

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 THREE
(Tuesday, 11th September 2012)**

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**Conference reported by:
Marten Walsh Cherer Limited,
1st Floor, Quality House,
6-9 Quality Court, Chancery Lane,
London WC2A 1HP.
email: info@martenwalshcherer.com**

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THIRD DAY: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH

MORNING SESSION

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

The President: Congress, could I just say many, many thanks to *The Hampshire String Quartet* who have been playing for us this morning. I think a round of applause is required. *(Applause)* Congress, before I go to the first set of announcements, I would like to call John Hannett from USDAW to make a brief announcement in relation to recent events over a resolution which appeared before us yesterday.

John Hannett (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*): Thank you for the opportunity, Paul. Can I just say that yesterday, Paddy Lillis, Deputy General Secretary of USDAW, moved the proposition on the CICA compensation scheme. This is a scheme which not only affects USDAW members in terms of being victims of crime, but many other unions. Congress, it is not often that we can come to the rostrum and say how successful we have been on the moving of a proposition, but at the TUC we had a good debate on this and, just to let you know, at the Committee stage in the House of Commons, the Coalition have withdrawn the proposals. *(Cheers and applause)*

This is a fantastic result and I want to thank the GMB and particularly the CWU in terms of the issue in the Dangerous Dogs Act. This is a great result. Let me just give you one health check on this. They may withdraw it, but it does not mean that it could not come back. It is highly unlikely that it will, but I just ask all unions to be vigilant to ensure this great victory. Also, I would like to thank the USDAW delegation and many other union representatives in USDAW for informing MPs and educating them on the devastating impacts that our members faced when

being attacked in the workplace. This is a great result. Be vigilant and make sure it does not come back. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, John. Congress welcomes that news. You will notice that I have been joined on the platform this morning by Ed Balls. Ed will be addressing Congress later this morning and I will formally introduce him in a little while.

May I remind delegation leaders that the ballot for Section C of the General Council takes place this morning. Unions eligible to vote for Section C should collect their ballot papers from the TUC information stand situated near the entrance to the Brighton Centre. Ballot papers will only be provided in exchange for the official delegation form. Please note that the ballot closes at 12 noon.

Presentation of Lay Reps Awards

The President: Congress, we are going to start the official business this morning by recognising the immense contribution made by the lay activists in our unions. The first award to be presented is the Organising Award, which this year goes to Darren Arnold of the RMT. Darren joined the RMT as soon as he started work on the Docklands Light Railway eight years ago and he first became active in the union four years' later. Over the last two years, he has negotiated an Olympics bonus, protected terms and conditions and persuaded the company to partially re-open its final salary pension scheme. Thanks to his efforts, 90% of his colleagues are union members. Congratulations, Darren.

The winner of this year's Learning Rep Award is Jeanette Dunbar of Unite. When Jeanette's employer, Diageo, announced its intention to close its Johnnie Walker plant in Kilmarnock three years ago, Jeanette was at the forefront of the fight to save the plant. She also decided to train as a union learning rep to help her colleagues to prepare for the future. With the support of the local college, Jeanette and her team ran 22 courses that helped over 200 of her colleagues avoid redundancy and find new jobs in the company. Congratulations, Jeanette. *(Applause)*

This year's Safety Rep award goes to Peter Ammundsen of USDAW. Peter has been a strong advocate of safer workplaces, having witnessed fatal accidents when he was working at the Liverpool Docks. He now works in a Tesco store in Liverpool where his commitment to the safety and welfare of his colleagues has continued. To prevent workers carrying heavy loads, Peter got the company to invest in electric trucks. He also played a key role in making sure that a refit of the store was completed without any major safety problems. Congratulations and thanks for your hard work, Peter.

Our final presentation for now is the Award for Youth. This is awarded to Stephen Heyward of PCS. Stephen has used his campaigning efforts against the Government's cuts programme to revitalise union activity at his branch at the Department for Work and Pensions in Merseyside. He has built membership up to 95% and, as the Young Members' Officer for his branch, he has recruited over 150 young members. Congratulations, Stephen.

I think we can say that we are very proud of the contribution of those award winners and, of those who were nominated, the standard was incredibly high. Our thanks go to all lay members across all unions as without their work the union Movement would not exist so let us give a special clap to everybody. *(Applause)*

There is one more award, but unfortunately my friend and colleague, Mary Turner, of the GMB is unable to be with us right now to collect her Women's Gold Badge Award. This will be presented to Mary at the end of this morning's session. Congress, that completes the Lay Reps Awards. You can read more about the award winners' achievements in the Congress guide. I am sure you will want to join me in sending our congratulations to all the award winners.

I would now like to move to paragraph 10.3. Before I introduce our guest speaker this morning, can I please ask the photographers to take into consideration the needs of delegates during the next session. Delegates, can I ask you to appreciate that the photographers are going about their job of work, but perhaps photographers would remember that this is a delegates' congress and not a press conference. (*Applause*)

Address by Rt Hon Ed Balls, MP, Shadow Chancellor, plus question and answer session

The President: Congress, it is now my pleasant duty to welcome the Shadow Chancellor, Ed Balls. Ed is the Labour member for Morley and Outwood and a proud member of Unite, Unison and the Co-operative Party. No stranger to Congress, Ed was previously in government as the Labour Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and the Economic Secretary at the Treasury. He is here with us today in his role as Shadow Chancellor and not, as David Cameron once referred to him as, "the most annoying person in modern politics". Well, we will wait and see! Ed will first address Congress and then, as agreed, there will be a question and answer session giving delegates a chance to put their questions to him directly. Ed, you are very welcome here today and I invite you to address Congress.

Ed Balls: Congress, it is a great honour to speak to you today. Thank you, Paul, for that introduction and for your leadership and support over recent years in fighting the BNP, in campaigning for free school meals and in standing up for jobs and a fair deal for working people right across the country.

At the very beginning of this speech, can I just say this. In the days after the fabulous and frankly nation-changing Paralympics Games, a week in which the whole country saw first hand not what disabled people cannot do but the excellence they can achieve, contrast that to the thousands of disabled working people who have proved that with the right help they can work, but have now been thrown on the scrapheap with no guarantee of a new job to go to, and let me commend too the work the GMB has led to campaign against the betrayal of Remploy workers.

(Applause)

Congress, what do you expect from a government and a Prime Minister who think that you restore consumer confidence and tackle insecurity at work by allowing employers to hire and fire at will, that you end recession and kick-start the housing market simply by making it easier to get planning permission for a conservatory, and you tackle gender discrimination by telling a 54 year-old woman Cabinet minister that she is too old to do the job and then appointing a 56 year-old man instead? What a contrast to this trade union Congress, proud this week to appoint your first ever woman General Secretary. *(Applause)* Let us take this opportunity to congratulate your General Secretary Elect, Frances O'Grady. Congress, I can think of no better person than Frances to teach David Cameron this fundamental truth: you do not have to be butch to be a strong, tough and principled leader. *(Applause)*

Let me add my congratulations to all the Gold Medal winners who have been presented with their awards today. Paul made the point a moment ago that we rightly celebrate the fabulous volunteers who made the Olympics such a success over the last few weeks, but let us also celebrate the trade union lay members who day in, day out voluntarily give up their time, energy and commitment to stand up for the rights of trade union members across our country. I know that Mary's award is coming later on, but can I just say to Paul that there is no person I know who has fought harder to defend members in tough times and also to stand up for social justice than our friend and colleague, the GMB's President, Mary Turner.

As for me being the most annoying person in British politics according to David Cameron, every time he says it, I have no idea if I should be proud or embarrassed to be given this accolade. The truth is that the *Sunday Times* corrected the record a few months ago. They asked the public in an opinion poll, "Who is the most annoying person in British politics?" The answer was that David Cameron is just as annoying as me, George Osborne is more annoying than me, Nick Clegg is more annoying than any of us, but the most annoying person in British politics, after all these years, is still Peter Mandelson. Peter and I have talked about this and we are both clear. If David Cameron and George Osborne think that we have been annoying so far, they have seen nothing yet and that is my pledge to you, Congress. (*Applause*)

No one here needs me to tell them that these are tough times. Britain is just one of two G20 economies in recession, the longest double dip recession since the Second World War. Living standards are facing the biggest squeeze since the 1920s with prices rising faster than wages. Unemployment is high with long-term youth unemployment rising month by month. Also, the cost of this economic failure means that borrowing is going up by a quarter so far this year compared with last year.

Congress, it does not have to be this way. There is an alternative; there always was an alternative. The Conservatives cannot say that they were not warned because I remember very well that two years' ago, at the TUC Congress, your General Secretary, Brendan Barber, highlighted the reckless gamble the Coalition were set to take with the economy. He warned that the Cameron/Osborne plan risked choking off recovery and making a difficult situation worse. Brendan — you called it 100% right two years' ago and, more than that, you and this Congress stood out against a media and political consensus, not just on behalf of your members but on behalf of working people across the country. I have to say that that once again showed the courage, calm judgment and commitment to jobs and social justice which has embodied and characterised Brendan Barber's ten-year tenure as the General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress and we thank him for the service that he has given to the trade union Movement.

(Applause)

I am proud to say too that with Ed Miliband and my Shadow Cabinet colleagues, we have stood side by side with you over the last two years. We have argued, campaigned and marched with you to make the case for the alternative. Just remember what the Tories said two years' ago. They said that faster tax rises and the biggest spending cuts of any major economy would secure the recovery and make us a safe haven. They said it would deal with our debts and they would do it in a fair way as, "We are all in this together."

Secure the recovery? We are in a double dip recession. The economy has contracted by 0.6% over the last two years since George Osborne's spending review. Deal with our debts? This year, borrowing is £9 billion higher than in the same period last year. Borrowing has not gone down. It has gone up by a quarter under George Osborne's plan. The rise in borrowing is not to

invest in jobs for the future, but simply to pay the mounting costs of his economic failure. As for, “We are all in this together”, you do not hear that phrase from Conservative ministers very often any more, especially from a Chancellor in whose Budget he said that he wanted to raise taxes on caravans, pasties, churches, charities and pensioners. However, his priority was to spend £3 billion on a tax cut for people earning over £150,000 and a £40,000 tax cut for millionaires. Millions are paying more in tax so that millionaires can have a tax cut.

That is why I hear trade union members saying up and down the country, “It is the same old Tories, helping the privileged few by hitting the many.” As Brendan said at the weekend, we now risk a lost decade of slow growth and high unemployment which will do long-term damage. Over 33,000 companies have already gone bust since the General Election. Investment plans have been cancelled or diverted overseas. New ideas and new inventions are going to other parts of the world to be taken forward. Our economy is weaker with capacity lost. I very much fear that when recovery finally comes, our economy will be more prone to inflationary pressures with long-term youth unemployment becoming entrenched, which will damage young lives, racking up costs which we will all have to pay. It will be not short-term gain for long-term gain, but short-term pain causing long-term damage and a long-term price for this Government’s failure.

At the same time, the Coalition Government is also using the cover of this deficit reduction to mount a full-scale assault on our public services and those who work in them. There is a reckless NHS reorganisation costing billions and risking putting profit before patient care. In education, there are market-based school reforms with Michael Gove now finally talking openly about profit-making schools. There are also deep cuts to policing which are already hitting frontline services, all of which are rightly being challenged by Unison, the NUT, NASUWT, the ATL, the Police Federation and many other trade unions in this hall today.

I say to Brendan, to Frances and to all the General Secretaries in the hall that we understand the need for action now, a change of course and a plan for jobs and growth. The fact is that you and your members cannot just sit back and wait for a Labour government. Despite the valiant efforts of Labour councils up and down the country, the reality is that the damage is being done now. That is why we have set out over the last year five immediate steps that the Government should do right now, things that Labour would do if it was in office. We would repeal the bank bonus tax, build 25,000 houses and get 100,000 young people back to work. We would genuinely bring forward long-term investment in schools, in transport and in roads. These would not be funny schemes but real money for real investment.

We would also reverse for a temporary period the deeply damaging VAT rise with an immediate one-year cut in VAT on repairs and maintenance to 5% to help homeowners and small businesses and boost construction. There would also be a one-year National Insurance tax break for every small firm in our country to help small businesses grow and to create jobs. Families, businesses and every one of your members are crying out for a change of course and some hope for the future and they want action now. That is why Ed Miliband and I totally understand and share your frustration, worry and concern expressed at this Congress.

You say that strikes must always be a last resort and the last thing that the vast majority of trade members want at a time of such uncertainty in our economy is strikes over the coming months. It is not what we want and it is not what the public want, but when Coalition ministers warn that they will have to legislate if they see a return to the return of the 1980s, what we are really seeing is Tories itching to provoke a row about strikes so that they can blame the stalling recovery on trade union members and working people. *(Cheers and applause)* Let us be honest, it is David

Cameron, George Osborne and Nick Clegg who should be admitting now that their plan has failed. They are the ones who should be changing course in the coming months.

Let us say loud and clear that nobody here wants a return to the hatred, division and confrontation of the 1980s. We do not want a return to the strikes and lost working days. There were seven times more days lost in strikes in the 1980s than under the last Labour government. We do not want a return to the rising child poverty, the decaying school buildings and the long NHS waiting lists of the 1980s. Above all, we do not want a return ever again to the mass youth long-term unemployment which scarred the 1980s, when young people left school or college and went straight into unemployment with opportunities denied. It was a terrible waste of talent which scarred our country for a whole generation. David Cameron may want it, George Osborne may want it, but we never want to go back to the 1980s in this Labour and trade union Movement.

We know too that it will fall to the next Labour government to clear up George Osborne's economic mess and it is going to be hard. Ed Miliband and I have said for many months that the Government's failure — no growth, rising borrowing, with our economy permanently weakened — means that the next Labour government is now set to inherit a substantial deficit that we will have to deal with. That is why however difficult this is for me, for some of our colleagues, for our supporters across the country, when we do not know what we will inherit, we cannot now make commitments about what the Labour government can do to change spending cuts or tax rises in two or three years' time. Unlike Nick Clegg, we will not make promises we cannot keep before a General Election.

Credibility is based on trust and trust is based on honesty. We have to be honest with the British people. Under a Labour government in this Parliament, there would have been cuts. On spending, pay and pensions, there would have been difficult decisions and disappointments from which we cannot, and will not, flinch. The question the public will ask is, “Who can I trust? Who will make difficult long-term decisions?” George Osborne has shown that there is no credibility in piling austerity on austerity, tax rise on tax rise, cut upon cut in the eventual hope that it will work when all the evidence is pointing to the failure of his plan.

A radical plan to kick-start our recovery, to put jobs first and to transform our economy will only be possible if we can win the trust of the British people that it is credible and it will work. We can stand up for jobs, for social justice, for equality and for fairness, but if we are out of government, we cannot deliver. That is the reality we face.

Last Friday, I met a constituent of mine called David, a construction worker and a UCATT member for over 20 years, with UCATT’s regional officer, Mark Martin. David told me that work is hard to come by at the moment with the housing market still flat on its back and the cancellation of Building Schools for the Future. He also described how employment in the construction sector has changed over his working life. David currently has an agency contract which he knows will be restarted before 12 weeks so he gets limited employment rights. He is paid above the minimum wage, but only because his £7.00 an hour job includes rolled in holiday pay, holiday he can never take. He has no sickness pay and no pension. He told me that he was still better off on the books of the agency than those of his work colleagues who, like him in the past, have been forced into self-employment and to pay for the privilege. He is much better off than if he was unemployed.

What my constituents like David want to know is whether we have a credible plan that will work to kick-start the recovery now, but also reforms that will make our economy work and make his life better for the future. That is why, in tough fiscal times, Ed Miliband and I said last week that we have to begin to set out the long-term reforms that we need to unlock long-term investment, tackle insecurity and invest in skills, which is the only route to long-term prosperity. That means a modern industrial policy to support long-term wealth creation, strategic support for manufacturing and services, and strong corporate governance to make sure that decisions are taken in the long-term interests of wealth creation and jobs. That is why we are examining the case for a *proper* British investment bank and why we want to see an international finance transactions tax too. Let us make sure in future that government procurement is not done in a way that disadvantages UK-based manufacturing production.

I am determined that we again look more widely at the issue of bogus self-employment in the construction sector. There is a careful balance to be struck. We do not want to undermine genuine self-employment but nor should contractual arrangements be distorted and misrepresented to avoid tax and undermine proper terms and conditions. It is not fair to taxpayers and it is not fair to your members either. That is why I have asked the Shadow Chief Secretary, Rachel Reeves, to look again at the 2009 proposals for reform, radical proposals taken off the table after the General Election, and to consult with the TUC, UCATT and employers to see if there is a better way forward. Construction is one of our most important industries. Let us work together to make it stronger, safer and fairer for the future.

We also need radical reform in our banking industry, reform which the Government is now planning to water down. We were right to reject the absurd Tory claim that the global financial crisis was caused by too much public spending here in Britain. We cannot say this often enough

— it was not too many teachers, nurses or police officers here in Britain which made the Lehman Investment Bank go bankrupt in New York. *(Applause)* Nor was the global financial crisis caused by the hundreds of thousands of working people earning ordinary salaries, who work hard every day behind the counter on every high street. People employed in the financial services in Leeds, Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol as well as London were as shocked and dismayed as everyone else at the gross irresponsibility of a few millionaire bankers at the top who caused such damage and gave their industry a bad name. People working in financial services on ordinary salaries want tough regulation and banks to work for the long-term interests of our economy. They do not deserve to be pilloried for their hard work and their service. *(Applause)*

Paul, let us work together to make our economy stronger for the long-term and to improve the working conditions of your members and my constituents. I was proud to be part of the Labour government. We did not get everything right. Sometimes we disagreed. Sometimes we were right to disagree and if we were right, I am not going to be shy of saying so. However, sometimes we were wrong. When TUC members made calls which we did not hear and which, in hindsight, we should have heard, I put my hands up. It was TUC members who told us to address the housing shortage and we were too slow to unlock the doors to councils investing in new housing. It was TUC members who first told us to implement the Temporary and Agency Workers' Directive and to strengthen enforcement of the minimum wage and that was right too.

Over 13 years, working together, based on our common values, we also did some good things — from tax credits to the national minimum wage; to guaranteed holidays and the campaign for the living wage; from the right to join a trade union and be represented; to new rights for mums, dads and carers in the workplace; from the windfall tax and the New Deal; and the work we did

supported by the Fair Tax Campaign to tackle tax avoidance. We must keep working together on these vital issues.

In my time in education, on school standards, on discipline, on anti-bullying, on free school meals, Labour has worked with trade unions to make our economy and our country stronger, fairer and better. As fair pay and progression is just as important to teaching assistants, caretakers, cleaners and lunchtime supervisors as to teachers, nurses, doctors and the police, I was proud to work with Unite, the GMB and Unison to set up the school support staff negotiating body, a body Michael Gove has now abolished. He is making a profound mistake. In my view, the Government is quite wrong to undermine the independent pay review bodies and to pursue a wholesale agenda for regional and local pay bargaining which will set hospital against hospital, school against school and be both unfair and more costly. We must make that argument together, Congress. *(Applause)*

In conclusion, Brendan and Frances, we are not always going to agree on every issue. That is the reality in a mature relationship. However, I sincerely hope that whatever disagreements we may have along the way, you and your members will never stop giving me and the rest of the Shadow Cabinet plenty of strong, tough advice. I do not think you will need encouragement to do so. In the Labour Party and the Co-op Party, we value the commitment to a strong, long-term economy and social justice that is this Congress at its best.

We know the Government has failed. We see it all around us. This is no time for complacency for Labour. Yes, we are ahead in the polls. Yes, David Cameron looks increasingly trapped with an economy plan which is not working, with a Conservative party deeply divided and a Chancellor he cannot sack even though he knows George Osborne is the problem and not the

solution. Labour cannot sit back and wait for Tory failure to hand us victory. That is the complacent road to failure for our party.

We have to make a credible case for how Labour can kick-start the recovery and transform our economy if we are to win back the support of working people in the ballot box when the General Election comes. We must do this because, as you know, when living standards are squeezed, we all know who pays the price. When public services are scaled back, we know which communities lose out. When unemployment becomes entrenched, we know which areas suffer most. When only some children succeed, we know which children will be left behind.

Rest assured, Ed Miliband, the whole Shadow Cabinet and I are determined to take this fight to the Coalition and show, for the sake of millions of working people across our country, that there is a better way. Congress, let us be confident that there is an alternative. Let us win the argument for that alternative in the country. Thank you for having me today. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Ed, for that address. I am now going to hand over to the General Secretary who will chair the Q&A session from the rostrum.

The General Secretary: Good morning, Congress. As you know, we have invited unions to indicate whether they want to put questions to Ed. I hope to get 10 or 11 questions in during this time. The first group of questions is around an issue touched upon in his remarks about the rebalancing of our economy. We will take the first three questions and then give Ed a chance to respond on those points.

Mark Lyon (*Unite*): My question is about a balanced economy with the role of manufacturing. The financial crisis has demonstrated beyond any doubt how over-reliant the UK economy has become on financial services. What do you intend to do to rebalance the economy and to make sure that we have a strong and sustainable manufacturing sector? Will your industrial strategy also include having a specific minister for manufacturing? (*Applause*)

Sue Mather (*Community*): Community represents thousands of manufacturing workers across the UK. Many employers have been cutting back on investments and struggling with access to credit. Would a future Labour government back a British investment bank to secure the future of British industry and where do you think the Tory-led Government has got it wrong in its support for British manufacturing? (*Applause*)

Frank Tyas (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*): In government, will you provide additional funding for social housing in order to ease the housing crisis and to kick-start the construction industry and, if so, in what form will the funding be provided?

Ed Balls: Mark, first of all, the answer is that the economy has to change radically for the future. We are not going to go back to the way things were in the last 10-20 years. We have to be concerned as to where the jobs will come from but, more importantly, the highly-skilled highways jobs on which we can build and from which we can export, with both manufacturing and services side by side. We have to start by saying that emphatically we need a strategic industrial strategy. There is no point in us having a debate about whether or not we need an industrial policy. We emphatically need an industrial policy and that is what we are working on very hard at the moment. We have the Cox Review looking at how we can tackle short-termism.

We are looking at the issue of skills and Ed Miliband will talk about that at the Labour Party Conference.

I have to say that an industrial strategy does not mean scrapping capital allowances for investment. It does not mean getting rid of the Regional Development Agencies, in my view. I was down at Longbridge a few months ago, the day before the Chinese Premier was coming over to open the new line of the MG car. Meeting the owners, they said, “It has been a really important process that we have gone through from the difficult times in 2005. The thing that brokered the deal to bring in the new Chinese investment was Advantage West Midlands. The Chinese Premier wants to congratulate the RDA for brokering that deal and making it happen, but we do not know how to explain to him that the new Government has decided to abolish the Regional Development Agency in the meantime.” That is not industrial policy: that is the absence of an industrial policy.

Today, Vince Cable will talk about his industrial plan. He talks about a business bank, but he is not saying what it will be, how it will be funded or when it will happen. We have said very clearly that we want a proper business investment bank — we are looking at how we can set that up — which will fill that funding gap for small businesses and get our economy moving.

The other thing which Vince Cable said on Sunday was that the biggest problem in our economy is the lack of demand. He is completely right because the recovery is being choked off because of the lack of demand. There will be nothing in Vince Cable’s announcement today which will make any difference to the lack of demand in our economy, just as there was not last week in the Government’s announcements on housing. If you are actually going to get this recovery moving, there has to be a genuine kick-start to housing.

We have said two things: repeal the bank bonus tax and build 25,000 houses, a £1 billion injection. I would like to go further than that by bringing forward housing investment. The reason why houses are not being built is not because of Green Belt planning restrictions, but because George Osborne cut the affordable housing budget by 60% in the last year and because the economy is flat on its back with no confidence amongst consumers, house-builders or the construction sector more widely. Until you change that with an alternative plan for jobs and growth, you cannot make a difference. That is why Vince Cable's plan today will just be a damp squib. It is the sixteenth time he has announced a new industrial strategy in the last year-and-a-half and I think that says it all.

The General Secretary: Thank you, Ed. We now have three questions on issues around wages and tax policy.

Kate Hudson (*The Communications Union*): Do you acknowledge the important role that raising low pay can have as a means of increasing consumer demand and boosting growth and, if so, what policies would you pursue to achieve this? (*Applause*)

Martin Johnson (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*): On the same theme, do you support the TUC analysis of the damage caused by the decline of the wage share of the economy? If so, what Labour policies will aim to reduce economic inequality?

Angela Aboagye (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*): If Labour were elected again in 2015, how soon would you introduce a financial transactions tax? Would you follow the example of

the Germans, the French, the Italians and many other EU members who are likely to out-function in FTTs by 2015?

Ed Balls: The budgets for the last two years showcased the muddled thinking of the Tory Government. They think that the only way in which you stimulate people at the top on the highest incomes to work harder and to spend more is to cut their taxes, which is why we have seen the top rate tax cut. Apparently, the only way to get people on lower and middle incomes to work harder is to raise their taxes and cut their incomes, which is what we have seen with the cuts in tax credits for people on the lowest wages in work. That is perverse and there is no way that that kind of strategy is going to boost the recovery.

We think that George Osborne, right now, should admit that he has got it wrong, say that he will not cut the top rate of tax, and instead not go ahead with the pension tax rise and reverse those incredibly damaging cuts to tax credits for people in part-time work on £16,000-£17,000 per annum. I have to say that the USDAW campaign on tax credits over the last year has been brilliant.

Martin, I enjoyed reading your column in *The Morning Star*. I am not a daily reader, but I read it from time to time. It was good to see that today. You talk about the way in which tax and tax decisions can affect inequality. You are right that inequality is the main driver of that wage share shift. Last week, we talked about pre-distribution, which I have to say is a good idea, looking for a good label. I think that Dave Prentis was right to say that he did not think he was going to win supporters on the doorstep with a campaign for pre-distribution, but it is a very important idea. It says that you have to tackle the underlying sources of inequality in society and that is what Martin is challenging us to do. It is the inequality in the provision of education,

spending on education, the availability of skills and what happens with the casualisation of the labour market. An important part of that are the national minimum wage and tax credits. We want to change the way the economy works to make it stronger and fairer for the future.

Finally, on Angela's point, here in Britain we have a financial transactions tax already. It is called stamp duty. Other countries in Europe are looking at doing a similar kind of thing. It raises quite a few billion pounds every year. I want us to go further and not simply have a UK financial transactions tax, as we do with the stamp duty on shares, but to see if we can get an international agreement on a radical financial transactions tax. The only thing I would say is that it is impossible to apply that in every country of the world. That would be ridiculous.

George Osborne and David Cameron are doing nothing to pursue this agenda but, in my view, we need to push America really hard so that New York is part of this as well as London, Frankfurt and Paris. If not, the danger is that we just end up diverting tax revenues to the United States and it does not really make a difference. I want America to be part of an international financial transactions tax and I hope we can win that argument with our American colleagues. I am not so sure what will happen if Mitt Romney wins, but let us see.

The General Secretary: There are a couple of questions on issues facing public sector workers.

Liz Cameron (UNISON): I am a proud public service worker and, like many thousands of others, I am going through the third year of a pay freeze despite a 12% rise in inflation. In a situation where there are care workers, dinner ladies, teaching assistants and youth service workers like myself, in a Labour-controlled council, going through the second restructure in less than 12 months and, two months ago, taking a £3,500 pay cut, what is the response from our

Labour Party? Why is it that we hear you and Ed Miliband talk about supporting this Tory pay freeze when I am having to make hard-line decisions like whether I can pay my child's dinner money, whether I can get him a school uniform (*Cheers and applause*), whether or not I can pay my heating bill and whether or not I can choose to buy food? How on earth do you expect to get the support of hundreds of thousands of public service workers when you continue to repeat that position? (*Cheers and applause*)

Alan Grey (*Prospect*): Prospect is the union for professionals and managers across both the public and the private sector. Ed, it was good to hear in your address how you were proactive when you were at Education in creating the structure for the staff in education to achieve fair pay and progression, but there is an overwhelming consensus that public sector pay policy is a mess. Civil servants remain the largest group of public sector workers who have not been subject to pay reform and we desperately need a new approach that is evidence-based, transparent and fair. As the likely Chancellor in the next Labour Government, would you support the establishment of a pay review body for the civil service as a whole? (*Applause*)

Ed Balls: First of all, on Liz's question, after the global financial crisis, we had to make difficult decisions. Alistair Darling announced in 2009 a 1% average pay norm in the public sector, but he said that he wanted it to be done in a fair way with greater sacrifices at the top so that we could do more for the care worker, the dinner lady and the lower paid worker that you talked about.

George Osborne carried on that policy. He wanted to get off it and he always said that he would do it in a fair way. He has broken his promise on doing it in a fair way. He has not delivered the extra money that he promised to lower paid workers and we are holding him to account for that.

He has carried on with it without discussion. The reason why he is in the position he is in is because the economy has failed and unemployment is so high. The austerity is getting worse because of his policies.

The position we are in is really hard and I do not doubt that at all in terms of what you say, Liz, but the fact is that over the next three or four years, the Government is planning radical budget cuts which will lead to the loss of 700,000 jobs in the public sector. We have all said that those spending cuts have gone too far and they are too fast, but George Osborne is carrying on with that. The reality is that in workplaces up and down the country, Unison members, activists and negotiators and other unions are sitting down with Tory councils, and in particular with Labour councils, and saying, “How do we deal with the scale of budget cut?”

Difficult decisions are being made. In order to avoid as far as possible — and it is not being avoided in many places — wholesale compulsory redundancies, people are saying that they will continue with pay restraint because jobs have got to come first. I think that is the right choice at the moment. We cannot say, with credibility, that the first priority is more pay for existing workers when hundreds of thousands of people are losing their jobs. That is the reality and it is the reality because of George Osborne’s failure on the economy. As a Movement, we have always said, “Let us put jobs first.” That is the right argument for us and it is the best way for us to win the public argument that we need a plan for jobs and growth. I know it is hard, Liz, and I want things to be done in a fairer way, but I do not think we can argue at the moment, “Pay before jobs” as we have to say, “Jobs before pay.”

On Alan’s point about the pay review body, I have always been a strong supporter of pay review bodies. I do not want to make policy up on the hoof around civil service pay. The reality is that

pay review bodies have been quite good in terms of being sensible about public spending and they have also allowed us to have extra help for new workers in certain parts of the country (e.g. London teachers starting out) while being fair and avoiding a race to the bottom in terms of standards, or local schools and hospitals set against each other.

My instinct is to want the pay review bodies to be expanded in their role and not to be contracted. When the Government is talking — Michael Gove in particular — about a wholesale rush to decentralise pay bargaining, we know from other countries that it is expensive, unfair and does not work. It is about time the Government learned some lessons.

The General Secretary: Thanks, Ed. Some other areas were key questions about aspects of Labour policy.

Barbara Benham (GMB): The last Labour Government failed to regulate so many areas to protect the interests of the British people. In fact, Labour deregulated and removed controls over pricing in areas like energy markets. Labour failed to build social housing, they embraced PFI and lost touch with millions of people by taking their votes for granted. If you could turn the clock back, which two things would you have done differently? *(Applause)*

Darren Ireland (National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers): Why did Labour do nothing to repeal the anti-trade union laws and actually made matters worse *(Applause)* with legislation which has allowed employers to use the courts to stop workers taking strike action even when there has been an overwhelming vote in favour? Is Labour now going to support the repeal of the anti-trade union laws or remain a friend of big business? *(Cheers and applause)*

Janice Godrich (*Public and Commercial Services Union*): I have to say, Ed, that I find your answer to the question on public sector pay extremely disappointing. It is possible to defend jobs and to ensure that people get a decent and fair pay rise. I would like to see a Labour government standing up for public services and public sector workers. Talking about the disadvantage in our society, the Labour Movement founded the welfare state and our members in PCS administer it day in and day out. It is the hallmark of a civilised society that we treat with dignity those unable to work through unemployment or disability. Tomorrow, Congress will debate a motion on welfare which calls for any work experience schemes for the unemployed to be optional and paid and for the Atos work capability assessments to be scrapped. Do you support this and, if Labour form the next government, will you propose policy changes to that effect? (*Applause*)

Ed Balls: Taking Barbara's question first, there were areas where we did not do enough on regulation, there is no doubt about that. I will give you two. The reality is that we spent 13 years being attacked from the right — the Conservative Party and more widely — for being far too heavy-handed with regulation, but that is the nature of political debate. In retrospect, even though we were attacked like mad by the Tories for being too tough on financial regulation, with huge complaints about it being too heavy-handed — when we came in, we scrapped self-regulation and put in place statutory regulation for the first time — the reality was that financial regulation was nowhere near heavy-handed enough. I, and every person involved in every part of the world, will always regret that we were not tougher on financial regulation during that period and we had not ignored those who said that deregulation was the only forward for financial services.

The second area I will talk about on regulation is the labour market around immigration. After 2004, I think we were wrong not to have the transitional controls on immigration from the new

entrants to the European Union, but it has undoubtedly been a positive for our economy from the way that immigration has worked. However, it would have been better if we had listened to voices here who said that the only way to make that work in a fair way is to enforce the minimum wage and to move quickly to implement the Agency Workers' Directive. I think it was a mistake not to have the accession controls and it was a mistake not to move more quickly on agency workers. Those would be the two areas that I would highlight.

What I would say, Barbara, is that we had the longest sustained increase in investment in our National Health Service and in our education system that any government has delivered since the Second World War. In those areas, I am proud that we put our money where our mouth was in terms of backing public services.

Darren, I do not think the way in which you have described it is right. I share the frustration that people have in this room regarding the way in which the role of the courts has changed. You now end up having micro issues being dragged through the courts in order to disrupt the normal, proper trade union balloting process. I do think there is a case for looking again at the way in which the law is working. However, it is not right to say that Labour did nothing on anti-trade union laws. On recognition of holidays, Bank holidays, paternity rights and maternity rights, we actually took some important steps forward as well as on the national minimum wage. I do not want to go back to the 1970s: I want an effective fair, labour market which works for Britain in the 21st century. I think we should have a discussion about what we need to do for the future rather than the past. *(Comment made by a delegate from the floor)*

I understand you think I did not answer a part of Darren's question. We have a government at the moment which thinks from the Beecroft Report that the only way forward for our country is

to make things worse. That is crazy and we have to stand against that. We have to have a sensible discussion about what you need in order to have a modern labour market for the 21st century. It is not going back to the 1970s, it is going forward and it is a discussion that needs to be had.

Finally, on Janice's point, I am cautious about the way in which you have put your question. I know from the work capability assessment for my own constituency that it is causing huge problems and lots of appeals. We need to look at this again and the way in which experts and charities are worried about what Iain Duncan Smith is doing. It is a very important issue. However, what is also important is that we know from all the evidence that, with the right support — and that means quite intensive support in the early period when a person with a disability or an injury loses their job — people can get back into work and that is better for them for the future. If people are left for long periods in unemployment, it becomes much harder to get back into work.

In government, we were trying to ensure that people with disabilities received the support they needed, but we are now going in the opposite direction with the Government. However, I am not sure that just scrapping the capability assessment is the right way forward. It has to be done in a way which is genuinely about capability. The reality is that people in Remploy should be helped to get a guaranteed job for the future. That is not happening at the moment and that is the wrong way forward.

The General Secretary: Congress, we only have limited time so I will only be able to take two more questions due to the pressure of other business. Mitch Tovey from the TSSA has a question about one key sector, which is rail.

Mitch Tovey (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*): What do you think about the likelihood of a 6.2% increase in rail fares from January and the impact that it is going to have on people and their families already hard-pressed because wages are failing to keep up with inflation? The Rebuilding Rail Report produced by the Transport for Quality of Life for the rail unions recently indicates that if costs arising from the privatised industry were eliminated, fares could be cut substantially by 18% or more. Do you agree that this sort of approach would be better for passengers and public finances? While we are on the subject, you have a General Election coming up in a few years' time and you will be looking for popular policies so would you consider taking the railways back into public ownership? (*Applause*)

The General Secretary: This is the final question that I am able to take so I apologise to the other delegates.

Karen Smith (*Society of Radiographers*): What will the Labour Party do, if elected, to ensure that the policy of a mixed economy within healthcare returns the NHS as the principal provider of choice? (*Applause*)

The General Secretary: Thank you, Karen. So, it is the future of the rail industry and the health service.

Ed Balls: In terms of rail, Mitch, I think you know that the danger is that it will be worse than 6% because of the way in which the Government has changed the rules and allowed for certain fares to be almost double that. We have seen a big rise in fares in a way which is hitting families and commuters very hard at a time when wages are under real pressure. That is something that

Maria Eagle has highlighted, that we have campaigned on and that we will continue to highlight in the coming months.

As far as the railway coming into public ownership is concerned, when we came into government in 1997, we inherited a flawed railway system. The Railtrack privatisation could never have worked. The reason I am convinced that privatisation of the Post Office can never work is because of the experience of the Railtrack privatisation.

The question is whether we should be making these contracts work in a fairer way or should we spend what would potentially be billions and billions of pounds taking the rail industry back into wholesale public ownership? I am not sure, when we come into government in 2015, that expenditure on that scale is going to be the first priority, but let us keep working together.

Finally, on Karen's point, the thing about health is that it is not like buying a cup of coffee or a pair of shoes. There is something different about healthcare which means that, in my view, markets do not work. They do not work in a fair way and they do not work in an efficient way. You only have to look at the American healthcare system to see that, first, it is massively more expensive; and, secondly, it is hugely unfair. What President Obama has been trying to do is to curb the way in which those market forces work in the healthcare system.

The idea that we in Britain, under a Conservative government, should be allowing the health service to go in the opposite direction flies in the face of experience and history and is completely perverse. There has always been a place for the private sector in the health service, but the idea that you allow the profit motive to become the driver of healthcare decisions and you allow commissioning to be done by people who have a financial profit interest in outcomes in

health is very dangerous. Andy Burnham, Ed Miliband and I are determined not just to tinker at the edges, but to challenge the fundamental principles which are driving this Government's health agenda. That means challenging Jeremy Hunt, which we are all looking forward to doing in the coming months.

The General Secretary: Congress, I have been overruled by the President, who says that he will make up the time later if we can squeeze in a couple more questions. *(Cheers and applause)*
We will next have Christina Paine from the UCU.

Christina Paine *(University and College Union):* My question concerns the recent dire plight of London Metropolitan international students who have been told that they cannot be taught because of the tier licence being revoked by the UKBA. Do you agree that we should welcome international students here as they contribute to our economy and bring the benefits of diversity and multiculturalism to the UK? Will you support the call for international students to be removed from immigration statistics as permanent migrants? *(Applause)*

Natasha Gerson *(Equity):* Do you agree that the arts, and particularly the performing arts, should be classed as a vital public service? By that, I mean that the performing arts have an essential role to play in education, promoting and prompting local and national debates, helping to ensure a sense of wellbeing and, in turn, improving mental health, maintaining local and national cultural identities, adding to the economy and as a social history record. As such, would you agree that it is vital that governments not only protect funding for the arts but increase it? Furthermore, should central governments not be doing more to ensure that local authorities do more to protect their funding of the arts, recognising the role they play across every aspect of local authority work?

Donnacha Delong (*National Union of Journalists*): If Labour return to power in the next Parliament, what are you going to do about the monopolies which are controlling and destroying large parts of the media? That is not just News International, but also the groups in regional media such as Johnson Press, Newsquest, Trinity Mirror and a number of others? What will you do to break up those monopolies and introduce diversity into the media?

The General Secretary: Thanks very much. The questions finish on a hugely important issue. Ed, over to you.

Ed Balls: I think to be honest, Donnacha, and you will know this better than me, the way in which the print media is changing at the moment is happening so fast and potentially so radically, and actually so worryingly in terms of what that will mean for the existence and stability of our local and regional media, that it is very hard for us to look ahead and say where we will be in two or three years' time. But I absolutely am with you and want to have a local and diverse and vibrant local and regional media. I think it is very important for holding us and government to account. I do not want to see heavy-handed regulation of the press but clearly we are all looking forward to the outcomes of the independent inquiry in the coming months, and there has to be change, we all agree on that.

Christina's point, do I agree we should have international students and celebrate the contribution they make to our economy and our society? Absolutely. I think that the odd thing about the Government's immigration policy at the moment is they seem to be trying to crack down on those parts of the immigration system they think they can control, even if they end up cracking down on those parts which are likely to do most damage to our economy. I do not know the

details of what happened at London Met and there is a legal case happening at the moment, and if any institution is not properly putting in place the checks and controls, that is a problem and it needs to be sorted out. But what the Government did last week is send a message round the world which said that British higher education is turning against international students and the way in which those thousands of international students at London Met have been treated in such a pre-emptory way seems to me really disgraceful, and I hope the Government will look again at that. (*Applause*)

Finally, Natasha's point, I agree with what you said about funding and the arts. In particular, you asked about education. I am just going to make this point about education. I think in a way it goes to why we are different from the Tories, their vision of society, why they will do so much damage. When I was the Education Secretary I visited hundreds of schools round the country and I went to many primary and secondary schools. I saw many school councils. When you went into a good comprehensive school, mixed community, a challenged community, or whatever, one that was well led, the head teacher invariably would say, "Let me take you to the school council." He said, "Let me take you to a science lesson." He would then say, "Let me take you to see in action our GCSE in dance, performing arts, music, design technology, and sport." You would stand at the door watching a GCSE being taught in dance. The head teacher — and this happened to me so many times, it is not coordinated — would say, "See these kids. That GCSE in dance is going to get them their maths and their English GCSE. What this does is it shows them they are good and they can achieve, they enjoy it, and they believe, and it raises their aspirations and if we are good at leadership we take the excitement and the self-belief from a dance GCSE and we say, 'You can be good in maths as well.'"

What Michael Gove has said is dance, music, sports, design technology, is second class. He said we are not going to count them in the league tables; unless you are doing maths, English, history, science, French, you are not doing proper subjects. That is so out of touch with the reality of British education, the needs of our economy, and the motivation of young people in our country. *(Applause)*

So, I say to you, I do not want to fund the arts as a peripheral thing to enjoy. I want to use art, music, and sport, to inspire a generation to believe in themselves and succeed. The thing which the Paralympics has done is that it has made people with disabilities role models and heroes and it has persuaded many people with disabilities that it can be them too, and that is fabulous. We are in a position where now children across our country are saying, "I want to be David Weir," but actually that same inspiration and motivation needs to happen in our classrooms from great teaching and great leadership. Michael Gove, in my view, when it comes to aspiration and education achievement has not got a clue. *(Applause)*

The General Secretary: Ed, many thanks for that. Congress, my apologies to the colleagues that we have not had time to bring in. We have had 14 or 15 questions to Ed covering a host of hugely important issues. Thanks to you, Ed, for responding so fully on all the different points and we will look forward to working together with you in the period ahead. Ed, many thanks indeed. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Brendan. Thank you, Ed. Colleagues, I am sure you will give me your full cooperation in not overstaying at the mike in order that we try and catch up some of that time. I thought it was important to get as many delegates in to ask questions as was possible.

Delegates, we return to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report, Economic and Industrial Affairs, the section on Energy Policy and the Environment from page 63. I am going to call paragraph 4.11 and Motion 43, “Greenwash” and the sustainable production of energy. The General Council supports the motion but with an explanation and I will be calling Paul Noon during the debate to explain that position.

Economic and Industrial Affairs

Climate Change and Energy

“Greenwash” and the sustainable production of energy

John McCormack (*University and College Union*) moved Motion 43.

He said: I am moving this on behalf of the Trade Union Councils. Congress, this motion expresses great concerns at the record of the energy, oil and gas industry, and to try and put that into some form ——

The President: Colleagues, if colleagues want to leave the hall and I respect people need to go out, can you just have a bit of respect for the person at the rostrum, please. (*Applause*) Start again, John.

John McCormack: I want to try and put into context the gas and oil industries record on safety because I think it is crucial to the core of this motion. To do that I went back to 1967 to the Torrey Canyon disaster, which was a key point in that industry. The industry then turned round and said they had learnt the lessons from that and they would put their house in order. Let’s

look at the record and there it is, colleagues, hundreds and hundreds of incidents here of tankers and boreholes spewing millions and millions of gallons of oil into the ocean; so much for learning the lesson. The most recent, of course, is BP's Deepwater Horizon well in the Gulf of Mexico. The statistics there are still being calculated but there is one fact that we must never forget, that is, 11 workers lost their lives on that platform. It is not a statistic but a fact and a fact again we must never ever allow the industry to forget.

The latest wheeze by the industry is shale gas extraction where they squeeze the last drops of fossil fuels from the earth. It is a system where they drill a borehole into shale rock. They inject sand and water and chemicals under high pressure to cause hydraulic fracturing, more commonly known as "fracking". We have already seen the consequences of this activity. In fact, the first exploratory drill hole has been done near Blackpool and we have seen there that there are concerns already being expressed about water pollution and resource, and the possibility that it has caused two minor earth tremors. There is probably quite a few in this room that have been to Blackpool and during that visit maybe as part of that visit you felt that the earth moved. Now thanks to Cuadrilla Construction that actually is happening and what this movement has to do is to call for a moratorium on all fracking, as has been done in France, as has been done in South Africa.

We have to ensure that the future of this country, in terms of energy, is based on real green energy, real renewable resources, and we have the coal at a macro and micro level for activities to promote that. At the macro level we have a demand that there is proper investment into solar photovoltaic energy, into wind, into wave, and into tidal forms of energy production, all of which are renewable. We have to say to the industry, and convince this Government, that we will not accept the big greenwash con that many energy industries are putting forward, that their

activities are environmentally friendly. Colleagues, they are not and we need resources and we need research to ensure that that is the case.

We call for real investment into real green energy. We encourage the establishment of green reps and environmental reps within our workplaces so that collectively and together we can promote real energy, real green energy, put the con of the greenwash to one side and make a difference to the environment of our country. Please support, colleagues.

Chris Baugh (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Motion 43.

He said: I think first reflecting on the revival in activity and growing importance of trades councils in organising in communities against the cuts and around climate change, reflecting the pressing urgency of decisive action on this issue, reflecting, as John referred to, the growing role of green reps, touched upon and confirmed in the LRD TUC report, and of the role of unions in holding the Government and employers to account, it is worth considering a couple of press releases to see where we are. They were issued by the Department of Energy and Climate Change in May of this year on successive days.

On Tuesday, 22nd May, it said the Government's new Energy Bill will help the UK to move away from high carbon technologies. The following day, Wednesday, applications for new oil and gas drilling in the North Sea have broken all previous records. The Government and the new minister know that it is impossible to reconcile these two statements. The draft Energy Bill, by various devices exempts, both gas and coal plants from targets for cutting carbon emissions set out in the historic Climate Act, and of course the Government acting in the interests of major energy companies slashed subsidies to feed in tariffs choking off investment into small scale renewable production. I would argue in the short time in office the Government's claim to be the

greenest government ever is on a par with, “We are all in this together” as one of the most fraudulent claims ever made by leading senior British politicians.

This motion, as John alluded, talks about two further areas of environmental risks, the little covered move from landfill to waste for energy incinerators, and in a nutshell this is about profits from burning waste rather than recycling, and, again as John referred, plans to exploit the massive shale gas reserves. On that particular point, PCS welcomes the proposal to work with local campaigners. The North West TUC organised a very successful conference in July around the issue. My point here is that my home town, Blackpool, hit hard by recession and cuts, with some of the poorest boroughs in the UK, not rich, obviously poor areas, deprived areas, is in fact rich in the wind and wave powers to fire offshore wind turbines that are entirely possible and affordable.

Now, as somebody said, if the planet Earth was a bank, the G20 and the IMF would have stepped in to save it. The point here is to use the opportunity of this crisis to put in alternative efficient energy and new housing that is needed, clean integrated rail, publicly owned rail network, and most importantly to rebuild a manufacturing sector by proper investment in renewables. In conclusion, make sure that working class interests are central to this debate. That is why unions need to play an important role. Apology for overextending my welcome, but please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Ronnie Draper (*Bakers, Food and Allied Workers’ Union*) supported Motion 43.

He said: I am speaking in particular to the part of the motion that deals with fracking. A year ago I thought the first person who talked to me about it was actually swearing at me. I am not a geologist and I do not profess a great expertise. I do not understand how an energy industry

condones a process that can cause minor earth tremors, the pollution of our environment, can make our water taps combustible, and can cause our properties to become uninsured. It sounds like one of those plots from a science fiction movie but this is real science impacting on our lives.

Why would you want to support an industry that causes man-made fissures in the earth, across the globe, without looking at the cumulative effect on the earth's crust? Remember, as the mover said, the tremors that happened in Blackpool last year; they were caused by fracking. Why should we support an industry that does not disclose the chemical cocktail that it is pumping into fracking wells polluting our water table? A polluted water table has the potential to poison our drinking water, our produce and our livestock. It is an industry that causes more environmental problems than potential benefits to us.

In a land where we are regularly running short of water and have rationing, the fracking industry can use between one and seven million gallons of water on every single drilling and each borehole can have 17 drillings. That is 119 million gallons of water on a single well. It is not just the use of water; it is how we dispose of it once it has been poisoned. The other question, what about the sand that is used in the process, where do such vast amounts of sand come from and does the removal of it in itself cause an environmental issue? Comrades, the issue of insurance is also going to become a problem. I understand the Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company already refused to insure properties where fracking takes place.

I want to finish by saying that we plan our energy over a year, from January 1st to December 31st and the rate that we are using energy is way above where we need to be. This year our energy consumption, our overshoot day, was in August. We are in energy debt, comrades, and so other

renewable energies need to be looked at, solar, wind, and tide as alternatives. I would like to call for a moratorium on fracking so we fully understand the full impact that it has on society. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Paul Noon (*General Council*) supported motion 43.

He said: I am speaking on behalf of the General Council inviting Congress to support the motion but with an explanation. In line with Congress policy, specifically Composite 9 on climate change from the 2008 Congress, the motion provides welcome additional support to the work of the growing number of trade union environmental or green representatives. It encourages trade union councils to take further environmental initiatives in their regions, for example through local networks of green rep sharing experience. The motion also questions the environmental sustainability of two new energy sources, the extraction process of natural gas through fracking and the generation of energy from waste incineration.

As was set out by the mover and supporter of the motion there are concerns over gas fracking and we recognise that the motion reflects the very real environmental and health issues from this method of extracting natural gas, whilst also acknowledging the economic opportunities available. However, the motion does not preclude support for the gas supply industry as a whole. Similarly, on generating energy from burning waste, or waste incineration, we acknowledge concerns expressed in the motion over the environmental and local health impacts. However, in broad terms, Congress policy supports investment in a sustainable low carbon energy mix involving a balance of renewable energy, coal and gas, and nuclear power and other forms of energy supply. Congress believes that a just transition to a low carbon economy includes trade union involvement in delivering the investment in job skills and the economic benefits which will follow.

In the case of community campaigns on the issue, before offering its full support the TUC would want to be satisfied, as always, that these are not conducted in a way that puts employment and livelihoods at risk. Congress is invited to support the motion with this explanation. Thank you.
(Applause)

* *Motion 43 was CARRIED*

The President: I would now like to call Composite Motion 10, Coal is vital to the energy mix. The General Council is supporting the Composite.

Coal is vital to the energy mix

Chris Kitchen (*National Union of Mineworkers*) moved Composite Motion 10.

He said: Good morning, Congress, President, delegates. The TUC has been active for many years in pushing successive governments to acknowledge that a balanced energy policy should have coal fire generation as part of the mix. Recognising the environmental effects on climate change, the TUC set up a Clean Coal Task Group to campaign for clean coal technology, and carbon capture and storage. The implementation of both clean coal technology and carbon capture and storage will reduce carbon emissions from coal stations to below the emissions of an unabated gas-fired station thereby making coal a greener option to gas.

The importance of developing CCS is not just of benefit to the UK in reducing our carbon emissions but as an export to the rest of the world to combat climate change. Comrades, there is an added advantage that we are in danger of missing out on, which is maintaining an indigenous

coal industry to ensure that we are not dependent on imports for our future energy needs and to guard against profiteering by international energy companies. We are at risk of losing the skilled workforce that remains in the deep mines that we have left.

This ConDem Government must not be allowed to leave our nation's energy policy to be determined by the energy companies, companies who only consider profit margins and shareholder dividends. They should be made to govern and to ensure that a secure and affordable electricity supply is maintained for the benefit of the nation.

Congress, we have all had experience of what happens as we become more reliant on imports. You just need to look at how your energy bills have gone up over recent years, and the price of petrol. Any little reason to put the price up but it takes for ever to come back down. Imagine what will happen when we are totally dependent on imports on the days that there is not enough wind or too much wind to utilise the wind turbines and we are reliant on imports to generate base load.

Comrades, austerity is not working. We need to invest in rebuilding our manufacturing base to create jobs and give our kids the chance of a better future. To do this we need a secure affordable supply of energy. Indigenous coal can and must be part of it. Tell the ConDem Government no to austerity and no to a return to Thatcher's rip-off Britain. (*Applause*)

Patrick Carragher (*BACM-TEAM*) seconded Composite Motion 10.

He said: The first thing I want to say about this composite is that fundamentally it is about green jobs. The motion or variants of it have appeared over a number of years now on the agenda at Congress. Each year the urgency of the motion increases. The reason for this is because

successive governments have not squared up to the failure of the privatised sector to deliver decisions to secure the long-term policy objectives which are shared between government, between industry, and between the trade unions. Crucially, these objectives are also in the interests of the consumer and when I say consumer I mean both the industrial consumer on which employment and heavy industry is based and also the domestic consumer, both of whom want green, affordable, and secure energy.

Last year when speaking on this motion trying to be upbeat I expressed some positivity about the fact that £1bn had been retained within the Department of Energy and Climate Change for the competition for a demonstration carbon capture and storage plant. Unfortunately, that optimism did not last very long because in November the Government announced that it was going to raid that billion pounds to fund longer term infrastructure projects. Inevitably, this must call into question the Government's commitment to clean coal and without the delivery of clean coal the whole issue of fuel diversity, which is crucial, will not be delivered. Chris, from the NUM, has pointed out the key issues. Coal is a flexible fuel, it can back up when the wind does not blow, and in the absence of carbon capture gas has been the option and gas on an unabated basis is not a green option.

Key decisions are urgently required if the indigenous coal industry, both deep and surface mines, is going to be able to get the investment to open up new reserves of coal. If companies see the market for coal going south they will not get the investment to finance future production and therefore continue and sustain future employment.

What are the omens? They are not good, I am afraid. I will say this and I think union colleagues, colleagues in the Clean Coal Task Group, would say that we have engaged with the

current Government. We have not always agreed with everything that they have said but I do believe that in Charles Henry we at least had an Energy Minister who knew his brief. As I say, we would not necessarily always agree with him but we gave him a deal of respect as a man who knew what he was talking about. To some extent he was constrained by the Coalition agreement, in particular in relation to the emissions performance standard. However, in the reshuffle Charles Henry was shuffled off to the backbenches and we now have two ministers whose credentials in terms of green policy are not at all clear. I would ask you to support this motion.

(Applause)

Craig Marshall (*Prospect*) supported Composite Motion 10.

He said: The motion submitted as part of this composite focuses on the role for coal in energy policy and emphasise in particular the need for progress on carbon capture and storage. Prospect has fully supported this approach on the basis that CCS is the only viable future for coal and gas power stations, and also recognising that coal still makes a vital contribution to ensuring secure electricity supplies.

In response to the Government's announcement of the current CCS competition, Prospect said that this move has been long awaited since the collapse of the CCS demonstration programme at Longannet last year. Prospect emphasises that CCS must be integrated with electricity market reform. Market uncertainty remains a key barrier to investment across energy industries. The £13m to be invested in a new CCS research centre is a useful first step and needs to be followed up by commitment to publicly funded long-term research and development programmes.

However, it is essential both that support for coal is part of a balanced energy policy and that after more than a decade of consultation early decisions are taken to deliver investment, hence

Prospect's contribution to this composite motion. The Energy Bill due to start its parliamentary progress this autumn will be key to achieving this aim. It has been through a process of pre-legislative scrutiny overseen by the Energy and Climate Change Select Committee whose report provoked lively debate and significant criticism of the Government's approach. Prospect responded by stating the Select Committee is right to point out that the proposed reforms are complex and still lacking vital detail. However, there is nothing new about complexity in this sector, indeed it has been a significant feature of the privatised electricity market. Whilst the Select Committee concluded that it will be difficult to produce a workable energy bill for the autumn, it recognises the urgency of the situation by also asking the Government to complete its progress by May 2013. Making a reality of this aspiration will require a strong coherent TUC campaign. There is no room for failure or delay. Please support. (*Applause*)

Terry Fox (*National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers*) supported Composite Motion 10. He said: We at NACODS believe in a balanced and diverse energy mix, a framework for clean coal Britain. However, we are concerned that this Government will lead another dash for gas to the detriment of any investment for other fuel sectors and technologies just to keep the lights up. Coal, it appears, still to be the forgotten fuel.

In 2011, coal generation supplied 30% of the UK electricity and in peak times during last winter this level rose to over 50%; coal provided a vital component to the UK energy supply. In recent months generators have been switching between fuels to keep generation costs down. This has resulted with the public benefiting and UK plc keeping the lights going. The UK has plentiful reserves estimated at least three billion tons, which is enough for around 60 years at current production levels. So why — why, Congress — is this country a net importer of coal and gas.

The Committee for Climate Change has stated that in order to meet the UK Government target for greenhouse gases, a target which is a reduction of 80% by 2050, from 1990 levels, the electricity industry must be decarbonised by 2030. This means that any coal plant running by 2030 must have carbon capture storage. Congress, action is needed by the Government to remove the barriers to clean coal power plants, including urgent adjustments to the ETS proposals to remove these perverse disincentives and support mechanism for the first CCS project. Within two to three years, the legal infrastructure for coal and for CO2 storage needs to be established.

Congress, indigenous coal has an essential role in securing peak electricity supplies but at this moment indigenous coal is presently sold at prices detriment to and determined by long-term contracts which makes it dearer than imported coal and does not allow for new investment in deep mines. We need an urgent high-level endorsement for a clean coal Britain. Please support Composite Motion 10. (*Applause*)

Paul Chadwick (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) supported Composite Motion 10.

He said: Good morning, President, Congress, and delegates. I am a first time delegate and speaker. (*Applause*) The RMT is very pleased to be able to come to this rostrum this morning and welcome Composite Motion 10 on the future of the industry in which many of our members continue to be employed in the safe transportation of coal.

Congress, despite the vandalism reeked on the coalmining industry by the Tories in the 1980s, the massive challenge of climate change, the threat of global warming, and the challenge to us to develop clean coal technologies, the fact remains that this island sits on top of 500 years of coal

reserves and that if Britain is going to develop its suitability for the long term to give us an independence from global energy, multi-nations, and petrol states, then as a composite coal is vital for the energy mix.

The RMT has long urged for the viability of clean coal technology and also for the important need to invest long-term in research and development for carbon capture coal storage. The argument has been made elsewhere for the potential for this country to become the world leader in clean coal technology, which is going to be one of the great export businesses of the 21st century. It gives us special pleasure this year to be able to welcome Composite Motion 10 and to note that nowhere does the composite commit to the folly of future development of potentially dangerous nuclear power technology. The disaster in the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan last year reminds us of unresolved problems and the continual threat that hangs over the heads of our children and future generations.

Finally, today the media reported that there is going to be a nuclear waste disposal plant at Shepway, under Rodney Marsh, that it is in the final planning stage, and is going to be as big as 22 times Wembley Stadium. Thank you for listening. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, I will take the vote.

* *Composite Motion 10 was CARRIED*

The President: Delegates, we now welcome Guy Ryder, Director General elect of the International Labour Organisation. Guy was elected to lead the ILO in May. Born in Liverpool, Guy started his trade union career in 1981 right here at the TUC International Department. Guy

then spent more than 25 years working in the International Trade Union Movement and was the founding General Secretary of the ITUC from 2006 to 2010. Throughout his career he has been a champion for working people from around the world, campaigning and organising for fundamental human and labour rights. Joining the ILO in 2010 he has become the first ever — the first ever — non-government Director General of the ILO. He has, and will always be, a friend of the TUC and the British Trade Union Movement. Guy, you are extremely welcome here today and we look forward to hearing your address. (*Applause*)

Address by Guy Ryder, Director General Elect of the ILO

Guy Ryder: Thank you, President. Good morning, Congress. Thank you for this opportunity, as you heard, for me to come home to the TUC. It is an honour and an opportunity. I see the opportunity in this chance to share with you just a few of the thoughts that I have at this point on the global situation, a situation of crisis in which working people around the world find themselves today.

Let me start off by saying that, like many people who are fortunate enough to find a new job, I owe my new job to many people who have helped me, none more than the TUC, a TUC which, as Paul has just said, gave me my first job 31 years ago this month. I remember it very well because it did not let me come to Congress and I have not forgotten that it did not bring me to Congress 31 years ago. Over the last year you have given me tremendous support in the campaign that I have conducted.

Colleagues, what lies ahead of us all? Above all, there is the task, urgent, unavoidable, and immense, of getting people around the world back into jobs; growth and jobs. The rest matters,

colleagues, but the rest has to be secondary. Global unemployment stands at historic highs. There are 200 million people around the world without a job and that is before you start to think about under-employment, part-time work, and the many millions who simply have withdrawn in desperation from the jobs market: 6% of the world's workforce. If you are thinking about youth unemployment, double the percentage, 12%, 75 million young people without a job. Then if you are looking at youth in Europe, you have to double the percentages again; they are at 22-23%.

Colleagues, this is not just a lost generation in the making, although it is a lost generation in the making, this is also a heavy responsibility for the foregoing generation, a responsibility that none of us have the right to dodge. If this were not enough there is, sadly, very little evidence of things now getting better around the world and, unfortunately, a great deal of evidence that it could be getting much worse, not just a profound and disturbing Euro jobs crisis but the stuttering recovery in the United States, and above all the very clear signs that the locomotives of the global economy in recent years, the power houses of China, of India, of Brazil, and others, are slowing down too. So, none of us should expect that some locomotive is going to appear from a long way away and pull us out of this stagnant mess.

So, where do we start? Let's begin with a hard-headed look at the experience of the last two or three years, this mix of austerity driven deficit reduction and deepening structural reforms designed apparently to make labour markets more efficient, more capable of producing jobs for those who need it. We all know deficits cannot go on for ever. We know that they have to be brought down. We know, too, if we are honest, that some labour market changes make sense and can be justified but the evidence before us now stripped away of all of the ideological prejudices is that fiscal consolidation measures that simply choke off growth do not bring deficits down. If you are in that type of situation, policies designed to make it easier to hire and fire

result in quite a lot of firing and a lot less hiring. It also brings about very serious labour market consequences. Think of this, that 50% of households in Europe which are living in poverty have at least one member who is working. We are creating a segment of working poor that stands as a condemnation of some of the policy prescriptions that have been acted upon.

The message is, and it is a simple message, it is time to move on. It is time to pick up again, and it seems a long time ago, on the initial international cooperation and reaction to the breaking financial crisis of 2008 when the G20 leaders did get together and commit in 2009 to put quality jobs at the heart of recovery. That was before the Euro debt crisis kicked in and things changed direction. It was just last week, not three years ago but last week, that the President of the European Council, Mr. Van Rompuy, said that there is no higher priority for Europe than jobs. Commission President Borroso (and the words are worth noting) spoke of situations of dire social emergency in Europe. It could not happen here? It is happening. So, the words are going right again. The question is where is the action? What are we waiting for?

Here are a few of the things that could be done and could be done straightaway. The first is a universal youth activation guarantee, a guarantee for all young people out of work, out of training, that they can have a job or training experience for all. Unrealistic: not at all, it has been done. It has been done in many countries. It comes in at less than 0.5% of government spending. It works. In Sweden, more than nearly 50% of young people who went on these schemes went straight into a permanent job situation, and that is at the lower end of the success scale. It is a guarantee that would give a proper place to education in our society. Think of the effects of education. Think of where they get it right, the training and education. Think of Germany where the youth unemployment level is actually lower than the general level of

unemployment. Why, because the education system, industry, and unions put their heads together and get it right.

Secondly, there needs to be a shift, not a small one, not a little bit around the edges but a major shift in tax policies so that they do promote job-rich recovery. Whatever you think is the right level of fiscal expansion or consolidation, and my god there is a debate to be had there, there is plenty of room wherever you set it to change the tax mix so that it helps to get people back to work. Instead of taxing work through payroll taxes, there is an enormous space and much need to redirect taxation to address environmental issues, not least because climate change is not going to go on hold until we sort out the jobs crisis; and shifting the tax burden, too, towards the financial sector, and I have heard what has been said this morning. Here again there is both need and opportunity and very frankly, Congress, all of the arguments I have heard against a financial transactions tax do more in my mind to reveal the vested interests lying behind the arguments than any logical opposition to a financial transaction tax which is workable and effective. *(Applause)* Of course, we need to repair and we need to restore the financial sector, get credit flowing back again to small businesses that are starved of credit and getting those enterprises — and there are many of them — sitting on heaps of cash to start investing again in job-creating purposes.

Congress, underlying all of these challenges, and there are more, I think is a single thought and it has to do with what Brendan said yesterday about the lessons to be learned from Britain's Olympic summer. It has been brilliant and there is a lot to feel good about in the afterglow of the Olympics, the achievements of careful planning, of investment, with the public sector doing what the public sector should and what it does best. Those achievements are there for all who want to

see to see, and the demonstration by the athletes themselves of what people can do when given opportunity and when the idea of inclusion turns from a slogan to actual realities.

My thought is this: are we capable, and I come back to the ILO with its worldwide membership, not just of governments but of trade unions and of employers, are we capable of making common cause globally to put people back to work? Is it beyond us to understand that the countries which have done best in weathering the crisis are those where governments accept their own responsibilities and respect and encourage, too, the role of the social partners on both sides of industry? That is where it works best, a lesson to be learnt if we want to learn it.

Are we all ready to come together in a way that means common endeavours are not penalised by those who would try to take sectoral personal advantage of hard times to advance their own narrow interests. Colleagues, we need to be able to do this. We need to understand that if we really believe we are all in this together and will only get out of it together, it means also working not only nationally but internationally as well. It means as well a fair sharing of the costs and the benefits of recovery. It means putting the values of social justice and of international cooperation back centre stage. The crisis has a tendency of driving us apart, nationally, internationally. It is the TUC and the ILO that share the values of internationalism and the values of social justice together that can start moving us in the right direction.

I want to finish in that tone by paying tribute to something which, as you go into international debates, I hope you will keep very much in your minds in these very difficult times, that is, the TUC's tremendous record of international solidarity, your readiness to reach out to those who are in need of solidarity across the globe. I know that Colombia has been and continues on your

agenda, Palestine as well. You have made a difference there, even if the solutions still are not immediately to hand.

There is some good news and I just want to bring one bit of good news to your attention in case it has slipped your memory. Exactly one week ago after 24 years in exile, the General Secretary of the Federation of the Trade Unions of Burma, Maung Maung, took the short flight from exile in Bangkok back to his home in Yangon not only to be reunited with a son he had not seen for 24 years but to contribute to the job of building trade unionism in his own country. That would not have happened — that would not have happened — without three decades of international trade union solidarity in which the TUC was to the fore. Take a bow. It is a gold medal performance. Well Done. (*Applause*)

Colleagues, I start my new job in a couple of weeks. It is a formidable task and my last word is to ask for your help and your support. I asked Brendan before I came up here how many affiliates there are now in the TUC, just over 50, and I have to deal with 185 countries, workers, employers, and governments. It strikes me that the potential for becoming annoying on a global scale is almost unlimited. I will try and avoid that but I do ask for your help, I do ask for your support. The ILO will only make a difference to the extent that we can engage trade unions around the world, the employer community and governments, in a common endeavour. So, I ask in your good traditions of solidarity to help and be with us as I go forward at the ILO. Good luck to you. Thanks for your attention. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Guy, and really great wishes from all of us and good luck at the ILO. Thank you very much for your address.

Delegates, we are now turning to Chapter 5 of the General Council Report, Global Solidarity, from page 84. I am going to call paragraphs 5.1 to 5.6 and call the RMT, who have indicated that they wish to speak on paragraph 5.3.

Solidarity

Alex Gordon (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) spoke to paragraph 5.3.

He said: Thank you very much, President. Delegates, RMT wishes just to raise a couple of brief points on paragraph 5.3 and in particular on page 90, the section of the General Council Report on Iran, and the trade unionist that is mentioned in that chapter, Reza Shahabi, the treasurer of the Shekahavid, the syndicate of the workers of the Tehran and suburbs bus company, who has been sentenced to six years' imprisonment for gathering and colluding against state security and spreading propaganda against the system.

I want to raise Reza's case specifically because he has been convicted solely for peaceful trade union work, and he is a prisoner of conscience. RMT is affiliated to the Committee for the Defence of the Iranian People's Rights, CODIR, the main solidarity organisation in the UK supporting the movement for peaceful and democratic rights in Iran and developing a better understanding amongst trade unions in the UK of Iranian trade unionist struggles. We welcome the reference to the work of the global union federations, the ITUC and Amnesty International, in highlighting the persecution of Reza and his colleagues.

Reza is in extremely poor health. After numerous hunger strikes in protest against the conditions in which he is being held, in February this year he complained that one side of his body was

numb. It was not until 30th April that prison authorities sent him to hospital. Since his operation Shahabi's body has developed infections and his condition is worsening every day. Doctors have recommended at least two months rest at home and say he is incapable of withstanding any further punishment. He was sent back to work, ward 350, of Evin Prison in Tehran on 14th August this year.

Iran's prison and judicial officials are directly responsible for the critical state of Shahabi's health and his worsening conditions. These officials have acted contrary to all doctors' recommendations and will be held responsible for their actions. According to his lawyer, Reza Shahabi's name was on the list of prisoners to be pardoned but this process has been abandoned without explanation. This TUC must demand Reza Shahabi be immediately released and given proper medical treatment. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, colleague. We will take note of that, thank you. I am going to move to Motion 74, Freedom of expression. The General Council is supporting the motion.

Freedom of expression

Martin Solity (*Equity*) moved Motion 74.

He said: I am better known professionally by my Equity name, Rhubarb the Clown. This is my first Congress and, yes, Rhubarb the Clown is a proud and committed lifelong trade unionist, activist, and son of a shop steward. In this country, and in many countries around the world, there are entertainers, workers, who want to make other people laugh and enjoy themselves but also want to organise and change their society for the better.

Motion 74 draws attention to the case of one such entertainer, Zarganar, one of many Burmese comedians who have been imprisoned by their government for using satire and humour to poke fun at a regime that then censored them. Zarganar's most recent imprisonment in 2008 was a consequence of his criticism of the Cyclone Nargis relief efforts. He had personally organised support from the Burmese Arts and Film Community and oversaw the distribution of aid to villages in the Nargis Delta. He was angered by the neglect and corruption he encountered and spoke out about this in radio interviews. In return the regime imprisoned him for 59 years for public order offences.

I am proud to have supported the campaign my union ran to secure Zarganar's release and delighted to say that when I met him earlier this summer I found that despite ill health, the death or exile of most of his close family, and the continuing threat of prison, Zarganar uses his freedom and his talents to find ways to educate the world about the treatment of migrant workers in South East Asia and the continuing persecution of Burma's minorities, including the Rohingya.

Performance can be a great and powerful thing but in far too many countries it is incredibly dangerous, for example, Iranian actress, Marzieh Vafamehr who was sentenced to imprisonment and 90 lashes, Roma circus artists expelled from their homes by the French government, and Juliano Mer-Khamis, Director of the Freedom Theatre in Jenin, murdered in front of his partner when he was leaving work only last April.

In Belarus, going to the theatre can be a crime. Nicole Karsin and Natalia Taliarda, who run the Belarus Free Theatre, the country's only independent theatre company, have to invite their

audience by text to a secret location in order to see a play. Audience members have been arrested and questioned while actors have been subject to death threats and intimidation. Members of the theatre company have been imprisoned and their children are being held in orphanages. In the end, Nicole and Natalia were forced to flee to the UK.

Meanwhile, in Hungary one of the first things that far right politicians did was impose their own supporters to key posts in the cultural sector. Large corporations, not just the likes of Murdoch but also mining companies and other big businesses, are increasingly seeking to control key media outlets and diminish the ability for journalists and artists to criticise them. Yet something that gives me great hope is that when people, like Nicole and Natalia, come to the UK one of the first things they want to do is join their union. They know that they are workers and their union is the vehicle through which they can stand alongside clowns, actors, dancers, models, performers, and singers, to give each other protection and make real change happen. Thank you, Congress, for your support. (*Applause*)

Danny Longstaff (*Musicians' Union*) seconded Motion 74. He said: I am standing here without notes because I have a right to be able to say what I like, so I will say what I like but it will not take long, up to a point, and within the realms of decency and respect, of course. Pussy Riot, the band we all know, imprisoned for two years for singing the wrong song. Only yesterday I noted an Indian cartoonist arrested in India for an inappropriate cartoon. As the Musicians' Union we often have to defend our members in various actions. Recently, we had four musicians from a top London orchestra, three of whom are Jewish, who made pro-Palestinian statements. Their management was then put under pressure by their sponsors to sack these musicians because it did not suit the sponsors. We successfully fought that and those people still have their jobs. (*Applause*)

It is not a privilege to stand here, it is my right. In some countries it is a privilege, in others it is a death sentence. I would just like to finish simply by saying thank you for listening. We have heard so much of what has been going on in the world where people do not have the right to say anything but remember this, we are not that far away ourselves from being tested. Thank you.
(*Applause*)

* *Motion 74 was CARRIED*

The President: I now call Motion 75, Colombia. The General Council will be supporting the motion.

Colombia

Lesley Mercer (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) moved Motion 75.

She said: For those of you who do not live in London there is a great big new travel advert on the Underground and it says, “The only risk you run by coming to Colombia is of not wanting to leave.” If you are a trade unionist like Carmen, who we heard from on Sunday and who received a fantastic standing ovation, if you are a community organiser, if you are peace campaigner, the only risk you run is of intimidation, death threats, forcibly being moved out of your home, abduction, torture, assassination, the only risks that you run. Almost 3,000 trade unionists have been murdered in Colombia since 1986 for doing what all of us do every day, which is organising.

There has been some change of tone from the newish government under President Santos but when I had the chance to go and visit Colombia in March the consistency behind the personal stories that we heard was quite remarkable. It was a common story of ruthless repression. Sadly, since our delegation got back somebody who we met down in the south has disappeared, almost certainly is now dead. Henry Diaz from the Agricultural Workers Union, FENSUAGRO, disappeared the night before he was due to lead a party of people to travel to the capital, Bogota, to attend a peace demonstration. Imagine if you ran that risk for organising a coach for October 20th.

There are some small rays of hope emerging from Colombia. I do not know if anyone caught the BBC news report from about two weeks ago that the Santos government has finally at long last agreed to sit down, apparently agreed to sit down, and talk about peace with the main gorilla group in Colombia called FARC. The Cuban government is facilitating doing some of the international work it does so well.

Colleagues, now is not the time to ease off the international campaigning for peace and social justice in Colombia. This peace process is at its very early days and it is fragile; without sustained international scrutiny and campaigning that peace process could fade away like it did in the 1980s. If there is one lesson I brought home from Colombia with me it is this. If the government out there does not care too much for its own people, it certainly does care for its international reputation.

I came back with so many stories and memories but the other main thing I came back with is just how valued international solidarity messages of support, and gifts, are to the trade unionists struggling out there. They literally represent a lifeline. If you want to hear more about what you

could do to help and be part of that lifeline, then there is a Justice for Colombia fringe meeting this evening.

I want to finish, President, with some words from another brave woman that we met out there, Judy Caldas, and she described to me what solidarity meant to her. I will say it in English, not Spanish. She said, “Solidarity is the kindness between peoples.” I think that was just great. I move the motion. (*Applause*)

John Rimmer (*NASUWT, The Teachers’ Union*) seconded Motion 75.

He said: In seconding the motion I want to highlight NASUWT’s international campaign in Colombia. Along with other TUC affiliates, NASUWT supports the campaign for civil and trade union rights in Colombia. Colombia is the worst country in the world for civil and trade union rights abuses, and as Lesley said earlier, with over 3,000 assassinated or executed since 1986.

I was part of the parliamentary delegation, along with Lesley, earlier this year which went to Colombia with the incoming TUC General Secretary to exert greater pressure on the Colombian authorities. Through the massive efforts of Justice for Colombia we were able to support the release of Lilianny Obando. The elation of Lilianny’s release was short-lived. The abuses continue. Already in 2012 countless citizens continue to disappear under the atrocities of false positives and ashamedly our coalition government continues to provide military aid whilst supporting the EU Free Trade Agreement with Colombia. Luther King said, “For evil to prevail good men do nothing.” Our government has done nothing but then how many good men and women are in our government? (*Applause*)

Like many others in the hall I was humbled by the civil rights and trade union activists in Colombia who put their lives and the lives of their family at risk on a daily basis. That Che Guevara's death is preferable to a life on our knees is a reality in Colombia. I question whether I would have had the conviction to be a trade union activist under those conditions.

This amendment supports the NASUWT and JfC campaign for the release of Omar Alfonso Combata, a teacher alleged to be a civil rights activist. Omar's only crime is being a Colombian teacher and trade unionist, for which he was detained on 2nd October 2011 and is currently imprisoned in a high security prison in Caqueta. He is falsely accused of rebellion and is being held without being convicted of any crime. Mr. Combata's imprisonment is based on questionable evidence, including a police intelligence report the content of which has been changed during the legal process making it highly dubious. Omar Combata has been denied due process, including the right to be present during his own legal proceedings.

The Colombian government targets teachers for execution, torture, and death threats on them and their families in an open assault on the rights of ordinary working families. Education brings with it a clear understanding of entitlement and fairer distribution of wealth. That is the last thing the Colombian government wants, and maybe our own. I believe our government's attack on our education system is a blatant attempt to dilute the social and civil rights of the children of working families making education a privilege, not an entitlement. In Colombia it is worse. Support this amendment. Highlight the Colombian government's attacks on teachers and trade unionists. Trade unionists internationally fight against injustice on a daily basis. Injustice anywhere in the world is a threat to justice everywhere else. Give your total support to this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Lena Sharp (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 75.

She said: Congress, despite official denials to the contrary and an impressive public relations blitz by the authorities, Colombia remains the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist. At the end of February this year, GMB Executive member, Eddie Marnell, participated in a Justice for Colombia delegation to Colombia and was able to see for himself just how bad the situation is. Even though the Free Trade Agreement with the USA was contingent upon a labour action plan, signed off by both countries in 2011, it has since been almost completely ignored by Colombian employers and government agencies alike.

The clauses on labour rights in the pending Free Trade Agreement with the EU are weak and virtually unenforceable, yet the Lib-Dem Minister for State in the Foreign Office, Jeremy Brown, described them as “legally binding and robust”. GMB wrote to every Lib-Dem MEP in May 2011 urging them to vote against the agreement when it came to the European Parliament. Disgracefully, not one of them bothered to reply.

The Peace Initiative, recently announced by President Santos, deserves our support, but until such time as there is an end to the culture of impunity, respect for human rights and compliance with ILO conventions, and an end to the Parliamentary violence, the trade agreement should not be ratified by Brussels. Indeed, the only beneficiaries of the agreement will be big business, and it is in their interests that it was signed. The GMB commends the work done by Justice for Colombia and is pleased to endorse this motion. Thank you.

The President: Colleagues, I am going to move to the vote on Motion 75.

* *Motion 75 was CARRIED.*

The President: Delegates, you will have heard that during the last Justice for Colombia visit, members of the delegation were able to enter Buen Pastor Prison, the women's prison, in Bogata. They were able to visit Lilianny Obando, a trade union leader in Fuensuagro, the agricultural workers' union. Soon afterwards Lilianny was released and recorded this message for us all. (*International video presentation by Lilianny Obando*) (*Applause*) Delegates, the important words there were "It makes us feel that we are not alone." That is the power of global trade unionism, and that is the reason why we stand up and support brothers and sisters in peril across the world. Congratulations to all those who contributed to that. So there are only 7,999 to go, so let's get cracking.

We will move on to Motion 76: Palestine – blockade of Gaza. The General Council supports the motion.

Palestine – blockade of Gaza

Billy Hayes (*The Communications Union*) moved Motion 76.

He said: Congress, when I was at the TUC General Council dinner last night, somebody said to me, "You're moving Motion 76, are you?", to which I said, "Yes". He said, "That's 76. That's the number of rockets that have been fired out of Gaza into Israel in the last week." I said, "That's really terrible." Obviously, that is a terrible thing for the people who have had to face up to that kind of thing, but that's the situation in Gaza. Let me tell you what the situation in Gaza is. For more than five years the Palestinian people living in the Gaza Strip have been subject to a siege by land, sea and air. In an election, which international observers confirmed as democratic, the Palestinian people voted for the Hamas administration. The Israeli Government was not prepared to accept the decision of the Palestinian people. Instead, Gaza was declared a "hostile

entity”, and the people “an enemy of Israel”. Rather than negotiate with the Palestinian elected leadership, the Government of Israel implemented a form of collective punishment against the whole people. The impact of the siege has been dramatic: an immediate loss of a third of local production; a loss of 26% of national income, and a loss of 38% of industrial income. The terrible blow to the economy and civil society must be further measured against a people already seriously disadvantaged. It is important to note that 70% of the people of Gaza are refugees. 80% of the households in Gaza are receiving some form of aid. More than 1.6 million Palestinians are struggling to live in the most difficult circumstances. Unemployment in Gaza stands at 29%, rising to 47% for women and 58% for young people between the ages of 20 and 24. It is even illegal to export from Gaza to the Palestinians in the West Bank. The extent of the disruption can be judged by the fact that the economy is now only 1% larger than it was in 2005. Getting just to that position was due to extensive efforts by the authorities and the people of Gaza. A thousand tunnels to Egypt provide a lifeline, albeit with a 25% tax on smuggled goods, which provides the means to govern Gaza.

The daily difficulties are enormous. 39% live below the poverty line; 60% are food-insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity. Gaza’s sole power plant cannot serve most of the population for more than 12 hours a day. This is a society which has one of the youngest populations in the world, with 51% of the population below the age of 18. On top of the economic difficulties are military actions by Israel. Operation Cast Lead and the daily over flights have led to 2,300 being killed, with 7,700 injured since 2005. Such an obvious humanitarian crisis demands action. There is no shortage of formal support for the lifting of the siege. This is the position of the United Nations, it is the position of the EU, it is the position of the Diplomatic Quartet, it is the position of the US Government and it is the position of the UK Government, yet the siege

remains. Indeed, far from feeling the pressure, the Israeli Government is having its trade status with the EU upgraded. The situation has become acute.

The most recent UN report suggests that Gaza will be without drinking water by 2016. The Palestinians need action from their international supporters. Motion 76 proposes that the TUC makes a modest contribution by sending a delegation to Gaza in conjunction with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. A delegation will report on the up-to-date position and suggest what we can do. This is one of the most urgent human rights issues in the world today. It demands our attention, our elementary commitment to solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza, in aid of their daily struggle for the right to live. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Hugh Lanning (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Motion 76.

He said: Congress, when you enter Gaza through the Rafah Crossing, you are greeted by a Palestinian flag and a sign saying: “Welcome to Palestine”, and it feels like it, actually. The car number plates have the same flag, not like in the West Bank where they have colour-coded number plates imposed by Israel. When I went to Gaza, I don’t know what I expected to see but it wasn’t what I saw. Everywhere a negative became a positive. The bombed rubble became the hotel we stayed in. The lack of electricity became a beach culture, where everyone de-camped in the evening to eat, work and play on the beach because it was the lightest and coolest place. The economic blockade created the tunnels. However, as Billy said, Gaza is a refugee camp. Over 70% of the population are refugees, and it is a prison.

From the memorial to those killed on the Mavi Marmara in Gaza, you can see the lights of the Israeli gunboats. In the renovated hospital, the biggest problem is not the wounded but the children dying of gastroenteritis caused by impure water and the lack of sanitation. It is the life-

saving drugs that the Israelis will not let them buy. It is the lack of water, electricity and medicine that are the real killers. These are the weapons, illegal under international law, that are aimed at the whole population of Gaza, and we allow it to happen. Western governments decry the siege but do nothing to end it.

This has been by some a modest motion because it does not mention “boycott”, but the TUC has good policy and made progress on settlement goods and complicit firms. But for once, we can act, not just talk. Do not under-estimate the significance of sending a TUC delegation to Gaza. It will be seen within Gaza as a huge step forward. At one of the meetings I attended I was impressed, because I saw a women making a call – not unusual – for more women to be in the leadership. So it would be great, Frances, if you could lead the delegation. It would mean that we would have a double-whammy.

We know that there are social and political problems and human rights issues, but in passing this resolution we can be part of breaking the siege, which, of itself, would help the reconciliation that is essential to a free Palestine.

At the Olympics and the Paralympics, the Palestinian flag was waved and cheered as it was paraded around. I don't know if you saw but in the shot put Palestine came fourth. It would have been great if they had got a bronze medal and their flag could have been raised. But let's help make it a reality. Palestine should not just be a flag; it should be a free country. Support the motion. *(Applause)*

Christine Blower (*National Union of Teachers*) spoke in support of Motion 76.

She said: Half of the 1.6 million people in Gaza are children. The blockade is having a devastating effect on them. The blockade is preventing the rebuilding of schools and inhibiting access to education; education, Congress, which is a human right.

I also want to talk in this speech about children in the West Bank, children whose education is interrupted by their detention in military custody. Paragraph 5.3 on page 90 of the General Council report makes mention of the very good work done by the TUC on this issue. The TUC wrote to Alistair Birt about this and he has responded, perhaps unusually for this Government, somewhat positively. The British Government have also accepted the report of a delegation of British lawyers on the treatment of Palestinian children under Israeli military law. Those British lawyers made in their report 40 recommendations, and here are some of them: “The arrest of children should not be carried out during the night, save in very extreme and unusual circumstances; children should be informed in their own language of the reasons for their arrest; any confession in a language other than the child’s own, should not be accepted as evidence; children should never be blindfolded or hood; methods of restraint should not be used unless strictly necessary; children should not be transferred on the floor of vehicles; prohibition on violent, threatening or coercive conduct should be strictly observed; children should have a parent or guardian present during their interrogation; interrogations should be audio-visually recorded and the tape should be made available to the children’s lawyer; solitary confinement should never be used as a standard mode of detention or imprisonment.” Why is it that children are exposed to this kind of treatment? It is for this reason. The conclusion of the report says: “It may be that the reluctance to treat Palestinian children in conformity with international norms stems from a belief which was advanced to us by a military prosecutor that every Palestinian child is a potential terrorist. Such a stance seems to us to be the standing point of a spiral injustice.” Indeed, it is, Congress. We need to work with the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and

the Defence of the Child International in Palestine to make sure that these unacceptable practices are absolutely eradicated. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Mitch Tovey (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) spoke in support of Motion 76.

He said: We thank the Communication Workers' Union for placing this motion before Congress. It follows on well from previous Congresses where the issue of Palestine, the occupation and the boycott have forced their way up the agenda. The policies are in place, the will is in place and now we have to put concrete proposals in place to enforce and publicise the boycott. Let the Israeli regime understand full well as they prepare for and urge another attack or war in the Middle East. This is only the beginning.

In South Africa in the dying days of state apartheid it was, of course, the economic reality that delivered the final blow, but a blow to a system fundamentally damaged and undermined by sporting boycotts, cultural boycotts, travel boycotts and some fraternal assistance from our Cuban comrades. In essence, during years of work by the anti-apartheid movement and the trade unions, justice was won for the majority and taken from the minority. Palestine will be as hard, and maybe more so, and will need as much solidarity as South Africa ever did. Our union for a short time affiliated, if that's the right word, to the well-funded organisation of the Trade Union Friends of Israel and disaffiliated soon after. Delegates at our annual conference, we rebutted the concept that blame could be attached even-handedly. This was following a refusal to have anything to do with one of their delegations. We should be sending trade union delegations in support of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, to identify the key people to meet and meeting the genuine representatives of a broad section of society.

The Communication Workers' Union has come up with an excellent idea – a demand, really – for the General Council to send a delegation to Gaza itself. I don't know what the General Council has in mind, but let me throw in a suggestion. We have had an excellent one from them already about the delegation leader, but I would suggest that we include in the delegation a couple of youngsters, a couple of young trade unionists. We should give them the experience as it will reward itself in the years to come. I don't believe you can go to Gaza or the West Bank and not find yourself convinced of the cause, whether by being on a PSC delegation, a union delegation, a General Council delegation or, indeed, if we are talking about the West Bank, by yourselves.

This delegation will have to answer the basic question on Gaza, and I quote from the motion: “..to determine how the TUC may most effectively contribute to the end of the blockade.” On behalf of the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association, I urge support for Motion 76. (*Applause*)

Alison Shepherd (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Motion 76 on Palestine – blockade of Gaza.

She said: We must reconfirm our support for the people of Gaza, under economic blockade by Israel for six years following the withdrawal of Israeli settlements in 2005 and the election victory by Hamas in 2006.

The intense brutality of military assaults may be off our television screens now, but the consequences of it still persist. Homes, schools and hospitals have been destroyed. Although there has been some lifting of the restrictions by Israel on the new Egyptian, Gaza is still subject to unnecessary and inhuman restrictions and has forced its population into poverty and dependency. Gaza is, effectively, a prison camp. 1.6 million Palestinians, half of them children, are living in a narrow strip of land, approaching some of the highest population densities in the

world. Many of them are refugees driven from their homes during the wars with Israel in 1948 and 1967. Congress, this blockade is collective punishment, which is illegal under international law.

No one should attempt to portray this motion as a support for Hamas. Trade unions and other progressives are, rightly, critical of them for their views on women, attacks on the Palestinian Trade Union movement and its refusal to recognise the right of Israel to exist. But it is the blockade that is more likely to increase support for them as it makes the residents of Gaza more reliant on them for food and basic services, thereby strengthening their hold.

Under international law, Israel has consistently and flagrantly breached its responsibilities, not only in Gaza but in the illegal occupation of the West Bank and east Jerusalem, but there is no economic blockade or sanctions here. Instead, their reward is to be a highly favoured trading partner in the UK and the European Union. The TUC has consistently worked for peace and justice in the Middle East and it has done some excellent work, particularly over recent years. The Israeli attack on Gaza in January 2009 and the assault on the Gaza flotilla a year later were two events that helped to change the perceptions of many in the UK as to what was happening in Palestine. The British trade union Movement has not forgotten the people of Gaza. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

Arjum Wajid (*National Union of Journalists*) spoke in support of Motion 76.

She said: In May this year the 20-year old Sufian Abu Nada set himself alight in a public act of protest because he could not support his family. Human rights organisations in Gaza say that dozens of Palestinian men have been driven to commit this very unIslamic act because there are no jobs and no means of supporting their families.

During Israel's military action in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009, the Israeli Army killed 1,434 Palestinians, including 400 children, destroyed thousands of homes, hospitals and schools. Since then the Israeli blockade of Gaza has made it impossible to do any recovery or reconstruction work. Four years later, many families, like Abu Nada's family, continue to camp on the rubble of their homes.

When the Holocaust was taking place in Nazi Germany the horror took place behind enemy lines and there were no TV cameras to inform us of what was happening, so the world could say later on, "We did not know at the time what was happening." These atrocities by Israelis are being committed right before our eyes. Thanks to technological developments, we watch every day Palestinians being killed, literally as the shots are being fired. No one can say this time that we did not know, but those with the power to stop it, choose to remain silent.

After the Gaza assault, a UN fact-finding mission on Gaza stated in its report: "The Israeli Army was guilty of war crimes and that the blockade amounted to collective punishment."

I shall wind up by saying what, in these politically hostile environments, we, as trade unionists, can do. We could follow the example of South African dock workers who refused to unload an Israeli ship as a protest. We could take lessons from Norway's railway workers who staged a token two minute strike and used it to inform their passengers of what was happening in Gaza. Trade unions in Canada, Ireland and Belgium have also been raising their voices. Comrades, let's join them. Better still, let's lead them by taking action against the blockade of Gaza and the inhumane treatment of Palestinians. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: I am going to move to the vote on Motion 76. The General Council is supporting the motion.

* *Motion 76 was CARRIED.*

The President: I move to paragraph 5.7 and Motion 77. The General Council will be opposing the motion. I will cause Billy Hayes during the debate to explain the General Council's position.

Trade union rights and UK membership of the EU

Bob Crow (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) moved Motion 77.

He said: Congress, let me put a few ghosts to bed, if you don't mind me using that expression, because I have heard comments regarding the RMT's motion on this agenda which are that we are going down the same agenda as the right-wing press, the right-wing political parties and also as far as the extreme right-wing parties, like the British National Party and the English Defence League.

Let me make our position quite clear. We, the RMT including this body, are internationalists. We have gone right through this morning's debate with Guy Ryder having the pleasure to be speaking to this Conference talking about international rights. We hold our hands out to all workers around the world but, brothers and sisters, people start recognising the fact about this European Union. The European Union was opposed by this body right the way through the piece until Jaques Delores gave a speech to this body. By the way, people should get Jack Jones's book, the great former leader of the Transport & General Workers' Union, who explains the reasons why the T&GWU at that time opposed the European Union. After Jacques Delores spoke at this body, he having said that we are all now partners, the TUC switched its policy. He

said that there was no such thing as struggle any more against the bosses. I was here as a delegate, and the very next day I met Derek Smith, the chief executive of London Underground. He opened the meeting to tell us how many cuts he was going to make, and I said, "Excuse me, chief executive, can we have an extra two weeks holiday, an extra 50% increase on pensions and also increases on sick pay?" He said, "Have you gone mad, Bob?" I said, "No. I've just been told by the European Commissioners that we are all partners, so surely we can all decide." People thought that they could just get out of bed one morning and their struggle was over. I have heard other people say that if we carry out a policy of a referendum, then we would be lining up with the British National Party. The reality is, brothers and sisters, that we should be deciding what the agenda is of working men and working women and not allowing the BNP and the right-wing political parties to pick the middle road up. That's what we should be standing for.

The BNP also has a policy on renationalising the railways, so can't we discuss renationalising the railways? What we are talking about here is that we are not opposed to European working class men and women. We are opposed to the concept of the bureaucracy of the European Union, and that European Union, brothers and sisters, is an animal that drives privatisation and smashes up the welfare state. We have to recognise the fact that after the war concessions were given to people in Europe because western governments were worried that the Soviet Union's concept of life would spread amongst the rest of Europe. As a result, better pay and better conditions were given. Now that the Soviet Union has gone, governments are going to take away from us all of those things that we, naturally, took for granted. That's why you can't have a nationalised industry under the European Union. Also, you can't have a public-sector monopoly. They don't mind having private-sector monopolies but they don't want public sector monopolies.

The reality is this, brothers and sisters. We are not wrapped up with the Queen and the Union Jack. Far from it. Someone said to me, “All you want to do, Bob, is keep the Queen’s head on a £10 note.” I couldn’t care less whether the Queen’s head or the Queen’s arse is on our £10 notes. (*Applause*) I am only concerned about how much money I am being paid. You can pay me in shekels, you can pay me in euros, but I’ve got to tell you, brothers and sisters, it’s a democratic position. I will elect my MP on the basis of what he or she is going to do for me at the workplace and in the community. You are taking these powers away by handing them over, not to the European Parliament, to unelected bureaucrats and to people who now want to take our rights away from us. The reality is that we should have the right for a referendum and we should be turning around and saying that if our fiscal policy is being taken away from us and there is no longer a currency that is our own currency if we enter the euro, then we don’t become a democratic Government at all.

Let me tell you that the people who fought in the Franco fight against Fascism in the 1930s were told that they were premature anti-Fascist fighters. I ask you this question, brothers and sisters. Don’t be premature, anti-European fighters either. The reality is that the *Viking* case, the *Laval* case and all of the other rotten decisions that are coming out of Brussels are anti working class. The European TUC General Secretary said that she was not a fan of football. She must have been a friend of the President of this TUC because he doesn’t know a lot about football considering the team that he watches. (*Laughter*) However, she said yesterday that she knows what a yellow card is. Well, I know what a yellow card is. A yellow card means that you can carry on playing.

Brothers and sisters – I am finishing here – I am asking you to support this resolution and vote for workers to have the right to take a referendum. (*Applause*)

Ronnie Draper (*Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union*) seconded Motion 77:

He said: Comrades, I think that this motion is one of the most fundamental ones on the agenda and most fundamental for our Movement. Millions of workers who are still reeling from the last Tory Government and the legislation that they put forward are asking now for the repeal of anti-trade union laws. We should not have to be asking for the repeal of anti-trade union laws. The last Labour Government should have given us that as of right.

Now, comrades, we are faced with renewed attacks on our basic trade union rights from outside of our own Parliament. The *Viking* and *Laval* judgments, as Bob just said, may not be the most famous judgments that people have heard of, but they are amongst the most dangerous to our Movement and to our ability to take action. In the food industry, my members are already facing employers who are trying to return third world conditions on them, and if they can get backing the law, they will. For us to get to a stage where we can take industrial action, we already have to jump through hoops. The last thing we want is to have to fight against European bureaucracy. We have so little influence over UK employment legislation and the direction of its attacks, but I put to you, comrades, that we have absolutely no chance with current legislation. Where will the term “disproportionate” end? Will rallies like that on 20th October become a disproportionate response to Government policy? Will meetings and gatherings like this become disproportionate as a collective response to government and industry attacks?

Comrades, if we are to have any chance of defending our terms and conditions – any chance of fighting workplace discrimination and to have any chance of protecting our employment – trade unionists have to maintain the right to take industrial action in whatever guise we see fit. Now with the *Viking* and *Laval* judgments, we will see business, local authorities and governments

jumping on the trade union suppression bandwagon. Unless we resist, comrades, these fiendish judgments will mean that we will find ourselves in court more times than Perry Mason. We will find our funds become a table for the frenzied feeding of business. We have, collectively, say no.

In a so-called democracy, I have the opportunity to remove those who are my oppressors. As a result of the rulings from the European Court of Justice, I have no say whatsoever. If we are to be faced with such dangerous legislation, we should have the right to oppose. We are not anti Europe, but if faceless judges can have a detrimental effect on our trade unions, then we should at least be able to ask the question. Comrades, we should not stand idly by and allow our members to be attacked from all sides. There is already going to be a referendum, so we say that we should be at the beginning, driving the bus and shaping the future. Let's not wait until the questions are posed for us and then have to respond to them. Let's be at the beginning shaping the future. I second. (*Applause*)

Elaine Jones (*Unite The union*) spoke against Motion 77.

She said: Congress, the attitude we take to Europe now is extremely important again, and the reason why it is important is that the working class is being made to pay for the crisis of capitalism. The ruling class across Europe say that there is no choice, that they have got to make these cuts but they get richer and their wealth increases. Our response to those attacks should be to strengthen our links with other European workers and trade unions and develop a European-wide working class alternative to austerity. A campaign now to withdraw from Europe would not help us develop those European-wide workers' links. Such a campaign would, undoubtedly, be dominated by the views of the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Express*, UKIP and right-wing Tories. It would whip up nationalism.

More important than the whipping up of nationalism is that it would mis-educate people into who our real enemy is. Our enemy isn't Europe. If we withdraw the British ruling class aren't suddenly going to stop attacking us. Our enemies are the political representatives of the rich in Europe and here in Britain, too, and if they link up across Europe, then we do the same. We call for a levelling up of workers' rights across Europe and for democracy in the European political institutions.

In Greece we are currently seeing the working class absolutely devastated by cuts, but we have also seen a workers' movement that is fighting to defend itself. They are not content with a one-day strike and a demo 10 months later. There have been protests and strikes. Doctors are now occupying hospitals, shipyard workers are blocking the streets over pay and university lecturers are planning strike action.

During the past couple of days, I have spoken to comrades who went on a union delegation to Greece earlier this year. They met with health workers, transport workers, teachers and factory workers, but not one of those unions were calling for withdrawal.

We have also seen the rise of the political organisation called Syriza, and what do they say? They say no to austerity, no to cuts and for the public ownership of the banks. They say they will not make cuts if they are ordered by the institutions of Europe and the IMF, but nor will they voluntarily leave Europe or the euro. They want to stay in. Congress, it seems to me that that approach is right. We say we will not make their cuts but neither will we be forced to leave. A withdrawal campaign now from Europe would, at best, be a diversion for our Movement against

us making those European-wide links. At worst, it would infect our class with the poison of nationalism. We urge you to vote against Motion 77.

Neil License (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in opposition to Motion 77.

He said: Congress, PCS supports every paragraph in this motion except the final one. PCS supports, as we know that all of you do, the RMT's call for stronger trade union employment rights. We echo, as we know all you do, the RMT's demands to repeal all of those laws that are an impediment to us organising in our members' interests. PCS also recognises, as we believe all of you do, that the EU is pro-austerity and pro-privatisation. PCS, like the whole of Congress, is united in opposing austerity and privatisation but, and it's a big "but", we do not share the conclusion that, therefore, we must campaign for withdrawal from the European Union. Congress, we reach that conclusion for two reasons. The first reason is because we believe it would be a massive distraction from the real and immediate fights that we face, the fights against employers suppressing wages, the fights against employers cutting pensions and jobs and the fights against the Government privatising and cutting services. To embark on a campaign to withdraw from the EU would not only be a distraction from those fights but it would actually align us with the Tory right, with UKIP and with elements of big business, the very people who are calling for further reductions in workers' rights. Instead of defeating those reactionaries, we would be sharing platforms with them. Congress, let's fight those real enemies, not make sham common cause with them.

Secondly, we oppose this motion because we do not believe that leaving the EU would make workers in our communities better off. The EU is pro-austerity and pro-privatisation, but so is the UK Government and so is any likely replacement. At the last UK general election all three major political parties supported austerity and privatisation. If you want a campaign to fight and

win, then let's fight and campaign to make Labour anti austerity and anti privatisation. That is a fight worth having and one worth winning.

The major trade unions and major-left parties in Greece and Spain, hammered by austerity, are not making the demands from EU withdrawal or even for pulling out of the Euro because, in itself, it would do nothing to benefit workers. Pulling out of the EU would not overthrow capitalism. If we had a progressive UK Government strengthening workers' rights and bringing industries into public ownership, and that was being blocked by the EU, then the case would be different, but until that point PCS believes that arguing for EU withdrawal is a distraction from the real struggles our Movement faces. Oppose the motion. (*Applause*)

Billy Hayes (*General Council*): Congress, I invite you to reject Motion 77. There is a lot of good stuff in the motion about 'Monti II' and trade union rights in Europe, but that is all in Motion 78, and we are going to invite you to support that motion.

Let me say something about the referendum. Today is 11th September. The fact that the *Morning Star* says that today is 11th September and the *Daily Mail* says that today is 11th September does not make it less true. As to the referendum, the point that your enemies support something that you think is right is one thing, but in terms of the position of the TUC we have not supported a call for Europe for more than 20 years for two main reasons. First, it is unclear, to say the least, what the alternative to membership of the European Union would be. Are closer links with the USA being proposed or with Commonwealth? Those seem to be unpalatable or certainly unrealistic. So perhaps there is the Norwegian route, meaning that we still have to follow EU decisions without having any say in how they are made. Secondly, the TUC has taken the view for two decades that, on balance, our membership of the EU is beneficial to workers' interests

both in economic terms and in terms of workers' rights. In terms of privatisation, it has not been as a result of the EU that privatisation of the Post Office has been mooted, or the liberalisation of postal services or, for that matter, the anti trade union laws.

In terms of the referendum and its timing, it would be completely the wrong thing to do now. Earlier this year a vote took place in the House of Commons where a hundred of Cameron's MPs voted for a referendum. When the Government minister – I think it was in about March of this year – was asked on *Newsnight*: “If not now, how do we deal with some of the problems of the European Union?”, to which he said, “We are not for a referendum now, but we would like to repatriate some powers.” What were the powers that he hit on right away? They were employment rights. That was the only thing he said about repatriating powers. He said that it would be absolutely the wrong thing to do now. You heard Bernadette yesterday speak about helping the ETU campaign in terms of social justice, jobs and growth. As has already been said within the debate, neither on the left parties nor in the European trade union Movement, there is not the call to come out of Europe. The vast majority of European left-wing parties and trade unions are for staying into the EU and seeking to reform the EU.

In terms of employment rights, let me just say this. My union supports the campaign for the repeal of all anti-trade union laws, but I think it is a bit of a myth simply to suggest that workers don't take strike action simply because of anti-trade union laws. People do not take strike action because they are scared, but when the timing is right they are quite prepared to defy anti-trade union laws but not because of what Europe says or this-or-that-law. In Crosby, Liverpool, this week, our members went out because of the way that they were treated. Not one of them cited the *Viking* or *Laval* cases. Not one of them cited employment rights in this country. Workers struggle and fight when they are given hope, and you are not giving hope to workers or building

the confidence of workers. To suggest that the simple route of your problems all lie in Brussels is not right. The problem lies with the type of society that we are in. The danger with the motion suggests that if we had a referendum then all our problems would disappear in the referendum. Our problems are our problems because of the type of world we live in, and that is why we are asking Conference to reject Motion 77 and support Motion 78. Thank you.

The President: The right of reply goes to the RMT.

Bob Crow (RMT): Thank you, President, and comrades. I turn to speak to my good friend Billy Hayes. Billy, when you said about your members going out on strike in Crosby, Liverpool, they got the support of your union and the full support of my union and, no doubt, the full support of this TUC, but the reality is, Billy, that your union is in court just as often as the RMT is in court. All I know is that when John Hendy QC and our solicitors see us, all I see from the other side – the bosses – is that they are taking us to court because of issues regarding Europe. They are the ones who mentioned *Laval* and *Viking*. Basically, to our comrades in the PCS, the issue is pretty clear. Either you think you can reform the European Union, or if you can't reform the European Union what are you going to do about it? The point is that if a service goes from one country to another, then proportionality can be used. That means that your members in a democratic ballot can decide that it wants to defend its industry and members and a judge can come along and say, "I think that what you are doing by taking a one day strike action is too much", and that you should only have an overtime ban, a half-day strike or whatever. That is what "proportionality" means under 'Monti II'. Our sister from Unite said that all the workers in Europe will rise together because there is a bureaucracy in Europe. That is not the case at all. Why aren't all workers rising in Europe at the same time? Workers will rise, as Billy quite rightly says, when there is sufficient confidence in what they are doing.

I heard a speaker from Colombia yesterday. We have got speakers here from America and all over the world. I've got more in common with a Chinese labourer than I have with a City of London stockbroker. The issue is this, brothers and sisters. I thought we were internationalist. Why do we have to have a fortress of Europe around us? Why can't we go out into the world and be real internationalists? Of course, there will be problems. No one is saying that capitalism will end, but I will tell you this, brothers and sisters. Is anyone going to say to me now, if they were given the opportunity, that they would go into the euro now? Would anyone go into the euro at this present stage. No one in their right mind would go into the euro. The fact is that the European Union is on its knees and there will be a referendum. If we don't put our agenda down, then the right wing will. Yes, we are in a minority today, but I've been a minority all my life. I will tell you this. I've always found out twenty years later that being in the minority was the majority position that was absolutely right which we obtained. So we might be in the minority, but I remember other positions that this TUC took and, at the end of the day, we look back and say, "Who was right and who was wrong?" I warn you, brothers and sisters, that unless this Movement wakes up, you are going to face the debacle of the same problems that are happening in Greece, Portugal, Spain and Ireland, and I urge you to support the motion.

(Applause)

The President: I intend now to put Motion 77 to the vote.

* *Motion 77 was LOST.*

The President: We are now going to Motion 78 to be moved by BALPA and seconded by Nautilus International. Then I am going to move to the Lay Member's Award that we left off from this morning.

Social progress clause

Jim McAuslan (*British Air Line Pilots' Association*) moved Motion 78.

He said: Congress, let me express my admiration for the courage of the GPC, which believed that we could go into a composite with the previous motion.

To understand our case, I need to give some history based on practical experience of trade union organising rather than political philosophy. In 2008 we were concerned that a major UK employer wanted to base part of its operations in France and the implications that that might have had for our members' terms and conditions. Talks failed, we conducted a strike ballot, we did it by the book, we had an 80% poll and 80% of members voted for strike action. We were, however, threatened with legal action because our proposed strike would constitute a breach of the employer's ----

The President: Colleagues, just keep the noise down when you are leaving the hall. You may not be interested in this particular debate but many other colleagues are. Please show respect to the speakers. Please. I am sorry, Jim. (*Applause*)

Jim McAuslan: Thank you. As I said, this is about union experience, not political philosophy. Perhaps it is not interesting enough.

However, we took the novel steps of seeking a court declaration that our actions were lawful. The employer counterclaimed seeking unlimited damages, including damages caused by the mere fact that we had served notice to take strike action. The employer's estimate was £100 million a day. So despite having complied with the tight legal restrictions of British law, which are the tightest in Europe, we were still liable to liquidation. We withdrew. Our Association is more important to us than any one dispute. They were dark hours for all of us. It would be arrogant to compare ourselves with the workers of Taff Vale, whose union were bankrupted by an employer who had very deep pockets. The fact is that we went through the same frustration, the same anger and, yes, the same fear as individual officers that they had gone through, but be in no doubt that this is one of the biggest attacks on British trade unions since the Taff Vale decision in 1900 and it needs an effective political response to safeguard trade union freedom. We picked ourselves up, dusted ourselves down and made a complaint to the ILO. It's Committee of Experts has twice made it clear that the United Kingdom is in breach of Convention 87 on Freedom of Association. The Committee observed, with serious concerns, the practical limitations of the effective exercise of the right to strike by BALPA members, and I quote: "It was seen as a real threat to the union's very existence and that the request for the injunction and the delays that would necessarily ensue through the legal process would likely make the action irrelevant and meaningless."

Europe has been waking up to this situation and shamed by this sort of judgment, it asked Mario Monti to come up with a solution. He failed miserably. Indeed, his report would have been written into legislative form and preserved in aspic a judicial formulation that is, basically, anti union. In our view, the draft Monti II regulation was a wasted opportunity. Others felt likewise and their report has now been thrown out. I would like to pay tribute to the lobbying work done by the ETUC, our own TUC and to the academics to make sure that it never became a reality.

Amazingly, the UK Government also objected, although I doubt very much that this was because they were aggrieved at the thought that economic rights might be outweighed by social ones. More likely, it was a concern about any EU influence in UK labour laws. But success at seeing off Monti II still leaves us exposed to the fossilised ECJ rulings and that no solution has been found. Until the solution is found, we are going to be left with no clear rules indicating that collective action may be taken in accordance with human rights principles and the threat of unlimited damages still exists for trade unions such as ours exercising a fundamental social right. That is why, Congress, we are calling for an EU regulation – we have called it a “social progress clause” – that makes those things clear. This will be an uphill task as the tide in Europe is towards liberalisation, away from social issues that might impede economic freedom. There is a huge public mood of doubt around people across Europe and even in this progressive room, as we have just heard, our mood will swing from one of belief to doubt and from support to opposition.

In my own industry, we are threatened again with EU rules and fatigue that are worse than our existing UK ones, and our members ask Europe to get off our backs. What I also know from our own industry and from the experience that I have just described is that no employer suffers these dilemmas. They will go where they get the best return and structure themselves in the most flexible way that they can. They have teams of lawyers to do this and those lawyers are tooled up. To draw up the Channel drawbridge would be a God send to them, so for us, in a very practical way, Europe does matter. If our experience is anything to go by, it will come round your way soon. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Mark Dickinson (*Nautilus International*) seconded Motion 78.

He said: Congress, Motion 78 highlights fundamental issues for trade union members in Europe. The *Viking* case arose from a dispute over an attempt by a ferry company in Finland to reflag its ships and replace the Finnish crews with cheaper seafarers from Estonia. It goes to the heart of the right to defend the interests of our members. As this motion rightly notes, it is all about the relationship between economic freedoms, on the one hand, and the right to take collective action on the other, both protected by the treaty establishing the European Community.

For seafarers, who have been more exposed than any other group of employees to employers playing fast and loose with globalised labour markets, this case has become of critical importance, but it is something that should worry all workers, workers everywhere. This motion highlights the vital need to secure a regulatory response that not only provides clarity and certainty for unions but also delivers safeguards to prevent social dumping across the community. That sort of protection is needed now more than ever before as we have witnessed the spectacular growth of outsourcing, temporary work and the flourishing secondary market for services and posted labour. Service providers have been moving from one Member State to another by exercising their entitlement to freedom of establishment and have used independent contractors or cheaper labour in ways which undercut the terms and conditions of domestic workers.

The issues at stake are immense, pitting the principle of free movement against national and international regulations, governing industrial relations, such as those prescribed by the ILO. Yet even though it is 10 years since the dispute that triggered this, we are still waiting for a social progress clause that establishes the right of workers and their representatives to take collective action. The long legal battles that have been generated by the *Viking*, *Laval* and *Ruffert* judgments have variously implied that unions cannot organise against companies employing imported workers at rates below those for local workers, that workers' rights to collective action

are less important than markets of freedom of access to cheaper workers, that union members are not allowed to take collective action to defend industry agreements, and that action aimed at levelling up wages of imported workers is outlawed.

Congress, it is appalling that these critical issues have not been resolved and that 'Monti II' regulation fails so dismally to deal with the fundamental principles at stake. We know what we want. Support this motion, support the principle of quality before cost, about being the best, not the cheapest, and protecting standards and not eroding skills. I second thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, I now intend to take the vote on Motion 78.

* *Motion 78 was CARRIED.*

The President: Congress, the business that we have not been able to complete I am going to try and put in at the end of today's business, if that is possible.

Presentation of the Gold Badge of Congress to Mary Turner MBE

The President: I want now to talk about Mary Turner. Congress, I reported to you earlier today that Mary Turner of the GMB, the Women's Gold Badge recipient, was unable to be with us to collect her award. I am delighted to be able to tell you that Mary is now here. It is incredibly difficult to sum up in a few words Mary's career and contribution to the trade union Movement, both to her own union and to the wider community. Mary has been an active trade unionist for over 40 years. She started off as the mother of a chapel at a local printing firm and then went on

to campaign for improved pay and conditions for school dinner staff in Brent. She played vital roles in both the People's March for Jobs and the TUC *Jobs Express Campaign* in the 1980s.

She joined our Executive in 1983 and was elected GMB President in 1995, a position that she still holds today. In 2010 she was awarded an MBE for services to trade unionism. Colleagues, I am proud and privileged to present Mary with the Women's Gold Badge of Congress. On a personal note, I have never met in all my life, in any arena, anybody with the personal commitment and courage that Mary Turner has shown in her battles and dedication to fight for her class, for her people and to stand up against injustice, bullying, harassment and any form of intimidation. All the great things that make our trade union Movement are embodied in Mary Turner. Mary, there is no more worthy recipient than this award.

(Presentation of Women's Gold Badge of Congress amidst a standing ovation and cheers)

Mary Turner (GMB): Congress, it gives me great pleasure and honour to accept this Gold Badge of Congress from you, my comrades and colleagues in the trade union Movement. I would like to say a thank you to a few people. Firstly, I would like to thank our TUC President, Paul Kenny. We have been comrades for an awful long time and great friends. Your support and my union's support has been great, but it was not always like that when I was first active in my union. Women were not expected to move up the ladder, but they soon learnt that I was not going away. I was told that when I was elected on to an Executive seat that I would not be there in two years time. Well, I'm still there and still causing a nuisance. I am often seen as the rogue both in the Labour Party and here. If speaking out for working people in language that they understand and putting their case for a fair and just society, then I'll keep being that rogue. *(Applause)* As a result of my activities, and of others in this hall, who I will mention, I was blacklisted in the 1980s and Paul Foot made me aware of it. I wore that badge proudly because I

must have been doing something right if Margaret Thatcher's Government decided that I was a threat – the dinner lady and not the builder. *(Applause)*

Congress, my family is in the auditorium and none of you in this hall can do this job without their support. Also I could not do my job without the support of my union members. I have great friends here – Barbara Benham, who has worked with me and has been actively for as nearly as long as I have, and Edna Rolph, and many others. I want to say to my husband, my children and my grandchildren, thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for supporting me in whatever I do, and I want to thank my union and my region.

I would like to dedicate this Gold Badge today to the hundreds and thousands of trade unionists across the world who have been bullied and murdered just because they want fairness and justice. Thank you, Congress, Paul Kenny, Pat and everyone in my union for their support. Thank you. *(A standing ovation amidst cheers)*

The President: That was quality. Congress, that concludes this morning's business.

Congress adjourned for lunch.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress reassembled at 2.15 p.m.)

The President: Once again, many thanks to *The Hampshire String Quartet*, who have been playing for us this afternoon. I think another round of applause is in order. Thank you very much indeed. *(Applause)*

Also, I would like to welcome Tommy and Ann Grimes from Kells. Tommy was the leading campaigner in helping to set up the Jim Connell Memorial, Jim being the person who wrote *The Red Flag*. It is great to have you here in Brighton. Well done, Tommy.

You will see that a delegates' questionnaire has been distributed on your chairs during the lunch break. Please complete and return these to the TUC information stand situated near the entrance to the Brighton Centre. I am also giving you notice that I intend to take Motion 5, Resisting Austerity Measures, in the name of the POA after Motion 25 this afternoon.

I call on Peter Hall, Chair of the General Purposes Committee, to give the GPC Report.

Peter Hall (*Chair, General Purposes Committee*): Good afternoon, Congress. I can report that the General Purposes Committee has approved the following emergency motion: Emergency Motion 3 on GCSEs will be moved by the NUT and seconded by the UCU. The President will indicate when it is hoped that this emergency motion will be taken. I will report further to you on the progress of business and other GPC decisions when necessary throughout Congress. Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much, Peter. As Peter has reported, we now have Emergency Motion 3, GCSEs, moved by the NUT and seconded by UCU. We now have three outstanding emergency motions. I am giving consideration as to how we are going to take these, but it looks fairly certain that they will be taken tomorrow.

Congress, I was unable to take all the scheduled business this morning: Composite Motion 14, Education for all; Motion 63, Music hubs; Motion 64, For profit — post-16 education; Composite Motion 15, Valuing further education; Motion 67, Homophobic bullying in schools; and paragraphs 6.1 to 6.4 of the General Council Report. If time permits, I will attempt to take this business after the scheduled business this afternoon or after the scheduled business tomorrow morning. I will let you know how this looks as we go along.

Equal rights

The President: We now return to Chapter 3 of the General Council Report, Equal rights, from page 28, Motion 20, Women hit hardest. Congress, as you may know, it is the position of the Equality conferences that they do not accept amendments. The FDA has indicated that they will remit their amendment. I will therefore take the mover and seconder of Motion 20 and then call the FDA to explain their position. I will then take any other speakers. I will give the right of reply to the mover of Motion 20 and finally take the vote on that motion. On Motion 20, Women hit hardest, the General Council are supporting the motion.

Women hit hardest

Sue Bond (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) moved Motion 20.

She said: Congress, I am from the TUC's Women's Conference and this is an angry motion as women are getting angry and with good reason. All the Coalition cuts to jobs, pay, pensions and public services — entirely unnecessary and entirely unjustified — are hitting the very people and communities that we are here at Congress to defend. These are the very people who did not create the deficit in the first place and of these women are particularly hit hard.

The Fawcett Society calculates that 81% of those losing their jobs under this Government by the end of last year have been women. That is even higher in the public sector where so many women are employed, with black and minority ethnic women often the first to be pushed out the door. That is coupled with the attacks on pay and pensions, the rocketing cost of food, the rocketing cost of childcare, the cuts to welfare, the cuts to child benefit, the cuts to child tax credit, the looming monster of universal credit and the sight of women queuing for handouts at food banks because they cannot afford to feed their children, something none of us ever expected to happen since the dark days of the 1930s.

Then we come to services. 80% of the Coalition cuts have yet to be implemented. Already, every week, funding cuts are closing or part-closing children's centres, women's advice services and rape crisis support. Half the women suffering domestic violence will lose their entitlement to legal aid as qualifying rules tighten and that budget is cut by billions. Women's refuges are now turning away over 200 women every week as their funding is slashed and many face closure. To cap it all, the Equality and Human Rights Commission's grants programme, which funds CABs, law centres and community groups to assist and advise victims of discrimination, is being closed down altogether.

Are we going to let the Government get away with all this? No, we are not. The Government says there is no alternative, but of course there is. Investment in job creation, public infrastructure, transport, housing, collecting the £120 billion in unpaid tax is the right road to recovery and not this headlong dash to economic disaster which is causing misery to millions.

Does this Government care about the deepening poverty and inequality it is creating? Not a jot. This is Tory ideology, red in tooth and claw. Their response to the legal duty to advance equality

is to say that it should be repealed as so much red tape. Our response must be unity, to hold them to account, the unity that we have shown in the motions carried this week. It is unity across unions and communities — women, men, gay, straight, black, white, disabled, young and old — marching together with the biggest show of strength that we can muster on October 20th, with coordinated strikes and campaigning against a Coalition ridden with tensions, weaknesses and divisions. We must say “No” to a future that destroys people’s lives and “Yes” to a future that works. (*Applause*)

Angela Lynes (*Unison*) seconded Motion 20.

She said: Congress, I am sure that nothing I am about to say will be of news to you. All of you will have read in the press about the greedy public sector workers with their high salaries and their gold-plated pensions, but I hope and trust you know that is a lie. The truth is that the majority of public sector workers earn less than £22,000 per year and the pension of our average local government woman worker is £1,600 a year or £5,000 in health. That is not gold-plated; it is not even nickel-plated.

Even if the lies were true, it still makes absolutely no financial sense to cut our jobs and wages. For every one pound earned by a public sector worker, 64 pence goes back into the local economy. Last week’s Save the Children Report highlighted the ever-growing gap between the haves and the have-nots with parents going without food, children without adequate clothing and family relationships breaking down in the face of grinding poverty. Where there is already deprivation, the cuts to public services impact the hardest of all on the local economy with the loss of services to those who desperately need them and the ever-growing number of the unemployed. For more than 2.5 million people who want to work but cannot find jobs, who pay

no taxes, who cannot afford to buy so pay no VAT and who rely on benefits, how does that make sense?

Women have always made up the majority of the public sector workforce. When cuts are made, it is the women's jobs which are the first in the firing line and even the Government admits this. The number of unemployed women in the UK is the highest in more than 20 years. Thousands of young women have never had the chance to work and see no prospect of decent employment in the future. Lifesaving services are closing. They all provide a lifeline for those who are in real need. If that lifeline is taken away, the consequences are dire.

The campaign against public services is motivated by a desire to cut and to privatise them. There does not need to be a single penny taken away from any public service or a single job lost. This is not about "them and us", it is not about private versus public and it is not a race to the bottom. We believe that all workers are entitled to decent salaries and decent pensions. It is about all working people uniting together to say to this Government that they are wrong and that there is an alternative which does not damage lives. Please support the motion and let us work together to tell the truth to this Government.

Can I say a personal thank you to all the unions in the hall for your best wishes during my recent illness. I am really glad to be back. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

The President: And we are really glad to have you back. I will call the FDA to explain their position.

Sue Gethin (FDA) moved the remission of the amendment to Motion 20.

She said: I would like to say from the outset that the FDA welcomes Motion 20 and is glad that it has been put forward from the Women's Conference highlighting the fact that it is women who are being hit hardest by the attacks on public services. I would like to dispel any concern there may be that the FDA amendment was trying to narrow the scope of the motion. We hope that you think the amendment is neither controversial nor seeking to undermine Motion 20.

The FDA seeks to gain recognition that it is not just at the lower levels of employment but also managers who are being hit hard as well. We consider that the motion is enhanced by including a reference to senior women managers and it is in the spirit of the motion being all-inclusive that we would seek remission of the amendment and ask that the ethos of the amendment is taken forward in conjunction with the substantive motion.

2012 has been a challenging year for women in the public sector and beyond. Reorganisation and job cuts have led to a reduction in the number of key roles, notably in the civil service. Additionally, a number of senior women have left the civil service and two more women permanent secretaries recently announced their departure. At one time, the numbers of women permanent secretaries heading up the ministerial departments was proclaimed by the head of the civil service as being at 50%. That is eight out of 16 posts. Since then, the reality is that there has been a significant reduction in numbers. The recently announced departures will mean that only 25% of permanent secretary posts will be held by women.

How disappointing was it that Sir Gus O'Donnell's job, which was split into three part-time roles, was filled by three men. This is compounded by the decline in the proportion of women in the senior civil service. This includes permanent secretary and below. The target of achieving

39% of women in the senior civil services has never been reached. In April 2011, the figure was 35.9% and this has now fallen to 34.7%.

In condemning the Government's reckless disregard of deepening inequality, Congress reaffirms its belief that there is an alternative, including the collection of avoided, evaded and uncollected tax. FDA members were at the forefront of an innovative campaign "Being Bold", which was a radical approach to raising revenue and defeating the deficit by the use of skilled tax professionals to close the tax gap and ensure that everybody pays their fair share. FDA's campaigning helped secure an additional £9.7 million in investment in HMRC.

All women in the public sector, at whatever grade and in whatever job, should be able to have the aspiration to achieve at the highest levels and the opportunities to do so and these are rapidly declining as a result of the austerity cuts. It is not a question of women breaking through the glass ceiling. It may have been cracked, but it looks as though it has been repaired and is actually coming down on top of us. Please accept the spirit of the amendment, remit it and support the motion. *(Applause)*

Kathy Duggan (*NASUWT*) supported Motion 20.

She said: It is reported that David Cameron is experiencing a trust deficit with women voters. He has a plan — apparently we are all going to get better access to nannies and funding to become entrepreneurs who are mothers. The Prime Minister has a poll rating of -25% among women. There is a gender pay gap of 12%. Out of 22 Cabinet ministers, 17 are men. That is 17 shades of grey-suited men making decisions on women's economic wellbeing.

Child benefit has been decimated as a universal benefit. More families have been pushed to their financial limits. For the first time, Save the Children is combating the effects of under-nourishment of children in the UK at a time when Gove has lifted the nutritional guidelines for school meals. Older women have become the Cinderellas of the working world. We work longer, for lower pay, in jobs with less status. Childcare costs are up, tax credits are down, social care for the elderly is cut and the buck stops with the middle-aged woman — I am just there by the skin of my teeth as I am probably a bit old to be middle-aged now — holding up far more than half the sky.

Osborne's austerity policy is having a disproportionate effect on women. 65% of the public sector workforce is female, or at least it was. That is 65% of the public sector workers whose jobs are under threat, whose pay is effectively frozen and falling, whose pension contributions are rising. The cuts and the policy of austerity are being used as a political weapon to undermine the confidence of ordinary working people, demonstrating an irrational contempt for over half the workforce.

Since May 2010 or, as I call it, "the apocalypse", the Government has raised £18.9 billion each year from their cuts, 13.2 billion of that from women. Osborne really does need to get his hands out of my handbag! Women are losing out on changes to employer pension contributions, cuts to children's centres, cuts to women's refuges, closure of the Women's National Commission, massive cuts to the EHRC, the watering down of the Equality Act, changes to maternity pay, cuts to legal aid — the list is endless and unfair. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Betty Joseph (*National Union of Teachers*) supported Motion 20.

She said: You might have heard some of these things before, but we need to reinforce what has been said.

Women account for two-thirds or 65% of employment in the public sector, many of them in low-paid jobs. However, all working-class women in various levels of employment are affected by the pay freeze and pension changes. Women are often the backbone in families, who keep things going despite whatever is going on, and this Government's onslaught against them is having a devastating effect in several ways.

The cuts to local authority budgets has meant that grants to community groups which support women subject to domestic violence, for example, are being affected. The planned cuts to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, who also award grants to community groups to fight discrimination, are being forced to reduce their services or to close. This Government wrongly believes that the tax cuts for businesses, relaxing regulations that protect workers' rights and the environment, reducing pay, cutting public sector employment and devaluing pensions will all stimulate growth. The evidence is clear — it is not working. We have zero growth and increased poverty, which we are seeing in our schools and in our community.

Instead of continuing down this devastating path, this Government should put more money into the hands of lower income people, particularly women, who would do more to stimulate growth through their spending and donations to charity work than the Government plan. There is an alternative. It is to collect the unpaid tax from the tax evaders — the Robin Hood tax.

The Shadow Minister for Women, Yvette Cooper, has shown that of the £8 billion net revenue to be collected in the year 2014-15, nearly £6 billion of that will come from women and the

education service is not exempt from that. Women's unemployment is at its highest level in 25 years. Women count for two-thirds of the latest monthly increase. Women, do we need to chain ourselves to the railings again to be heard?

The sign of a progressive society is one that looks after its women and children. What does that say about the UK? My NUT casework locally shows that a disproportionate amount of women, especially black and ethnic minority women, are subject to disciplinary or capability procedures in schools. This is due to the Government's ideological programme of reform.

It is good to know that the TUC is working with the Runnymede Trust alongside other unions to investigate the effects of the austerity cuts on minority workers. We need to use every available media to counteract the Government's view of austerity and promote the alternative, plus the myths, and make ordinary people understand the lies that are being told. It is a well-known fact that there are more women in the unions than men so let us raise our voices and state categorically that we did not create this mess and we are sick and tired of having to take the brunt of it. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

Vicky Knight (*University and College Union*) supported Motion 20.

She said: Congress, austerity hurts working people, but this is not news. Wholesale privatisation of the public sector, the continuing pay freeze and cuts to health and welfare services, social care and access to justice all contribute to untold hardship for working people, our members. The media and the Government's right-wing spin machine sell these cuts as necessary. They blame us for the crisis and offer economic alternatives that just do not deliver for those of us not on a six-figure salary.

In education, both further and higher, privatisation is endemic. Flexibility exists for employers not for staff. Casualisation, instability and a long-hours culture is prevalent and employer expectations breed a further culture of competition and divide, making our trade union roles crucial. When markets rule, capitalism sets social groups against each other using gender, race, sexuality and disability, such issues to nurture conflict, undermining our human and our trade union rights, and it fosters inequality. It breeds inequality, affects workers with stress and anxiety and makes people quite sensitive about their status and the threats to it. It becomes “them versus us”. Inequality undermines trust, it undermines community and it undermines unity within our trade union Movement.

When we in this Movement compromise on equality, fairness and full and equal representation of all our members, it is game over, curtains up and just another victory for the right-wing agenda. Women are hit hardest and black women also suffer a double deficit. LGBT issues for women are hardly even on the agenda of this Government, who are set to drive socio-economic divide and rule policies, practices and procedures as a wedge between us.

That is why at UCU, Voices for All are crucial in reaching our end goal of mainstreaming issues and speaking with one unified voice. Congress, let us unite to ensure that the Government are held to account in delivering on the Equality Act and on the public sector equality duties. Let us resist the cuts that are impacting disproportionately on vulnerable workers such as cuts in pay, conditions and flexibility at work, cuts in rape crisis services, counselling services and domestic violence support services, cuts in health and social care, child benefit and childcare places, all hitting women hardest.

Congress, this is the time when equality must be at the very heart of our industrial agendas. This is where our unions' equality structures come into their own as delivering for all. This is where unity is indeed the strength when we campaign for justice in employment, pay, pensions and public services. Congress, get involved and support organisations like the Charter for Women, the People's Charter, the National Assembly of Women and particularly the Sisters' Fight Back Conference on 17th November in London where Sarah Veale and Gloria Mills will be speaking on issues from Women in the Economy, Women's Representation Campaigning, Equal Pay, Equal Rights, Children and Young People. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: The FDA has remitted the amendment. Does Congress agree to remit the amendment? (*Agreed*) I would now like to move to the vote on Motion 20.

* *Motion 20 was CARRIED*

Equal Rights

The President: We now move to Motion 21, Equal rights. The General Council is supporting the motion.

John Hannett (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) moved Motion 21.

He said: Congress, this Government's continuous, relentless attacks on employment rights still continue, often thinly disguised as cutting red tape and reducing the regulatory burden on business. It is matched only in its savagery by its assault on the welfare state. The Government's relentless economic strategy, which we have heard much about over the last couple of days, continues and has plunged our economy into the first double dip recession for over 30 years.

Yet despite this, and against the advice of financial experts across the political and business spectrum, they continue to forge ahead with the flawed programme of austerity measures and their dismantling of the country's system of social security support. It may be couched in the language of rights and responsibilities, but this is not what is driving their reform of the welfare state. Their £20 billion programme of cuts to benefits and tax credits is not driven by the need to improve work initiatives and incentives and opportunities or, in fact, the desire to simplify the system. It is driven by their need to cut the deficit and shrink the State and it is those in society least able to afford it that are paying the highest price. The cuts are targeted at disabled people and families on low incomes, many thousands of USDAW members and many other members represented in this hall today.

Congress, tax credits have been singled out as particularly worthy of the Government's attention. Working families have taken a massive hit over the last two years and we saw another wave of changes this April, a wave that swept hundreds of thousands of parents off tax credits and reversed years of progress tackling child poverty made under the last Labour government.

Congress, USDAW's survey of 1,000 members revealed just how important tax credits are to them. Over half were in receipt of tax credits and this figure rises to two-thirds of members with children. When parents were asked how important tax credits are to their family finances, an overwhelming 95% indicated that they were either important or very important and yet that evidence did not dissuade the Government from ploughing ahead with this reform.

The introduction of the 24 hour couple rule came in as planned without delay, without hesitation and without explanation. Despite mounting a campaign in late 2011 to raise awareness of the

change amongst our members, a worrying 40% told us that they were uncertain what the change would mean for them and their families. Despite pointing out that the Government were entirely mistaken in their belief that extra working hours were there for the taking, the Government again continued regardless of the evidence.

The total loss to families from welfare benefit and tax credit cuts in 2012-2013 stands at almost £9 billion, more than double the previous year. Congress, unfortunately things are going to get a lot worse. According to the in-depth analysis by the campaign organisation Child Poverty Action Group, families have not yet experienced even half the full amount of cuts they will be hit with by 2014-2015.

Congress, the Coalition's economic policy is in disarray, business confidence has fallen, the books are not balancing and the Government is increasingly out of touch. It is women and children particularly who are bearing the brunt. How shocking that only a week ago, the international charity Save the Children, famous for its work to relieve child suffering in Africa, launched its first ever domestic campaign to raise money to combat child poverty here in the UK, one of the richest countries in the world. So let us make it very, very clear to the Coalition that we in the trade union Movement are joining forces again next month to gather and protest against this blatant attack on workers. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

Douglas Scott *(Accord)* seconded Motion 21.

He said: The Government's recent changes to tax credits show just how out of touch they really are with the lives of ordinary working people. Whilst they increase the tax breaks for some of the wealthiest in our society, they are introducing a programme of welfare cuts that are having, for some families and for some of our members, a devastating effect. The multi-millionaire

bankers are the ones who caused this crisis and low paid workers, particularly women, are the ones who are bearing the brunt of the Government's vicious attacks on ordinary working families. Paradoxically, some of these low paid workers are in the very banks which have paid their executives millions of pounds in salaries and bonuses.

Tax credits and working families have been particularly targeted by George Osborne. Despite the current recession, a recession which his Government is doing not at all to address, George Osborne thinks that part-time workers are able to increase their hours of work on demand. In April of this year, the introduction of the 24 hour qualifying period hit many of our members very hard.

Let me just give you one very brief example. My daughter, Heather, an Accord member for many years, suffers from fibromyalgia. She is only able to work 20 hours a week. In April of this year, Mr. Osborne upped that to a 24 hour qualifying period and that cost her £200 a week in tax credit. Accord has a 75% female membership, nearly half of whom are part-time, and many of them have also lost out with massive impact upon their family finances.

This increased hardship is doing nothing to tackle the economic difficulties we face and has reversed the progress made by the last Labour government in tackling the issue of child poverty. Congress, women and children are bearing the burden of this Government's failed economic policies and condemning future generations to living in poverty. We must continue to campaign against these savage cuts which are based on ideology and designed to reduce the deficit, drawing back the welfare state. We must campaign to support women and families and tackle in-work poverty during these difficult economic times. Accord is very proud to support USDAW's motion and calls on Congress to do the same. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 21 was CARRIED*

The President: I would like to now call Paragraph 3.8. The RMT have indicated they wish to speak. We will then be moving to Motion 22, Saving lives and supporting women. The General Council will be supporting the motion. First, we will deal with Paragraph 3.8 from our colleagues in the RMT.

Women's equality

Glenroy Watson (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) spoke on Paragraph 3.8 of the General Council Report.

He said: We are here again at the section dealing with Haiti. We thank the TUC and the General Council, particularly Frances, for giving us room during the beginning of the year to hold an event in Congress House commemorating the second year of the earthquake. We would also like to thank the international officers, Owen and his staff, in the TUC. However, we are again asking you not to forget that the situation is still continuing despite the millions of pounds that were collected. We want the General Council to challenge the situation. Charities have collected billions of pounds and have just put the money in their bank accounts.

We also want to look at what is happening internationally. One of the things missing from the Democratic Conference in the US was Bill Clinton walking down the stage. He should have had Monica Lewinsky in one hand and George Bush in the other because something is going on. Clearly, whatever Obama appointed Clinton and Bush to do in Haiti is not being done. We do have a situation where we, as a body, need to speak the truth to the powers that be. We need to

say that it is wrong, it is appalling and it is unacceptable that almost three years after this disaster and billions of pounds have been collected, the money is not there. Where has the money gone? What have they done with it? Why have they not done more to improve the lives of people in Haiti? We want the General Council Report to reflect that. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you for those remarks. We will take that on board. There is something to be said on the point raised.

Patricia Stuart (*Unite*): This is mainly just a little information. The General Council hears the concerns raised by the RMT and we are glad that the RMT raised the issue in the first instance. The TUC Trustees have been trying to identify union projects that we can support. That is quite difficult in Haiti because only 2% of workers are in the formal sector and they are organised as such. There is very poor trade union coverage.

It is right that there are still continuing problems in Haiti, particularly violence against women, which stepped up massively after the earthquake with a vast increase in rape in the camps and so on. This situation has not got any better particularly and there is some evidence that agencies such as US Aid and the World Bank, in their involvement in Haiti, have trained a stream of preferred bidders for services which have been destroyed in the earthquake to replace State-owned services which were provided before to give the private sector serious inroads into the country. The critique is correct, but the TUC is doing everything it can to find a safe haven for the funding which will help that situation. However, we must keep raising our voices on it also.

The President: Thank you, Pat. We can move now to Motion 22.

Saving lives, supporting women

Chris Riley (*Accord*) moved Motion 22.

He said: This is my first time at Congress. (*Applause*) Incidents of violence against women and girls are known to increase during times of financial hardship and economic stress, including the recession in which we find ourselves now. At the same time, women's ability to escape domestic violence is known to be limited by financial constraints. Local authority cuts are having a devastating effect on refuges and other services for women. 31% of funding to the domestic violence and sexual abuse sector from local authorities was cut between 2010 to the present, a reduction of £5.4 million. 230 women, just fewer than 9% of those seeking refuge, were turned away by Women's Aid on a typical day in 2011 due to lack of space. This is abhorrent.

The number of independent domestic violence advisers has been reduced. In 2011, of the eight major IDVA service providers supporting over 13,000 clients, two faced funding cuts of 100%, three faced cuts of 50%, three of 40% and two of 25%. Respective services working to reform male perpetrators of domestic violence suffered budget cuts so that between 2010 and 2011, 78% of services reduced the number of clients they were able to assist.

Statutory provision, including those police and court services that involve specialised expertise, has also been reduced following funding cuts. This includes cuts to operating levels of domestic abuse officers, the units on female genital mutilation and domestic violence courts. However, Congress, it is not just about cuts. Awful attitudes to rape and sexual violence continue. It is not a matter of sexual etiquette. The appalling catalogue of attacks on women's rights continues, most recently with members of the US Republican Party talking about whether pregnancy can

arise from legitimate rape. This gives us the impression that we are moving backwards, not forwards. Congress, let us reaffirm our message that violence against women is never acceptable. I move. (*Applause*)

Linda Moore (*GMB*) seconded Motion 22.

She said: Earlier this year, Theresa May, the Home Secretary, said, “Better use of women’s skills could be worth £15-23 billion to our economy each year. Giving all women the opportunity to achieve their full potential must be at the heart of our approach to economic growth.” Congress, what a whopper! The truth is the complete opposite. We are living through the biggest and most sustained attack on women in a generation.

The Coalition Government’s freeze on public sector pay and tax credits added up to £2.3 billion, of which women are likely to lose £1.7 billion, a 73% burden. Since 2010, the Government has cut £18.9 billion each year, of which £13.2 billion came from women, which is 70%. Women have had to bear the brunt of job losses. 1.25 million women are unemployed, the highest number for 25 years. Women make up around 65% of the public sector so austerity and job losses in that sector are having a continued disproportionate impact on women’s employment, but this is only half the story as there is also a human cost.

When money is tight, incidents of violence, particularly domestic violence against women, increases and, as you know, funding for women’s refugees and services is often the first to be cut. Our research has shown that 95% of women’s organisations face funding cuts or a funding crisis in the next year.

Congress, the rise in domestic violence is one of the most insidious effects of austerity. More than one million women suffer domestic abuse, more than 300,000 are sexually assaulted and

60,000 are raped each year. One in four women experience domestic violence over their lifetimes. It is vital that women's services receive long-term funding, particularly at a time when violence against women is rising. These cuts are forcing women to stay in violent and abusive relationships as they have no safe place to go. Congress, please support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Can we move to the vote on Motion 22. The General Council are recommending support for the motion.

* *Motion 22 was CARRIED*

Presentation of the TUC Equality Audit

The President: Congress, the TUC Equality Audit is one of the most important pieces of work that we do at the TUC. It allows us to examine what we are all doing to promote diversity within our own organisations. Unions have already received copies of the Equality Audit Report and I now have great pleasure in calling upon the Assistant General Secretary, Kay Carberry, to introduce the Equality Audit for 2012.

The Assistant General Secretary (Kay Carberry): Congress, this latest TUC Equality Audit shows the value of unions in hard times, hard times for the economy, hard times for ordinary working people and a particularly harsh environment for collective bargaining and equality.

Congress, your debates have been dominated by the trade union Movement's alternative to austerity policies and you have already spelled out the impacts on the most disadvantaged. That impact shows up starkly in our latest TUC Equality Audit. The Government has been telling us

that protection from discrimination and rights to things like maternity leave and pay that we have taken for granted now are burdens on business. They see equality as an easy target and this Equality Audit Report tells us that so do many employers.

When the TUC did the survey that led to this Audit Report, unions told us that agreements are being watered down and advances that we have made are being halted or reversed. Some unions reported examples of progressive policies that they had achieved on things like maternity, flexible working and adjustments for disabled people being weakened or scrapped altogether. More unions said that they were holding on to good agreements, but having trouble getting employers to stick to them.

But, delegates, as you will see when you read it, it is not all depressing because this audit, like in previous years, does tell a good story about the trade union Movement. It shows all the unions in the hall acting to defend equality, taking steps to prevent employment and pay gaps widening for women, disabled people, LGBT people in the workplace, black and ethnic minority workers and also older workers and younger people in the labour market. For example, unions have made sure that their negotiators have practical tools to assess the equality impact of proposed job cuts, pay freezes or cuts in pensions and the audit shows that unions have campaigned vigorously to protect terms and conditions using equality arguments.

What we have reported here is not all defensive. In this audit, you will see examples of unions using collective bargaining to make strides forward, even in this harsh economic and political climate, and at the top of unions' agenda is equal pay. You will see a lot of success in this area, for example, employers in banking, transport and media agreeing to do equal pay audits and

tackling pay at the lowest grades in which women are concentrated. All of this is thanks to unions.

Congress, we have known for a very long time that if you work in a unionised workplace, you will be better off, including when it comes to maternity and paternity leave. The audit shows that unions are still making headway in those areas too with new and better agreements despite cost cutting by some employers. Of course, this makes a huge difference to struggling families. You will see other positive examples too like unions keeping up the fight against the far right, including getting agreements on membership of far right organisations in the prison service, schools and fire rescue services.

So we can take heart, delegates. Here is straightforward evidence that even in the coldest of climates, unions are there for the disadvantaged and the marginalised. President, I have great pleasure in commending this Equality Audit Report to Congress. *(Applause)*

Stephen Lawrence's legacy

The President: I am now going to proceed to call Paragraph 3.17, Paragraph 3.9 and Motion 23. The General Council supports the motion.

Fern McCaffrey (GMB) moved Motion 23.

She said: In February of this year, Gary Dobson and David Norris were convicted for the murder of Stephen Lawrence. You may recall the secret police video showing these two and others making stabbing gestures and expressing vile racist comments. We welcome these convictions; however, others remain free.

It has taken Stephen's parents, Neville and Doreen, 19 years to receive any form of justice. However, the reality of racism in Britain keeps raising its ugly head. The convictions of Gary Dobson and David Norris at the beginning of this year for the murder of Stephen Lawrence brought the issue of race discrimination back to the front of the newspapers. Whilst the black workers recognise that this is only a partial victory in bringing Stephen's killers to justice, it is nevertheless a tremendously important decision.

We know that race is not on the Government's agenda and that they believe more in assimilation than any form of racial justice. The integrating strategy published by Eric Pickles demonstrated that it is no good looking to the Tories for racial justice. Their solution to the problem that plagues our communities is for all of us to participate in the Queen's Golden Jubilee Big Lunch and to join in a National Community Music Day.

Congress, much has changed since the murder of Stephen. However, some things remain the same. You may all have seen the CCTV footage last week showing a young black teenager being arrested by police in Sidcup. The teenager explained that he has been stopped around 50 times by the Metropolitan Police and has been subjected to four years of harassment and false charges, which he believes has been motivated by the colour of his skin.

In April of this year, Theresa May was asked about a secret Scotland Yard report detailing questions about the conduct and integrity of a police chief involved in the Stephen Lawrence case which was not given to the Macpherson Inquiry or to the Lawrence family. In the same month, a black fire-fighter, a public servant, tried to assist police officers while off duty but was himself targeted by the police because of the colour of his skin. He was abused, assaulted and

shot with a stun gun. If the taser had been a real gun, this fire-fighter would have been dead, essentially because he was black. When we are victims of crime, we are not believed.

Many of us had thought that cultures of negligence, discrimination and institutional racism had been addressed. These cases show us how far we still need to go. Furthermore, the levels of unemployment as a result of the recession and public service cuts are crippling the young black community. The level of youth unemployment has reached a record high of just over one million. Within these statistics is the tragedy of black youth unemployment rising from 28.8% in 2008 to 55.9% in the last three months of 2011. Just like in the 1980s, we face the prospect of yet another generation of black workers being excluded from the labour market and then subsequently blamed as being welfare-dependent when they are subjected to a life of unemployment. Thus, it is hardly surprising in the context of increasingly aggressive policing of young people that we saw in the riots of last August. The danger for our communities is that the gains made in closing the unemployment gap between black and white workers over the last 20 years will disappear and that the structural disadvantage that exists for black workers in the labour market will continue long into the future. What a prospect for me and my peers.

So what is to be done? The GMB and the Race Relations Committee is determined to ensure that the fight against institutional racism continues and that the Stephen Lawrence Centre is supported. This is why the TUC was supportive of many unions who launched the Stephen Lawrence Fundraising Appeal to help ensure the Centre's survival. It symbolises the struggle against institutional racism in our criminal justice system and in the rest of society. Its legacy is that it provides a focus for the continuing struggles of black communities and against public institutions whose structures and processes result in racist outcomes.

Congress, I want to make you see that it is important that we continue to strive to ensure that the trade union Movement is truly representative. A recent survey from the Labour Research Department on black workers' representation and participation in trade unions found that despite the initiative to encourage more black members to take positions within the trade union Movement, black officials are even less visible among the senior ranks of the trade union Movement. During times like these, we, as a trade union Movement, have a responsibility to ensure that fighting institutional racism remains central to combating discrimination inside the trade union Movement and certainly with employers. (*Applause*)

Mohammed Taj (*Unite*) seconded Motion 23.

He said: I have been an activist for nearly 40 years, but can I tell you that I have never taken any task as seriously as when I gave evidence to the Macpherson Inquiry. That Inquiry did us all a service by highlighting the problem of institutional racism. It made society address the evil of racist violence.

The resolution notes that things have improved and that is a fact. No one could watch Mo Farah run for gold, cheered on by 75,000 people in the stadium, and another 50 million people having a heart attack at home, and not see that things have changed for the better when a Muslim, born in Somalia, becomes a national hero. Sometimes, it is right to recognise how far we have come, but racism remains endemic in our society today. Just read the resolution. A young black kid is 27 times more likely to be stopped and searched. If it was not so serious, it would be a joke.

The trade union Movement has always been at the forefront in the struggle against racism and it is time to take the lead again. Let us re-establish the Stephen Lawrence Taskforce and let us say

this. When it comes to supporting it, money will be no object. It will get whatever it needs.

Friends, I urge you with all my heart to please support this resolution. (*Applause*)

Zita Holbourne (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 23.

She said: Cuts in austerity have deepened the level of inequality in education at work, in the criminal justice system and wider society. We have a Government that does not care about discrimination, which wants to weaken and reduce equality law and which is destroying the EHRC. Over one million young people are unemployed whilst one in two young black people are unemployed. University education is out of reach for the poorest young people, a disproportionate number of whom are black. Young people are facing the toughest employment climate in over 20 years. At least one in 12 black people are unemployed and institutional racism means that it is harder for black people to get a job as discrimination in the labour market increases. Black men are now up to 32 times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people and there are more young black men in prison than there are at university. Black women are the hardest hit by public sector cuts because of the double impact on them.

Doreen Lawrence has called for a second inquiry into her son's death because of corruption in the first inquiry. The majority of the 70 recommendations made by Macpherson have yet to be implemented and since Stephen's murder, there have been many more racist murders and deaths at the hands of the police and the State so that families like the Lawrences are forced to fight for justice for years. To name but a few, we should remember Jay Abatan, Sean Rigg, Smiley Culture, Kingsley Burrell, Anthony Walker, Mark Duggan, Anuj Bidve. We must remember all of those names with Stephen's until a change to the justice system is achieved.

In contrast to the many organisations fighting racism which have lost their funding and have been forced to close their doors after serving their communities and fighting racism for decades, the taskforce and work to tackle institutional racism by the TUC must be fully and properly resourced. One way in which you can contribute to Stephen's legacy is to support the TUC Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust Fundraising Appeal. PCS has presented a cheque to Doreen Lawrence at our ADC of £5,000 and I know some other unions have too, but there is still some way to go. I was honoured to be asked to design the poster for the appeal, but what would make those of us on the TUC Race Relations Committee really proud is first to reach the £100,000 target. Therefore, I call upon all of you here today to go back to your branches and regions and fundraise and donate.

To finish, the Trust is under threat, as are many voluntary sector organisations, because its funding has been cut. If we do not succeed, the Trust may have to close its doors on helping to make the potential ambitions of young people a reality, enabling them to pursue careers in architecture (Stephen's chosen field) and other professions, thereby keeping Stephen's legacy alive. It is easy to donate. I want you to get your mobile phones out before you leave Congress today and donate online via the TUC website or by text. You text "TUCS99" followed by the pound sign and the amount you want to donate to 70070.

Please keep Stephen's legacy alive. We have a responsibility as a Movement to not just defend the gains in equality that we have made, but to challenge discrimination and strive for improvements. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Amarjite Singh (*The Communications Union*) supported Motion 23.

He said: Congress, 2013 will make it 20 years since the brutal murder of Stephen. Stephen was only 18 years of age. In school, he was a keen learner and he was good at most subjects, but his best subjects were art and maths. At the age of 16, he set up a small business with his best friend designing and selling T-shirts, caps, jackets and book covers of well-known bands, rappers and political figures such as Malcolm X. He even worked as a film extra alongside actor Denzel Washington in the film *For Queen and Country*.

Tragically, on April 22nd, 1993, Stephen was brutally murdered because of the colour of his skin. Although Gary Dobson and David Norris have been convicted of Stephen's murder, there are still three persons who contributed to it still roaming free. Congress, we should never forget why the Stephen Lawrence Taskforce was set up. It was to make the society we live in equal and fair so that people are not discriminated against because of the colour of their skin.

Part of this motion calls for the General Council to re-establish the Taskforce with specific resources. The trade union Movement has driven the changes in how businesses operate with their recruitment policies, equal opportunity policies and how they look at themselves as employers. We have made many positive changes for black people. However, we have a long way to go and black people want to be part of a future that works. That is all we are asking for in Motion 23. Please support the motion and thank you for listening. (*Applause*)

Glenroy Watson (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) supported Motion 23.

He said: I rise to support Motion 23 but also to congratulate the TUC Black Workers' Conference and the Race Relations Committee for a timely motion to be sent here. I think there are many things that are happening, sometimes behind the scenes, which we do not understand

and acknowledge. Many of us here will remember the campaigning and meetings that Stephen Lawrence's parents and their supporters had to go to in order to get where we are so the legacy is a lot more than that.

It is sad to say that with many of the atrocities and injustices that remain, we are still treading some of those paths. Therefore, I want to focus on the last paragraph where it talks about resources and us, as a Movement, ensuring that this does not happen again to families who are their lowest ebb after the murder of their loved one has taken place. Some of them have been mentioned here. Regarding Sean Rigg, if you have not been following the coroner's court case, it is a landmark victory, I believe. Despite State interference and obstruction, a jury in a coroner's court overturned the suggestion that somebody died in hospital when they had been murdered in a police station. It is an important victory and I hope we will continue to follow that.

Our union is taking up the role of supporting these campaigns and issues, predominantly the Janet Alder campaign. I would say to all trade unions that you have the opportunity — and not only through the TUC — to continue to support these organisations, campaigns and initiatives as you are also able to do it through your own trade union. Community groups are out there suffering and do need your support. We ask that you do so not only here, as affiliates to the TUC, but in your individual trade union as well. I support the motion. (*Applause*)

* *Motion 23 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, I will now move to Motion 24, The continuing fight against racism. Delegates, it has not been possible to reach accommodation on Motion 24. The amendment that

stands in the name of the CWU has been accepted and the amended motion will be moved by the PFA and seconded by the CWU. The amendment in the name of UNISON will stand outside the motion. Firstly, I will call the mover and seconder of Motion 24, followed by the mover and seconder of the amendment. At the end of the debate, I will give the right of reply, if required, to the mover of Motion 24 and then take the votes on the amendment and then on Motion 24 itself. I call Motion 24, The Continuing Fight Against Racism. The General Council is recommending support for the motion.

The continuing fight against racism

Nick Cusack (*Professional Footballers' Association*) moved Motion 24.

He said: Racism reared its ugly head within football last season and reminded us all that there is still much to do in combating racism in our society. The PFA has led the fight against all forms of discrimination and intolerance in our industry. We have made great strides in changing the landscape for black players within professional football.

You only have to go back to the late 1970s and 1980s to realise how much progress has been made. In those dark days black players faced horrendous abuse and prejudice and were told that if they wanted to stay in the game then they should just accept it and get on with it. Society turned a blind eye, government turned a blind eye, and the football authorities turned a blind eye also.

Just as well, then, that the PFA challenged this mindset and campaigned strongly to have a zero tolerance approach to the kind of sickening racist abuse that was part and parcel of the game back then. This was not an easy path to tread. Hooliganism was endemic in the game and the

National Front had a real foothold amongst football supporters. The clubs were not interested and the leagues were reluctant to challenge the status quo. In short, all that football offered black players was a very uncertain career in an environment that was hostile and soul destroying for these talented athletes that deserved so much better.

Refusing to accept this, the PFA set out to attack this state of affairs. We established with the CRE an organisation called Kick it Out, which, along with another PFA-funded organisation, Show Racism the Red Card, has done sterling work in bringing about important changes within our game. We now have a much better environment for black players with the authorities and the leagues working constructively with the PFA to ensure that racism has no place in the modern game.

I do believe that the football regulations and legal protections have improved things and in terms of the journey that football has travelled in the last 30 years the game is unrecognisable from what it was. That being said, last season served as a wake-up call to everyone involved in football that we must continue to be proactive and vigilant in this area. Indeed, it is more important than ever that we condemn racism unreservedly and insist on the most severe punishments for any players or supporters who are found guilty in this regard.

To this end, we are looking to implement a change in the players' standard contract to enable football clubs to initiate dismissal for this kind of behaviour. We also support the FA's regulations on countering racism in that this offence is to be treated as an aggravated one and consequently this attracts double the sanction if found guilty.

It is important to say also that our membership has taken a lead in this fight and black and white players alike have rallied to the cause. Black players today are understandably not prepared to accept any forms of racist abuse and neither should they. If we allow racism to creep back into the game, then the struggles of the early black players will be in vain and the PFA is determined not to let that happen.

This fight, of course, extends beyond the terraces and field of play and although my union has brought about a real change within our sport, it is the wider battle in our communities that needs to be stepped up because sooner or later it will show itself in football with last season perhaps heralding the start of this.

This is where we call on the trade union Movement to work with us in this fight. We acknowledge the great work of the TUC and all our union colleagues in combating racism and Britain would not have made the progress it has made here without the hard work of the labour Movement and its demands for change, yet inequality still permeates our society. We know all too well that with this present government's disastrous economic policies things are only going to get tougher and more challenging for ordinary people. In the current climate of cutbacks and austerity, it is clear that the extremists of the right will look to take our country back to the bleak days of the past when racial hatred and division was ingrained in our society.

Colleagues, we must fight with all our might to stop this from happening. In this context, what happens in football is important. We know that football has the power to reach all corners of our society and the PFA's campaigning work and influence has made a real difference.

We are proud that our game is all inclusive with players of all backgrounds, nationality, and ethnicity playing in front of legions of multi-ethnic supporters free from abuse and prejudice. We are committed to ensuring that all this good work is not undone and football is a sport for everyone.

To conclude, the PFA is a union that will continue to meet new challenges and difficulties head on and fighting racism is a top priority for us. The vital role that our members have played thus far in the war on racism and will continue to wage will hopefully serve as a rallying call to all trade unionists to show similar strength of purpose and resolve in this fight.

Furthermore, the PFA is determined to do all it can to eradicate racism in our industry. The recent incidents have made us redouble our efforts in this regard, but this is a fight that is not about one union or one industry, it is one that we all consider to be of the utmost importance and to that end the PFA calls on our colleagues within the trade union fraternity to join with us and not rest until the war on racism is won. I move. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

Tony Kearns (CWU) seconded Motion 24.

He said: I am here to second the PFA motion and in doing so to applaud the PFA for the work they do, with *Show Racism the Red Card* and the *Kick it Out* campaign. The busiest fringe meeting we had at the CWU conference this year and last year was when the PFA came down and spoke on this particular issue this year, Leroy Rosenior and Paul Mortimer.

As the PFA motion says and as Nick said when he was moving it, there will be many new challenges in the fight against racism as austerity bites and the swingeing cuts continue. The far right will be looking to exploit the situation and will try to ferment conflict in our cities. We saw

in the election in Greece as a result of austerity measures Golden Dawn, a fascist party, with 8% vote in that election. One of their policies was they were going to mine the border with Turkey to stop Turkish immigrants coming over. That is the type of mentality they had.

At the Unite against Fascism AGM this year delegates were confronted around the lunch time with EDL supporters accusing them of being traitors and unpatriotic. Last year in Liverpool in May we saw an attack by EDL members on News From Nowhere bookshop, a trade union and Labour bookshop attacked by EDL members who bizarrely, for an organisation that claims to be defending England, whatever that means, and chanting terrorism, asked the staff did they stock pornography. The link with racism is that the News from Nowhere sells tickets for antiracist events and organises coaches to anti-cuts meetings.

On Friday 11th May, the EDL also in Liverpool tried to get into Unite's North West regional offices, about 10 or 15 of them. Unfortunately for them, Unite transport drivers were having a meeting in the building at the time, and they left. (*Applause*)

Significantly, in terms of the way the far right in this country are anti-trade union and anti-working class, on 10th May this year when hundreds of thousands of people were taking strike action to defend working class terms and conditions, a PCS picket line in Bootle in Merseyside was targeted by the EDL and it was only when the police arrived and arrested those involved did that situation change. That is chilling echoes, not so much for me of Nazi Germany but more of what happened in Italy with Mussolini where they rounded up troops coming back from the First World War and used them to attack workers and workers' picket lines who were taking action against the bosses at that point in time.

There have been successes. The London Mosque this time last year where we organised against EDL, we were marching through the head of the beast as they called it; in Bristol, in July 14th this year, similar. Just last Saturday in Walthamstow when EDL said it is a make or break rally for them and they were going to put thousands on the street, 150 turned up and 4,000 to 5,000 people in that community turned out to stop the EDL getting to where they wanted to go. *(Applause)*

Predictably, that has led to more infighting and resignations within the EDL, and the same applies in Luton, in Dundee, Leicester, and Chelmsford. It is not accidental. Those things just do not happen by accident. That is a coming together of communities. That is reaching out and is done by talking to the communities and, in particular, and unlike some of the errors I think have been made in Europe, it is about talking to the Muslim community and engaging. These events do show that the rise of the far right can be combated.

The CWU in the proposition calls for national events where we can learn, campaign together and, more importantly, unite against racists and fascists in our community. *(Applause)*

The President: I am now going to call UNISON to move the amendment.

Rena Wood (*UNISON*) moved the amendment to Motion 24.

She said: I would like to start off by saying we totally commend the work of the Professional Footballers' Association. You have changed the world of football, there is no doubt about that, but I am little confused, Nick, with respect, because I did not hear anything when you were moving the motion to explain why you cannot support our amendment. I think our amendment actually enhances what the PFA are trying to do in continuing the fight against racism.

One thing I do want to say is this. Equalities are not unreasonable. It is based on a basic principle of fairness, nothing more, and nothing less. Antiracism is part of that equality agenda. It is not about special treatment and it is not about PC gone mad. It is the basic principles of trade unionism. That is what we are about, fairness. It is that simple. It is not complex. It is not something you do not understand. It is not about chips on shoulders. It is about fairness: simple.

I think it is interesting, Euro 2012, Sol Campbell, said he was fearful of black fans going over to Europe to watch the football. That is an indication of the racism that still exists and why we have to challenge it. Racism takes many forms. It is not that long ago when Gordon Brown, as Prime Minister, was caught on microphone in the “Duffygate” scandal, when the woman from Rochdale started talking about immigrants and that kind of issue. All these things are linked to racism.

Now, football is unique as a sport because it unites absolutely everybody. I am Manchester born and bred and proud of it, and not really into football, but my family are Manchester United supporters and I have to say their success is because Sir Alex Ferguson was a trade union steward. There is no doubt about it, and that is why United have done as well as they have. Don’t forget that. (*Laughter*) David Beckham used to be a United player and he is revered the world over in terms of trying to encourage the playing of football, and also he played a part in the Olympics. He is iconic and he has an influence. Football has an influence. It does unite people.

I also want to thank Searchlight for the work they do and I want to thank our President for supporting Searchlight. If you are not affiliated, you ought to be. Because of their intelligence

work and the information they obtain, it was discovered that the EDL second-in-command was a football hooligan. We have to do everything we can. As a society we have a responsibility to challenge racism wherever it exists. We have a duty to make sure the Government does that by using the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. If you do not have the evidence, you cannot challenge it.

Please support our amendment and, PFA, come and join us on 20th October, fixture list permitting. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The amendment to Motion 24 was formally seconded by RMT.

Ian Crossland (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 24 and the amendment.

He said: Most recently during the Paralympics and the Olympic Games this country was united in its support of British and international athletes regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender, or disability. I am certain this support contributed to the success of these games. Alas, in the football grounds and other sport stadia the picture is markedly different. Vile sexist chanting, racism, homophobia, and disablist behaviour entirely beneath contempt is exhibited by the louts and the extremists who attend football and other sport in this country. In addition, the EDL, populated by similarly minded scum, roam the streets looking for trouble, especially in target areas such as Halifax, Blackburn, and Oldham, using football as an excuse to exert criminal influence on increasingly disparate communities.

The battle to counteract racism, and indeed all other prejudice, is upon us. Words and campaigns need to be reinforced by more positive action to encounter the bigots and extremists who use

football to peddle their filthy material and to persuade others to join in with their contemptible behaviour. *Show Racism the Red Card, Kick it Out, Just a Ball Game* and the *Justine Campaign*, are all movement stoically trying to tackle this issue. In rugby league the RFL recently fined Castleford £50,000 due to homophobic abuse directed at Gareth Thomas and, as a result, now have strong and proactive equality and diversity policies, together with campaigns celebrating diversity of all kinds. The English Cricket Board is currently looking at its own policies to ensure that any form of prejudice is stamped out and thus making their sport more attractive to the whole community.

In these times of austerity racism, homophobia, sexism, etc., give the bigots the opportunity to vent their poisonous spleen at anyone who happens to be different. I am calling on all the antiracism and equality groups to get together and kick racism out of football and also to support other diversity campaigns to rid football and other sports of all forms of prejudice. There has never been a more pertinent time to take up this challenge. Please support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Marilyn Bater (*National Union of Teachers*) supported the amendment to Motion 24.

She said: Good afternoon, President, Congress. Following a lengthy debate, the NUT finally decided to support the amendment in the name of UNISON. We have done considerable work in schools which show racism the red card. Personally, I led on it in my school and as a branch secretary I have led on it in my association in the London Borough of Hounslow.

We recognise and admire the antiracist work of the PFA. The PFA's record on this issue has had a marked, positive impact in schools over a number of years. Regrettably, recent high profile incidents have led to the perception of an increase in racism in football. Media coverage of these

incidents filters into classrooms and into playgrounds. We support an EHRC inquiry because the more eyes combating racism the better. Once again, I reiterate our admiration for the considerable impact of the PFA's antiracist work but please support the amendment. (*Applause*)

Dotun Alade-Odumosu (*GMB*) supported Motion 24.

He said: On Saturday, 4th August a Muslim named Mohammed, who was born in Mogadishu in Somalia and came to London as a young boy, won the gold medal for Team GB in the 10,000 metres, a Londoner and an Arsenal fan. It kills me to say that. The athlete was asked, "Wouldn't you rather be running for Somalia?", and Mo Farah replied, "Look, mate, this is my country and when I put on my Gt. Britain vest I am proud, I am very proud."

This moment and the win was a celebration of the active diversity of Britain and this diversity is also reflected in football. More than 25% of professional players in England are black or from an ethnic minority community but, Congress, there are only three black managers in the Premier League and other football clubs. I am sure it is not because of their lack of ability in showing the abilities of players or kicking jockstraps whilst still inhabited, but we know how it goes.

So, how do we get the ethnic minority representation at all levels of football? As trade unionists and as the legislation allows we have been at the forefront of advocating positive action measures, not to be confused with positive discrimination. To improve the presence of under-represented groups in the workplace one possible solution is to learn the lessons from American football. The Rooney Rule, introduced in 2003, helped to increase the number of black national football league head coaches from 6% to 22% by 2006. The Rooney Rule requires NFL teams to interview at least one black or ethnic minority candidate for head coaching or senior football operation opportunities that become available as part of the transfer and open recruitment

process. This rule and other possible action measures are worthy of investigation and adaptation, and then implementation.

Earlier this year we were exposed to the dark side of racism in football in the case involving Luis Suarez and Patrice Evra where the most unacceptable form of racism was used. In my experience of dealing with workplace racism the investigation into this case was the most thorough professional process I have ever witnessed. If this standard of investigation was applied to workplace racism we would truly be celebrating the ethnic diversity at all levels of our society and in all sectors. This case was followed by the incident involving John Terry and Anton Ferdinand. The racist comment uttered by John Terry at his criminal trial was disgusting. If this had been made in the public arena it would have probably resulted in a smack.

Mo Farah, John Terry, and others, are role models for young people, not just young footballers who are spectators as well. So, Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you very much, Dotun. Nick, do you want the right of reply? There was a question from Unison about why you were not accepting the amendment.

Nick Cusack (*Professional Footballers' Association*) in reply, said: I will just be brief, Congress. I would just like to emphasise that both ourselves and Unison are not far apart and fundamentally I think it is clear that we want the same things. My focus is on the professional game and what the position is in relation to racism at this level. Of course, there have been a number of high profile incidents last season that have grabbed the headlines and we take these very, very seriously but, notwithstanding that, we are in an infinitely better position now, we believe, than we were in the past in the fight against racism in football.

In a nutshell, the reason why we cannot accept Unison's amendment is that again in the professional game their amendment does not encapsulate what we believe to be the current position in football at this level. I also think rather than setting up an inquiry what we need to do is re-double our efforts and concentrate on condemning racism and challenging it wherever it appears.

The PFA will deal with incidents as they arise but we believe that overall our strategy to counter racism in football works and we will continue to work really hard to ensure that this does not change. On this basis, please accept the PFA motion as it stands. We have great experience and success in this area. It is our specialised area. Please trust us and support our motion. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

* *The amendment to Motion 24 moved by UNISON was CARRIED*

* *Motion 24, as amended, was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, we now move to Motion 25, Disability hate crime. As I explained earlier, it is the position of the Equality Conferences that they do not accept amendments, therefore I will call paragraph 3.10 and I will then take the mover and seconder of Motion 25. I will then take the mover and seconder of the CWU amendment, and then the mover and seconder of the BECTU amendment. I will then call other speakers. I will then give the right of reply to the mover of Motion 25 and finally take the vote on the CWU amendment, then the BECTU amendment, and then the vote on Motion 25. I am calling paragraph 3.10 and Motion 25, Disability hate crime. The General Council is recommending support for the motion.

Disability hate crime

Sean McGovern (*Unite*) moved Motion 25 on behalf of the TUC Disabled Workers Conference. He said: Congress, the Paralympics has seen a welcome positive media portrayal of the disabled and venues that are very accessible but it was very much a bubble far removed from the daily experiences of most disabled people in this country. It is a disgraceful hypocrisy that we have seen ministers handing out Paralympics medals in one hand and taking away the benefits of disabled people with the other. (*Applause*) Panorama and Despatches investigators have found that ATOS, the company making profits from carrying out the work of capability assessments for the Government, are actually working to targets to cut benefits. This Government is determined to slash the benefits budget no matter what the human cost, and we are paying the highest of prices.

Amongst many of the well reported abuses that ATOS has carried out is finding people with terminal cancer fit for work. This has been supported by a relentless propaganda campaign and tabloid witch hunt against disabled people. Disabled people have regularly been portrayed as benefit scroungers. We have been roundly demonised thus making it easier to attack us. This campaign has been so successful that the Glasgow media trust found that the public believed between 50% and 70% of disabled benefit claimants are fraudulent. The reality is that the amount of fraud barely registers on the radar; it is 0.5%.

There is a direct link between portraying disabled people as scroungers and an increase in disability hate crime. Reported levels of disabled hate crime have soared to an all time high and we know many disabled people do not even bother to report the abuse they receive because they just do not see the point.

Although it has become much worse, hate crime has always existed nonetheless before the work capability assessment. Its roots lie in the exclusion of disabled people from society and in the continuation of the charity model of disability, which turns us into objects of pity or scorn.

This motion calls on us to use the social model of disability to challenge the attitudes that cause hate crime, to challenge the media stereotypes and to fight this Government's agenda. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Mandy Hudson (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded Motion 25.

She said: Thank you, President, Congress. Just a word on the amendments: the reason why we do not accept the amendments is that there is a principle that the self-organised equality conferences have the ownership of the motion and therefore if affiliated unions want to affect that motion they need to send delegates to that conference and do any amendments there. There is nobody, really, to give permission fully for amendments so we would rather you did not accept those amendments that are in the names of USDAW and BECTU.

I am speaking on behalf of the Disabled Workers Conference and I want to concentrate on three aspects of the motion that is before you. First of all, there is the need to educate to prevent disability hate crime; the promotion of Disability History Month, and the use of the social model of disability to challenge disablist attitudes.

Personally, I believe that the death of Fiona Pilkington and her daughter, Frankie, on 23rd October 2007 was the first real wake-up call to many people in the general public about the state of disability hate crime. That was the woman who was forced to suicide by setting her car on fire with her 19-year old daughter inside because of years of abuse faced by her and her family in

a small town in Leicestershire. That disability hate crime meant her family suffered for many years and the police and local council did very little to support them. They were left in a vacuum in which disability hate crime could flourish.

Unfortunately, five years on the situation is much the same. We have had our little Paralympics bubble but in the end what is happening on our streets is very different, and it is fuelled by the right-wing media who seem to think that we are an easy target. Difference should not lead to segregation and isolation; that is why I believe education is key. Full inclusive education is important so that all different kinds of humanity can be celebrated and accepted in our schools and communities.

The current rush to further privatisation of education through academies and free schools will not secure that inclusive education approach which promotes the full human rights of disabled young people and this system of good inclusive education is vital to achieve true equality for all our citizens, disabled and non-disabled alike. We need to learn the lessons of history.

Disability History Month, which runs from November 22nd to December 22nd, is now approaching its third year and I would ask all TUC affiliate unions to organise events and celebrate the participation of disabled members over the years. I think it is important that we remember what happened in the 1930s in Nazi Germany. The conditions there in terms of the language are much the same now as we hear about useless eaters and whether or not we have the right to life. I think it is important that we fight that at every single level and we do not allow people to dehumanise us to the extent which justified the elimination of so many people. I also would encourage you to support the social model of disability which takes away the medical

model and the deficit model. We want to play our fair part in society. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

The President: I am now going to call the first amendment to Motion 25. The General Council is recommending support for the amendment.

Allan Eldred (CWU) moved the first amendment to Motion 25.

He said: We can see by the fact that this motion has come from the TUC Disabled Workers Conference and the fact that this amendment resulted from something put to the CWU Conference by our own Disability Conference, that hate crime is a specific issue for disabled people. The report, in plain truth, was published a year ago by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. It is an in-depth report into disability related harassment, in all its manifestations, from name-calling to physical assault, to arson, and even to worse aspects of it than that, all simply because the victims have a disability. That cannot be right in a civilised society.

We were shocked when our attention was drawn to this by our workers with disabilities. We were shocked to learn about the extent of such harassment and bullying along with the level of animosity and prejudice felt by some towards people simply because of their disability. The report concluded that people with disabilities have come to expect this as part of their normal life, and we live in a civilised society? The findings are a catalogue of failures by the authorities. They found that incidents are dealt with in isolation, often without reference and in many cases without knowledge of previous incidents. Various agencies work in isolation once the incident is reported, and in many cases disability is never considered as a factor in what caused the crime to happen in the first place.

They found that there are barriers and roadblocks to justice, to support, and to redress following those incidents. You can see the problem when access to justice is dependent on a victim's ability to withstand a bombardment of questions and suggestions designed to prove that the victim is wrong or lying, and even if that victim has a mental illness or learning disability still that is the process. What happens is that prosecutions are not taken because the victim is assumed to be an unreliable witness. That is simply not good enough.

This report deals outlines a number of cases and previous speakers have outlined the one that I was going to focus on, Fiona Pilkington, but there is a second one. Actually, there are ten of them within that report and there is one about a vulnerable adult, no names, no nothing in this report, who was cared for by her mother and when her mother died the person who was given the responsibility, who became her official carer, absolutely abused this woman. It cannot be right that this happens and yet that was allowed to happen because of failures in processes.

Anyone in this room in a blink of an eye can become the subject of a serious mental illness or physical disability. Congress, something has to be done. Support the proposition, support the amendment, and, colleague, I understood what you said about the conference but I hope you will accept this amendment in the spirit and intention with which it is moved, that is, to use everything in our power to put this injustice right. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Austin Harney (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 25 and seconded the CWU amendment.

He said: The Public and Commercial Services Union represents tens of thousands of members in job centres and many of our branch activists and representatives are very disturbed by large sections of the news media insinuating that disabled people are benefit scroungers, which easily

encourages disability hate crime. Currently, the number of disability hate crimes reported to the police has reached a record high, sparking concerns that the Coalition's anti-scrounger rhetoric is fuelling hostility to the most vulnerable sections of society.

A total of 1,942 disability hate crimes were recorded by police forces in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland last year. That figure based on the Freedom of Information supplied by 43 of the 44 police forces represented a 14% rise on 2010. Disability hate crime has doubled since the start of the financial crisis in 2008. Despite the rise, the number of people convicted for the crime actually fell last year. Only 523 people were found guilty of a disability hate crime in 2011, which is a decrease of 5% from 2010. It suggests that barely one in four reported crimes leads to a conviction and no doubt that ratio has just got worse from last year.

I could swear in a minute but I will save my "unparliamentary" language for later. Iain Duncan Smith, the Work & Pensions Secretary, said: "We are going to push these benefit reforms," and hinted strongly that lots of people on disability benefits are scroungers. There is real danger in that statement.

However, Katherine Hornby, the author of *Scapegoat, Why We Are Failing Disabled People*, has made clear that that kind of rhetoric leads to disability hate crime on the streets. Hornby has produced many examples of disabled people who have been abused, kidnapped, punched, kicked, strangled, even forced into slave labour, and have had their disability allowance stolen on several occasions. No doubt we need to wake up to the horrors of this prejudicial society, which has been exacerbated by the ideological cuts agenda under the ConDem Coalition.

Disability hate crime is deeply rooted in our society. It is a fact that many disabled children still suffer degrading forms of bullying at school and then have to endure job discrimination, which was severe before the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This job discrimination still goes on for many people with invisible disabilities and as high as 85% for those with the autistic spectrum disorder yet these people are also very vulnerable to disability hate crime.

As mentioned earlier, the tabloids play a part in disability hate crime. Anyway, I will make quite clear I call on all of you to strenuously campaign against disability hate crime. Support the motion and support the amendment. (*Applause*)

The President: Before I come to the second amendment that is moved by BECTU and seconded by the Musicians' Union, I indicate to you, Sean, that I think you will be required on a right of reply.

Jane Perry (*Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union*) moved the second amendment to Motion 25. She said: This amendment would change item (iii) on the list in the motion from “a properly funded hate crime programme” to “a properly funded programme against hate crime”. This amendment is clearly, entirely, explicitly a friendly one. Please support the amendment. (*Applause*)

The Musicians' Union formally seconded the amendment.

Sean McGovern (*Unite*) exercising his right of reply, said: President, Congress, I would like to thank the speakers on the amendments the sentiments of which I have no problem with but we,

the TUC Disabled Workers Conference, would like to assert the right to form our own motions.

Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Sean. I am now going to move to the vote. First of all, the CWU amendment to Motion 25, the General Council recommends support.

* *The CWU amendment to Motion 25 was CARRIED*

* *The BECTU amendment to Motion 25 was CARRIED*

* *Motion 25 as amended was CARRIED*

The President: That completes Chapter 3 of the General Council Report. Delegates, we now return to Chapter 1 of the General Council Report, A Future That Works Campaign from page 5. I am going to call Motion 5, Resisting austerity measures. The General Council supports the motion.

A Future That Works Campaign

Resisting austerity measures

Stephen Gillan (*POA*) moved Motion 5.

He said: Congress, the POA recognise this has caused some division. We do not believe it should. That is not our intent in this motion and it is certainly not the POA trying to be smart or divisive in any way, shape, or form. What we truly believe is that there needs to be a robust response to this uncaring government. If there is not, then I think the Trade Union Movement could be in trouble. The POA welcomes The Future That Works demonstration on 20th October.

That is building on the march last year. It is building on the public sector strikes of 30th November and 10th May this year.

Trade unions need to be the strong voice to protect not only public and private sector workers but those who have no one speaking for them, such as the unemployed, our children, the elderly, the disabled, and all those in our society who are vulnerable. We believe that Motion 5 supplements Composite 1 that was heard yesterday.

We heard yesterday, and we passed resolutions that coordinated campaigns and coordinated actions and strikes, and the POA believes they are fully justified in the wake of the resisting austerity measures and the attacks on pensions, pay, and terms and conditions. We also believe that we should consider the practicalities of a general strike. The last time I looked in the dictionary “consider” meant, contemplate, think about, examine, and reflect. If this motion is passed today, it does not mean that we are on a general strike tomorrow, it does not mean that whatsoever, but we should have that in our armoury because this Government are not afraid or embarrassed to do what they are doing to society.

Let’s have a look. We had various speakers on Composite 1. Let’s look at some of the reasons. Dave Prentis, Len McCluskey, and Mark Serwotka, elegantly outlined the position. Let’s look at some of these issues and they are not exhaustive: job losses, public and private sector workers, child poverty, food banks, people going to loan sharks because they cannot get to the end of the month, the Beecroft Report, the anti-union laws, the Jackson Report, zero hours contracts, dismantling the welfare state, pay freezes, dismantling our NHS, dismantling all our public services, attacking unemployment, youth unemployment, and at the same time moving a pension age to 68. I am no economist but the reality is how on earth can you expect people to work to 68

years of age when you have a million youngsters unemployed? It makes no economic sense whatsoever. *(Applause)*

We are at a crossroads. We need to make up our minds which direction we are going in. We should not be afraid to mention the words “general strike”, to say that we are going to consider that. *(Applause)* People tell me, and I listened to Ed Balls this morning when he said that strikes will fall into the hands of this coalition Government because they will put in additional anti-trade union legislation. They have already done it. They have already done it and they will do it even more, even without this threat. So, when you are threatened, threaten them back and let’s have it in our armoury. *(Applause)*

Just winding up on this particular issue, there was one issue this morning. Mary Turner: what an inspiration. Maybe we should have more Mary Turners in the Trade Union Movement because without them we are going to die on our feet. Be proud of Mary Turner, keep fighting, and let’s take this fight to the coalition Government. Thank you. *(Applause)*

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

He said: It is a pleasure to second this resolution. I understand some of the debate is going to be about the wording and practicalities. We can all argue about what words mean. You can extract a passage from *Alice in Wonderland* and the words will mean exactly what you want them to mean. I see the words and what I want them to mean, and I am dealing from the top of the pack, not from the bottom of the pack. I do not want anybody accusing me of coming up here and trying to argue to get something through the back door. Every single person here today is representing someone who is under attack by this rotten government, every single one of us. *(Applause)*

I was astonished this morning when the attacks that are to take place on workers next year with the industrial tribunals where the fees are being put up that Ed Balls never said a word, not a single word. What did he say? He said, “You can’t wait for a Labour government,” and that we have to do something now. Yes, we can carry on protesting, we can carry on doing that to raise the consciousness, but what else are we going to do, have an organised streak through London, or have the new General Secretary come through like Boadicea with nothing on, on a horse, to say that we do not want these attacks to take place. (*Laughter*) If they are throwing spears at us from every part of the Government, then the only option is to put up every shield to defend ourselves and defend our members.

The issue is this, brothers and sisters, after what Ed Balls said it’s no good people saying we have to wait for a Labour government. I listened to his speech today and never heard him say once, “I’m going to repeal the anti-trade union laws,” not once that he was going to do something to repeal the industrial tribunal fees. I had to take two Paracetamol and lay down in a dark room at lunchtime after I heard what he said. (*Applause*)

Brothers and sisters, this is the unfairness. This Government has allowed £325bn in quantitative easing, glorified IOUs. Why can’t people losing their houses every day of the week have the right to have money leant from the Government. Why can’t small businesses have government money? There are a hundred million building workers on the dole, there is a shortage of housing, so we should turn around and put the builders back to build houses, put people in the houses, and they would be paying tax and not be extracting social security.

Brothers and sisters, we as a trade union movement have to stand firm with the leadership and this gives us an opportunity to reaffirm our beliefs and reaffirm our faith for what we stand for. Pass this resolution, get out on the demo on October 20th, coordinate action, and if it means a general strike let's do it and get on with it. (*Applause/Cheers*)

John McNally (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 5.

He said: It is very welcome that the General Council is supporting this motion so we should be clear what it means and how it can be implemented.

The motion calls for coordinated action and far-reaching campaigns, including considering the practicalities of a general strike against the Government's austerity programme. This motion deserves the full unqualified support of every union serious about defending its members and their class.

Austerity is just a sanitised expression for what is in reality nothing more than an unremitting class war carried out by this Government against our people. The aim is to achieve, on the basis of the cuts and privatisation programme, the biggest transfer of wealth and power in many generations. At its core is a race to the bottom that is ripping the heart out of our communities. It means the driving down of wages, massive job cuts, the destruction of the welfare state and its share in the public services, and provides the basis of a sub-life existence for working people.

This unprecedented assault, however, can only succeed because of the poisonous political consensus that exists amongst the major political parties, shamefully including Labour, that showed us no alternative market and the barbaric proposition that the acquisition of obscene wealth and profit by a tiny unaccountable elite comes before the needs of millions. Those

millions are crying out for an alternative. They watch in fear and disgust as one outrage follows the other, the fixing of the Libor rates affecting millions, banks laundering drug money, and a government-instigated hate campaign against the disabled and unemployed.

The 30th November demonstrated the massive strength and potential of our Movement but rather than building on that tremendous display of class solidarity, the abject surrender that followed sent out a message of division, despair, and defeatism. We now have an opportunity to send out a message of hope, loud and clear, that we intend to harness the full strength of our Movement and class to stop this austerity programme in its tracks. October 20th must be more than another protest march. It must be the plant from which we build coordinated industrial action in the widest possible front across both the public and private sector.

Every union here has a legitimate dispute on pay, pensions, jobs, privatisation, or related issues. So, let's have no nonsense about the difficulties or the legalities of organising coordinated action, and let's not fixate on the scary words, "general strike", let us rather in a determined, committed, and most crucially urgent fashion sit down together and agree a date for joint industrial action across the Trade Union Movement as soon as practically possible after October 20th. A 24-hour general strike as a start to an effective programme of coordinated industrial action and wider campaigning would irrevocably shift the balance of power in our favour.

How many times does it have to be said that campaigning works and action gets results. The PCS has recently won thousands of jobs in the Civil Service by organised action. The attacks are increasing, they are not abating. Millions are waiting for a lead. Let's give them that lead. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

Tony Kearns (*CWU*) supported Motion 5.

He said: I just want to make this point, when the POA proposed this, the CWU opposed it but a lot has happened between that and today. What you are going to be told no doubt by those who oppose this is that this is fantasy politics and we should not be indulging. Fantasy politics to me is a group of millionaires meeting in Oxford 10-15 years ago and praying that there is some kind of bank and economic crisis around the world that they can then step in and use to drive their ideology and drive the working class into abject poverty for generation after generation: that is the society we are heading towards if we stand back and do nothing about what is going on to our members and the working class today.

As Steve says, it does not mean there is going to be a general strike tomorrow. I agree, it does not mean because the CWU stands up here and supports this that if we went back on Thursday morning and called our members out they are going to come out: no, they are not, of course they are not. One of the issues about discussing the practicalities is to understand all the barriers that may be in the way to generate that type of action. One of the barriers that are going to be in the way is engaging with the membership. We have to go out and explain in detail the issues that affect our members on a day-to-day basis and how that is going to shape society for years to come.

One of the other hurdles that is going to be put in your way when you are asked to oppose this is that actually what we should be doing is keeping our heads down, let it ride over, and it will go away. People were keeping their heads down when the attacks came on pensions. Benefit recipients were keeping their heads down when there was an attack on the welfare state, and cancer victims, when their care was taken away. There has been a 40% increase in rough sleepers on the streets of this country in the last 12 months alone, homeless people keeping their

heads down and yet still being picked on. Children's education, remember children making threats to the Government when their education and their futures were to be taken away. This is the type of society that we are going towards.

One of the other reasons that the CWU supports this is because our policy carried at our conference in 2011, unanimously I have to say, was to call on the TUC to coordinate a 24-hour general strike. No, it is not going to happen just because we say so and it is not going to happen just because we click our fingers, but the practicalities are we have to point out to our members the type of society they are going to be living in, in the future, and we are the ones leading this movement today who have to take that responsibility and say, enough is enough, and the fight back has to begin here with this motion. (*Applause*)

Paul Noon (*Prospect*) opposed Motion 5.

He said: I am speaking in opposition to Motion 5, specifically the demand for consideration of a TUC call for a general strike. I agree with Steve Gillan absolutely that the present situation requires a robust response from the Trade Union Movement and our view is that this is what it has in our consideration of Composite 1. At the very best, this motion is a distraction, a distraction of the great work that we are doing together in The Future That Works Campaign as set out in Composite 1, and a distraction from winning the arguments, which we are doing, that you cannot cut your way to growth.

We do not think that contemplation of a general strike reflects the reality of where we are, certainly not where Prospect is as a trade union, or we believe where we are as a movement. That is not to say that we will not support industrial action, where appropriate and where we have a legitimate trade dispute.

We are not ducking the question of strike action. As Mike Clancy made clear from us yesterday, Prospect will do this, if necessary, on pay and we will coordinate with other unions as we did on 30th November. This was all covered in Composite 12 yesterday. We are not going to pretend we are anywhere near a generalised public sector and private sector strike call when there are profound doubts about whether a legitimate trade dispute actually exists. Far from making our enemies and opponents tremble in their shoes, a call like this will, in our view, be seen by them as a stick to beat us with, a welcome distraction and diversion from their failings.

Finally, would a general strike work even if we could do it? It did not work out too well for us last time, did it? Let's not pretend that we can do something we cannot. We will vote against Motion 5 and I hope you do too. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Chris Keates (*NASUWT, The Teachers' Union*) opposed Motion 5.

She said: All of us here know that since May 2010 ordinary working people and families have faced the sustained, vicious, and relentless assault on their standards of living, on their jobs, on their pay, on their pensions, on their working conditions, and access to key services, including free healthcare and education.

The TUC has led the trade union and public fight back against the ideologically driven policies which drip with contempt for working people, public services, and indeed anything which is the mark of a fair and a just society. The NASUWT, like other unions here, has played and continues to play a key role in this fight back. Our members are taking action day after day on a school by school basis to combat academisation and privatisation. On a school by school basis we are taking action against job loss. On a national basis coordinated across 24,000 schools we

have been engaged since 1st December 2011 every single day in continuous industrial action and yesterday we announced the escalation of this to take place later this month in conjunction with our sister union, the NUT.

Yesterday, Congress voted unanimously to support coordinated industrial action as part of our Future That Works Campaign. We know that we can deliver coordinated action. We did it on 30th November. But this motion, whatever words we use, “consideration”, “practicalities”, will be seen as a motion calling for a general strike. As a result, we risk alienating the public but, more importantly, we risk handing this unelected Coalition the propaganda it needs to deflect the growing public anger that is developing against this Government on to the working people we represent. Our hearts, our anger, our frustration, our passionate and unstinting commitment to working people and trade union values drives us to want to instinctively vote for a motion containing reference to a general strike but, colleagues, it is our heads that must win the day. Let us not convince ourselves that talking about or calling a general strike is a magic bullet against this Government and will end this nightmare.

What we need is digging in, building the strategy we established on November 30th, stepping up the information and the awareness campaign, doggedly challenging everything they do, mounting defences in every workplace and building the industrial action, and use our heads as we have done so far. Let’s build for sustained and coordinated action and we will win on behalf of the working people and ordinary families in this country. I urge you to oppose the motion.

(Applause)

Jim McAuslan (*British Air Line Pilots’ Association*) spoke in opposition to Motion 5.

He said: Congress, I can be very clear. Pass this – not in our name. We are told in the corridors and the huddles that go on at Congress that there is nothing to be worried about. It is only to consider the practicalities. That is just wrong. If you don't believe me POA, listen to the seconder. The only words that matter in this motion are the last two and, yes, I am fixated about the last two. Those are the words that this motion is about. Pass this and you will let the genie out of the bottle.

I can tell you about the practicalities now. 15 per cent of workers in the private sector belong to a trade union. The average turnout in a ballot in the public sector is 20%. That means that about 3%, if we are lucky, of private sector workers will take part in a ballot, and that is even if we could find a unifying industrial issue, in my own industry, in the 26 disparate bargaining areas that I represent, that would make them lawful. The reality is, in my own Association, 80% of whom belong to a union, this would be seen not a general strike at all, but it would be seen as a public sector strike. Rather than a display of strength, it would actually expose a weakness and a deep fault line that exists between us. This is just at a time, as the last speaker said, when we should be describing a broad economic alternative to what we are faced with which reaches every corner of this nation's life. We get tied in knots about a day's general strike that will not work. Worse, it will give our opponents a stick to beat us with about a whole range of industrial action ballot law. This would be just at a time when our message should be about unfairness at work, about gaps in the Agency Workers' Directive and about weakening employment law. These are things that do unite us. If we devote time, effort and energy to this matter, it will give the leader writers and commentators of this land a chance to divide us.

Congress, there is a time for the power of argument, and this is the time, and there is a time for the argument of power, but this is not the time. Oppose. (*Applause*)

Steve Turner (*Unite*) spoke in support of Motion 5.

He said: Colleagues, we have had two days of fantastic debate here in Brighton, and it is clear to all that we are, without doubt, not simply in unchartered waters here but facing a vicious and vindictive Government that is comfortable in not only treating ordinary, decent people with contempt but waging open class war on our members, on our communities, and if we don't stop running, we will be in a lot more trouble than we are now. The one body that can effectively organise a fight back is us, the TUC.

In response, I am not standing at this rostrum demanding that the TUC gets off its knees. This is a serious debate and raises critically important issues for the future of our Movement. But Len was right on Monday when he said that you can't deal with these challenges with leaflets. Equally, we won't win with argument alone. Brendan, later, spoke of it being a defining moment for our Movement, and he is right. In response to this moment, Motion 5 calls upon the General Council to do a number of things, including the consideration and practicalities of organising a general strike. Given we only have a limited number of weapons in our collective class armoury, it would be a betrayal of our responsibilities as leaders of our Movement if we did anything less. Motion 5 does not call for a general strike.

Colleagues, in considering our options, it must be clear that any such action would be a political strike, called centrally by the TUC, and not a trade dispute requiring ballots or majorities. Of course we will face many challenges, legal challenges, political challenges and logistical challenges. It would help if we were growing at 10 million members and not six million members, but most importantly it is an issue of confidence and solidarity.

Passing a motion is easy. Considering the issues will be a little more difficult, but to see that policy into practice needs support, action and argument in thousands of workplaces across our nation. We must argue the case for action with millions of ordinary workers in the private and public sector, men and women, linking the generations, those in work and those without work. We must link our workplaces with our wider communities, developing solidarity in a collective confidence to rise up.

Congress, remember this. Our challenges pale into insignificance when compared with those faced every day by millions of ordinary people in this country. People are experiencing pay cuts and growing insecurity at work, the class cleansing now of our inner cities, the infliction of poverty on families in a scale not seen since the 1930s, the dehumanising effect of unemployment and a million betrayed youth, welfare attacks, moving people on a path from workfare to the workhouse, and the destruction of our health, education and public services.

We are at our best when united, proud and fighting back, roaring like lions, not cowering in corners. Doing nothing is not an option. What we do and how best we do it is a long overdue debate. Support Motion 5. *(Applause)*

Dr Mary Bousted (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) spoke in opposition to Motion 5.

She said: Congress, ATL opposes this motion not because we do not believe that this Coalition Government is following a catastrophic course, failing in its duty of care to the poor, the vulnerable, the young, the sick and the disabled. We oppose this motion because, in our view – ATL's view – the call for a consideration of a general strike is a dangerously misguided strategy. It's the wrong thing to do at this time.

Osborne was booed at the Paralympics because the public now 'get' it. Just like the Bank of England, the IMF and the OECD, his plan 'A' for austerity is not working and will not work, so the Coalition is in crisis and the media are reflecting that. The TUC can be proud of the part it has played in making the argument against austerity politics and the part it has highlighted in the alternatives to austerity. That is what the march on 20th October should do more of.

But now, just as we are being listened to by the public, we change the message. The proposers of this motion make a gift to the right-wing editors who can resume normal service with a big lie: "It's the union's fault". By the way, if you think they will bother about the neat distinction between calling a general strike and considering calling a general strike, you are less cynical than I hoped you were. I say this: even the least cynical amongst you know that this Government is under the sway of the most ruthless and right-wing ideologues seen in Westminster for many, many years.

This motion is a welcome gift to them, itching as they are to take off the shelf and away from the package further legal restrictions on trade unions. If you are relying on a Labour Government to take those restrictions away, look what they did the last time they were in power.

Let me pass over the little practical difficulties of co-ordinating lawful trades disputes with thousands of employers across the country, or of activating the 14% of our members in the private sector, because I want to end with this question. I know what the appetite for strike action is amongst the membership of ATL, and this is why I am speaking at this rostrum today. I cannot claim to know the appetite among six million of our members as a whole. Are they ready, or do they need a further campaign of education of working people to convince them that now is the moment that they must stand up for themselves or face a lengthy period of intensified

exploitation? I only ask that you answer that question for yourselves honestly before you vote.

(Applause)

Chris Murphy (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) spoke in support of Motion 5.

He said: Congress, I am going to give you a history lesson because this is my last TUC, not my first, as a delegate for UCATT. The reason I've got a cockney accent is because my father was a miner, and in 1926 we had the same debate then and he had to come to London to get a job, and when he got to London he was treated like black people were treated when they came over in the '50s. The point I am making is that we have had this debate time and time again about general strikes. The Pentonville Five were released eventually as a result of trade union strike action. The miners, whether you agree that the miners should have had a national ballot or not, took action to defend their villages and their industry, but look at what has happened to the mining communities. One reason for that is that the TUC members bottled it. *(Applause)*

This motion is just asking the TUC General Council to consider a general strike, but the way the opposition is, you would think we were calling a general strike for 20th October instead of a demonstration. If you go down the road of opposing this motion, I think it will prove to the membership and potential members of trade unions and the youngsters that there is no fight. *(Applause)* Look at Europe, and especially Spain, although I am no expert, but what I read in the newspapers is that they are out on the streets, they are going into supermarkets and taking the food out because they haven't got jobs. I beg you not to make the mistakes we made year after year after year when we were faced with crucial issues. This Government is worse than Thatcher was, and we've got to show them that they can't get away with attacking the working class of this country. Thank you. *(Applause and cheers)*

The President: Chris, if you can't get away with taking a liberty with the Chair, nobody can. Thank you. The final speaker will come from Usdaw and then I will call the POA to exercise the right of reply.

John Hannett (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) spoke in opposition to Motion 5. (*Cries of disapproval*)

He said: Congress, I listened patiently to the speakers before so please afford me the same dignity. (*Applause*) Congress, what does unify us in this debate is the anger, the frustration, the effect and the determination of this Government to attack workers. What divides us in this conversation and debate is the strategy. Therefore, whatever strategy you support, the respect of each of our opinions are important.

Congress, I listened very carefully to the speakers. First of all, I am absolutely clear that much of the motion reiterates the sentiments contained in Composite Motion 1, which was carried unanimously yesterday. The issue with Motion 5 is, in effect, the sting in the tail. Congress, I have been around the trade union Movement for a long time, and I am not going to challenge Steve in terms of what his intention is, but I know that *this* form of words is, in effect, a means to an end. In reality, it would have been more open if somebody had moved a motion to call for a general strike. If they had have done, I believe it would have been defeated.

Congress, be careful. I would ask the question of all general secretaries and all leaders, whether they are politicians or not, to say how many letters they are getting from workers asking the TUC to organise and call a general strike? I believe that is not happening, and I think we should reflect what our members want.

I met with my delegation last night and we had a very open and transparent conversation about the likelihood, even if the conversation took place, and I can tell you right now that many Usdaw members are as angry and frustrated as every other union member who has contributed to this debate. But here is the rub, Conference. At the moment they talk about strategy in terms of political activity, making sure we return a government that has empathy towards us and not something that is not going to happen.

Congress, I am absolutely clear that the work we have to do begins not just in this hall but in every workplace, but be frank about this. Let's not get ourselves into a position that what we are really talking about is a conversation. The real issue is that some of our people, whose opinions I respect, would like a general strike, but my opinion, based on evidence from my members, who are no different than any other union's members in this hall, is that that is not what they want. Secondly, and most importantly – it was said by Paul and a number of other speakers – let's not give our opponents the biggest stick ever to beat us with, because when they start probing how many members are in the private sector, how many members are queuing up for a general strike, we will fall flat. I can tell you that I am not in the business of saying something that might court popularity, because *this* is about real politics. This is about educating our membership about what is happening, but remember that when it comes to the ballot box and changing the government, we work together. That means not just passing a proposition as though it is a conversation. We know what the real agenda is. Some people passionately that that is the answer but I do not believe that that reflects the mood of the country or the mood of many members who work in this area of employment.

Conference, it's been a good debate. What should unify us is to change a government that constantly attacks us, not to get into a position that we believe something is going to happen but won't. Please oppose. (*Applause*)

The President: Steve, I am making the wild assumption that you are going to exercise your right of reply. I thought so.

Steve Gillan (POA): Conference, it has been a good debate, I think it has been an honest debate and that's what the trade union Movement should be about. We should be able to come to the rostrum and say it as it is and let's have that debate. There is no problem with that.

As for giving our opponents an excuse to beat us with a big stick, I think they are already doing that and it is starting to hurt. (*Applause*) Unite was absolutely right about trades disputes and the differences of political protests called by the TUC. John Hendy QC and Professor Keith Ewing have been absolutely clear in the briefing that they have written that it is, potentially, legal. That is why we need to take responsibility and lead the trade union Movement against this Government.

I want to mention a couple of issues. The POA, as you know, has been restricted in our trade union rights for the past 18 years. We have had magnificent support from Brendan and Frances in disputes that we have had. I have heard it said in some corridors – it should be said at the rostrum – that the POA is moving this motion to get the rest of you on a general strike. That is not true. The integrity of my union is beyond reproach. The reality is that we have broken the anti-trade union legislation and we have led on that ourselves. (*Applause*) It is all too easy to look for excuses as to why we shouldn't do things, but we are the leadership in moving the

motion and we should not be afraid to take the fight to this Coalition Government. Yes, they will threaten us, but I will tell you now – I see the red light, Chair, and I will finish – that this Government will only stop chasing us when we stop running. (*Applause*)

The President: I am going to move to the vote on Motion 5.

* *Motion 5 was CARRIED.*

The President: Colleagues, let us now return to Chapter 2 of the General Council Report: Organising and rights at work, and to the section on Organising at page 9. I call paragraph 2.2 and Composite Motion 2, The private sector. The General Council supports the composite motion.

The private sector

Denise McGuire (*Prospect*) moved Composite Motion 2.

She said: Congress, trade union membership figures tell a stark story. Twenty years ago there were 11 million members in the TUC. Then years ago that figure had fallen to 7.7 million and this year it is 6.4 million. Let's be honest, 6.4 million and falling! The rate of membership loss has slowed but not stopped. We are facing the harshest economic climate for a generation but folk aren't flocking to join us. We are still the biggest volunteer force in the UK but we should be a whole lot bigger.

The difference between the public and private sector is immense. In the private sector, less than one in five are covered by collective bargaining, and membership density is just over 14%. These low levels of collective bargaining coverage and membership density aren't evenly spread.

The lowest levels are in construction, communications, manufacturing, sales and customer service. Part-time workers lose out, as always. The jobs, where young people are likely to have their first experience of work, tend to be union-free environments.

Young people are more internet savvy, and people who inhabit cyber space usually expect to get information and advice for free. We know that we cannot run our unions without active, paying members, but a union in the Netherlands has actually given up trying to recruit people under 30. The union has given them to a website, with Q and As on the world of work, paid for by advertising revenue, sponsored by MTV, no collective spirit, no common values and not even a union logo. Congress, you might think that that is far fetched but maybe we are not too far from that. People in the private sector are more likely to go to Citizens Advice, to friends, colleagues, solicitors and the internet before talking to a union or to the TUC. Congress, we have to change that state of affairs. A strong union membership in the public sector needs a strong union membership in the private sector.

We have seen efforts to turn workers in the private sector against workers in the public sector. We have seen the equality of misery approach and we've seen the politics of envy. If we want a future that works, we can't accept managed decline, which will lead fewer members, less money to work for our members, leading to poorer outcomes and even fewer members, and so it would go on, a spiral of decline. Every employer who recognises unions would be just watching and waiting to derecognise us.

I work in an industry where recognition hangs by a thread. The full panoply of threats and tactics have been thrown at our members. We've seen colleagues coerced into signing personal contracts and we've seen their relief when we got them back into collective bargaining. We've

seen union busters outsourcing and offshoring, and I know the situation is no different in the public sector. Any one of us and every one of us is just a moment away from being outsourced, having our work moved overseas or having our places of work closed down completely. Our jobs are only secure for the blink of an eye, a blink from the greedy CEO who wants to appeal to a shareholder, a blink from the Minister who wants promotion. As our President said in his address on Sunday, our challenge is to define ourselves again, and there is no greater imperative than to stamp our influence across the whole of the economy.

Congress, let's choose a future that works for our members. Let's go for growth, more people, more young people and more people active in their unions, not managed decline but a strong, coherent and collective response. Let's choose a union future. As our badge says: "Union and proud". Together let's grow trade unionism across the UK. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Lindsey Adams (*Unite The union*) seconded Composite Motion 2.

She said: Congress, I work in the private sector but, luckily enough, I work in the finance sector, a sector which has a long and proud history of recognition in the trade union Movement. However, I know that other private sector workers are not so fortunate. Therefore, educating them about trade unions and why we are relevant is of paramount importance. In the private sector we see job insecurity, casual labour, high attrition rates and unsociable hours paid at a normal rate of pay, to name but a few. These are things that have been hard won by trade unions in the past.

Yesterday we voiced our concerns about regional pay and the importance of collective bargaining. Within the private sector they often have individual pay so that is not even looking at regional pay. It's look at each individual, fighting against the other individual, to get a better

wage, putting people in teams against other people in teams. Pay secrecy is something that is out *there* and is really common, which should not be going ahead, but still does. In the private sector there is no equality duty, so the pay gap between men and women for ever widens. Unfortunately, that is both in recognised and unrecognised areas.

Last month in Wales Unite highlighted a contact centre in Cardiff where prisoners were bussed in and paid £3 a day. It is an absolute disgrace. I am not sure we have got to the bottom of the issue of whether there were vacancies there or whether people were being sacked when the prisoners were brought in. Congress, don't get me wrong here. I'm not condemning the prisoners, but I am condemning the immorality behind the company's reason for doing that. This would never happen in a strongly unionised workforce. Therefore, we need to put strategies in place to build 100% effective union organisation in the private sector, and we need to start today. We need to get out into our communities, get out into our schools and teach our young people, our jobseekers, our friends and families how valuable it is to be in a trade union. Also they need to pass the message on.

My union, Unite, has been at the forefront of these two initiatives and a lot of hard work has gone on in putting these strategies into being, but there is more to do. For those of you in the public sector who are fighting for your pay, pensions and other terms and conditions, keep up your fight because if the jobs come into the private sector and if we don't organise in the private sector all the hard win battles over the last two hundred or so years will turn to dust.

This is not going to be easy, Congress, but it is not an easy life that we lead, especially as we have the worst trade union legislation in Europe to protect us. I was going to finish there, comrades, but as we have just supported Motion 5, let me add this little bit. It is right to say that

86% of private-sector employees are not organised within our Movement, so even if they wanted to join us going forward, they wouldn't be able to do so and that situation must change. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you. That is a very important point.

Paddy Lillis (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2.

He said: Congress, at the end of the '80s more than nine million workers carried union membership cards. Today membership of the TUC has dipped below six million. Just over 14% of private-sector workers are trade union members, so we all need to make the trade union Movement more relevant to unorganised workers in the private sector. Congress, workers in Britain are facing tough times. Job insecurity, the squeeze on wages, rising costs of living and fears for the future are all common concerns of the ordinary working men and women. The TUC needs to be seen to be speaking out for all workers.

Let me say that it is possible to organise the private sector. Usdaw, alongside other trade unions, operates in the private sector. Usdaw organises, primarily, in the retail and distribution sectors, and those sectors are not easy to unionise but it can be done. Through a co-ordinated organising strategy, Usdaw has been able to deliver trade union density levels of over 60% in parts of the retail sector. If we can organise retail workers to these levels of trade union membership, then there should not be any 'no-go' areas for the trade union Movement. At the end of the 1990s our membership had fallen to below 300,000. Today Usdaw's membership has grown to over 422,000. Congress, the private sector can be organised, but it will only be organised if the trade

union Movement sees it as a priority. It will only be organised if we make a coherent, sustained and determined effort to recruit and speak up for all workers including private-sector workers.

As the composite says: "...extending union membership and influence in the private sector is one of the key challenges facing the trade union movement". The composite correctly states that the future of the trade union Movement depends on widening our appeal, to reach out to workers in non-organised groups, sectors and companies. On behalf of Usdaw, I am asking Conference to support the composite. Thank you. (*Applause*)

John Edgar (*Community, The Union for Life*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2.

He said: Congress, I am a one in seven. I am a union member in the private sector. For every one of me and my colleagues at Tata Steel Tubes in Corby there are six workers in the private sector with no union. We are fortunate. We are still highly organised in the steel industry across the UK and strong unions in the steel industry have been vital to delivering productivity gains and winning a fair share for workers in return. Sadly, that level of private-sector organisation and union strength is becoming increasingly rare.

There are numerous challenges to overcome when organising in the private sector, such as hostile employers, a high turnover of labour and an increasing number of workplaces that have never had a union and don't even know what a union does. So it is vital that we overcome these challenges. How do we do that? We need to innovate our unions. We need to find more ways to reach out to the private-sector workers and to demonstrate the power of collective bargaining. We also need to educate more employers about the value of trade unions.

I am fortunate. My employer provides facility time and recognises the contribution that the union makes to the workplace on many different issues, such as health and safety, productivity, employment and industrial relations. We have our differences and our arguments but, in the end, my employer recognises the value of trade unionism to the business. There are other constructive employers out there, too, who see unions as an integral part of a successful company. We should be making the case together to other employers. We know we have a strong story to tell, so let's get the message out to the millions who are not in any union and let's get organised. Thank you.

Richard Evans (*Society of Radiographers*) supported Composite Motion 2.

He said: Sisters and brothers, the decline in the influence of trade unions in this country is directly linked to a decline in membership. Yes, we all know about the history of anti-union legislation, the demonization in the media, the complacency in the labour movement, social trends and employment trends. It's a complex issue. But we cannot hide behind complexity or pretend that member recruitment and retention is anyone else's business. Membership is our business. Members are our business. We know that the situation is dire in the private sector and we cannot dodge the responsibility to turn this situation around.

What this composite is asking is that the TUC looks for new ways to support, encourage and enable all affiliated unions to become more effective. We know that if we can turn the tide at the grass roots the impact and influence will follow. But we are also asking for the collective weight of Congress itself to become more effective, more effective in fighting back. We are looking for some leadership from the General Council, some central united initiatives, to tackle the political culture where the decimation of union influence is a policy issue. For although the focus of this composite is rightly the woeful situation in the private sector, it is no surprise that

SOR members have a significant interest in paragraph 2. We have lived with the fragmentation of health provision for years. Privatisation of the NHS, remember, is a Labour policy and today we received no reassurance from Ed Balls. Shame on him.

The business of breaking the unions in healthcare has been espoused by Labour just as it is now for the Coalition. Of course, this has not happened without a lot of noise and vigorous protests from individual health unions and from the TUC but with little to show in terms of success. It is happening all across the public services, with the intention to repeat the processes that have seen the disastrous depletion of influence in membership in the private sector, so it is time to wake up. Yes, it is time to oppose the overt anti-union policies of the current Government, but it is also time to change the general political consensus across all parties; time to challenge our so-called friends at the head of the Labour Party to have some balls – someone had to say it – and to stand with the Congress in reversing the negative perception of our Movement. It is time to show that the rights and fair treatment at work are the path to success of businesses; time to stand up for a better society and time to stop going backwards. The years of decline, accompanied by the dwindling influence of this Congress and of unions in every part of the economy, has to stop. We have to reverse the decline and commit together to do this now before it's too late. Support the composite.

Susan Highton (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2.

She said: This motion, rightly, highlights the crucial need for the union Movement to direct greater attention and resources to unionising the private sector. The fact that less than 17% of private sector workers are covered by a collective agreement is a frightening statistic, and with the rapid call for private sector involvement in the public sector, it is one that we must pay heed to and active on, collectively, to address. Unionising parts of the private sector is challenging

and we do face some large problems, but let us not be intimidated by this. It is a challenge we can rise to. As unions we have a good story to tell about positive benefits that the trade unions bring to employers, to workers and to companies as a whole.

As we have already heard this week at Congress, the unions give back to society and we can measure it in the billions, whereas the bankers just take and we can measure that in the billions, too. Our challenge is to get this message across and accepted. We should also recognise that the private sector is not some union-free desert. There are areas in the private-sector economy where there is strong unionisation and good industrial relations. This, in particular, is the case in the manufacturing sector as well as in the motor industry, especially. Why else would Ford, Jaguar, Land Rover and Honda have announced more than £500 million for investment in their unionised British plants?

We have to recognise that the manufacturing sector is shrinking in our economy and what is taking its place is more difficult to unionise. Take private-sector nursing homes and their increase in the use of the contractors in the NHS, as an example. It is increasingly the case that we are facing employers who don't care about unions at best, or are actively hostile at the worst. However, there are new employers who we can work with. For example, there is the joint recognition agreement that UNISON, Unite and GMB signed just recently. This composite highlights the steps we need to take to get private-sector unions growth.

In closing, I *make* two points in particular. First, it is effective workplace-union organising that has to be the number 1 priority here. We have to win the hearts and minds of ordinary working people about issues that concern them directly. They will join the union. Meanwhile, we must confront the private sector challenges for a much stronger position. Secondly, we must work in

a more coordinated way as trade unions as to how we select our organising targets. We must focus our collective strengths on the millions of workers who go completely untouched by the trade unions. There are enough potential new members out *there* for us all to share. Let us cooperate and coordinate about how we unionise the private sector. Support this composite. Thank you.

Paul Maloney (*GMB*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 2.

He said: Congress, the private sector will not come to us. We have got to go to the private sector. The GMB membership is growing a lot faster in the private sector than we are in the public sector at the moment. We are seeing specific growth in the retail, utilities, security and contracted out services. It is not easy to build a union in the private sector, but neither is it in the public sector in this present climate of insecurity and fear. We know that fear is one of the biggest obstacles for members and activists in the private sector. I am talking about the fear of the sack, the fear of the bully manager and the fear of reprisals. Sometimes this fear may not be well founded but all too often it is the case of the bully manager driving fear into our activists and members in the private sector.

We all know that there is legal protection for representatives, but all too often this does not allay the fears of our activities in the field. Our strategy within the private sector focuses on tackling the fear factor. First, we must get access to workplaces and then build in support in each workplace by focusing on local campaigns and issues that our members can directly relate to. We have to build our base, slowly but surely, towards the goal of collective bargaining. Much as we want to, we have learned that we cannot build a union in the private sector from the top down. It can only be built from the bottom up, from the workplaces and from the middle out. The tactics involved in building from the bottom often need to be more flexible and agile than what we

currently do or what we have become accustomed to. What works in one place might not work in another.

On-line joining, community trade union organising, flexible training for new workplace organisers and, in particular, women and ethnic minorities, and the use of SMS as a messaging tool. We have all developed these strategies in our approach to organising within the GMB, but building people's faith in the GMB still requires personal presence where people work, as it does for all trade unions, and putting ourselves at the very front of our potential members remains central to our approach.

Congress, this composite is worthy of support as it reinforces sensible steps to meet the key challenges of organising in the private sector, which is essential to the future of the GMB and to the trade union Movement. Thank you.

The President: We will now move to the vote on Composite Motion 2.

* *Composite Motion 2 was CARRIED.*

The President: We are going now move to Motion 7. Colleagues, I am aware, as you must be, that we had a lengthy debate this afternoon with a lot of speakers participating. We are running behind schedule. We lost business this morning which will be carried over until tomorrow – there is no question about that now – but I am determined to finish the agenda today, which will require two bits of co-operation from you. Firstly, that we go on past half-past 5 for, maybe, 15 minutes in order to do justice to the speakers. Secondly, I am going to make a balance, we will not get in everybody who has indicated that they wish to speak in support. I am sorry about that,

but there are only so many speakers we can fit in in a day. The General Council is indicating support for Motion 7, and I will only be calling UCATT in support.

Vulnerable workers

Martin Spence (*Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union*) moved Motion 7.

He said: Congress, the trade union Movement has a good record of initiatives in support of different categories of vulnerable workers. First of all, let me refer to agency workers. In the debate earlier during Congress on Composite Motion 3, that included a section on the Agency Worker Regulations, which we recognised represented progress, although there were still anomalies that we needed to address. There are anomalies, we do need to address them, but the regulations do represent progress and it is progress that would not have been made had it not been for the organising, lobbying and campaigning work of the trade union Movement. So we should be proud of that.

Agency workers are just one category of vulnerable workers in the economy in this country today. There are about 1.4 million agency workers. There are also 1.25 million to 1.5 million freelance or casual workers in different sectors, certainly in the media and entertainment sectors where our members work, but in others as well. They are working and living from contract to contract, with different employers from day to day or week to week, with different workplaces from day to day and week to week.

Young workers who are trying to breakthrough into work, trying to get started in their careers, encounter new forms of vulnerability, such as the whole phenomenon of the unpaid intern or the unpaid so-called 'work experience placement', or the unpaid so-called 'volunteer'. There are

many sectors of the economy today where entry level positions are regularly unpaid, and in a time of staggeringly high youth unemployment, it is not surprising that many young workers simply believe they have to put up with that if they can. Some can because they have families who can bankroll them. Many can't because they come from working class backgrounds, poorer backgrounds, where their families can't bankroll them, so they are excluded even from getting on the first rung of their career ladder. These are the sorts of vulnerability that we are talking about today. What they have in common is that the balance of risk is now entirely out of kilter. Employers are pushing risk and transferring risk on to individual workers, so that all the uncertainty, all the vulnerability and the precariousness that is inherent in many employment situations, in a market society, is transferred on to the worker.

That situation undermines all sorts of things that we would wish to see in place. It undermines skills, because the employers we are talking about are not going to invest in training for workers for whom they have so little respect and in which they are not prepared to make a real investment, and the workers themselves can't afford to invest in their own skills when their prospects are so insecure. It undermines social mobility when young people can't even get started because of the way in which unpaid internships and work experience are structured. It undermines the whole concept of building a career in whatever sector people wish to do it.

What we are calling for in this motion is for these different areas of vulnerable work to be pulled together, for the common patterns and common factors to be recognised by the TUC so that we can develop a campaign, a programme of work, around these issues that defines positive employment rights that gives us the basis to tackle these abuses. We are talking here, Congress, about millions of workers, millions of potential members of our Movement, and it is time to pull this together and define a new approach and a new campaign. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Natasha Gerson (*Equity*) seconded Motion 7.

She said: Congress, Equity fully supports this motion and we would like to highlight the additional threat to our members and our industries caused by the cuts in funded training, rises in tuition fees and lack of proper opportunities for young people starting out in the arts. One of the results of these cuts is that young people setting out on the road to a career in the arts find that the only path they can afford to take is lined with the promises of unscrupulous employers offering short-term pain with the dubious incentive of long-term gain.

In the professions we represent, this often means that performers are asked to take part in projects for no or, at best, low pay, with the sweetener of being able to add to their experience on their CVs. No doubt, as their CVs are built up these performers can then leap to the front of the queue with employers, advance and be paid twice the nothing that they got before. I am sure the mathematicians amongst us will quickly work out what that means. Remember that dancing and drama help you with your maths.

Often these performers will find that there is no insurance cover provided by employers. Health and safety is a forbidden subject, and reasonable working hours are measured by how long it takes for you to fall over exhausted. Sadly, there are those both within and without the performance profession who believe that these things are, somehow, a right of passage that all artistes should endure. This is, frankly, crap, and it should be given the same credibility that digging coal out with your fingers, sending children up chimneys or cleaning toilets without a brush are somehow character forming. This is an issue that must be vigorously championed by the TUC, not just to protect people embarking on work but also to stop existing workers' pay and

conditions being undermined by employers cynically exploiting desperate as they seek work. Please support the motion.

William Hutt (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) spoke in support of Motion 7.

He said: Congress, I am a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) The depiction of work identified in the motion is all too familiar for construction workers – the hire and fire attitude of agencies and employers using the recession stick to drive down conditions has led to building workers becoming increasingly vulnerable with little or no job security. UCATT campaigns on behalf of these workers. Many are engaged through agencies utilising legal loopholes so that workers are denied treatment with employees after a 12 week period. Other methods to limit fair employment rights in construction include self-employment. Workers are classified as self-employed for tax purposes when, in reality, the self-employed worker shares the same conditions as an employee, but as they work under the construction industry taxes scheme they are excluded from employment rights. They can be paid off at a moment's notice and are denied the basic entitlements that many of us take for granted, such as holiday pay, sick pay, access to pension schemes, free personal protective equipment and more and more are forced even to pay for their own administration for their pay slips by payroll companies. It is absolutely scandalous. Congress, they all have a common feature, which is to deny workers full employment rights and to limit employers' responsibilities, acting as a useful tax avoidance vehicle for the companies and agencies that use them.

At UCATT we identify these disgraceful practices and expose them. Typically, the right-wing media show little interest, choosing to ignore their friends, spivs and cheats. We should, however, credit the *Daily Mirror* and its *Gizza Proper Job* campaign, which has brilliantly

uncovered the reality of work for millions of Britains at work today. It shows: “Building workers denied pay after being stood down due to royal visits” and “Cleaners forced to set up limited companies in our rail stations”. Congress, the attitude of many bad employers is, frankly, Dickensian. They exploit and profit from the labour of those out *there* doing a hard day’s work. Congress, support the motion and support the right to fair employment for millions of vulnerable workers. (*Applause*)

The President: I am now going to move to the vote. The General Executive Council is recommending your support for the motion.

* *Motion 7 was CARRIED.*

You don’t know what you’ve got until it’s gone

Graham Smith (*UNISON* and the TUC Young Members’ Conference) moved Motion 8.

He said: President and Congress, we are living in bleak times, and that is not just a reference to the view from my hotel room. Throughout the last few days we have heard time and time again as delegates have highlighted the mounting attacks on our members, but especially younger ones.

I will tell you my story. I started my apprenticeship as a youth worker in 2006. The scheme was a good one. We were paid in proportion to the rate for the job and that £11 grand a year felt like a million pounds to a school leaver like me. However, I soon realised very quickly how easily it can slip through your fingers with your phone bills, digs money, union merchandise and all the rest comes out of your pay packet.

I look at the new cohort who are doing their apprenticeships just now, but they are paid the apprentice minimum wage of £2.60 an hour. Congress, I don't need to explain to you why I think it's an absolute travesty that we have pay differentials in the National Minimum Wage, never mind one that would force young people to live in poverty at the outset of their working life, but how is anyone meant to have a decent standard a living of living when you are paid less than £100 a week, never mind having your own place and having your own family? I finished my apprenticeship four years, and to fast forward I now work at an FE college in Edinburgh. Most of the students there are from some of the most deprived areas in the country. In less than a month my college is going to be merged with another two colleges in the city, not out of choice but as a result of Government policy, which is going to reduce the amount of jobs there but also the choice of students who will get an education. It means that in future years those young people are going to have to travel across the city, and if you have been to Edinburgh in the last couple of years you will know fine well that, with the tram project disaster that we have, you are spending a good amount of time in the bus.

It is not just the removal of the local connection, but there are plenty of students who are forced to survive only on the EMA. I am thankful that our campaigning in Scotland amongst young people actually managed to keep it, when the barn pots in Westminster ripped it away from young people's hands in the rest of the UK. It barely pays for their bus to college each day, never mind getting a lunch. That is the reality that so many young people go through. In fact, no one should have to start their working life like that.

We are only too aware of the tremendous need to fight these attacks and ensure that we inform and involve not only young workers but young people in general. We must inform and inspire them to join us in what is the fight of our lives. Congress, my experience has been telling, and I

am sure it is not different to yours. All too often I speak to young people who don't know what a trade union is, let alone the achievements we have actually gained over the years. Our Movement's history is one of struggle, but not one of unwinnable struggle. We have won major victories for working people – I don't need to list them here as you all know them – and we have, fundamentally, changed the lives of millions of people, and that is one hell of a legacy that we need to fight for. We have not always won all of the demands, but that is the nature of trade unionism – negotiating, dealing and bargaining until we reach an agreement that works for our members.

However, this vile Tory-run Government, with its twisted ideology, is attempting with sledge hammers and steam rollers – that is a reference to UCATT – to reduce to rubble what our parents and generations before them fought so long and so hard for. Our experience is that in talking to young people about those struggles – our struggles – is that they are often simply forgotten or never even taught, whether it is part of their formal education, by the family or through the media. The consequence of this is that too many young people do not understand the role that the labour Movement has had in gaining and building up what has now been toned down. Without an appreciation of what trade unions have delivered, it is hard to get across to them the great potential of collective endeavour. Our achievements are practical examples of what we can do together and what are both realistic and inspiring to them. That is why it is our task as a movement to ensure that young people hear about the heritage of what organised labour has delivered and why it is so important to defend it.

We know what is necessary to defend young people, jobs and public services, but basic workplace organisation will always be our bread and butter. So now, more than ever, we need to ensure that the strength of our Movement and our potential is remembered, and that we, once

again, know and celebrate the history of our movement and appreciate its achievements. Thank you. (*Applause*)

James Stribley (*GMB*) seconded Motion 8.

He said: Congress, I am a proud Remploy worker. (*Applause*) Trade unions make a tremendous contribution to the lives of working people, their families and in shaping our society. We meet at a time when we have a fight against this Coalition Government, which is hell bent on removing hard-won rights and is determined to change the character of Britain. They are creating an “us and them” society, not for working people but for the top 1% although they have no mandate to do so. They have created a society based on unfairness, injustice and greed. This Coalition Government is threatening to remove the rights that generations of trade unionists have won for working people, which were fought for every step of the way, and this Coalition is hell bent on removing them. Just ask the Remploy workers in the 20 plus factories who were sacked last month. Also ask the Remploy workers if their dignity has now been taken away. One of this Government’s proposals is to repeal employer liability for third party harassment, so if you are a young disabled person working in an hotel and a comedian on stage decides it is amusing to make a joke of your disability, the management will not be liable for his abuse.

Congress, trade unions have fought for, lobbied and won rights for working people. We must highlight the positive role of trade unions in society, particularly for young people, who are having such a hard time in finding and keeping jobs. It is also worth nothing that in the GMB we have found the most effective way of engaging young people to get them to join. There is no substitute for having an application form and pen to sign up members. Now they are joining the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Colleagues, I am now going to move to the vote on Motion 8. The General Council is recommending support.

* *Motion 8 was CARRIED.*

The President: Congress, I am going to take Motion 9, which the General Council is supporting. Then we are going to move to the results of the ballot and the election of the post of General Secretary.

Organising in the fashion industry

Dunja Knezevic (*Equity*) moved Motion 9.

She said: Congress, I am the co-chair of Equity's Morals Committee. As a model of many years experience working abroad and in the UK I have direct experience of the issues that this motion addresses. The public sees the life of a model to be glamorous, surrounded by beautiful people in beautiful clothes and endless parties. This is just not the case. They do not see that many of us have experienced long working hours without breaks, been treated without respect, been denied food, been photographed inappropriately without our consent and been sexually harassed all at various workplaces.

Also we have all been asked to work for free at one time or another to further our careers, and we all start at a very young and impressionable age. When models first joined together to seek union representation, each had a story to tell, and even those with the best earnings and best agents had experienced photographic shoots or catwalk work which fell short of minimum standards, where no changing facilities were provided, no food and they were asked to do dangerous or inappropriate things during a photo shoot. One model responded in a survey that

she had been asked to climb up a tree in five inch heels and then balance on a branch. Another model reported that the bleach used to dye her hair resulted in long-term injury, while another reports no breaks, no toilet roll and no food available, even to buy, at a 12-hour shoot. One model even reported that car paint had been used on her body instead of body paint.

Since Equity accepted models into membership they have worked together to bring these issues to light. We have worked together with the British Fashion Council to ensure that there are Equity-approved guidelines for working on the London Fashion Week stage, which ensures that only healthy models, who are over 16, can work for designers. The same guidelines provide for breaks, decent temperatures, available refreshments and late-night transportation.

However good this achievement is, though, it is only the beginning, given the fact that the fashion industry, which is worth £20 billion to the UK economy, lacks organised bodies of employers with whom to negotiate standard terms and conditions of employment. Against this background, Equity is organising with individual employers and asking them to sign up to a 10 point code of conduct for the treatment of models during photo shoots, working in studios and on locations. The 10 points cover working hours and breaks, provision of meals, travel and transport, respect and dignity, change of appearance, nudity and semi-nudity, changing areas, bathroom facilities, temperatures, insurance and prompt payment. Lastly, no more under-16s will be used in photo shoots representing adult models.

We are currently in discussions with one major retailer which has indicated that they would like to adopt a 10-point code of conduct for whenever they engage models. It would be great news if a formal agreement is made as we are sure that if a standard is set by one major retailer in the industry, then others will follow suit. If they do it in any numbers, then this will radically

change the culture of the UK fashion industry and give models rights equal to those of other workers. Congress is asked to support the motion, to support Equity's efforts to organise models and support our campaign to extend the 10-point code throughout the industry. Thank you.

(Applause)

Sheila Bearcroft MBE (GMB) seconded Motion 9.

She said: Colleagues, as we have heard, the exploitation of child models starts at a very young age. Barely out of childhood, they are exploited and vulnerable, old before their time. Their childhoods have been stolen from them. Colleagues, if you were able to follow the trail back from the forced labour in the cotton fields of Uzbekistan by young children to the factories in India, where young children work long hours in Dickensian conditions, to the young models in the UK, who are used by the industry to encourage us to buy cheap clothes on the high street, how comfortable would you be in your bargain items? It's an uncomfortable thought.

How often do we hear people of all ages, not just those who are young, saying, "I got it in Tesco's", "I got it in Asda. It was only a fiver", or "It was two quid in Primark. It was cheap at the price." Are you happy to ignore the real price, the price paid by exploited children? All over the world children are producing clothes which end up in this country being modelled by the young people the motion is calling to protect. Such garments are being sold in Marks & Spencer, Tesco, Littlewoods and in Next. Next was where the GMB led a demonstration this morning against low-paid young workers. That is another link in the chain of exploitation. Most of all the well-known companies, including Burberry, Courtaulds and Bedware, are producing clothes for sale on our high streets which used to be manufactured here. That is not the position any more. Why? Is it because children abroad make better clothes? No. It is because it is cheaper to get clothes made in China, India, Bangladesh and Vietnam by children rather than pay

adults to make them. How many of you here today have checked where your clothes have been produced? The conditions these children work in are Dickensian, to say the least. Not even adult workers in these countries have a minimum wage. Even they get a pittance for churning out cheap clothes.

In the United Kingdom today there are in excess of two million economically active children. Colleagues, support the motion and let's all work together to give children the childhood they deserve. (*Applause*)

Shelley Asquith (*Unite*) spoke in support of Motion 9.

She said: Congress, "You need to lose weight"; "You're not tall enough"; "Your skin is the wrong colour"; "What do you mean, you won't take your top off, you won't shave your head and you won't work for free?" If these are reasons for losing a job in most of our industries we would be fighting an unfair dismissal case. Unfortunately, in the fashion industry discrimination is standard practice and unionisation is almost non-existent.

As with much of the entertainment industry, fashion models often begin working at a young age and they are expected to work for nothing when starting out. Even many professional models take up second and third jobs to get by. Models are met with pressure to lose weight and change other parts of their physical appearance daily. There is also still a huge under representation of ethnic minorities in the industry. There are men and women who get by on diets of baby food to stay thin; models who have been ordered to be photographed nude without prior agreement; models who are sent on jobs by agencies despite having to miss a weeks of school. Many models come from eastern Europe to find work, speaking little English and with no knowledge

of their legal rights. Young and migrant workers are two of our most vulnerable groups and most likely to be receiving a poverty wage.

Next week will be London Fashion Week. Men and women, some as young as 13, will be working long hours without breaks and under enormous pressure. The Model Sanctuary, a place where models at London Fashion Week, have previously gone to receive advice and meals has this year been shut down. For too long the British fashion industry has refused to enforce regulations. They recommend that designers do not use children to model men's and women's wear, but these practices are plainly ignored.

A minimum rate for models would be a first step towards ensuring a fair remuneration system and the enforcement of a minimum age of 16 for all adult modelling would protect child models as well as help tackle the culture when men and women seek unachievable appearances.

In order to protect young models from exploitation and exhaustion, regulations should also include a maximum working day of 10 hours, with scheduled breaks, to reflect the European Working Time Directive. To guarantee models with dignity at work, any nudity or drastic change of appearance should be agreed prior to any contract being signed. Please support our brothers and sisters in the fashion industry. The workplace issues they face are similar to those we hear about across our sector, but models do not yet have a big enough collective voice to fight their injustices. Support Equity in organising this industry and helping end a tradition where sexism and harassment, negative body image issues and unfair pay are considered the norm. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: I am going to move straight to the vote. The General Council is recommending support of Motion 9.

* *Motion 9 was CARRIED*

Results of the ballot for General Council and General Secretary

The President: Colleague, I am now going to announce the results of the ballot for General Council and General Secretary, and I invite Audrey Harry, the Chair of the Scrutineers to give the results of the ballot for the General Council and the General Secretary.

Audrey Harry (*Chair of the Scrutineers*): President and delegates, it is my task now to present the Scrutineers Report. Will delegates please turn to the back of your Agenda and I will give the results of the ballot for the General Council starting with Section C. The members nominated for Sections A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I and J, and the General Purposes Committee are printed in the Agenda.

Section C: Manuel Cortes (Transport Salaries Staffs Association): 214,000 votes; Mark Dickinson (Nautilus International) 211,000 votes; Jonathan Ledger (Napo): 101,000 votes; Robert F Monks (United Road Transport Union), 70,000 votes; Ged Nichols (Accord): 221,000 votes; Dave Penman (FDA): 214,000 votes; Tim Poil (Nationwide Group Staff Union): 193,000 votes; Eddie Saville (Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association): 232,000 votes, and Simon Weller (Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen): 240,000 votes.

Those elected are the names only: Manuel Cortes, Mark Dickinson, Ged Nichols, Dave Penman, Tim Poil, Eddie Saville and Simon Weller.

As you will see, nominations were invited for the post of General Secretary, following Brendan Barber's decision to retire towards the end of this year. Frances O'Grady was the only nominee and she was nominated by 32 unions representing almost 90% of the affiliated membership. Frances, therefore, becomes General Secretary (designate) and will become General Secretary when Brendan retires at the end of this year. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you very much, Audrey. I think it is quite right and proper if we invite the General Secretary (designate) to say a few words. Congratulations, Frances.

Frances O'Grady *(General Secretary (designate))*: Well, brothers, you've been thinking about this for 144 years. *(Cheers, applause and laughter)* I don't want to rush you but are you really sure? *(Calls of "Really")* Are you really sure? I would like to hear it. *(Calls of "Really")*
Thank you.

Sisters, will you join me in giving notice to anyone who still thinks that women are the weaker sex: you'd better think again. *(Applause and cheers)*

I want to thank you and your unions for nominating me to become General Secretary of the TUC. There is no greater honour. I also want to give my personal thanks to Brendan. Brendan has always shown me respect; he has always consulted me and he has encouraged me. When times were tough, he has always backed me. He taught me that we work best when we work as a team and for that I also want to thank our TUC staff, whose talent and commitment is second to none. Brendan, I couldn't have wished for a better boss or a better friend. Thank you.
(Applause)

Delegates, we are the voice of millions of working people, men and women, black and white, migrant workers and British born, including many who have yet to become our members, millions of ordinary working families who are under unprecedented pressure, but who want hope for the future. I promise you that I will make sure that our voice is heard day in and day out, that our concerns can't be ignored, dismissed or marginalised. I will not let any government or party take us for granted. Of course, our Movement must be open to change and change we will in the months and years ahead, not just talking to ourselves about ourselves but reaching out more, campaigning more, organising more and, if needs be, fighting back more. I will put the TUC, Congress House and our regions at the heart of the values, hopes and campaigns that you, our affiliated unions, all share.

Change must mean a banking system that serves the real economy, not just itself.

Change must mean a green industrial strategy that puts Britain back to work, and change must mean public services, publicly owned, not just our precious NHS but childcare, elder care and our railways, too. *(Applause)* Change must also mean not just a minimum wage, not even just a living wage but a fair wage for all of the people in this country. That means finding new ways to rebuild the scope and coverage of collective bargaining, our bread and butter work, new ways to harmonise and humanise work, recognising that we all have a right to a family life. It means new ways to win more democracy for ordinary people at work, because no one has a greater interest in the future success of the workplace than those whose livelihoods depend on it. That collective strength has never been more needed in Britain today. It is our only protection against greed, injustice and the abuse of power.

There are many ways to tackle the obscenity of inequality, but there is none more effective than strong and free trade unions. Weak unions mean wider inequality. Strong unions are the surest measure of a fairer society. On October 20th I will be proud to stand at the head of what must be a truly mass demonstration, the TUC giving expression to the fears and hopes of the British people in a way that no other organisation or movement can do. We are still the biggest organisation in civil society. Our tens of thousands of elected representatives, people like you, are the big society. Our values represent everything that is best in British society; decency, democracy and fairness. These are my values, our values, trade union values. I believe, delegates, that together we can build a future that works and together, united, we will win. Thank you. *(A standing ovation amidst cheers)*

The President: Fantastic. Colleagues, we have got left over from this afternoon's session Motions 69, 70 and the relevant paragraphs. We will be taking those tomorrow. Thank you very much for your patience. Congress stands adjourned till 9.30 tomorrow morning.

Congress adjourned.