to coincide with the 30th November pension dispute. They marched proudly alongside other unions on that day. When it was announced on 8th January that the Bristol site was closing, staff were told that the jobs would be transferred to the Darwen site in the North-West where 220 new jobs on the minimum wage would be created. They were told that they were replacing the 300 jobs in Bristol that were on the previous Post Office terms and conditions.

Therefore, we have a lot of sympathy with the NUJ and other unions about the cuts at the BBC and thought it was important to support the motion. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 72 was CARRIED*

The President: As I pointed out earlier, I said I was going to attempt to catch up with the business from this morning covering Motion 59 and Motion 68. My intention is to get them in now if possible. I certainly think we can get one in straight after Motion 73, which is the last scheduled item of business. We will therefore go to Motion 73 first and the NUT has indicated that they wish to raise an issue on paragraph 4.18.

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

Christine Blower (*National Union of Teachers*) spoke to Paragraph 4.18.

She said: This is the paragraph on the Olympic legacy. The TUC did fantastic work on the Olympic legacy, but a sports legacy from a government which has got rid of sports partnerships, that is selling off school playing fields for all it is worth and is opening free schools in buildings which have no play facilities, let alone sports facilities?

Helen Glover, the British gold medallist rower and an NUT member while she was teaching, and all the athletes who won medals in the Olympics and Paralympics, needed first-class facilities. That means investment in facilities and staff to teach them. 50% of the medals were won by those who were privately educated. However, we know that Mo Farah, Jessica Ennis and so many other winning athletes were

educated in comprehensives. A mass of talent exists everywhere and we need to make sure that all children and young people have those opportunities.

As time is precious, I am just going to conclude by offering you a joke from one of our executive members. When George Osborne went to the Paralympic Games, why was he booed by 80,000 people? It is because that is how many people the stadium holds. *(Laughter and applause)*

Work not play

The President: Can we now move to Motion 73, Work not play. The General Council are recommending support for this motion.

Gerald Newson *(Musicians' Union)* moved Motion 73.

He said: Congress, our motion today is to highlight and define the concept of what is work in the music industry. We, as professional musicians, are only too aware that much of the public and employers have the view that playing music for a living is rewarding in itself, the job must be free, therefore you can play for free and, by the way, what do you really do for a living?

Let me make it quite clear. Musicians go to work in exactly the same way as any other sector of society and expect fair and correct employment terms and attitudes to be implemented and respected. All too often, we are the victims of emotional blackmail with requests to donate fees for good causes or play for nothing as the exposure will be commercially beneficial and high-profile. Although the requests

may be well-meaning in most cases, it must never be a part of a musician's term of employment as music is a commodity which has an economic value. If a musician wishes to donate their fee, that is another issue, made on a voluntary basis and not under subtle employment pressure.

The recent successful Olympic Games have shown the world our artistic flair, our cultural heritage, our social diversity, our creative imagination and our skill in presentation, but we cannot stand back and let it ride on, or be built upon, the shoulders of unpaid musicians and workers. Without being properly paid under negotiated agreements, as expected in all other industrial sectors, there is a danger of diminishing our sense of fairness and greatness as a country and it can cast a shadow over our integrity and respect for the working man.

Musicians work for a living. It is not a fluffy world of playing for fun. It is a world where real people are working to bring up families and balancing household budgets. Working musicians are not highly-paid workers and the perception that they live in a special world, divorced from the realities of normal society, is a gross misunderstanding and simply untrue. When I go to work at Abbey Road studios on a Monday morning and the red light goes on at 10.00 a.m., I am very clearly at work. It is not about inspiration, prima donna attitudes or any other emotional artistic miscomprehension. It is simply that I start work. I work as any other professional works, such as a surgeon doing the first operation on a Monday morning in the middle of winter, the airline pilot with an early morning shift, the police, nurses, firemen and emergency services working under adverse conditions. That is the world of the professional and musicians are a part of that world.

We do not earn the enormous incomes of the star as sharing a stage with the headliner does not mean similar income levels. We are not Roger Daltreys or Paul McCartneys, but are working musicians relying upon each other and our respective unions to uphold our employment agreements. We do not expect any other area of a concert production to work for nothing and neither should we expect a musician to do so either.

I will finish my speech by saying that I could read all this again and replace the words “Musicians Union” with “Equity” and the word “musician” with “actor”. Our sister union is indeed under similar pressure and never let us forget that our industries are major contributors to the British economy. The musician is proud to have been a major contributor to the glorious Olympics. Now let us show the world not just our sporting skills, but also our Olympian industrial agreements and aspirations where we all, as professionals, have a right to fair and correct remuneration. Thank you for your time. I ask Congress to support the motion. *(Applause)*

Martin Spence *(Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union)*
seconded Motion 73.

He said: I am very sorry to be seconding this motion, not because it is not a good and important motion, but because I am sorry that we have to have the debate at all. We should not have to debate the principle of workers being paid for their work and that is actually what we are talking about here today. The mover was quite right. The problem that musicians faced at the Olympics is a problem that actors and performers face in other contexts. It is something that our BECTU members — technicians and

craft workers in media and entertainment — face in other circumstances and journalists face in some parts of the media. There is this perception that because the product of our members' labour is a leisure product or an entertainment product — it is your newspaper, it is your news bulletin, it is a film, it is a theatre performance, it is a musical performance or a musical recording —and something which you watch at home after work or something that you go to see on an evening off, somehow it is a pleasure or a leisure activity for our members to produce the product. It is not. It is bloody hard work.

Our members were paid at the Olympics, I am delighted to say. They were the people who were providing those fantastic images and pictures which went out to hundreds of millions of people around the world, showing the Olympic and Paralympic Games at their very best. They inspired people across the globe and it was a fantastic achievement. Camera operators, editors, broadcast technicians, loggers, runners and hundreds of thousands of people produced those images and they got paid. At the Olympics, Musician Union members did not. As Brendan said earlier today, they got the boundary wrong between what is a volunteer and what is a worker. It is a regular problem in our industries. Support this motion, support workers in the leisure and entertainment industries and help us put it to rest. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 73 was CARRIED*

Mind the Hunger Gap campaign

The President: I would like now to move to Motion 59, Mind the Hunger Gap campaign. The General Council supports the motion.

Dennis Edmondson (*British Diabetic Association*) moved Motion 59.

He said: Congress, the World Health Organisation states that malnutrition is the greatest single threat to global public health and while it might be convenient for us to think that this scourge is restricted to Third World populations, this is simply not the case. In the UK today, more than three million people are believed to be at risk of malnutrition and the vast majority, over 90%, are often recognised within our communities. This problem appears to be getting worse as sadly we hear almost daily of the fall-out from a Britain ransacked by cuts. Indeed, only last week, as we have already heard, Save the Children launched its first ever British campaign highlighting the disturbing increase in child poverty where one in eight of the UK's poorest children do not get enough to eat every day. We have also heard of the disturbing increase in food banks, pointing to the state of our economy.

Malnutrition impacts on people's lives regardless of gender, race or age and we know that it is most common in older people. You will therefore be shocked that an estimated one million older people in the UK struggle to eat even one decent meal a day. This scandal of hidden malnutrition is a major public health issue that urgently needs attention.

The BDA's Mind the Hunger Gap campaign aims to focus particularly on the plight of older people at risk of malnutrition living in the community. Having enough to eat and drink is one of the most fundamental human needs, but many vulnerable older

people do not have these basic needs met. Poverty, social isolation and fragmented services have left many older people, a high proportion of which are women, excluded and invisible within our society.

Malnutrition causes a wide range of psychological and physical problems including low mood and self-neglect, difficulty in keeping warm, reduced muscle strength and a weakened immune response that increases the likelihood of infections and illness, coupled with a longer recovery time and slower wound healing. As a result, the malnourished access healthcare frequently with more visits to the GP and a significantly higher rate of hospital admissions that tend to be of a longer duration. They are also more likely to be re-admitted to hospital. Overall, malnutrition costs the NHS over £13 billion annually — that is twice the burden of obesity — and yet this massive financial burden can be reduced by achieving good nutrition across the health and social care spectrum. So now is the time to act, especially as care is increasingly shifted away from hospitals and residential care homes into the community.

The recent Equality and Human Rights Commission inquiry into the homecare system in England highlighted that some social care budgets had been devolved for local implementation. One in three local authorities has already cut back on the care services that they provide in people's own homes and a further one in five was likewise planning to cut services within a year. This is an important opportunity to plan collaborative services to protect and enhance these vital services.

Dieticians are the only qualified health professionals that assess, diagnose and treat nutritional problems. We have the expertise to lead the nutritional pathway across the

health and social care system. We are keen to engage with key policymakers and work in partnership with unions to raise the importance of eradicating malnutrition. We therefore ask Congress to call on politicians to protect at least one meal a day by ring-fencing funding to ensure that adequate meal provision for older people continues to lie at the heart of community care.

You will hear in a moment from our Honorary President of the BDA, the fabulous Mary Turner, who will second this motion on behalf of the GMB, as I know she feels personally passionate about this important issue, as well as others. Individually, you can all help so I invite you to visit our stand in Auditorium 2 to sign one of our postcards and sign up to our ePetition for Mind the Hunger Gap. You will also find further details on the back page of the *New Statesman*. Please distribute the ePetition widely to family, friends and colleagues so that we can generate the required 100,000 signatures to send a clear message to the Government.

Finally, the theme of this year's Congress is a future that works. Many older people, living in poverty without enough to eat, are wondering whether they have a future that will work for them. Let us act now to help secure their future, a future of health, dignity and respect. Remember, do not just mind the gap; Mind the Hunger Gap.
(Applause)

Mary Turner (*GMB*) seconded Motion 59.

She said: I have the honour of being the Honorary President of the BDA, of which I am extremely proud. Congress, not a day goes by when I am not shocked by some new scheme that this Government comes up with to hit working people who are

struggling to cope, such as unemployed people, people on low incomes and anyone else that they can hammer. Their attacks on the elderly and the young by cutting Meals on Wheels and by taking away the entitlement to free school meals for hundreds of thousands of children whilst they bail out their banker friends and give tax breaks to criminal financiers is absolutely beneath contempt.

It is utterly unacceptable on every level that more than 350,000 children will lose the right to free school meals when the universal credit is introduced. It is a fact that for our elderly, having a nutritious hot meal every day can be a lifesaver. What has happened to Meals on Wheels is a disgrace. We now have outsourced meals, heated up in a van or delivered frozen every two weeks to be heated up in a microwave. The only human contact for the housebound elderly is having a frozen or microwave meal dumped in front of them. People with dementia sometimes do not know what day it is, but they are expected to manage a fortnight's worth of food at a time. They are left without home care at weekends, they often forget to eat or drink and then arrive at the casualty department on Monday mornings suffering from diabetic comas, dehydration, malnutrition and infections.

Congress, that is a fact. I witnessed it myself when I was unfortunately taken into hospital. No minimum nutritional standards were laid down. There was no ring fencing of funding. Thousands are left out in the cold. It is a disgrace that more than one million senior citizens cannot afford one meal a day and eat less than one meal a day. It is wrong that councils from Camden to Croydon and Southend to Sunderland have cut their Meals on Wheels services to balance their books.

Our critics will sneer about affordability and cost, but I do not see a cost. I see an investment in our children's healthy future and dignity for the elderly after their working lives. We have had to endure a bunch of no-nothing Tory upstarts who have not done a day's proper work in their lives. Even with this bunch of clowns — I would not pee on them if they were on fire (*applause*) — we should not be reduced to setting up food banks.

The Guardian newspaper recently revealed that half a million people a year will be in receipt of a food parcel by 2016. Welcome to the food banks where people queue up for handouts. They are elderly people, people with young children and people in shock after losing their jobs as part of the Government's final solution to making the workforce flexible. Congress, hunger is back in the 21st century in Britain. Shame on this Coalition and all they stand for. Congress, they have found plenty of money to bail out the banks. We should be able to provide at least three meals a day for young and old, not one. Thank you. (*Cheers and applause*)

The President: I am going to take the vote now on Motion 59. The General Council recommend supporting the motion.

* *Motion 59 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, we have one motion left, but I am mindful of the fact that it has been a long day. If Congress is agreeable, we will carry on. I do not want to rush the resolution, but I do not want to bounce people over until tomorrow. Are

people content to stay for another 10-15 minutes? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much. I will call Motion 69, Future psychiatric diagnosis in children and young people.

Future psychiatric diagnosis in children and young people

Kate Fallon (*Association of Educational Psychologists*) moved Motion 69.

She said: President, Congress, please support this motion. It highlights the numbers of children and young people who are reported to have mental health difficulties and expresses concern about future psychiatric diagnosis in children and young people.

Every day, there are media stories about the number of our children who have mental health difficulties. Only within this last week, YoungMinds has reported studies on male anorexia, self-harming and attempted suicides in the young. Reported data indicates continued increases in the numbers of children causing concern. Why? Mental health difficulties are closely linked with family, social and environmental factors.

When children are insecure and frightened, when they feel pressured and stressed, they demonstrate behaviours which should tell responsive adults around them that something is wrong. Something wrong may be family break-ups, bereavements, financial crises, substance abuse, physical abuse and mental abuse. Something wrong may be too much pressure to achieve high grades in exams or too much pressure to be very thin or very beautiful, to hang out with the cool kids or to have all the latest gear.

Here in the UK, the awareness of this link between children's environments and their mental health has increased. Successive governments have acknowledged this by putting more resources into support and help for the children and for the adults around them. We welcome the work that has been done thus far, bringing professionals together in order to do this. Our own members have received credit for their work in schools. We want this approach to continue. We want the issues which lead to children's mental health difficulties to be addressed to help children feel safe in their homes and their schools, to help the adults who love and work with those children to be able to meet their needs and to be helped when they struggle to do so. We want the children to be given support to cope with stress and pressure when faced with it. We need government policies which support strong, healthy communities, schools and families.

But we are worried. We are worried about the new addition of the internationally recognised medical diagnostic manual, DSM5, which is on its way from America and is due to be introduced here next year. The manual describes psychiatric disorders and provides a checklist for doctors to use in diagnosis. The new checklist is so broad that if adopted here without qualification, there may be many more children and young people being diagnosed with psychiatric disorders. New categories are subjective and unscientific. A shy child may be diagnosed with social anxiety. A sad, grieving or temporarily withdrawn child could be diagnosed with depression. When our children demonstrate worrying behaviours, we can say that there is something the matter with them, not that there are things the matter with the world they are living in.

Children whose needs are not being met by the adults around them will be termed as having a psychiatric disorder. Diagnoses of psychiatric disorders very often lead to drug therapy. We are worried that more children diagnosed with psychiatric disorders will lead to an increased use of drug therapy and long-term reliance on medication rather than an emphasis on changing the child's environment.

In America, there have even been concerns about links between the panel who drew up the new guidelines and some large pharmaceutical companies. Do you want large pharmaceutical companies deciding whether or not our children have psychiatric disorders? We cannot let this happen. We want NICE and the Department for Health to recognise the concerns about DSM5 and warn clinicians about its limitations. Congress, please support this motion. We want to improve help and services for children and not increase the numbers of them being labelled as psychiatrically disordered. Congress, I move and thank you. (*Applause*)

Cathy Tattersfield (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) seconded Motion 68.

She said: The Association of Teachers and Lecturers is happy to second this motion. It goes to the heart of what every educationist really believes in, that when a child has a problem which is then identified, the underlying causes of the problem should be addressed and dealt with. Quick fix solutions such as mentioned in this motion do not provide long-term answers.

Congress, there is only me now between you and your evening's entertainment so here is a tale with a moral to send you on your way. There were three TUC delegates who had a headache every morning. We might give them an aspirin, perhaps.

Actually, we all know that we should question them further. The first delegate, it seemed, had consumed eight pints the night before. The second one had struggled with the hotel air conditioning all night. The third one was new to Conference and found it difficult to keep up with the scintillating debate. They all had headaches.

For each one, if we were considerate brothers and sisters, we would propose different solutions. The first should drink shandy in future. The second should get the hotel to adjust the air conditioning or open a window. The third should perhaps be sent on a union learning course to aid their concentration. These solutions are long-term, unlike the aspirin which is temporary. And so it is with children, our pupils and the patients of our colleagues in the Association of Educational Psychologists. Their problems can be complex, requiring careful diagnosis, treatment and educational programmes.

I know from first-hand experience in my own special school that the collective knowledge, advice and support of the teams of professionals in finding transforming solutions which rescue the child and their families from seemingly intractable problems are the way forward. Express your concern about this quick-fix solution. Do not take aspirin. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 68 was CARRIED*

The President: Thank you very much for your co-operation. That means we have completed the business. Before you all rise, you had better listen as there are one or two small housekeeping issues. I remind delegates to complete the equality monitoring forms that have been sent to you. Delegates should have received pink

forms which should be returned to the delegation leaders. If any delegates have not received the form, they should see their delegation leader. Delegation leaders should return their green forms in the box provided at the TUC information stand situated near the entrance of the Brighton Centre.

Could I also remind delegation leaders that the ballot for Section C of the General Council takes place tomorrow morning. Unions eligible to vote for Section C should collect their ballot papers from the TUC information stand situated near the entrance of the Brighton Centre from 9.00 a.m. Ballot papers will only be provided in exchange for the official delegate form. Please note that the ballot closes at 12.00 p.m. tomorrow. Thank you for your indulgence. The Congress stands adjourned until 9.30 tomorrow morning. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

(Congress adjourned)

