

**144<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS**

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Held at:

**The Brighton Centre,  
Brighton**

on

**Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
and  
Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

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**Congress President:**

**PAUL KENNY**

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**PROCEEDINGS – DAY FOUR  
(Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> September 2012)**

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## FOURTH DAY: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

*(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)*

**The President:** I call Congress to order and I ask you to show your appreciation again for the *Plastic Youth Jazz Orchestra*. *(Applause)* Can we all say thanks to *Music for Youth* which has provided us with some fantastic music all week? *(Applause)* I also want to thank the NUT.

Delegates, I remind you to complete your Delegates' Questionnaires and return them to the TUC information stand, situated near the entrance to the Brighton Centre.

Congress, you will recall that yesterday morning we carried a resolution – perhaps people should note that sometimes resolutions passed at the TUC do have some impact – opposing the 'Monti II' proposals being put forward by the European Commission. We took the view that the 'Monti II' proposals would leave the trade unions out in the cold. Last night our friend, Bernadette Segol, the General Secretary of the ETUC, who spoke to us on Monday, let me know that the Commission had decided to shelve the 'Monti II' proposals, as she put it, "because the red card had been wielded". *(Applause)* This was just hours – literally, just hours – after we called on the Commission to send 'Monti' to the sin bin. It is a major victory, Congress. It came the day after we took the resolution from Usdaw on the CICA compensation scheme and, of course, we learnt the next day that those proposals had been withdrawn. One can only look forward to resolutions calling for the sacking of David Cameron coming true in the next few weeks. *(Applause)*

Colleagues, as you know, we lost business at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions yesterday. Following this morning's scheduled business, I intend to take that business in the order it was lost from the agenda. In order to clarify for those delegates waiting patiently to be called, this will be the order: Composite Motion 14, Education for all, to be moved by NASUWT; Motion 63, Music hubs, to be moved by the Musicians' Union; Motion 64, For profit, post-16 education, to be moved by UCU; Composite Motion 15, Valuing further education, to be moved by UCU; Motion 67, Homophobic bullying in schools, to be moved by SOR; paragraphs 6.1 – 6.4; paragraph 4.16; Motion 69, LAPSO – call for reform, to be moved by Napo; Motion 70, Resisting the treat to probation, to be moved by Napo, and paragraphs 8.1 – 8.10.

I will then take the General Council's Statements on Solidarity with South African Mineworkers and Unions. Following that, I will take the three outstanding emergency motions. Is that clear, Congress? You can answer. (*Agreed*)

Delegates, we continue today with Chapter 4 of the General Council Report: Economic and industrial affairs, the section on welfare and social affairs, from page 61. I am calling paragraphs 4.8, 4.9 and Composite Motion 8. The General Council supports the composite motion.

### **The welfare state**

**Janice Godrich** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) moved Composite Motion 8.

She said: Congress, we face a Government firmly in the interests of the richest 1% in our society. It tells us that the welfare state is unaffordable, yet it has already found the money to cut the top rate of Income Tax from 50% to 45% and to cut Corporation Tax from 28% to 24%, and they intend to give even more money to business by cutting it to 20%. The tax cuts for the rich and big business, benefiting the top 1% in our society, so far add up to about £30 billion of giveaways. Coincidentally, the same Government are cutting welfare by £30 billion. So Cameron and Osborne are taking money from the disabled, unemployed, lone parents and those struggling to pay rents to give to the super rich. At the same time, we see this Government trying to move people from their established houses and communities out to cheaper areas of rent. The answer to that, of course, is to put a rent cap on and to make sure that those landlords are exploiting some of the worst off in our society, who are made to pay for that cost.

It is not just this perverse redistribution that we should be concerned about. What we see is a vilification and a bullying of anyone on benefits. We see this with the work capability assessments carried out by ATOS, a private IT company paid £100 million a year to carry out these tests, formerly performed by public-sector workers. The work capability assessments are a means solely of taking people off Unemployment and Support Allowance and putting them on to Jobseeker's Allowance instead, cutting the income of disabled people by about £30 a week. We know that these tests are deeply flawed because disabled people tell us they are, because activist groups like Disabled People Against the Cuts and charities like Mind tell us that they are. Also the British Medical Association has called for them to be scrapped. I can tell you that

108 MPs have signed John McDonald's^^^ EDM calling for the tests to be scrapped. Congress, we need to join that coalition and call for the ATOS tests to be scrapped.

Unemployed people are being bullied as well. The Workfare schemes are a disgraceful stain on the welfare state that our Movement created. This composite motion is opposed to workfare. It is right to offer unemployed people workplace opportunities, but they should be optional, not compulsory, and they should be paid. We should be investing to create jobs but, instead, this Government are cutting jobs and forcing people to work for nothing. Congress, a society that refuses to support its most vulnerable has lost the right to call itself a civilised society. We need to rebuild the welfare state on the basis of a policy of full employment, universal benefits, set at a level to enable the recipients to live in dignity, with publicly delivered services and programmes.

The key to defeating the harshest elements within these proposals from this Government is to link up and co-ordinate with all those who are serious about fighting these cuts. Trade unions, trade councils, pressure groups, disability groups, unemployed workers groups and others must join our campaign. We need to stand together in defence of a welfare state and a decent civilised society. That is our best hope of defending ourselves against these cuts. At the moment, we see politicians from all sides creating a climate where they are able to portray those who are unable to work as workshy and scroungers on the state, and then court political popularity by attacking these people and making them scapegoats. You only need to switch on your television at half-past 9 every morning and see the atmosphere that is created by programmes like the *Jeremy Kyle Show*, *Saints and Scroungers*, and those in the

media who are trying to demonise people who are just unable to work or find jobs, if they want to work.

Congress, we need to stick together. We can really put up a massive fight back to defend welfare, defend public services and build the sort of society that we can all be proud of. This is about public need, not private profit. Please support. (*Applause*)

**Nicolas Wilson** (*National Union of Mineworkers*) seconded Composite 8.

He said: Congress, I congratulate my colleagues in the PCS. I can't speak with the knowledge of their membership because they are having to handle the problems and the trauma caused by cuts to the welfare state on a day-to-day basis. The reason why we are part of this composite came about because of the growing number of our members, mostly former members, who are now being assessed through the Government's work capability assessment, and have either lost or had their benefits cut. Many of these individuals, like in other industries, have been on Incapacity Benefit on a long-term basis simply because they were injured at their place of work or contracted industrial diseases. They were, therefore, found to be unfit for work. Now they are being under severe mental strain now being cause and the traumatic stress that comes from it because they are having their benefits cut and stopped.

The work capability assessment is nothing more than a vehicle to allow the Government to attack some of the most vulnerable in our society in order to cut billions from the welfare budget. But as the previous speaker said, there is no problem paying ATOS millions of pounds to carry out the assessments, which have now been found to be flawed. So much so that the National Audit Office has

criticised the Department of Work & Pensions for double payments because of the large number of successful appeals that are coming through against the assessment carried out by ATOS. Up to 38% of appeals are successful. Incidentally, colleagues, it is important to remember that where there is proper representation, the figure rises to 68%. So it is right that we should oppose this attack on our welfare state, as has been said.

Let me wind up now – I am conscious of time – by saying that we should never forget the hypocrisy of this Government because it knows no bounds. They tried to justify the new assessment by claiming that it frees people from a life on benefits, by allowing them into employment which, on the other hand, they are closing the very organisation that has a track record second to none for many, many years of assisting people like this into employment, namely, Remploy, which has been said many times at this Congress. That is the hypocrisy of this Government, colleagues. So let's stand together on this issue because it does affect people. Those who are being attacked are the most vulnerable in our society through their benefit claims and other benefits being changed. As the previous speaker said, let's fear behind and get the only assessment that we need which is a re-assessment of the actual process. Thank you.

**Lynn Ambler** (*Association of Educational Psychologists*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

She said: Congress, it gives me great pleasure to support this composite motion, part of which was contributed by the Association of Educational Psychologists. In front of you is a bit of a multi-subject composite, but it brings together many issues of serious concern to the whole Movement. Let me say that I am especially proud to follow a

delegate from the NUM today because in my day-to-day work as an educational psychologist in the towns and villages of West Yorkshire, I see the plight of families associated with the mining industry. I am talking about towns and villages like Knottingly, Havercroft and Featherstone, which were blighted by the Tories in the 1980s and further attacked by them in the post 2010 period, places where investment in children, young people and families markedly improved after 1997, but where the increase in poverty since 2010 is tangible.

On a daily basis I see the impact of the Tory policies; the loss of the EMA and its impact on young children and young people who should be at college but are not because there is no money for fares to college. I see families on very limited incomes, struggling to clothe children to send them to school. New inequalities means another generation who feel confused, ignored and unsupported at best, and victimised at worse.

In educational psychology we have concerns about less access to resources for vulnerable groups, limitations on the definition of “need”, consequential under achievement, disruption and disaffection, the breaking up and destruction of support services and pressure on those services to create income by trading. On top of all these, the people who deliver these services are struggling with pay freezes and the rest. They are threatened with devious moves towards regional pay that will further exaggerate differences between the haves and the have nots, and reinforce inequality of service delivery.



A movement to regional pay will set back our Movement and further punish those groups which rely on a consistent, dedicated and compassionate workforce.

Congress, we must reiterate our belief that the vulnerable in Barnstable have the same right to services as the vulnerable in Barnsley. Workers in those services should have equal pay to deliver unilateral services. The Government's scurrilous divide and rule policy must be met with trade union action that includes a reiteration of the principles of fair, equal and nationally agreed pay, equity for public sector workers and reinstatement for all services and resources necessary to support the vulnerable. Thank you, Congress.

**Jackie Lewis** (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

She said: Congress, as the composite says, and as previous speakers have made clear, Government attacks on welfare are increasingly vicious and their impact increasingly widespread.

I want to focus on just two areas. Firstly, the impact on children. This is supposed to be a Government that wants to strengthen the family. Not a bit of it. The raft of cuts in the benefits system will adversely affect many working families. For example, caps on housing and overall benefits will affect larger families and those with children who have high level special needs, creating cliff edges that serve to disincentivise work. This is counter-productive nonsense. It is bad for our economy, bad for our communities and bad for the future. As Parliament prepared to vote on Monday on the universal credit system, even arch sell out, Frank Field, finally turned against the Government's welfare plans. Perhaps Cameron himself is having reservations, but he

lacked the bottle to get rid of Iain Duncan Smith in the reshuffle. The universal credits appear to create tipping points for single parents in work and for large families that will mean a further loss of income. As always, the most vulnerable suffer the worse. Different work patterns already create particular problems for families with children. For example, parents in part-time work find it especially hard to access quality childcare as many providers prefer to have full-time placements. Shift and seasonal workers face similar problems in accessing places that are in high demand. Add to this a counter-productive funding system and unscrupulous providers and you have a classic recipe for disaster. People in these situations now face even greater struggles as their benefits are cut.

Let us remember, Congress, that for those wanting to challenge unfair decisions, their options will be even more limited in future when the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act comes into effect next year, as it will deprive people of access to legal aid in support of appeals.

Congress, the second area I want to focus on is the impact on LGBT people. From the start of this year, a single person under 35 can only claim housing benefit for bedsit accommodation or one room in shared accommodation. The latest plan is to cut housing benefit entirely for young people under 25. This disproportionately affects LGBT people on low incomes. It completely ignores the fact that not all young people are equally able to remain in their family/parental home. Many more will be forced into homelessness.

Finally, Congress, we need to remind the Government that a proper welfare state is not just a safety net, and it is not about food banks or a welfare system that punishes people for being disabled or in poverty. We have to campaign to defend and rebuild the welfare state for a future that works. Thank you.

**The President:** Thank you, colleague. I am going to move to the vote on Composite Motion 8. The General Council is recommending support.

\* *Composite Motion 8 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** I am now calling paragraph 4.7 and Motion 40.

### **Child poverty**

**Mary Bousted** (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) moved Motion 40.

She said: Congress, one of the most pernicious lies that the Coalition Government bandies about is that education is a cure for the ills of child poverty. Under the cloak of social mobility and aspiration, Michael Gove uses educational standards as a smokescreen against the pernicious effects of the Coalition Government's policies, which will, as sure as night follows day, result in more children living in poverty.

Those of us who talk about poverty and its effects on children's health, wellbeing and life prospects are accused of making excuses. If only, as the Melanie Philips and Michael Goves tell us, teachers were ambitious enough for their pupils; if only we really believed in social mobility then we could magic away the effects of child poverty. Schools and teachers could cure it all. This is, of course, a lie but one

which has been repeated so often that it is believed too readily by people who ought to know better. The danger, as I have found out myself, is that if you do talk about the effect on poverty on children's life chances, as I do, you are accused of being soft on standards and excusing teaching failure. This is, of course, a dangerous nonsense.

Conference, let us be clear. Michael Gove and his right-wing friends use the bankrupt concept of social mobility to cover up their elitism and their denigration of state schools and teachers. In their world poverty is an excuse, not a powerful explanatory factor for the education under performance of poor children. Why, they ask plaintively, do so few children with free school means go to Oxford or Cambridge? They answer their own question: "It is because teachers are not ambitious enough for poor children. They hold them back through low expectations." Of course, this is nonsense but it is a dangerous nonsense, and now it can be disproved.

A study published in June this year by researchers from the University of Sheffield, using data from four sweeps of the Millennium Cohort Study demonstrated conclusively that poverty, and in particular persistent poverty, has a negative effect on children's cognitive development in their early years. Children born into poverty have significantly lower test scores at ages three, five and seven. The research also showed that children living in continual poverty in their early years suffer from impaired cognitive development. But children who are persistently in poverty throughout their early years, their cognitive development test scores are more than 10 percentile ranks lower than children who have never experienced poverty, even after controlling for a wide range of background characteristics, such as parenting. So,

Conference, there can be no argument. The longer you are poor, the more your education will suffer and so will your life chances and your future.

Teachers do all they can to redress the pernicious and persistent effects of child poverty, but they cannot magic them away. For the Secretary of State for Education to pretend that they can do so is an insult to the profession. Using teachers and schools as a scapegoat also serves another useful purpose. It deflects attention from the Coalition Government's policies, which will worsen child poverty rates, but the Child Poverty Action Group, which this year produced a UK map of child poverty, is clear where the fault lies. They recognise that, as a result of the last Labour Government's policies, between 1998 and 2010 the number of children in poverty was reduced by 900,000. In May 2010 the Coalition Government took office pledging it would continue the previous government's commitment to end child poverty and to implement the Child Poverty Act 2010.

However, the Institute for Fiscal Studies has forecast that this Coalition Government's policies will cause a further rise in child poverty. Far from it being eradicated by 2020, it will have returned to its peak of the 1990s, thereby wiping out the progress that has been made. The Child Poverty Action Groups says: "It is a political choice whether the cost of balancing the budget falls most heavily on the poorest or the wealthiest. The decision made to place the greatest burden on the poorest, revealed in the Treasury's Income Distribution Analysis for Tax and Benefit Changes, published in the Autumn Statement, not only puts children's wellbeing at risk but it carries economic risk, too. Child poverty already costs the UK economy around £25 billion a year, and any rise in child poverty will push up this cost. Just last week, the Save the

Children charity has started a campaign to alleviate child poverty in the UK, and the charity launched its campaign stating: “It is shocking to think that in the UK in 2012 families are being forced to miss out on essentials, like food, or to take on crippling debts just to meet everyday living costs.”

Conference, we do not need wider definitions of child poverty. We need to do something about child poverty. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**Audrey Harry** (*GMB*) seconded Motion 40.

She said: Congress, children who grow up in poverty pay a heavy price. Poverty and social inequality have a profound effect on children, not just on education, but it impacts their health. They have more illnesses, perform poorly at school and also when they are adults. A wider definition of child poverty is not the answer. Contrary to popular opinion, child poverty does not mean not having the most expensive trainers and Ipods. It means living in sub-standard housing and that your family cannot afford to put the heating on. It also means eating cheap food, full of additives, fat and sugar. It means never wearing clothes that have not been worn by someone else. It means stigmatisation.

You can massage the figures and definitions as much as you like, but you just need to look around the supermarkets to see mothers struggling to fill their trolleys. Food prices are increasing faster than wages. Mothers are having to ask their children for money from their piggy banks to pay energy or food bills. Where is the justice in that? It is appalling that such inequalities persist in the UK rather than improving the situation of children from the most deprived families. That situation is getting

worse. The people who are suffering most from the economic recession are not the people who have caused it. They are the hard-pressed families, often on low pay and in insecure work, struggling to keep their families together. Whilst benefits are being cut, families and children are bearing the brunt of the austerity agenda whilst the rich are getting richer. Iain Duncan Smith says that work is the route out of poverty, but the continuing scourge of low pay undermines that sweeping statement. Low pay and unemployment cause poverty. Decent wages for working people is the key to moving children out of poverty. The Labour Government's commitment to halve child benefit by 2010 was a brave step. The economic crisis not has helped the cause but it is not right to say that the target cannot be met because of it.

It is not right to change the definition of "child poverty" so that it will take more to meet the targets. Congress, we must challenge the Coalition Government, not kick this subject into the long grass. We must be positive on how to meet the 2020 target. To do so, we need action now. Please support. (*Applause*)

**Robbie Faulds** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 40.

He said: Congress, Michael Gove accused opponents of the academy schools as being "the enemies of promise". Just to be clear, Michael Gove is a Tory so, of course, you can assume that the exact opposite of anything he says is the truth. We know from what other speakers have said that academies are not something that are going to end child poverty. In fact, they are more likely to increase it. We have already seen evidence from the academies' programme that they will end up with selection, less children on free school meals in them and will have other problems. The same can be said for the Free Schools programme, which has been introduced by

Gove's government. What we have seen from free schools is, quite simply, that they do not work. Evidence from Sweden and the US, where they have already been introduced, shows that they are a failure and cause anti-social behaviour and isolation. All this is very important because we need an evidence-based policy to work out how we get education to end child poverty.

What the Tories have been doing is ideological based, the same as for their economic solutions. They are based on ideology, not evidence. In the Department for Education, instead of using any evidence when they released the announced around free schools, they created a database of teachers and head teachers who would support their policies and just wheeled them out to say a few positive lines. All this is extremely important because education is a key way out of child poverty, but it is also crucial to ending child poverty in the future because the unfortunate fact is that still the biggest indicator of a child's future prosperity is their parents' current prosperity. So if a child is from a household in poverty, they are far more likely to end up in poverty as an adult as well. That is a disgrace. It is a disgrace that the fifth richest nation in the world has got one in four of its children in poverty, with that figure being as high as 70% in some areas.

The way to tackle that situation is not to shift the goalposts for the poverty threshold. The way to tackle that is with positive measures. Progress was made under the last Labour Government in reducing child poverty, largely as a result of tax credits. While that was to be applauded, we should be clear that tax credits really amount to a form of socialism for the rich where they are subsidising wages that companies will not pay to workers. What we really need are socialist policies for the rest of us to get child



poverty ended. We need a decent welfare system, as has already been mentioned today. We need to invest in creating proper jobs and apprenticeships, bring back the EMA, allow poor children access to education, decrease job insecurity and we need to ensure that all workers receive a fair living wage, which is the best single way to pull everyone out of poverty. Please support this motion.

**Robert Wilkinson** (*National Union of Teachers*) spoke in support of Motion 40.

He said: Congress, the National Union of Teachers welcomes the opportunity to support this motion from our sister union, the ATL. Teachers in our daily task of education recognise the profound influence that home circumstances have upon the chances of success or failure in achieving qualifications. A famous German philosopher once said: “Men make their own history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing.” There is no denying that a few individuals are able to overcome adverse circumstances and achieve success. The Olympics have given enough examples of this. The Paralympics even more so. Yet it is a myth that every individual can go from rags to riches, from obscurity to fame, purely by strength of will alone. We have to recall the quotation from another German that the definition of insanity is to keep on trying the same thing after repeated failure in the vain hope of achieving success. For most youngsters from poor backgrounds this, unfortunately, is their experience of the education system.

Teachers are aware that right from the first day of school some pupils are better prepared than others for what the school expects of them. Education is a great liberator. It can and does provide opportunities for some to overcome their

circumstances and secure upward social mobility but against the odds, swimming against the stream.

Save the Children has a new poster showing “It shouldn’t happen here”. Well, some of us believe that child poverty shouldn’t happen anywhere, but it is true that Britain is a wealthy country. The wealth was created by the skilled labour of previous generations of men and women, but that wealth is being increasingly concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. The rest of society has been and is being robbed of our inheritance, the social capital that resides in our libraries, our NHS, our playing fields and our comprehensive schools. Congress, if we want to eliminate child poverty we need to change the circumstances in education and in the wider society.

As a woman from Argentina once said: “The poor do not need charity. They need social justice.” Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, colleague. I now intend to move to the vote on Motion 40. The General Council is recommending support.

\* *Motion 40 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** We now move to Composite Motion no. 9. The General Council is supporting the composite.

### **Exploitation of foreign seafarers in UK waters**

**Martin Troman** (*Nautilus International*) moved Composite Motion 9.

He said: Colleagues, how would you feel if your job took you thousands of miles from family and friends for up to a year at a time with few chances to call home or keep in touch by email? Then how would you feel if you found yourself being owed several months of wages? This sort of thing is the sad reality for thousands of foreign seafarers who work on board ships coming in and out of the UK's ports every day. Let me tell you about one of these ships, the container ship *Philip*, which turned up in the Port of Liverpool last year. A Nautilus International Transport Workers' Federation ship inspector found that the Filipino crew were being cheated out of their wages by a double book-keeping system on the ship and were owed almost a quarter-of-a-million dollars. After pressurising the owners and threatening to arrest the ship, we got the money for them but then had to call for police support after hearing that they had then had their wages taken from them again. The seafarers were repaid their money a fortnight later, but when they arrived home in Manila they were, effectively, ambushed as they were leaving the airport and taken to a crewing agents' office where their owed wages were taken from them again. Our inspector received from than 40 text messages from the crew detailing the threats made against them by the crewing agency, including warnings that they would be blacklisted and refused future employment.

Colleagues, this sort of shameful exploitation simply should not exist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and it is to the UK's shame that our Government has been turning a Nelsonian eye towards such appalling treatment to some of the world's most vulnerable workers. In the case of the *Philip* the UK washed its hands of any responsibility, passing the buck to the ship's flag state, Gibraltar, which in turn failed to take any effective action to punish the owners and the agents, even though these

seafarers had money owed to them, repaid twice, taken away twice and evidence of illegal double book-keeping was obtained. I could have stood at this rostrum with a catalogue of similar cases that we have uncovered in our ports.

The failure to act against these shady practices gives a green light to sub-standard shipowners, undermining those who operate decently and creating hugely unfair competition on the backs of crews from developing nations, often lacking any effective union protection. We now have more Filipino seafarers working in British waters than British seafarers. Despite all this evidence, our Government has to be dragged kicking and screaming into adopting measures to give even basic protection to the increasing number of foreign crews in our maritime sector. It is dragging its feet on extending the National Minimum Wage to all seafarers in UK waters, and procrastinating on the application of the Equality Act to foreign crews of UK ships.

Even worse, this so-called shipping nation has dismally failed to be in the first wave of countries ratifying the ground-breaking International Maritime Labour Convention, which has been described as a global bill of rights for the world's 1.2 million seafarers. Britannia claims to rule the waves, but to Nautilus it seems that Britannia is more interested in allowing dodgy shipowners to waive the rules. It has got to stop. Just because seafarers are working in a globalised industry, we should not be tolerating south-east Asian pay rates on ships operating out of south-east England. Support this motion and get our Government, finally, to wake up to its moral, social and legal responsibilities to give some of the most marginalised workers in the world the sort of protection that we take for granted, and help eradicate exploitation that would not be out of place in a Dickens' novel. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Daren Procter** (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Composite Motion 9.

He said: Congress, we speak about social dumping. People think we are talking about seafarers from shores far away, when actually “social dumping” is happening here 48 miles away in Portsmouth. Seafarers are being paid £28.19 per day for a 12-hour day, working seven days a week for up to three months at a time. I repeat, this is happening 48 miles away, comrades, not the other side of the world. That is what this composite motion is about.

The knock-on effect of that is that there is no level playing field for our seafarers. Local seafarers are now queuing up on the dole. We go on about mass unemployment, jobs, opportunities and safety, but all of that goes out of the window with seafarers. If you look around you today – decency, rights, safety and having a voice – these are all the things that the TUC stands for and everything that social dumping stands against.

We have already heard that we have no maritime policy. You may not know that seafarers are not covered by the same safety regulations as every other land-based worker. We are not covered by the SRSC. You may not know that seafarers cannot go to a tribunal regarding the Working Time Directive. In Portsmouth there is a company called Condor Ferries. We started a campaign against them a couple of months back because there is no level playing field there. What they are doing is employing Ukrainians 1,600 miles away to travel between Portsmouth and Jersey or

Portsmouth and Guernsey, and they are paid £28.19 a day. There is no safety there, no voice, no rights and no decency.

We talk about global solidarity. So what about the workforce 48 miles away? It's great that we've got global solidarity, and we need it, but we need to stand firm and see what is happening here. We need to see what is happening down the road and understanding what is causing the seafarers of this maritime nation going down the Suwannee. They receive no holiday payments, no pension contributions and no cap on the amount of 12 hour days they can be made to work. They work seven days a week for three months at a time.

I can see that the lights are going on, and I could sit here all day and talk about social dumping. Comrades, talk is cheap. We need action. We need help in Portsmouth. We need help as seafarers. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We will now move to the vote on Composite Motion 9. It is being supported by the General Council.

\* *Composite Motion 9 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** Congress, I am now going to move to Motion 42 and paragraph 4.10. The General Council will be supporting the motion.

**Housing**

**Steve Murphy** (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) moved Motion 42.

He said: Congress, I am pleased to be speaking on a subject that I am passionate about. We have heard from previous speakers this week about the massive cuts that are being implemented by the Coalition Government. So I would like to take this opportunity to point out some of the areas of growth that this Government could be credited with: homelessness is up by 14%; families living in bed and breakfast are up by 44%; private rents are up by 26%; overcrowding rates are up by 0.6%, and five million people are on waiting lists for social housing. We are facing both a financial crisis and a housing crisis.

The latest slump was caused largely by the falling output in construction, the sector my members work in. But instead of investing in this vital area in helping to kick-start the economy, we have seen massive cuts to social housing budgets. In the previous quarter, new social housing output fell by a massive 25% compared with the same period in 2011. This is the largest fall in volume of work in any area of construction, but these are abstract figures.

Let me give you an example of what the figures really mean. Just 454 affordable housing units were started in England in the six months before September 2011, compared with 13,000 units in the same period in 2010. Take out the part-rent/part-buy properties and those charging up to 80% of the market rate, just 259 units were for genuinely affordable social rents. The situation will only get worse with last Thursday's announcement of the removal of the Section 106 planning laws,

abolishing the requirement to include a proportion of social housing in new developments.

Estimates show that 240,000 new homes are needed each year to meet demand, and we saw just 259 new social housing properties completed in six months. We have an absolute moral obligation to tackle this housing emergency, and it makes economic sense. Invest in construction and we will see growth. Invest in social housing and we will see wider community and social benefits. Inadequate housing affects the health and wellbeing of those who live in it. We have heard about child poverty this morning, and children in bad housing are up to 25% more likely to develop health problems and disability in adulthood. They are less likely to do well at school and more likely to suffer from behavioural problems and go on to offend. All of these factors reduce their long-term chance of securing well-paid employment. Yet the Government claims they want to reduce dependency on benefits.

We all know that the best way to avoid long-term benefit reliance is to give all children a decent start in life. Reduce the needs for benefits, yes, but don't penalise claimants. The benefits cap is forcing families into more overcrowded conditions, driving people on low incomes out of whole areas of London and the south-east, away from their jobs, schools and support networks.

Let's reduce the housing benefit bill another way. Let's take people out of over-priced, private rented accommodation where the Government pay billions in subsidies to private landlords and put them into decent, affordable, social housing. 281,000 construction jobs have been lost since the end of 2007, a fall of 12% of workers



employed in our industry. Let's tackle the unemployment benefits bill by putting people back to work. For every new home built two new jobs are created for a year. If we need 240,000 new homes, that is nearly half-a-million jobs, good value job creation. This demand cannot be met by the existing workforce, so we need to invest in the one million young people not currently in education, employment or training. Apprenticeships should be an important factor in tackling social exclusion and equipping young people with the skills for life.

The economy has to move away from its over-reliance on financial services and increase output from areas such as manufacturing, industry and construction. This approach does not have to be bad for the environment. We need to push the green agenda. Homes are responsible for almost a third of the UK's carbon emissions. New build is a great opportunity to improve the energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable technologies. A large-scale programme of social house building will create job opportunities, environmental sustainability, generate jobs, reinvigorate the economy and, most of all, will diminish social inequality. These values have to be at the heart of the alternative vision for Britain. Thank you.

**Steve Warwick** (*UNISON*) seconded Motion 42.

He said: Congress, fixing the housing crisis highlighted in this motion requires a different set of values to those that the Coalition Government lives by. The guarantee that people on ordinary income can be provided with a decent, affordable home in a safe and mixed community will require policies that are rooted in the values of collectivism and social solidarity, values underpinned by the belief that the 'haves' have a duty to the 'have nots'. These are our values, the values of the trade union

Movement. These are the values that underpin the call in this motion for a massive increase in social house building.

We should, of course, acknowledge that many of us here today are housing 'haves', rather than housing 'have nots'. Trade union members can be home owners, be it in social housing or, unfortunately, exploited by the private-rented sector. Many in this hall and in our workplaces have seen the value of their homes increase in recent years. Many of you, regardless of all the other pressures on your income, will have been paying record low interest rates on your mortgages for a number of years, yet we all know that this is far from the complete picture.

As a report of an inquiry by *Housing Voice* will show later this week, increasing numbers of working people are desperate to find somewhere desperate to live. People are being forced to live in sheds and other outbuildings, with families living in just one room of a single council house converted into four private flats. People are sleeping on sofas and floors of friends and families. Of course, it is the young who are at the sharp end and those on the lowest incomes who have the least choice.

In UNISON a recent survey showed that nearly half of our members have grown-up children living with them because they cannot afford to move out. Young people who want to set up home and start families are increasingly parked in the private rented sector where conditions are worse, where tenancies are least secure and where rents are rising faster than the wages of many.

The underlying cause of this situation becomes clear every time Cameron, Clegg or a Coalition Housing minister gets up to respond to the dreadful house building figures with another ineffective initiative. They are simply not taking responsibility for the housing crisis and the continued failure to ensure that the supply of affordable homes keeps up with demand. They think that the votes of the housing ‘haves’ will outweigh those of the ‘have nots’. They believe that in pandering to the self-centred self-interest that they can get away with tinkering at the edges of the housing challenge. As the motion points out, we need a campaign for a massive building programme. We need to ensure that it is our values that win the day. Only then can we ensure that the homes that our people need are delivered. Thank you, Congress.

**Ann McLaren** (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 42.

She said: Congress, there are many areas where successive governments have failed to listen to the trade unions and the demands of society, but none have been more ignored and neglected than housing. The impact of the scarcity of housing for those on the ever-expanding waiting lists and the effects on the wider society, of education, the strain on over-crowded families and unemployment. Where social housing has been neglected, we are looking at ever-increasing unemployment within the building sector. Is it any wonder why there are so many young, unemployed people today who could already have benefited from apprenticeships, been trained in vital building skills and contributed to the economy. This is something that each and every young person should have the right to.

We have millions of people out *there* who this Tory Government call ‘scroungers and spongers’ living a life on benefits. Yet they ignore the opportunity to invest in a

major infrastructure right across the country by building social housing. It is clear that successive governments have failed, failed thousands of those who are currently employed, failed thousands of young school leavers looking for a career, failed the many families living in overcrowded housing and failed thousands waiting on the housing lists for basic accommodation. It is clear that this Tory-led Coalition is attacking the very principle of social housing by limiting the time someone is a tenant, throwing residents out of their homes if they improve their lot by getting a better job and pay, and evicting those who cannot afford the housing benefit cap, but encouraging more of their Tory-invented right-to-buy schemes.

We need a sustainable house building programme right across the country, not the paltry token of one or two homes within each local authority, and they are even thinking of getting rid of that. We are talking about building tens of thousands of homes, providing work for hundreds of thousands of unemployed skilled employees. We need low cost social housing that drives down the cost of high rents in the private sector. This is the way to cut local authority housing benefit. Social housing that is not sold off under the right-to-buy scheme properties is bought by greedy profiteers buy them and then rent them to desperate people who need to apply to the same local authority to pay the extortionate rents. Colleagues, to get this country out of its debt, we need to get the banks lending, people spending, more jobs and more investment in sustainable growth. Building thousands of social homes would be a start. Thank you.

**The President:** We will move immediately to the vote on Motion 42. The recommendation of the General Council is one of support.

\* *Motion 42 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** We now stay with Chapter 4 of the General Council Report: Economic and industrial affairs. We turn to the section on pensions from page 56. I will call paragraph 4.6 and Composite Motion 7. The General Council is supporting the composite and please note that BALPA has withdrawn its amendment.

### **Pensions**

**Kevin Courtney** (*National Union of Teachers*) moved Composite Motion 7.

He said: Congress, the NUT is proud to have been a founder member of the *68 is too late* campaign along with PCS and Unite. I am pleased to say that 13 other national unions have joined. I am hoping today that the TUC as a whole can throw its weight behind what we think is a very important campaign.

*68 is too late* is not just about public sector workers. On this Government's current plans anyone in any job, who is less than 36, will have to work to at least 68 to get their state pension. Many others, who are slightly older, will have to work until they are 67 to get their pension, and it doesn't stop there. It is at least 68 because the Government want a flexible link with longevity, with estimates that people currently in their 20s may have to work until they are 70, 71 or 72 to get their state pension. It doesn't work, Congress, and we have to fight it. It is not just about public sector workers. These changes affect workers on the line at Fords, people on the checkout at Tesco, drivers for Eddie Stobart, people who work as cleaners, building labourers and coal miners. Congress, these changes are not credible and they are so wrong.

These changes, which do not fit with the reality of the lives of working people, could only have been introduced by a Cabinet of millionaires. We know, don't we, that many of our people will simply not be able to work to those ages because of ill health, caring responsibilities or because the boss says that they are inefficient and sacks them before they get there. For those who do manage to work to those ages, it will mean the best years of their retirement lost. Their healthy years will be spent in work rather than playing with their grandchildren. A greater proportion of their retirement will be spent living with ill health, thereby losing the benefits of those longer ages. Congress, I say again that these changes could only have been put forward by a Cabinet of millionaires. They are so wrong and we have to stop them.

The Government say that we are living longer and if they don't increase the retirement age then pension costs will go up. They are right. But what happens is that they draw the wrong conclusion. They draw the millionaires' conclusion. Conference, some of us are living longer, although many of the people who we represent in this room are not, but there is a general increase in longevity, and that is because of the increased science and technology which is making our society, as a whole, so much richer. Congress, we can afford decent pensions. We can afford to celebrate the increase in longevity, but we do have to get our priorities right, and our priorities will not be the same as the millionaires' priorities. We need priorities for the 99%. It is not asking for the world, Congress. France has a pension age of 62. It has higher taxes on the rich and on companies to pay for it. Which is better: a Robin Hood tax to bring in £20 billion a year from the banks or working people till they drop?

On October 20<sup>th</sup> we need a huge demonstration to assert the priorities of the 99% and to say that *68 is too late*. However, Congress, *68 is too late* isn't just about the state ages. It is about the occupational schemes. Private companies like Tesco are increasing their occupational retirement age to match the new state ages. Public sector schemes are doing the same, so nurses, prison officers and police community support officers are all expected to work until they are 68, except that we know that many simply will not be able to. Teachers tell us that many of them will not be able to get to 68. Maybe if they were asked to work part-time with smaller classes, but working till 68 full-time with classes of 30 teenagers just does not work. That is why the NUT along with our sister unions – the NASUWT, EIS, UCU and ICAC – are still in dispute about teachers' pensions. It is a major reason why we and our sister union, the NASUWT, have launched our joint declaration to Defend Teachers: Protect Education. It is why we in the NUT believe that industrial action over pensions should not be over.

Congress, we know that unions have reached different places. This composite motion allows us a way to unite again. Let's all demand that *68 is too late*. Let's all demand that the Government retreats and lowers the state pension ages. We must fight to protect the state pension age and limit the age rises in the occupational schemes. Joining up with this campaign gives the TUC a chance to launch a campaign that chimes with the interests of the 99%. Let's make sure that October 20<sup>th</sup> is a huge demonstration of our determination to fight for working people. Congress, *68 is too late*. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Dave Penman** (*FDA, The union of choice for senior managers and professionals in public service*) seconded Composite Motion 7.

He said: Congress, 68 may be too late, but leaving the decision on future changes to the state pension age to the Government alone will inevitably mean that *69 will not be fine*, and we need to find a catchy rhyme for 70, which is beyond my skills.

Congress, increasing life expectancy for working people is a development that should be celebrated as a welcome by-product of a modern society with better living standards and a world-class health system. The result should be a longer, happier retirement at the end of an already long working life. The benefits of increased life expectancy should be supported by public policy as a positive development that enhances people's lives. Instead, we have an approach from the Government that seeks to set an almost fixed period of retirement that people are entitled to, constantly moving the state pension age to ensure that it is not extended. In the pensions negotiations that we have just emerged from, the Government fixed the position of the normal pension age for public sector schemes to be the state pension age, despite the evidence that many public servants were choosing to work longer to suit their change in lives, but the insistence on this link potentially over ensures the longevity risk in public sector schemes and could see costs start to fall.

In the civil service negotiations we pressed for a mechanism to ensure that if costs fell and the normal pension age was fixed, then this would result in increased benefits to scheme members, a mechanism now called "the cost floor", which has been adopted across the other public sector schemes. Taken together with the virtual abandonment of decent occupational pension provision in the private sector, the rise in the state



pension age has a major impact on the life patterns of the vast majority of the working population. The pressure on the Government is always going to be greatest from the Treasury, who see increased life expectancy as a cost rather than an opportunity to enhance citizens' lives.

There needs to be a counter balance. Left alone the Government will always cave in to this fiscal pressure and the only question on the state pension age will be how quickly and how far it rises. With such profound consequences, it is vital that a new approach for setting the state pension age is established.

Congress, the composite calls for the establishment of an independent commission, with representation from the union movement, to gather evidence in an open and transparent way and have statutory responsibility for setting the state pension age. There must be clear criteria, open public consultation and, crucially, an objective of sharing the proceeds of economic growth fairly between those of working age and those who have retired. There clearly is an economic impact of longer life spent in retirement but, as with other aspects of a modern society, decisions need to be taken which balance the benefits to that society with the costs. Without an independent commission, it is clear that the costs will always prevail. Thank you.

**Ms Joanna Brown** (*The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

She said: President and Congress, you now the figures already. By 2018 the state pension age for women will increase to 65. By 2020 the state pension age for both men and women will increase to 66, and by 2046 the state pension age will increase to

68, which means that anyone who is currently 35 or younger will have to work until they are 68 before they get their state pension. As we have already heard, the increase in the state pension age is being mirrored in occupational pension schemes. In the new NHS pension scheme the normal retirement age will move automatically if the state retirement age increases. As if all that wasn't enough, the Government have said that the pension age could be raised still further as the general longevity of the population increases.

The Society's fear is that babies born today will have to work until they are over 70 to draw a pension. So why does this matter? Of course, it matters because, although the population is living longer, that does not necessarily mean that we are living healthier. To quote a report by BUPA on *Health in the Workplace*: "The UK workplace of the future will be older and sicker, and the nature of illness will change, so more people will be living and working in ill-health."

Congress, around 17 million people in the UK have a long-term condition, such as diabetes or arthritis and the number is expected to increase over the next couple of decades. Nearly 40% of people with a long-term condition say it affects their work and 36% of people aged between 65 and 74 have what is deemed to be a "limiting long-standing illness". Congress, that is four million people. Of course, the longer people have to work, the more they will suffer from work-related ill-health because of the physical demands of their jobs. This is clearly a major concern for people involved in heavy manual work, but it affects other workers as well.

My own members, podiatrists, are prone to suffer from neck, back, shoulder and hand injuries the longer they work. It's bad for them and it's bad for their patients. In hospitals people over 65 are admitted to wards designated for the elderly. It is rather ironic to think that some of the NHS staff caring for them will be older than their elderly patients. This is not just about having a fit and health workforce; it is also about having a healthy retirement, which everyone deserves at the end of their working life. We can't stave off illness indefinitely, but we should all have a few years when we can enjoy our retirement in good health. How likely is this for people who can't retire until they are 68 or 70.

The Society believes that working longer means living less. We are calling on the TUC to reject the Government's message that working longer is inevitable. Support the campaign and the composite.

**Alice Robinson** (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported Composite Motion 7.

She said: The impact of the changes in the State pension age to public and private sector employees is significant. Their work-related pensions are now linked directly to the State pension age. The age of 68 was one decided upon by the Government to help it achieve its mantra of cutting the deficit. I need to remind everyone in this hall that the deficit was not the making of the ordinary working men and women of this country, but was caused by the greed of the bankers, who this Government still refuse to regulate.

The retirement age of 68 is based on actuarial figures used as a basis by those making the decisions about what they think the country can afford. It is not based on the physical or mental factors that might be involved in their work. This resolution calls for an independent commission to be established, including the trade unions, to have the statutory responsibility for determining the State pension age and early retirement age based on clear criteria, including occupational effects.

As a teacher of history, one of the most important considerations that students are encouraged to make before arriving at any judgment is to consider the evidence base on which the decisions are made. So did the Government consider any of the following factors in determining the State pension age? There are the physical demands in carrying out the task that many public and private sector employees find they have to do as part of their jobs. Will the wellbeing and safety of clients, patients and students dealt with by our members be taken into consideration? There are the mental demands and pressures of tasks performed where split second decisions needs to be made. There is the impact of shift working. The older you are, the greater the risk of health-related issues after prolonged shift working during somebody's working life. There is also the impact on workers with disabilities who might be unable to work until the age of 68.

One of the travesties of this is that the Government's own equality impact assessment on women says, "Some aspects of the changes will impact on women more than men." The second one on disabilities said, "The evidence indicates that these proposals to increase the State pension age are likely to have a stronger impact on disabled people than on non-disabled people. However, we consider it is justifiable

in the wider context of the need to ensure that the State pension system is both affordable in the long term and provides a decent income.” I ask you to support the motion. (*Applause*)

**Chris Murphy** (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) supported Composite Motion 7.

He said: As we all know, the Government’s attack on public sector pensions is yet another attack on the working class. It does not just apply to the public sector, but also to the private sector. The rise in the State pension age will affect our members in UCATT and the manual workers in engineering who undertake heavy lifting in all sorts of weather. It will affect them more than workers based in offices where it is heated in the winter and air-conditioned in the summer.

The point that concerns us is that age *68 is too late* and we want it to be 60. We have signed up recently to the *68 is too late campaign*. I am proud that my union, UCATT, did that. Our members, on average, retire at 63. If you look around, you do not see many old bricklayers, ceiling fixers or floor layers still doing the job. That is because their backs have gone, their arm joints have gone and their knees are completely knackered. Therefore, with an increase in the retirement age, the fear of my trade union, as has been mentioned by others, is that it will increase the deaths in the construction industry. This is because workers are forced to work longer and the older they get, the slower they get.

Secondly, it is just another way of saving money by getting workers to work longer, but how many workers are going to reach the age of 68 to receive their pension? Do

not say they are living longer. I have heard this and I accept it. I am still here and I ought to be dead! The facts of life are that we are going to have cuts in the health service if we do not have them already. I ask Congress to support this motion and for all unions to join together. We have to stick together or else they will take us apart. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**Paul Warren** *(Community)* supported Composite Motion 7.

He said: I have heard some passionate speakers against the increase in the State pension age. We share those concerns, but we are also concerned about the increasing retirement ages in occupational pensions.

We believe there is a massive problem for shift workers in particular. There is mounting evidence that shift workers are 40% more likely to suffer a heart attack. They are also disproportionately likely to suffer from depression, sleep disorders and family breakdown. It is scandalous that the Tory-led Government is already fast-tracking the retirement age. For too many shift workers, the change is likely to mean that they will have no retirement before they can access their State pension and they may never access it at all.

Congress, this cannot be right. Retirement ages must take into account the impact of a person's line of work in longevity. This is an issue which spans the public sector and the private sector, from the steelworkers doing the coal shovelling shifts into the furnaces on Teeside to the nurses in our hospitals. We believe that this issue is too open to political interference. George Osborne wants us all to work until we drop. As shift workers, we are likely to drop quicker than others.

That is why we are supporting this composite and calling for an independent commission to look at all retirement ages. We want it to consider all the evidence of the impact of occupational effects of shift-working on longevity. We want dignity in retirement and we also want to have the opportunity of retirement before it is too late. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**Angela Aboagye** (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

She said: I am a first-time speaker and this is my first time at the TUC. (*Applause*)

This composite brings together the concerns of union members working in both the public and private sectors. I would like to focus here on the private occupational pensions industry. They have been seriously discredited in recent years with stories of lower returns, misselling and overcharging, which are leading workers to turn their backs on making crucial investments to help avoid a retirement living in poverty and hardship.

It is not surprising that most people struggle to understand how pension schemes work. Just last month, Pensions Minister, Steve Webb, said, “Current arrangements would baffle even Einstein” so what hope is there for ordinary mortals like us to understand the complexities of private sector schemes and make well-informed choices about where to invest for our retirement? Savers are often in the dark about how much they pay for their pensions. The reality is that some pension providers here are charging double the fees levied in countries like Holland and Denmark. In

other words, workers in this country are being denied the simple low-cost pensions that seem to be readily available in Europe and other countries.

These concerns are more relevant now than ever with the impending move to auto-enrolment to pension schemes which kick-starts next month. We cannot afford a progressive step to turn into yet another opportunity for the pensions industry to rip off hardworking people. We call on the Government to ensure that all pension providers supply their customers with simple statements setting out clearly, in pounds and pence, what they are losing in charges.

We call on the Government to ensure that schemes linked to auto-enrolment are high-quality and that workers are protected from excess transfer fees and other charges.

Pledges and codes drawn up by the pensions industry itself is not enough. Only State regulation and enforcement can properly protect our workers. How can it be right in a country as wealthy as the UK that many workers are forced to retire when they will struggle to pay for the basic necessities of life? Please support this motion.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** Brilliantly presented and perfectly on time. Thank you very much. Congress, I am sorry, but I am not going to be able to get everybody in so I am going to call two other speakers, the NUJ and Unison.

**Anita Halpin** (*National Union of Journalists*) supported Composite Motion 7.

She said: I am 68 years of age, but I am speaking here on behalf of my son and my grandchildren as I think it is extremely important to have a joined-up economic



strategy. In Composite 5, quite rightly, this Congress urged the General Council to continue its excellent campaign against government cuts and with renewed fervour to make the case for an investment and growth-based economic policy that emphasises jobs.

I have a concern that the only economic considerations which are going to be taken into account with this independent commission, albeit with trade unionists on board, in order to spread the proceeds of economic growth fairly amongst those of working age and retired individuals (whenever that happens), are both the misery and deprivation of young people who have not had a job, ignoring the potential of putting one million people back into work and what that would do to boost up the economy. Basically, the economy will only be boosted when we all have fair pensions, young people are in work and we actually want to go out and spend money because we can, therefore creating demand and more jobs.

My brief intervention is to urge the General Council to make sure we have a joined-up economic strategy. This is bearing on last year's composite motion that we passed on an alternative economic strategy. You do not have a future without an economic strategy that works, with fair taxation to pay for pensions and to create jobs. While we commend the motion to you, we ask you to see it in that wider context in order to make a future that works. Thank you for your time. (*Applause*)

**Mike Hayes** (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Composite 7.

Congress, we must not underestimate the achievement of the TUC and its member unions in both blunting and turning the recent Government attack on public sector

pensions. As a result of member action, the public sector continues to retain good, defined benefit schemes, which remain open for new members to join, and which should be a beacon of hope for the millions in the private sector with little or no pension provision.

Congress, it is essential that we maintain our pensions campaign and progress from where we are now to defend good schemes. Take with a pinch of salt the Government's pledge not to change public sector pension schemes for another 25 years. Their plans to have a single flat rate State pension will increase both employer and employee contributions and will inevitably lead to renewed pressure to change pension schemes further.

Congress, Unison continues to oppose an increase in the retirement age, especially if this is not linked to the actual longevity experience of the pension schemes. The reality is that if longevity increases then the cost of schemes will change too. If longevity improves then members must continue to have a role in determining what, and how, changes are to be made.

However, a pension scheme must be there when you need it. It is no good the Government saying that we must work longer if the jobs are just not there for us. Successive governments have watched as pension provision has declined in the UK. An ever-decreasing minority of workers in the private sector remain in pension schemes which are frankly not fit for purpose. Defined contribution schemes do not work as employers pay derisory contributions into them.

Congress, we must reinvigorate our policy that the minimum employer contribution to a pension arrangement must be a minimum of 10% as soon as possible and not the inadequate 3% proposed by 2017. It must be recognised that the Government and employers must pay more and not just the employees. Finally, the TUC must do all it can to keep members engaged on pensions. The message must be that, with our members behind us, we can defend and also improve our pension provision. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks to the brevity of the last two speakers, I am going to squeeze in the RMT.

**Sean Hoyle** (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) supported Composite Motion 7.

He said: I am going to make some points and talk about what I believe is the contradiction that is going on here. Auto-enrolment sounds like a positive thing, but when you look at it, it is set at such a low level that it will not achieve an adequate pension for anybody. What will happen is that people who are auto-enrolled will end up on welfare and benefits and the meagre auto-enrol pension that they receive will be taken off at the other end. That is all that is going to happen and it is insincere.

Quantitative easing has created the problem that government bonds have rocketed in price and the interest from that is how they value our pensions. Therefore, that programme has created mass deficits which are artificially induced and you can question whether they are really there. The Government is using those deficit figures to attack all of us. They are saying that the holes are there, they cannot fill them and

they are unaffordable. I have looked at the figures and there has been £325 billion in quantitative easing since 2008, which is predicted to rise to £500 billion. Of course, all the time they are buying government bonds and, as a percentage, the yield or the interest will keep going down. They use that to measure how much money we have in the pension fund against the yield on a government bond. That is telling us that we have a problem.

At some point in the future, the £500 billion worth of gilts will be returned to the market. When that happens, the price will be suppressed. When that happens, the yields will rocket. When that happens, there will not be a problem any more.

However, the Government are opportunists. They will cut our pensions before that and make us work longer. The attack on us will come well before that. When that day comes, there will be surpluses, but we will not get them back. The same people who are cutting our pensions now, making us pay more and work longer will be taking pension holidays again, as in previous years. Put simply, pensions are deferred wages. That is all they are. They are our deferred wages. Keep your grubby hands off! Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Can I move to the vote on Composite Motion 7. The General Council are recommending support.

\* *Composite Motion 7 was CARRIED*

**The President:** We now turn to Chapter 9 of the General Council Report, Campaigns and Communications, from page 133. I am calling paragraphs 9.1 through to 9.6. That completes Chapter 9 of the General Council Report.

Congress, we now return to Chapter 10 of the General Council Report, TUC Organisation, from page 141. I am going to call the paragraphs one by one: paragraph 10.1, paragraph 10.2, paragraph 10.5, paragraph 10.6, paragraph 10.7, paragraph 10.8, paragraph 10.9 and paragraph 10.10. That completes Chapter 10 of the General Council Report.

I now intend to take the business lost from yesterday morning and afternoon sessions. We therefore turn to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report, the Economic and Industrial Affairs section of Education from page 77, paragraph 4.15, starting with Composite Motion 14, Education for all. The General Council will be supporting the composite motion.

### **Education for all**

**Chris Keates** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' Union*) moved Composite Motion 14.

She said: This is a time of unprecedented attacks on education and other public services, on teachers and other public sector workers, on children and young people and on ordinary families and working people. In the middle of the worst economic downturn in the last 60 years, the social and economic prospects of our society depend on the work of teachers, lecturers and support staff in schools and colleges. Our prospects depend on a State education service which supports all learners to

make the most of their skills, talents and potential and strives to transform the life chances of all children and young people.

The Government's education, social and economic policies are stifling rather than supporting the aspiration and entitlement of working-class children and young people.

Let us look at this Government's record. In just over two years, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of children plunged into poverty. Contempt for the plight of children and young people is writ large across all aspects of education policy as fundamental entitlements such as the right to be taught by a qualified teacher, financial support for continuing in education and access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all learners, particularly the most vulnerable, are swept aside.

Schools are forced to focus on a limited set of subjects to score points in league tables rather than to cater for the needs of pupils. Design and technology, RE, ICT, music, art, drama, dance and social science, popular choices among students, are being dropped by schools as the world of the 1950s grammar school is recreated. The fundamental principle of a public service free at the point of use has been contaminated by the provisions in the recent Education Act which allow schools to levy a charge for subjects that were previously free, to introduce school uniforms costing hundreds of pounds, to charge exorbitant prices for school meals and to make a profit on taxpayers' money. The selection of pupils and parents on the basis of ability to pay is now a reality.

We can add to all of this young people from ordinary working families being denied the opportunity for their hard work to be properly recognised and rewarded; the lost opportunity to access further and higher education; the lost opportunity of a job or apprenticeship meaning a lost generation of young people; the removal of grants to support ethnic minority achievements; the re-definition of special needs which will leave some pupils no longer able to access specialist support; the review of child employment laws for school-age children to allow them to work longer before and after school; the scrapping of planning laws to enable schools to be set up in disused office blocks and abandoned factories; the introduction of free schools which drain funding and pupils from existing schools and segregate our communities; and military academies set up in deprived areas run by ex-servicemen, which amount to nothing more than national service for the poor.

These are not the building blocks of an education system fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These are regressive, elitist education policies designed to set up a quasi-independent sector funded by the State. These are policies to allow privateers and profiteers to turn a fast buck at the expense of our children and young people and, when the contract is no longer lucrative, to walk away.

Teachers, lecturers and their unions will not stand by and let this Government destroy State education. Later this month, NASUWT and NUT members will be taking escalated industrial action to protect the professional working conditions, pay, pensions and jobs needed to deliver a world-class education for every pupil in the country. Our State education system is too precious to allow it to be wrecked by Government ministers driven by ideology and determined to recreate what they

consider was a golden age when working people knew their place, when death and injury at work were considered merely an occupational hazard and when education was for the few and not for all. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**Hank Roberts** (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) seconded Composite Motion 14.

He said: Congress, if academies are such a good idea, why has Michael Gove had to resort to blackmail and bribery to get them? As schools resist, Gove resorts to compulsion. Where is parent power or parent choice?

The real agenda is ever clearer. It is not just giving people like hedge fund managers the ability to peddle their ideology through the control of schools and the curriculum, but to enable them and others to make a direct profit out of running them. The first has arrived, the Breckland Free School, run by a private, profit-making Swedish company, and more will be coming.

ATL says that it is time for all right-thinking people to say “No” to schools for profit. If you object to our health service being run for profit, why do you not object equally strongly to our schools being run in this way? With privatisation comes a loss of accountability. The Audit Commission says that of all public expenditure, education is the least scrutinised and controlled. In the light of Brent Council originally giving the finances of my school, Copland, a clean bill of health after the management allegedly misappropriated £2.7 million, we demanded that the procedures be improved. Brent, to its credit, did precisely that. That is why the council uncovered four more cases and it is not because there is something special in the air in Brent. A



middle tier of governance is absolutely essential, both from a democratic and accountability point of view.

I am not saying that the management of all State schools are corrupt. The large majority are hardworking and honest. Copland was a foundation school, one step removed from the local authority. The further schools move away from local authority oversight, like academies and free schools which are totally independent, the greater the opportunities for wrongdoing. If you multiply the opportunities for wrongdoing, you will get more wrongdoing.

In my view, the abuse and downright theft of taxpayers' money is much more widespread than anyone suspects. It will amount to millions upon millions of public money. I call upon Michael Gove to abandon his plans for every academy and free school to be financially autonomous and overseen by him. I further call upon the Government to fundamentally strengthen its auditing and oversight procedures and to set up an independent inquiry as to how this should best be done.

Michael, what with your call for a return to "O" levels, suggesting your friend, Rupert Murdoch, is given one of our schools, that academies should not have to meet minimum nutritional standards, selling off playing fields, the GCSE marking fiasco and the free school that closed before it even opened, I think you are in danger of becoming education's Mr. Bean. May I perhaps suggest a career change? What about stand-up comedy? I second.

**Annie McCrae** (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) supported Composite Motion 14.

She said: I am actually going to focus on a particular part of the composite and that is to do with the blight of poverty and its impact on learning. I know we passed Motion 40 this morning on child poverty so the issue has already been raised. We all recognise that in Britain, in 2012, it is more obvious than ever that the impact of poverty creates huge barriers to effective learning. They are barriers from birth, they are barriers to effective pre-school learning, they are barriers for kids getting the most out of school, they are barriers to access to further education and higher education, and they are barriers to community and adult learning. It is not just about the effect of child poverty on learning.

This morning, Mary Bousted cited evidence from a Sheffield University study which I had not heard about before and which I found fascinating. That evidence shows the effect of persistent poverty on cognitive development in children. In Scotland, Dr. Harry Burns, who is the Chief Medical Officer, has recently talked about studies in which he has been involved, which show that poverty-induced stress on pregnant women can have an impact on the unborn child and on its subsequent ability to learn. That is absolutely shocking.

As a teacher, I cannot magic that away. I cannot make that suddenly not happen. That is obviously part of a bigger and more sustained struggle in which we, as a trade union Movement, have to be involved in order to banish poverty for ever. However — and here is the important bit — with appropriate resources, we can reduce those barriers. Obviously, those are the very sorts of things that will tighten our purse strings in local authorities, the very things they start to cut. We can provide things like breakfast clubs and free school meals. Obviously, well-nourished children are

better learners. We can provide things like homework clubs which provide quiet and supportive space with access to books and computers. Composite Motion 14 shows that we seek to provide some kind of structure for a campaign to provide these kinds of additional resources which can tackle education inequalities that are linked to poverty. Please support. (*Applause*)

**Jonathan Sedgebeer** (*Unison*) supported Composite Motion 14.

He said: Previous contributions from our sister unions have eloquently set out the case for a complete transformation of current education policy so I will not repeat those arguments. I am sure there will be no objection in this hall to the sentiments contained within the composite.

From the point of view of an activist working in local authority education, the hurdles of the current policy faced by our children are there for all to see. The careers service is wrecked. Special support services are slashed. Local authority nurseries are under threat. Academies and free schools are being set up at a rate of knots. Nutritional standards are slashed. Abolition of the EMA and the rationing of grades, as we see today in the news, are there for everyone to see. If you get over all these hurdles, massive fees and lifelong debt from university is what you have to face. As the composite states, Gove wants to take us back to the 1950s, reflecting his own twisted boyhood ideology.

Congress, in Unison, we are particularly pleased to see educational support staff commended for their continuing commitment alongside our teaching colleagues. Let me remind you that Unison, the largest education union, is made up of hundreds of

thousands of women workers delivering learning, transforming lives and supporting teachers. These are the cleaners, the cooks, the teaching assistants, the technicians and the admin staff. The majority are women who are on term-time contracts or they are part-time workers who are therefore are low-paid.

These staff members literally give hundreds of free hours of goodwill every week to keep our schools and colleges going. They believe in the public service ethos and dedication to young people. Despite what we heard from Ed Balls yesterday, they need a pay rise now and they need a living wage. *(Applause)*

In order to bring about the aims of this composite, we need not only to get rid of Gove and the Government, but we also need the incoming Labour government to hear our message. Working with our sister unions, we must get Labour to draw a thick line under its own past. New Labour laid the foundations for this offensive marketisation of education with the PFI and academies programmes. We need a new agenda. We need to reveal the truth behind the pupil premium — there is no premium. We need to reject the dismantling of our public services. We need the TUC to champion public ownership with education reform at its core. We need the cuts in education reversed. We need investment in all our young people to tackle their poverty, as eloquently explained in Motion 40. We need investment in education staff. That is the new agenda. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

**The President:** I am going to move now to the vote on Composite Motion 14. The General Council are recommending support.

\* *Composite Motion 14 was CARRIED*

## **Music hubs**

**The President:** I now move to Motion 63, Music hubs. The General Council support the motion.

**Kathy Dyson** (*Musicians' Union*) moved Motion 63.

She said: There are now 122 music education hubs across the country and most comprise former local authority music services and staff. They were formed earlier this year in response to Darren Henley's paper on music education and their aim, broadly, is to provide extra provision for music education in school through a range of partnerships with local music organisations. So far, so good. The MU supports the Government's pledge to give every child the opportunity to learn a musical instrument through the hubs, but questions whether cutting funding for music education by 25% and encouraging whole class instrumental teaching to save money is the right way to go about it.

At the same time as Government cuts, local authorities are also withdrawing funding from the new hubs and there are many inconsistencies around the country with some hubs facing greater cuts than others. It is the national and local funding cuts that are having such an impact on teachers previously employed on proper contracts by local authorities. The pressure is on the new music hub organisations to cut costs and many have cut the pay and conditions of existing staff in order to work to a budget

that is actually impossible to achieve. They are expected to do much more with far less money.

Losing hard-won employment protection destabilises the profession, causing experienced and dedicated teachers to drain away or retire and making it harder for younger musicians and teachers to forge a viable and sustainable career over the long haul. For example, in one hub, all experienced, well-qualified and older staff had their threshold payments removed — these are given for excellence in teaching — using the erroneous argument that now the hub is no longer funded by a local authority, they are no longer entitled to those payments. This represents a pay cut of £6,000. A steady stream of hubs have made their staff redundant, many of whom are highly-qualified, and then offered them work on sessional or zero hour contracts. As a result, they lose all employment and pension rights whilst many managers still retain teachers' pay and conditions.

Some hubs are now acting purely as agencies, charging high rates for instrumental teachers to schools whilst paying low rates to the teachers themselves. That well-known music education company, Serco, is running one music hub and is now charging self-employed teachers £50.00 a term to work locally. Musicians are already well aware of “pay to play” gigs and now it is likely to be “pay to teach”. These types of hubs are also trying to impose draconian conditions on staff not to work for other hubs or to take on students privately.

In this situation, many schools are sidelining the agencies and negotiating directly with teachers, sometimes paying them more while still saving money overall. The

implications for the survival of the hubs over the next few years is therefore in doubt and without local and regional organisations for specialist music education, there will be neither equality of provision nor coherence of policy and there will be a free-for-all.

As always, the Tory neo-liberal agenda, driven by a totally irrational belief in the efficiency of market forces, has had no impact on making music services more effective or in providing better quality provision. On the contrary, the opposite is true. The Arts Council, who are now administering the hubs, have no music educational background or expertise and are therefore unlikely to be able to monitor them in a meaningful way.

There is a mass of scientific evidence and our own experience tells us that children and young people benefit hugely in many ways from learning and playing musical instruments with all the social and educational activities and benefits that flow from that. There is also a compelling argument that all specialist music provision should be free. We do not charge children to learn maths or English and we do not expect them to pay for the costs of their gym equipment so why music?

The current Government policy of privatisation is again undermining the likelihood of equality of musical provision for all our children whatever their background and geographical location. Despite this, musical instrument teachers remain committed and fight hard to provide a dedicated and comprehensive service. It takes a long time and a lot of hard work to learn to play musical instruments and longer still to study to be a teacher.

The MU has been at the forefront of working with instrumental teachers and the new music hubs. We are watching the situation closely and we are introducing hub reps across England in order to hold the hub managements to account. The MU also wants to negotiate standardised pay and conditions for teachers within the hubs in order to preserve the current high levels of musical education. We have produced a leaflet for teachers and are running events across the UK. Please support this motion.

*(Applause)*

**Judy Moorhouse** (*National Union of Teachers*) seconded Motion 63.

She said: Before every session of Congress, we have been privileged to hear wonderful music played by wonderful young people, those same young people who are so frequently traduced and defamed by those who should know better.

This week, Congress has had the opportunity to enjoy a woodwind ensemble, a jazz group, a string quarter and the amazing plastic youth orchestra this morning. Music for Youth can justifiably be proud of these young people, as are we in the National Union of Teachers as we sponsor Music for Youth. For those of you who have not yet managed it, try to attend the school proms held in the Albert Hall every year.

There, you will see an awe-inspiring array of talent, both vocal and instrumental, from rock to classical and bangla bands to harpsichords. The world of music is there.

All of these young people are representative of the thousands of pupils in our schools who love music and are brilliant at it. The extraordinary musical talents of thousands of young people have been nurtured and developed by teachers of music in schools



and professional specialist musicians from outside of schools. These services were once provided by local authorities, but are now to come increasingly through music hubs. You have already heard Kathy speak on the background to music hubs and their implications. You already know that the Government itself has stated through Darren Henley's review that music is important to young people. Why then does this same Government seem hell bent on destroying access to instrumental and vocal tuition for all but those who can afford to pay? It could be that the law of unintended consequences is at play or, alternatively, it is part of the price that young people are expected to pay for the mistakes of others.

If our children and young people are to develop their musical talents and if schools are to continue to provide high-quality musical educational performances, then young people and their music teachers will need the continued support, advice and expertise of specialist musicians. Without that support, we will see the opportunities for wider engagement in performance continuing to be undermined.

I am immensely proud that through its partnership with the Musicians' Union, the NUT is working hard to challenge this attack on a vital service, but we cannot do this alone. Congress, we need your support. To conclude, if music be the food of love, play on. Give me excess of it. Do not put our young people on a starvation diet.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** I am going to move to the vote on Motion 63. The General Council is recommending support for the motion.

\* *Motion 63 was CARRIED*

**For profit, post-16 education**

**The President:** We move to Motion 64. The General Council is also recommending support. It will be moved by the UCU and seconded by the GMB. I will only have time to call one other speaker so I will call Unite.

**Sally Hunt** (*University and College Union*) moved Motion 64.

She said: Congress, the US Senate Education Committee published a report last month that should be compulsory reading for every minister in this Government. The investigation was into the US for profit degree industry. It found that companies there spend more on marketing and recruiting than they do on teaching their students. It was found that billions of dollars of taxpayers' money has been squandered and that companies have prioritised shareholder profit over their students.

In America, the profit companies have swallowed billions of dollars of public funds in return for derisory graduation rates, crushing levels of debt and degrees, frankly, of dubious value. 80% of students from for profit colleges have failed to complete a four-year course and one in five of those students who do finish have defaulted on their publicly-funded loans within three years.

US private companies recruit just 10% of their students, but they consume 25% of government-backed loans. Things have become so bad that one company is now being sued for over \$11 billion — and that is for fraud — by the US Government.

The senator leading the investigation had one simple reason for this. He blamed the problems on years and years of deregulation by successive administrations.

You would hope, would you not, that ministers here might learn the lesson and you would hope that they would be rather more careful with public finances. Sadly, that is not the case. The private companies currently circling our higher education sector and their powerful backers in the Anglo-US finance sector have had multiple meetings with ministers in the run-up to the proposed Higher Education White Paper. Whilst our efforts — and they have been strong and supported by our members — have stopped that White Paper coming in to the Queen's speech, it would be utterly naïve of us not to expect that the Government will attempt to grant their friends better access to our taxpayers' money and to try and do it through the backdoor.

If we are to avoid a repeat of the US for profit scandal in this country, the following must happen. Public funds and subsidies must only be granted to institutions with a primary obligation to education and not those to profit. The Government must ensure that for profit companies are subjected to tougher, not weaker, quality checks and assessments than our public institutions. Students in those places have to have full protection against those institutions going bust.

Brendan made clear yesterday that private certainly does not always mean better. As well as the Olympic security failings for G4S, the likes of A4e and ALS have not just embarrassed the ideologues within government, but have stolen public money for poor return for this country and that must not be allowed to happen in our education sector.

We need from this Congress to send a very clear message to the Government and to every vulture circling all aspects of our education in this country that our students and our children are not for sale. As our members face pay cuts, job cuts and insecurity in their workplace, they face a government which is deriding education, making it more difficult for students to learn and willing to export and remove students who have done nothing wrong other than come to learn in this country. As a Congress, we have to stand full square and say that education is not for sale. It is a right, not a privilege.

Congress, UCU will fight this every step of the way, but we will need your support so, in moving Motion 64, I hope that we can count on that. We hope to see you when we are out there campaigning on behalf of our students and our children because that is how we will keep our education safe. I move. (*Applause*)

**Sharon Harding** (*GMB*) seconded Motion 64.

She said: GMB members in colleges and university are rightly worried about the increasing private equity interest in their places of study. As a general union, the GMB has witnessed the effects of private equity in many parts of the economy in companies like the AA, Boots, in the publishing industry and in public services such as social care where Southern Cross was asset-stripped and then collapsed. Indeed, many other social care providers continue to struggle under the weight of private equity and debt. We know from experience that private equity is bad for business, bad for employees and bad for people who rely on these services. We know that the private equity elite are making millions by stripping assets and slashing jobs.

Independent research confirms that our members know this only too well. A recent study of private equity takeovers in the UK found a significant decrease in employment after firms were taken over by private equity. The report's further analysis said there were failures to identify any parallel and significant increase in the firms' productivity and profitability.

Privatisation in further and higher education is not about increasing efficiency. It is about exploiting the workplace, stripping assets and capturing public money, money which ought to be spent on education and training young people as well as adult learners. For these reasons, private equity can have no place in our colleges, universities or public services. Too many governments, past and present, have opened the doors to these profiteers. We need to campaign to keep them out. Please help protect our further and higher education from financial exploitation. Please support this motion. I second. (*Applause*)

**Tamsin Piper** (*Unite the Union*) supported Motion 64.

He said: I am pleased that the UCU referred to the College of Law in the motion. A couple of years ago, Unite won a hard-fought battle for recognition there for members. I cannot imagine how much longer and harder the fight would have been if we were doing it now. It is owned by Montagu, a private equity firm. We would still do it, but we know it would be much tougher.

The private equity firms who want to come in are not going to pay university staff the same as they have now. They are not going to give the same conditions. That competition will give universities the chance to drive down the terms and conditions

of existing staff in the public sector. We have to fight that. At the moment, the College of Law is an anomaly. While it still is, support this motion, oppose the culture capitalists and let UCU resurrect that old AUT slogan: “Rectify the anomaly.” Congress, I support. *(Applause)*

**The President:** I am going to move to the vote on Motion 64. The General Council is recommending support.

\* *Motion 64 was CARRIED*

**The President:** We move now to Composite Motion 15, Valuing further education. The General Council support the composite motion.

### **Valuing further education**

**Kathy Taylor** (*University and College Union*) moved Composite Motion 15.

She said: Congress, ever since this Government came into power, they have bombarded us with a constant stream of mealy-mouthed statements about the importance of social mobility. Nick Clegg has said that he wants a more open society where people can choose their place so why then is his Government making it so much harder for people to access the very education and training that would enable them to do just that?

In further education, we are facing a relentless and incessant onslaught of attacks despite our acknowledged track record of helping people from all backgrounds to

progress in life. First, the Coalition Government announced that it would be cutting the further education budget by a massive 25% by 2014. Then Mr. Gove, without even bothering, incidentally, to visit a further education college axed the educational maintenance allowance, taking £390 million in grants away from the poorer students in some of our most disadvantaged communities.

Now, the Government's next target is the older learners and to make it harder for them to access education and training. From next year, anyone over the age of 24 wanting to study "A" level equivalent qualifications and above will be forced to take out loans, just like in higher education, to pay for the full cost of their tuition, another regressive move that will result in thousands of people being priced out of education.

This would be a disaster for a sector already reeling from huge spending cuts and would lead to yet further course closures and further redundancies in our sector. In higher education, applications have slumped by nearly 40,000 following the introduction of those fees and the withdrawal of the EMA so that over two-thirds of colleges have reported a drop in enrolments amongst 16-18 year olds.

We cannot afford a repeat of this among over 24s, not least because as the Government makes education harder to access, the skills gap in this country will continue to increase. The benefit of having more people in further education is huge. Those with further education qualifications generate around £75 billion for the economy over the course of their lifetimes. For every pound spent on apprenticeships, the Government gets £40.00 back. Even by this Government's

narrow monetary standards, that is an amazing return which highlights the enormous value that the nation gets from the further education sector.

Further education is a vital gateway to higher education, training and employment that fulfils individuals, promotes social mobility and drives economic growth. By removing funding and access for young people and for adults needing a second chance, this Government is condemning a generation to unemployment and benefit dependency.

The downgrading of the role of the minister with responsibility for further education in last week's reshuffle of the ministerial "B" team is another backward step. If Nick Clegg is serious about opening up society then he must stop the Coalition Government from closing off education opportunities. What we need is a real champion for further education, speaking upon the sector's behalf at the highest level in government.

As fees rocket, college grants are axed and young adults are forced to take out huge loans if they wish to return to education, it is really difficult not to conclude that the greatest threat to social mobility is this Government's right wing ideology and its own punitive policies. Fierce campaigning by UCU, our sister union, and the National Union of Students has forced the Government to make some concessions, but they are nowhere near enough. We are determined — and we know that we can count on your support — to continue our campaign against the introduction of further education loans and for the restoration of full public funding for college students of all ages.



Only through increased public investment can we promote access to education, stimulate economic growth and achieve genuine social mobility. (*Applause*)

**Alan Munro** (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) seconded Composite Motion 15.

He said: Congress, as many of you will doubtless be aware, we do not elect many Tories in Scotland, which I think is very much to our credit. (*Applause*) In fact, at the present time, we only have one UK MP in Scotland. However, sadly, we do suffer from the impact of the Coalition Government's austerity programme, a programme that we all recognise is not working.

Unfortunately, also not working are a growing number of our young people, 86,000 in Scotland alone and one in five across the UK. Young people between the ages of 16-24 are being miserably failed by the governments in Westminster and indeed in Edinburgh. We have the spectre of mass youth unemployment, a stark and depressing throwback to the plight of the youth in the 1980s under Mrs. Thatcher. What this means, in effect, is that young people, having their aspirations crushed, their pathways forward blocked and their life chances stymied, are apparently to be the victims of the economic chaos and crisis. Congress, we must reject this scenario and use the strength and influence of our Movement to offer them the protection they deserve.

For many young people, FE is truly a lifeline. The funding cuts, whether from the UK or Scottish governments, are cuts which threaten that lifeline. They are totally unacceptable and must be opposed. On Monday, the OECD published a major report entitled "Education at a glance". One of its findings in relation to further education is

to underline the fact that the impact of the cuts falls disproportionately on those from poorer backgrounds — no surprise there. In other words, those in most need are being hit the hardest. This, of course, is unacceptable for our fellow young citizens.

The EIS being Scotland's largest teaching union by far, organising, as we do, in every education sector, we can, and we do, work productively on many fronts with the Scottish Government. We are, for example, hoping to establish a long overdue return to national collective bargaining in FE in Scotland in the not too distant future. However, Congress, we are asking for your help in relation to the SNP's current and proposed cuts in the FE sector.

FE in Scotland faces a 19% cut in cash terms over five years. That is £130 million, a 36% real terms cut when inflation is taken into account. These cuts are clearly misguided and ill-timed, taking place at a time when we need investment and expansion in FE and not contraction. Let us oppose these cuts and communicate that opposition clearly and forcibly to the Scottish Government. Support the composite.

*(Applause)*

**Naimh Sweeney** (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported Composite Motion 15.

She said: Why should we value FE? Why should we support a joint union campaign? With ten years' experience working in further education, I wanted to share with you my reasons for valuing it and why I believe the joint union campaign calling for a halt on attacks to the sector is in itself invaluable to the recovery of the economy.

I value each and every student who has ever, or will ever, enrol on an FE course. They often arrive after difficult school experiences, after time away from formal education or having taken an early career choice because they passionately want to work in a particular area or occupation. They battle against social inequalities. At 16 and in 2012, they are often the first in their family to remain in post-compulsory education. They battle against the stereotypes in the media by not being a traditional “A” level student. They battle against the continuous demonisation of young people.

Successive governments have continuously belittled and undermined their chosen qualifications and training routes into occupations. I value FE because it educates and trains thousands of students each year in health and social care. If I am going to be working until I am 68, we are going to need those. However, it is not just me. If I were a racehorse owner in Newmarket, I would value my local FE college, which provides courses in equine management and animal welfare from NVQ Levels 1-5. If I owned an airline based in Luton or Crawley, surely I would value my local FE college, which provides an extended diploma in travel and tourism or aircraft maintenance.

FE is valued by me and thousands of fellow teachers, lecturers and support staff in the sector, but successive governments and education departments appear to have no idea what it is or what it does. It does, and should, play a vital role in the recovery of our economy. Any cut in the funding of education is a cut on knowledge and aspiration. We need to value FE for the reasons I have outlined and I urge you to support the joint union campaign. (*Applause*)

**Sue Johnson** (*Society of Radiographers*) supported Composite Motion 15, with particular focus on section “b” of the SOR amendment.

She said: I am privileged to have worked in the NHS for the last 25 years in a profession that I love, and I really thank the Government for giving me an extra seven years to look forward to: not.

Radiography is a great profession and last year I had the honour to be the President of the Society and College of Radiographers. Throughout my year, which was fabulous, I met many members. There were all enthusiastic and they all had something different to bring to the patients that they serve. I met mature students in their second careers giving something back after years in non-caring roles. I met young students who had worked their way through college and were tackling their degrees with the enthusiasm of youth. I met radiographers who had used access courses to top up the qualifications that they had on leaving school and they now positively glowed in the success of gaining a degree. I met working mothers who had set themselves up alongside their teenage offspring studying into the night to achieve success: all ages, all colours, and all backgrounds.

I can see how our membership has diversified since I joined the NHS. I know that our patients and the profession benefit from this. Patients recognise kindred spirits when they make use of our services and they feel comfortable with staff who reflect their communities. The elitist educational policies of this government, a government who refuse to recognise the potential in their electorate, promise to devastate a diverse workforce and prevent these really dedicated and motivated people from joining not only my profession but professions across the healthcare team.

Congress, I would ask you to support this motion and help to guarantee the viability of a health workforce able and fitting for our patient population. Thank you.

*(Applause)*

\* *Composite Motion 15 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Colleagues, I have been busy working out times and schedules and we have caught up a bit. If Congress will agree to work through, I think we can finish the whole of the business, including calling everybody who has so far asked to speak, if we overrun the lunch break by about 35 to 40 minutes. The alternative is to call the lunch break and then come back at 2 o'clock. Would colleagues agree that we work through? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much indeed for your cooperation.

I call Motion 67, Homophobic bullying in schools. The General Council recommend support.

### **Homophobic bullying in schools**

**Karen Smith** *(Society of Radiographers)* moved Motion 67.

She said: Evidence exists to show that discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered students continues to persist in our educational establishments in the UK despite social attitudes having changed significantly over the past 30 years. Stonewall's publication, *The School Report*, found that seven out of 10 students who experienced homophobic bullying said it had impacted adversely on their school

work. Half of those who had experienced homophobic bullying had skipped school more than six times. LGBT students are two to three times more likely to commit suicide than their peers. We know that schools have a legal requirement to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying. Many have tried and tested programmes and strategies to increase awareness and tackle this behaviour. We also know that homophobic bullying incidents dramatically decrease in those schools who engage with these programmes. However, there is still a long way to go with engaging these schools to introduce policies and procedures to deal with this problem.

By ignoring the evidence and failing to acknowledge and explore this discrimination against LGBT young people, we are giving the signal that bullying is just part of school life, that there is not a problem, and that we do not care. Bullying has a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of LGBT students. These students have the same wishes and dreams as everyone else. They want to be treated equally, to be on a level playing field and to take their place in the community on the same terms as their peers, above all they want to be able to go to school or college in peace to study just as everyone else is entitled to do. Instead, what they often find is that they are the targets of casual taunts, stigmatisation, rejection, and often violence.

Congress, we cannot in all conscience continue to shirk our responsibility to this group of people who, along with their peers, represent the workforce and talent of the future. Every child should be able to be themselves without fear of judgement and we need to do all that we can to ensure that this happens. Teenage years, in particular, are difficult and laced with uncertainty. They are the years when we form our identities and think about our place in the world. LGBT young people may have even

more of a struggle through these years and they need extra support. It is very difficult to help these students to feel supported in the face of homophobic bullying.

Congress calls on the TUC actively to work with the education unions and campaigning organisations to encourage all education authorities in the four countries of the United Kingdom to work towards ensuring that LGBT students are able to experience a safe and secure learning environment so that they can achieve their full potential in our schools. I move. (*Applause*)

**Chris Riley** (*Accord*) seconded Motion 67.

He said: We are happy to be seconding Motion 67, as amended, to eradicate homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in our schools. Some good work has already been done much since the hard fought for repeal of section 28 but recent findings in the Stonewall *School Report* shows that we must do more with over 55% of young LGBT people having suffered from homophobic bullying at school. We should not be surprised while there is a culture, though, among our young and youth where everything is gay. I frequently experience young colleagues saying, “That’s so gay,” to anything that is different, out of the ordinary, or just does not function right. I do not mind telling you, as I tell them, I am gay and I work properly.

Ofsted’s own report, *No Place for Bullying*, published in June of this year highlights the need for better training, concluding that most anti-bullying training in schools was too general leading to many teachers feeling ill-equipped to tackle incidents of homophobia. So, what can we do about it? Teachers need to be equipped with the necessary tools, training, and support to be able to challenge homophobic bullying

where it occurs. Lessons in basic equality and human rights need to be taught throughout the key stages with inclusive curriculum. Ofsted need to ensure their inspectors monitor these issues and we ask our teaching unions to continue this fight, ensuring that their schools do intervene where homophobic bullying occurs.

Schools Out began campaigning in this area in 1974 and provides education and support tools with their programme, *How to Make Your School LGBT Friendly*. We ask the TUC to work closely with this campaign. We also want to highlight the additional challenges we face as the Government step up their drive for free schools and academies. There is a real risk of fragmentation, different standards of education for different schools. We must challenge this attack on the free access of information for our schools and protect these vulnerable children from any corrosive morals. We must also continue to challenge any equality exemptions of these schools or faith-based education.

With suicide rates among young LGBT people worldwide disproportionately higher than their heterosexual counterparts lets do our part. As someone who has suffered from homophobic bullying at school, I want to say it does get better. Let's stamp out homophobic bullying, biphobic bullying, and transphobic bullying in our schools. Let's not just say it gets better, let's make it better. (*Applause*)

**Annette Pryce** (*National Union of Teachers*) supported Motion 67.

She said: Homophobic bullying is something that I had to endure when I was in school and 20 years later here we are still enduring it. You only have to look at the hysteria over the current gay marriage debate to see an example of how homophobic



some parts of society still are. This motion states that only a quarter of schools report that they have a problem with homophobic bullying and I cannot say that I am very surprised. The real problem is that some schools do not understand it; some do not know how to deal with it and some simply do not want to. The best teachers will challenge it. The best teachers will ensure that their students understand that they exist in a diverse society that includes LGBT people.

My school colleagues now know that when we create an environment that is safe for LGBT young people we create an environment that is safe for all students and staff. So let's look again at the uncomfortable facts. LGBT teenagers are twice as likely to suffer verbal abuses as straight counterparts. This is even higher in faith schools. They will also suffer violence, theft, vandalism, cyber bullying, death threats, threats with weapons, and sexual assault. What Stonewall reports do not often tell you in any great detail is that this type of bullying affects all young people in schools, not just LGBT teenagers. Homophobia is insidious and it will seep into every aspect of a school's ethos if it is not checked, so schools undoubtedly cannot afford to pretend that it does not affect them.

All students need role models for positive behaviour and I count myself as being one of those role models. As well as being the national executive representative for LGBT teachers in the NUT, I am an out gay teacher. Some of those that I represent will be out like me, but most will not. They may feel unable to be open about who they are, they may feel unsafe or unable to be out, and if this is a problem for them as teachers, as the adults in their school, then it is definitely a problem for their students. It is the lack of return over bullying as a problem that simply is not accurate.

Section 28 was a destructive and dangerous piece of legislation, which is at risk of coming back in a new form in free schools. It was nothing less than a generational failure of our young people by ignorant politicians and we are still seeing the after effects of this a decade after it was repealed. Some teachers still believe that it applies. Working with organisations that have extensive experience in training teachers such as Schools Out, which the NUT already works collaboratively with, can only enhance the provision for all teachers to provide a safe environment for all the pupils because none of us are safe until all of us are safe. The NUT wholeheartedly supports this motion. (*Applause*)

**Bev Miller** (*UNISON*) supported Motion 67, and the amendment.

She said: UNISON has 350,000 members in education and has an enduring commitment to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender equality. We welcome this debate on tackling bullying in schools. Whilst there have been many advances in LGBT equality, nevertheless, far too many schools, playgrounds, classrooms, and indeed staff rooms, are hostile places for LGBT people. Visualise the experience of daily persistent and pervasive abuse going unchallenged and consider how this poisonous atmosphere corrodes dignity and self-esteem, its impact on all, staff and students alike, those who identify as LGB and trans, and those who do not. The detrimental impact that it has on learning and educational attainment jeopardises the future career options of LGBT students who are already vulnerable in relation to employment. It undermines LGBT staff and affects their performance at work.

UNISON is adding to this debate the devastating impact of the Tory-led government's attempts to fragment and privatise education through academies and free schools. It is an irrefutable fact that as more and more schools move away from local authorities, coordinated and effective action to tackle this bullying becomes increasingly difficult. The growing numbers of faith schools that generally do not support LGBT lifestyles or equality makes it even worse.

Stonewall's research shows that two-thirds of young gay people have experienced bullying in school. This figure goes up to three-quarters of young people attending faith schools. Lesbian, gay, and bisexual pupils who attend faith schools are significantly less likely to tell someone they are being bullied. Only 4% of LGBT pupils feel able to tell their local religious leaders about bullying. We know that the situation is similar for our own LGBT staff working in faith schools that are afraid to complain about discrimination. Whilst no mention is made of bi or transphobic bullying, it is known that the situation for transgender people is often even more severe.

So, yes, Congress, we must work together on this issue and organise our members working in education and we must step up our campaign in support of good local schools that are part of a national comprehensive education system which are accountable to local authorities. This alone will not eradicate anti-LGBT bullying as there is much to be done but this is a crucial part of making our schools safe for all to learn and work in. Please support. (*Applause*)

**Kamaljeet Jandu** (*GMB*) supported Motion 67.

He said: I recall recently my 8-year old son was playing football with his cousins in the garden and I was in the kitchen and I heard this kerfuffle, raised voices and dispute. There was a disputed decision. Then I heard, “You’re gay,” as a form of insult. I gently asked them what that meant and where they had heard this. They looked puzzled and my son said, “We say this at school.” I explained to him and his cousins how this word could be very hurtful and upset his great uncles who are gay. My son and his cousins listened, they questioned, they talked, and they understood.

Congress, last year 15-year old Dominic Crouch committed suicide after playground taunting that he was gay. Within a year — within a year — his heartbroken father was found dead. Many, many schoolchildren endure stress and misery as homophobic abuse goes unnoticed or unpunished. Just as casual racism and sexism have become increasingly unacceptable, though not enough, homophobic name-calling has come into everyday use. The derogatory use of the word “gay” can result in long-term damage to a young person’s self-esteem, confidence and wellbeing, as shown in the case of Dominic.

This leads me to the next question, which is, what are the authorities and schools doing about this, and, as the sister said before me, 75% of schools say that homophobic bullying is not an issue. This is the legacy of the notorious clause 28 which has left schools skirting around the issue and afraid to talk about homosexual sex. Trade unions have been in the forefront of challenging bullying, verbal or otherwise. We should use the same template and model to raise awareness, highlight, and challenge homophobic bullying. As you know, we need to face up to the casual

homophobic comments wherever they arise, in the playground, in the street, or in the home.

We meet here today in Brighton not just as trade unionists, though that is at our core, we are here as mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters, brothers, cousins, each and every one of us in this hall has a responsibility in our personal lives to explain and put right the negative cultural influences on our children and their friends. This is our challenge. Support this motion. (*Applause*)

**Julia Neal** (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) supported Motion 67.

She said: President and members of Congress, thank you to the Society of Radiographers for bringing this important motion to our attention. Yes, homophobic bullying can still be a huge problem in many of our schools despite the work of Stonewall and the increasingly good practice examples that are being developed by teachers, pupils, and community-based organisations, such as Schools Out, to combat homophobia.

We should also notice the work of the cutting edge consortium that has shown that faith does not have to be an obstacle either. When only a quarter of schools really think that this is an issue which needs addressing we should be concerned but I would also like to point out that there should be more awareness of the problem of transphobic bullying as well. Pupils in the trans community in our schools and colleges can be very vulnerable. Gender variance can be detected in children as young as two. It causes extreme stress for them and this alone would impair their

achievements as they go through their education and, of course, bullying will severely aggravate this as well.

Although schools may think that they have no transgender pupils to worry about, statistically this is unlikely. In any school of 1,000 pupils there are likely to be six who will experience transgenderism throughout their lives, and schools must acknowledge this and develop policies.

As has already been mentioned, I think it is important that we realise local authorities are not directly responsible for so many schools now. With the coming of free schools, academies, all outside LA control, there is a clear risk that homophobic bullying will not be properly tackled. This may be a real problem where there is a faith dimension to the governance of the school. In faith schools 75% of gay pupils have experienced bullying. It is vital that academies, free schools, and independent schools have clear policies to intervene to prevent this for we know that where policies are in place there is always a sharp reduction in the incidence of this type of behaviour.

I will close by citing just one disgraceful example of prejudice which I heard of in a school recently. It occurred in a government-funded Catholic, free, secondary school. In a public meeting at the school, it was openly stated by a parent that the school would not teach gay nonsense and that schools are not teaching basic family values. The morals of the country should not be dragged down. On hearing these comments, a school governor said, "Gays will be welcome in this school but we would not encourage it." That says it all.

I would like to point out that the school did try to dissociate itself from these remarks but I use it as an example to show the potential that there is to damage some of the exceptional progress that has been made to combat bullying of all types in our society. There is still a long way to go if the scourge of homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying is to be a thing of the past. That is why ATL supports this resolution. Please vote for it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

\* *Motion 67 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Colleagues, we now turn to Chapter 6 of the General Council Report, Learning and Skills, from page 102, and I am calling paragraphs 6.1 to 6.4. That completes Chapter 6 of the General Council Report.

Congress, we now return to Chapter 4 of the General Council Report, Economic and Industrial Affairs, turning to the section on Justice, from page 79. I call paragraph 4.16 and Motion 69, LASPO – call for reform. The General Council supports the motion.

### **LASPO – call for reform**

**Jonathan Ledger** (*NAPO*) moved Motion 69.

He said: I am proudly moving Motion 69 in NAPO's centenary year. (*Applause*) For many years NAPO has been calling for the reform of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. A radical overhaul was long overdue as people with criminal offences

were obliged to disclose relatively minor convictions when applying for work, long after they had taken place, and when many had changed their lives and behaviour significantly. The Act was, in effect, undermining the rehabilitation of people who no longer carried a threat to society. Consequently, it was good to welcome significant changes to the Act earlier this year, which means that sentences of up to four years will be treated as spent, not requiring disclosure, thus enabling the speedier reintegration of ex-offenders back into society. How ironic, then, that this progressive change was achieved as part of the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act, a piece of legislation which in other respects is a divisive and dangerous assault on the right of people to receive Legal Aid.

This motion concentrates specifically on its negative impact in the Family Courts. The Ministry of Justice claims that LASPO structurally changes Legal Aid in order to focus it on cases where legal assistance is needed, citing threats to life or liberty, and the risk of children being removed into care. Ken Clarke, the former Justice Secretary, claimed that Legal Aid would always be available in Family Court proceedings involving allegations of domestic violence whilst the then Justice Minister, Jonathan Djanogly said, “This Act ensures we will continue to have one of the most generous Legal Aid systems in the world which together with no-win no-fee deals means that legal help is widely available for those who cannot afford a lawyer.”

NAPO, along with other unions and pressure groups representing staff in the Family Courts, would beg to differ. In its response to the consultation on the then LASPO bill the Family Courts union cross-party group, which includes parliamentarians interested in family work, along with NAPO, PCS, and NAGALRO, the professional



association for guardians, raised wide-ranging concerns about the impact of the bill's provisions on family justice. These included, in particular, the lack of clarity about those cases involving domestic violence which would be covered by Legal Aid, the impacts of cuts on the provision of alternative forms of support to families denied access to Legal Aid, the effects of reducing the payment of expert witnesses on the quality of assessment in cases involving key decisions about the care of children and the likely delays in court proceedings and related increased costs as a result of fewer people being legally represented during proceedings.

During the passage of the bill the opposition in the House of Lords sought to amend it in relation to these key issues, particularly domestic violence, but the Government defeats were overturned and only a few concessions made. NAPO is monitoring the consequences of the Act for practice in the Family Courts and evidence is already beginning to accrue of the difficulties it will present. NAPO members are reporting significant delays in proceedings as a result of increasing numbers of litigants appearing without legal representation, with hearings taking much longer as a result of judges or their legal advisers having to explain the proceedings at regular intervals. Consequently, there is evidence of longer waiting lists for hearings, more time has to be set aside to compensate for the delays. We are receiving examples of protracted arguments over payment for assessment reports resulting in further delays, increased anxiety for the parties involved and the risk of judgments being made without full information being available.

Our members remain deeply concerned that the new Legal Aid rules and long delays in proceedings will result in vulnerable children, and adults, being placed at greater

risk. They believe that many abused women do not meet the LASPO definition of domestic violence and that the court process itself will become part of the ongoing abuse they have suffered.

Congress, the Legal Aid system was designed to level the playing field in court proceedings, to ensure that poorer people could have access to legal representation. We fear that LASPO will not only place many vulnerable people at greater risk, it will also discriminate against people on the basis of their ability to pay. That is why NAPO is seeking Congress's support for our motion calling for an urgent review of LASPO's provisions in relation to courts. The costs of legal Aid is significant and the argument for some reform is generally accepted but making draconian changes at the expense of equality of access to justice and with the potential to place more children and adults at risk of harm is neither fair nor responsible. Congress, I move.  
*(Applause)*

**Paula Brown** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Motion 69.

She said: PCS believes that access to legal advice is a fundamental right for the public. This bill threatens confining access to justice only to those who can afford it. The removal of £350m from the annual £914m Civil and Family Legal Aid budget by 2014 will have a devastating impact as it will affect one in four of those seeking Legal Aid. This does not provide for a more efficient court service and it is not the mark of a civilised society to expect that people should just fend for themselves.

PCS believes that the future policy for Legal Aid provision is being driven yet again by cost and ideology and not by fairness or justice. This bill does nothing to protect

the human rights of the poor and vulnerable and the size of your bank account should not be a factor. Everyone in civilised society should have access to justice and to not have this is surely a great injustice. Successive governments have closed courts and reduced access to Legal Aid in family proceedings in the belief that less people would go to court yet there was no evidence to support this. In fact, as the gradual withdrawing of Legal Aid has come into effect, there has been no substantial reduction in the number of cases. A legal representative can do much groundwork which means more cases can be heard. Without this, misunderstandings and unnecessarily contested hearings clog up the courts and waste time. It is a false economy.

Congress, these changes are just plain wrong. They do not benefit those in our communities who most need help. So I ask you, please, to support this motion and continue to campaign against injustice and while I am talking about injustice could I just say that I really hope the families of those 96 people killed at Hillsborough will get some today. (*Applause*)

\* *Motion 69 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I am now moving to Motion 70, Resisting the threat to probation. The General Council also supports this motion.

### **Resisting the threat to probation**

**Tim Wilson** (NAPO) moved Motion 70.

He said: President, Congress, let me begin with an anecdote to illuminate what may otherwise be yet another gloomy example of this Government's doctrinaire outsourcing of a great public service. This everyday story from a probation case load is of a stalker with a past record of domestic abuse but who was placed on probation by the court for a comparatively minor road traffic offence at 11.30 in the morning. He is told to report to his probation office at 2 p.m. that day. He fails to keep that appointment. Probation staff note this and its potential high risk of harm status and notify the police. The offender is then traced to his ex-partner's street and arrested for breach of his order and going equipped to burgle. A potential threat has been contained. All this is good current probation/police public protection work possible because the interagency terms of reference are clearly set down and understood by the agencies concerned in a shared value system which places the potential victim as a priority in the battle to reduce crime.

What of the future? Well, under the Government's plans to outsource £500m worth of probation work the scenario I just gave would be increasingly unlikely to end well. Let's examine how this would be. For a start, once this service is sold off the aforementioned offender will not be clearly flagged as a potential risk of harm. He will be one of the mass of 120,000 cases across the country systematically reclassified by the Ministry of Justice as a lower risk because his current road traffic offence was relatively low level. His supervision will have been handed over from probation to the private security sector to manage, this will be a company such as G4S, Serco, or Sodexo, which has no genuine stake in our country's or our communities' safety because as a transglobal, even with the best will in the world, it is difficult to think in terms of local communities when what you feed off is a blanket market coverage to

produce massive profits so that you can boast of having made millionaires out of your transglobal shareholders. Even if the privateer company looking after this case did have the best will in the world, the chances are that it will not have the required highly trained and skilled staff to recognise our offender's potential risk of harm because it pays its high turnover rate employees the lowest possible wage: think G4S and the Olympics security contract. More likely is that said privateer will not wish to pass this case back to the probation service to manage properly anyway since every time it does so it will lose a little bit more of its profit margin.

So, Congress, what we have in this planned outsourcing is the makings of a massive criminal justice policy bungle all in the name of ideology, the withdrawal of the state from its rightful role as arbiter of justice and public safety, the dismantling of this country's coherent societal functions established over generations in favour of a disjointed multi-silo'd experiment in which security companies do not, will not, communicate with each other for the public good for fear of business confidentiality breaches putting profits at risk.

I ask you, Congress, identify the no-brainer, what shall it be, safeguarding profits or safeguarding the public? The Government wants to introduce this outsourcing without further primary legislation using statutory instruments under clause 23 of the Crime and Courts Act. Congress, our members are fed up with this threat to their jobs and their service. NAPO is rallying to resist under our Stop Clause 23 campaign. Congress, support the motion, support a public probation service. I move.

*(Applause)*

**Peter McParlin** (*POA*) seconded Motion 70.

He said: In the recent Cabinet reshuffle we bid a fond farewell to Kenneth Clarke who was replaced as Justice Minister. Whenever the POA leadership met with Kenneth Clarke he always used to look at us as if we were mad. I do think after yesterday's events perhaps Brendan has some sympathy with that position, but he was a Justice Minister who seemed to think that he could introduce policy based on rhetoric and sound bites. As you know with Kenneth Clarke, he often was saying not very much but saying it rather well but on occasions when he opened his mouth it was calamitous. He felt that rehabilitation revolution could be introduced by magic but, of course, you cannot do that with cuts and you cannot do that with the chaos of outsourcing and privatisation. You certainly will not get it, as Ken Clarke wanted it, by following obscure diktats from far right think tanks. Payment by results may well turn out to be a panacea for the justice system, however there is no evidence to date that it will be but it is introduced without any results to back it up. Then they have introduced investment bonds in rehabilitation in which you can put your hard-earned money into bonds and then gamble on the fact that the rehabilitation rates will improve. If any of you are thinking about putting some of your hard-earned cash into these bonds, I would emphasise some caution.

Now Kenneth Clarke has been replaced by Mr. Grayling, who we understand enjoys being referred to in the popular press as the attack dog of the coalition Government. Well, the POA are looking forward to the long walks that we will have with him. We are looking forward to the obedience training which will be necessary because we cannot have dogs running around attacking people. (*Laughter*) But we have already written to Mr. Grayling supporting NAPO and asking him to revisit the calamitous

decisions that have been made in the criminal justice system by this coalition Government and, yes, by the last Labour government. We want a rehabilitation revolution. We see nothing wrong with the concept whatsoever but we must also be tasked with protecting the public. You will not achieve those goals by outsourcing the probation service. You will not achieve those goals by losing operational oversight of such a vital service. You will not achieve it by undermining the risk assessment process which results in unsafe and premature releases of prisoners into our communities. So, the POA are asking you to support the motion. We will put the muzzle on Mr. Grayling. Please support the motion. Justice should never be in the hands of privateers and outsourcers. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**Maureen Le Marinel** (*UNISON*) supported Motion 70.

She said: I am pleased to be here supporting this important motion on behalf of UNISON. Since the Tory-led Coalition took office they have proved that there is no such thing as privatisation too far; no service is too sensitive or too important to escape. They say it introduces efficiency, competition, and discipline, but the history of outsourcing and privatisation has shown that what it actually means is a hidden cost for taxpayers, greater bureaucracy, job cuts, and declining services. The profits made by private companies are at the expense of our members, of the services they deliver, and the communities they serve.

UNISON represents thousands of workers in the probation sector and our members carry out vital services. They help rebuild lives, they reduce reoffending, they rehabilitate offenders, and turn lives around. They look after the interests of victims and make sure that their voices are heard. They keep communities safe. Their work

can be a matter of life and death. They enter people's lives at some of the most difficult and sensitive moments you can imagine. Our members are committed to the delivery of high-quality public services, provided directly by the public sector and accountable to the communities they serve.

What price can you put on the work they do? According to the Government, it should be sold off to the cheapest bidder. Their proposals to privatise and outsource up to 70% of probation work will lead to a fragmented workforce. It will introduce a profit motive in an essential and sensitive area in the public services. Congress, it will be a disaster and it is not just our trade union members who think so. Lord Ramsbotham, the former Prison Inspector, has condemned the plans and said: "A complete distortion of the criminal justice system." Their plans for payment by results remain untried and untested. The fragmentation of probation services depends on the cooperation of teamwork. It is not only inappropriate but dangerous.

UNISON has an alternative. Under our model local authorities and probation trusts would work together; they emphasis cooperation and shared resources. Our approach would retain services and jobs and develop genuine localism in the probation provision. There is an alternative to privatisation and cuts to services. Please support. (*Applause*)

\* *Motion 70 was CARRIED*



**The President:** I now turn to Chapter 8 of the General Council Report, Wales and the English Regions, from page 125. I call paragraphs 8.1 to 8.10. I think there was an indication from a colleague in CWU.

## **Wales and the English Regions**

### **Wales TUC**

**Amarjite Singh** (*CWU and Wales TUC General Council*) spoke to paragraph 8.7. He said: I am the current President of the Wales TUC. This section records a highly significant event in the history of the Wales TUC. Like the Welsh Government itself, the Wales TUC has come of age and it is taking devolved responsibilities within the TUC for Welsh matters. On behalf of the Wales TUC General Council I would like to formally record our thanks to Frances O’Grady and Paul Nowak for the positive and professional approach they adopted during their review of the Wales TUC role and responsibilities. Devolution allows us to operate on a different basis in Wales with a Welsh Government that wants a true partnership with the Wales TUC. The new status of the Wales TUC allows us to take full advantage of that opportunity and provide in Wales a real example of an alternative to the UK Government policies. We are delighted with our new status and rightly see it as an historic step forward for the Wales TUC, but let me be clear, we remain proudly part of the British TUC and will continue to play our full part in the UK wide campaigns and in this Congress. Congress, thank you for listening. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you. Colleagues, that completes Chapter 8 of the General Council Report.

Congress, we now move to the General Council Statement on Solidarity with South African Mineworkers and Unions. I am going to call Sally Hunt to move the statement on behalf of the General Council, which is supported by the NUM.

**General Council Statement: Solidarity with South African Mineworkers and Unions**

**Sally Hunt** (*General Council*) moved the General Council Statement.

She said: We have all been shocked by the news from South Africa's platinum mines. The killing of 34 miners who were on strike by the police on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> August is totally unacceptable and, Congress, the General Council believes that we have to make our voice heard and we have to say publicly that we utterly condemn the killings.

Taking strike action is a fundamental right and should never end in murder. The South African Trade Union Movement, indeed South African society at large, has been stunned by the violence and this is a challenge to the whole of South African society, to government, to business, to communities, and to trade unions as well.

Next week the Congress of South African Trade Unions, COSATU, will hold their conference and the TUC will be represented there by our Assistant General Secretary, Kay Carberry, and she will take with her our message of solidarity and sympathy. British trade unions have a special link with our sisters and brothers in COSATU, forged in the anti-apartheid struggle but no less strong today. We feel their pain and the killings at Marikana must have our shared anger and our shared sorrow. Like

them, we demand answers and we demand justice. We demand that British multinationals like Lonmin stop putting profits before miners' lives and negotiate social justice and economic justice with the unions.

The deaths at Marikana have provoked outrage and soul-searching throughout the world. Those deaths are totally unacceptable, Congress, but they must not be in vain. Please, support this statement and send the strongest possible message from this our Congress to our sisters and brothers. Please agree the statement. Thank you.  
*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you very much, Sally. I intend to call one speaker, FBU.

**Matt Wrack** (*Fire Brigades' Union*) speaking to the General Council Statement, said: Comrades, the workers and their trade unions of South Africa played a key role in the ending of apartheid and, as Sally has mentioned, there is a special bond between us as a result of that long and heroic struggle, but those workers and their trade unions today continue to face a battle against economic exploitation, sometimes in appalling conditions and appalling working conditions, and in the mines particularly appalling health and safety conditions, and now in addition the issue of state repression.

The massacre, and it was a massacre at Marikana, was murder of people for taking strike action and I think that gives a clear question to people, when police shoot people for being on a picket line you decide whose side you are on, and I have to say

we are on the side of those workers and we send our condolences to their families.

*(Applause)*

The General Council makes note of the appalling initial decision to use apartheid era common purpose legislation to actually charge other strikers with the murder of their colleagues, their brothers and sisters killed at Marikana. Fortunately, that has been withdrawn. As Sally said, this has prompted a significant debate in South Africa and you can read some of those comments, particularly interesting to see the comments of the founding General Secretary of COSATU on some of the implications of these recent debates.

I note that the second largest affiliate of COSATU, the Metalworkers Union, NUMSA, has issued a detailed statement on the issue. I urge people to read it. It notes, for example, that this is the first post-apartheid state massacre of the organised working class in defence of local and international mining bosses and their profits.

You may also have noticed, Congress, that actually strike action in the South African mines has spread. There has now been strike action in a number of goldmines and clearly the workers involved need to ensure that such horrific attacks on strikers do not take place again. I note that NUMSA also calls for the special squad involved in that massacre to be suspended.

I urge people to follow this. This is a terrible and internationally important event that we need to monitor. We need to ensure that such horrific killings do not happen again. We need to send from this Congress, and from individual unions, greetings to

workers struggling against appalling conditions in the South African mines and their attempts to organise to fight back. We supported those workers and their organisations during the struggle against apartheid. Clearly, their struggle continues and our solidarity needs to continue alongside that. Support the motion but take those messages back into your individual unions and monitor and build that support on a practical basis. Support the motion. (*Applause*)

- *The General Council Statement was ADOPTED*

**The President:** We now move to Emergency Motion 1, London Met. The General Council is supporting the Emergency Motion. The General Council recommends support for the motion.

**London Met.**

**Mark Campbell** (*University and College Union*) moved Emergency Motion 1.

He said: Just over two weeks ago thousands of international students studying at London Met, my university, woke up to a headline in the *Sunday Times* that said their leave to study in the UK was to be withdrawn and they had only 60 days either to find another university or they were to be forcibly deported. In one stroke of a pen, the Government, via the UK Border Agency, blighted the lives of over 2,500 international students. As Ed Balls put it yesterday, this is absolutely disgraceful.

These are not just stats, these are people just like you and me trying to better themselves and support their families and communities. They are like Dean, a

student on my MSc Computer Forensic course. Dean is from Nigeria and he has already successfully passed a pre-Masters in a Computing course at London Met and he should now be about to start his second semester on his Masters course.

So far Dean and his family have paid over £15,000 in course fees. He attends class, he has passed all his exams, and his English is excellent. He is halfway through his course and he does not want to change his university. He wants to stay at London Met with the lecturers he knows and his student friends, both home and international students, and he should be allowed to do so. (*Applause*)

On receiving news of his predicament he informed his family in Lagos to try and explain this terrible event. His father suffered a heart attack as he absorbed the news and now he is critically ill. Dean is now scared to leave the country to see his potentially dying father because he thinks he will not be allowed back to complete his studies that his family have scrimped and saved for him to be here. It is disgusting.

Dean is not bogus. He is not a scrounger or an illegal, or any of the other filthy racist abusive terms spewed by bigoted Tories and their right-wing friends in the gutter press, the very language that gives succour to the racists and fascists of the EDL and the BNP as they attempt to divide us. Well, I am proud that Dean and his fellow international students are in my class. We all benefit from the different geographical cultural and social perspectives that such students bring. I am proud that London Met has the most working class and ethnically diverse students today of any UK university and that we host the TUC archive, and the internationally acclaimed Women's Library, and I am proud that we defend multiculturalism in the face of

attack by Cameron and friends. Hopefully, Ed Miliband will now add his own voice to such a necessary defence.

We are demanding an immediate amnesty for all of London Met's international students so that they can complete their studies at London Met and not be farmed out across the UK or forcibly deported. We support Jeremy Corbyn's Early Day Motion 437 that argues for the reversal of this appalling decision. Please get your MPs to sign. We are saying loud and clear, yes to education, no to deportation, amnesty now.

*(Applause)*

This is not just about London Met. This is an attack on all our international students across all universities. International students bring in billions to our economy. They help sustain our universities and, as I have already stated, they add much welcome diversity and multicultural perspective. The attack on London Met sends shockwaves throughout the world. It has effectively put up a sign saying, "You are not welcome here." It needs to be reversed. Let's be clear, international students are immigrants and not responsible for the destruction of our economy, the running down of our NHS, the privatisation and assault on our entire education system. Our real enemies are the Tories and the privatisation friends they have.

We need to say loud and clear, international students are welcome here. Support this motion. And a word to our management, we will work with you to defend our students and our university but don't you even dare consider taking us down a privatisation, or an outsourcing, or a shared service route as a solution to the financial

crisis we are in. It is no solution and you will be vigorously resisted. Please support the motion unanimously and send the right signal. (*Applause*)

**Denise Ward** (*UNISON*) seconded Emergency Motion 1.

She said: Last week two government committees of cross-party MPs stated that the Government's attempts to reduce immigration by cutting student visas were threatening the country's world-class education sector. They also stated that at this time of economic difficulty it is vital to support such an important and lucrative market. Home Office statistics show that the Government's drive to cut the number of overseas students will cost £2.6bn more than it saves. In addition, there will be £330m lost in tuition and immigration fees. If economic growth is this Government's priority, then it should note that international students contribute £5bn to the UK economy.

How has this been reported across the world? Newspapers in China and India, two key growth areas in international students, have placed headlines condemning the UK for deporting students. Meanwhile, the United States and Australia are increasing their recruitment. They are licking their lips as they suck in the world's talent. But we must remember that our government wants to keep Britain's population below 70 million. It wants to prove to the Tory claptrap press — good job I said that carefully — that it is committed to keeping immigration down: shame on them and their narrow-minded policies.

Putting economic reasons to one side, there are other important issues that Cameron and his cronies need to consider. London Met, like Teesside University where I



work, reaches out to those whose families have not historically attended university, to those who want to widen their education and have greater choices in their lives, and to release them from the poverty trap many are caught in, which is also in line with UNISON's higher education aims. This Government is shameful to let universities such as London Met experience the current difficulties and not raise a hand to help. They are well aware of the repercussions for students, staff, London Met as a whole, and the local communities who benefit from the economic input of international students. The potential threat to London Met and other universities that experience such difficulties is far reaching. It should not be underestimated. Something needs to be done quickly if our world-class education sector is not to be damaged beyond all repair.

Consider how society benefits from the diversity and multiculturalism that international students bring. Do we really want a limited experience HE system for society or do we want one that broadens our thinking and understanding of the world outside of the UK. What is happening at London Met is not fair to students, not fair to staff, not fair to the union members, and not fair to society, and it makes no sense for the economy. Support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

\* *Emergency Motion 1 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now move to Emergency Motion 2, Legal Action in Respect of the West Coast Mainline. The General Council is recommending support.

**Legal Action in Respect of the West Coast Mainline**

**Simon Weller** (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) moved Emergency Motion 2.

He said: It does appear to be a bit of an annual event, this, whether it be at the Labour Party or whether at the TUC, that someone from the rail unions will come on and say what a woeful state of affairs we have within our industry. It is quite easy for us to stand back now and see First Group and Branson's Virgin fighting it out. We could easily say, "A plague on all your houses," but that would not be the right thing to do.

We have an utterly, utterly, insane system, a system that sees the subsidy back-loaded and the profits taken first and then when it gets too difficult, when these firms are starting to have to pay a bit to the taxpayer that has been propping them up, they hand back their keys and walk away. Then we see the mad argument of South West Trains. This is very difficult to explain. They pay money to the Government and then say, "We're not making enough profit," and the Government pays them more money. It is insane. Then we have East Midlands Trains, when they were in dispute with ASLEF when we were fighting to defend our members' pensions, the Government paid them for all their losses. If anything, they actually made money because they did not pay any wages when we were on strike. They had no incentive to sort out those issues.

This is all coming from an utterly flawed franchising system, which was examined by Sir Roy McNulty and he diagnosed the problem being fragmentation. His response was to order more fragmentation, as if that would solve the problem. We see in 1995, which was the last year of books for British Railways, we saw £5bn worth of revenue

of which £4bn was income and £1bn was subsidy. In 2009, which is the numbers that McNulty examined, we saw total revenue of £11bn of which £6bn was income and £5bn was subsidy from me and you.

Back to the debacle between First and Branson, Richard Branson quite kindly says he will run it for free. Why don't we do that all the time; rather than him electing to take his profits a little bit later, let's run it for everyone. Let's bring it back to a publicly accountable system. ASLEF has had some survey work done and one of the questions we asked was, "Do you think UK rail should be returned to public ownership?" Unsurprisingly, the answer was, yes, by 70%.

This is where I am getting quite incensed. When I saw Ed Balls earlier this week and when he was asked a direct question, should we renationalise the railways, this is where he is so out of step with the British public, he said, "No, it will cost billions." Actually, Balls is wrong, utterly wrong. It will not cost any money to renationalise the railways. It will not cost any money to bring back our infrastructure. Network Rail is not for profit. It was the remnants of Railtrack. The franchises, you do not have to pay any money to them. We have demonstrated that with East Coast Mainline. When they come up take back their keys. Don't re-let them, run them for the public good and not for the shareholders. *(Applause)*

What disgusts me, and I would consider myself a bit of a Labour loyalist because I have stuck with them since I was 18, when I see Balls standing here saying it is going to cost billions to take the railway back, he is showing he is out of touch with the

British public. We need those railways renationalised and we need them now.

*(Applause)*

**Bob Crow** (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Emergency Motion 2.

He said: I have great pleasure to support ASLEF's emergency motion superbly moved by Simon Weller, in my opinion.

Brothers and sisters, we passed the resolution earlier this week saying, and committing to, and reiterating that the policy of the TUC that all the railways should be renationalised. Can I say that as a negotiator, like others in this room and outside of this room, we sometimes can't get all that we want at any given moment in time but with the railways it is a different issue. This ain't about one of the train operating companies or two of the train operating companies, this is about having the entire railway network renationalised. That is what we want: no slices of the cake, we want the complete bakery that goes with the whole lot of it. *(Applause)*

Brothers and sisters, Simon is quite right, Ed Balls could have made a statement here yesterday and, in my opinion, if he just turned around purely on the issue of saying that the railways should be renationalised, and make a decision on the West Coast Mainline, that on its own would have been radical enough to get Labour re-elected at the next general election. He says it is a nuisance. We have to deal with these transport ministers. Every time we go and see one they say, "We can't make a decision on anything yet because we have only just been appointed." We must have gone through a new transport secretary once a year, in my opinion, in the last 10 to 12

years. They go through transport ministers, this Government and the previous governments, like a navvy goes through sandwiches.

The reason why they do not want to renationalise is because there is no will to renationalise but the fact is it could save money. You have to argue the case whether the railway is a public service or a service to make profit. There would not have to be one penny of compensation paid to the privateers. The East Coast Mainline is being run by the state, just as good as any other part of the railway network, so why can't the Government just turn around and say to First Group and Virgin, "None of you is going to run it. We're going to run the West Coast exactly like we do the East Coast." When every franchise comes up we take it back and we change the colour of the trains. The only cost would be new uniforms and the vinyls that go on the new trains.

The issue is this, brothers and sisters. When Ed Balls says that it is a nuisance, these politicians are out of step with public opinion. He was such a nuisance yesterday, Ed Balls, that he could give an Anadin a headache, to be quite honest with you. *(Laughter)* Our position is quite clear, this ain't about Virgin versus First Group, or First Group versus Stagecoach, this is about an ideological issue of where the railways sit. People say to me about these fare prices. People should recognise the fact there was only two tickets under British Rail, peak and off peak. You now have a whole complete menu of different tickets that people cannot understand. Some people can travel 20 minutes later on a train on a second class ticket and then a first class ticket would be cheaper. It is an absolute nonsense. Paul, the red light is up and

as railway workers we don't go through red lights I am going to stop here. All the very best. (*Applause*)

**Mitch Tovey** (*Transport Salaried Staffs' Association*) supported Emergency Motion 2.

He said: Virgin Trains worker. We have in the propaganda war between First Group and Virgin Trains a perfect example of all that is wrong with the present privatisation reality of our network and, in particular, the ludicrous franchising system that sees millions of pounds of taxpayers' money being diverted into the private sector.

Branson is right when he attacks the way that franchises are handed out. This outpouring of righteousness has to be taken in context with the reality that if Virgin Trains maintains the franchise, any complaints would have been very mooted, to say the least. Virgin Trains preparing to announce an assurance of no compulsory redundancies, if they had been successful, have now been responded to by First Group that staff numbers will be broadly the same. While both statements are to be welcomed, actions speak louder than words. Whoever gets the West Coast Mainline, unless it is held in public ownership and we are at a very early stage, will want to instigate their own brand of cull. Indeed, Virgin jumped the gun last January when they sacked, reinstated, and then suspended one of our Birmingham-based reps, the suspension went on for six months, and then he was sacked on the day of the opening ceremony of the Olympics, and still they will not say what the reason was. This of course is still an active item for our union but Virgin Trains have form in this: union representation in their headquarters is obviously a great problem for them.

Bob, when he was speaking last night at the rail unions' fringe meeting, spoke of the bewildering array of fares available. Rarely have you seen such confusion and suspicion on the faces of tourists when you try and explain that they should buy a first class ticket rather than the standard one that they asked for because it is cheaper. Virgin is not alone in this. In different guises, different names, with different start times, with different finishing times, an array of time-based restrictions, ticketing is a recipe for confusion and the invitation to catch the wrong train, and if you catch the wrong train, that is when it really starts to get complicated.

Yesterday Balls' misunderstanding of the whole concept of railway franchises and finances shows there is still much to do. These franchises can be taken back and they can be taken back for free. We need to make life uncomfortable for the franchise holders, press them, and make them squeal until they beg to be relieved of them. The policy of public ownership would be incredibly popular with voters and it will add money to the Treasury. On behalf of the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association I urge support for Emergency Motion 2. (*Applause*)

\* *Emergency Motion 2 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now move to Emergency Motion 3, GCSEs.

**GCSEs**

**Alex Kenny** (*National Union of Teachers*) moved Emergency Motion 3.

He said: I feel like I am keeping you back in detention as time is getting on so that we can move Emergency Motion 3. Congress, I want to start by asking you to listen to this statement from a Tory education minister. It is from 1987 but I think it fits perfectly the situation I am about to describe. He said: “We are beginning to create aspirations that society cannot match. We have to ration education opportunity so society can cope. There’s going to be considerable social change. There may be social unrest. If we have a highly educated but idle population, we can anticipate more serious unrest. People have to be educated once more to know their place.”

Every summer hundreds of thousands of young people sit their GCSE exams and every year these young people and their teachers work hard and put in hours to make sure they meet the criteria for the grades they are striving for. Over time these exams have become high stakes not just for the young people but for schools, teachers, and support staff. Every year schools, departments, and teachers, are set targets expecting them to increase the number of students achieving the top grades of A\* to C and this target-setting is now played out against the backdrop of the fear of privatisation if there is any slippage or failure. So, every year resources are targeted at increasing the number of students achieving the thresholds for the top grades, and these grades do matter.

Students need C grades to get into college or on apprenticeships, except that this year the grade boundaries were changed and many students did not get the grades they were expecting or their teachers had predicted. Perhaps 10,000 or more students will lose college or apprenticeship places as a result and it is now clear that the exam regulator, Ofqual, has taken steps to cap and ration the number of top grades on offer.



Incredibly, this year they changed the grade boundaries between the exams taken in January and those in July. So, thousands of students, who would have achieved a grade C had they taken the exam in January, were awarded a D grade in July, and this has happened to many students in the school where I work in Tower Hamlets. Now Ofqual tell us that they set the grade boundaries for allowed grades at GCSE based on the scores children obtained when they left primary school, in effect saying secondary education does not matter, does not have an impact on what those students achieve.

For years teachers have been accused wrongly of having low expectations of the students we teach but here is a government body at the behest of Michael Gove, no matter what he has said in parliament today let's be clear, this is under the influence of Michael Gove, here is a government body putting a defined cap on achievement. Congress, this is a rationing of qualifications and education and it is working class students who will suffer. Combined with the abolition of the education maintenance allowance, the trebling of tuition fees, and youth unemployment at one million, this is the biggest attack on working class aspiration and ambition for generations and we have to resist it.

Congress, this whole situation shines a light on what this Government thinks of young people and the games they are prepared to play with their life chances. The NUT applauds the decision of the Wales Education Minister, Leighton Andrews, to order a re-grading of the exams sat by students in Wales and we call for this Government to do the same and to launch an independent inquiry into what happened. (*Applause*)

Congress, this situation opens up the opportunity for a deeper discussion about how we judge schools, how we support schools, and how we assess students. The current high stake system of exams, targets, and league tables, is not used in other high-performing systems. This is a debate our Movement must engage with and shape. Do we want exams with fixed numbers set at each grade or do we want criteria referenced exams, like the driving test or music exams? Do we want to use exams as a filtering mechanism to divide society or should there be a ladder which creates a culture of lifelong learning and achievement?

Michael Gove knows what he wants and he is going to use the opportunity to drive through further selection, further divisiveness, and further privatisation. His interests are not the same as ours and they are not the same as the children we teach. We have to decide what we want, engage with the debate, and put the arguments as forcefully as we can. I move. (*Applause*)

**Sean Vernell** (*University and College Union*) seconded Emergency Motion 3.

He said: This issue, Congress, is a class issue just like any other issue, such as pay, pensions, and the attacks on the welfare state. It is just another example of how this Government is protecting the pathways of privilege and power for the children of the wealthy by denying access to decent jobs and higher education. It is another vicious attack on the young working class kids in my college, other colleges, universities, and schools around the country, like the fees campaign, like the capping of fees, like the EMA; they are attacking once again our young people.

You just heard from the last speaker how they have rigged the examination system. Teachers, parents, and students up and down the country are absolutely enraged by what is actually taking place at this moment in time. How they have done this has been explained, the moving of the boundaries. Take, for example, my own college. I teach in a further education college in North London. I teach young working class kids who sometimes have found it difficult at school, have come as a second chance into further education to do better at their English. In my last year, 64% of my students achieved an A to C grade; this year 28% of my students. I have had students in tears, phoning me up asking what to do. Many of them had places to get into apprenticeship courses. I do not know if people saw last night on Newsnight two students who were being asked to discuss what they thought of what was taking place. One student talked about how he had a place on an apprenticeship but no longer can he go onto that apprenticeship. That is taking place for thousands of young people and especially in further education colleges where we teach young people to re-sit their GCSE examinations. It precisely hit hardest the most vulnerable students, and particularly it is an equality issue; BME students as well are particularly hit by these changes.

So, once again, you can see what this is about, a class attack on our young working class kids, to stop them going up the ladder where they feel they can achieve these kinds of things. Each and every year we have been told by governments that we have to teach and teach our students to pass tests. Our teachers do it fantastically well and have managed to do this. Now, they are trying to change the goalposts again, the A\* grade, just in case somebody squeezes through the gap to climb the ladder. When

that does not work, when we still manage to get our young people to get As and Bs, they hate the idea that our kids can do as well as the rich and powerful.

We have to be very clear, I think, Congress. Support this motion and make sure that we do get the re-grades, like the Welsh Minister has done. It is only fair. Our governments wonder why our young people take to the streets and riot in the way they did a summer ago, when we have the attacks on the EMA, the attacks on our fees, and other attacks. We have to say, stop attacking our young people, they need justice, and we have to be the ones that provide hope for them. Support this motion.

*(Applause)*

**Brian Cookson** (*NASUWT*) supported Emergency Motion 3.

He said: Colleagues, everyone in this room will be acutely aware of the huge publicity given to the issues surrounding the English GCSE results. Many of you will know students that have been affected by the reduction in numbers achieving grades C and above. The Secretary of State maintained an eerie silence for over two weeks but would no doubt be rubbing his hands in glee watching the story unfold, the inaccuracies and perceptions abounding within a complex scenario. For a man wedded to the 1950s curriculum and a return to O-levels where limits were applied to the number of candidates passing every year, this was maybe a gift or the result of pressure applied to lower pass rates to ensure that so-called grade inflation did not take place. If confidence in the system is destroyed, then the path to the end of the GCSEs is made so much easier for him and we should be scared, very scared, by that prospect.

A robust examination system maintains standards year on year. The role of Ofqual and the awarding bodies is to ensure the maintenance of standards and any interference in this spells the death knell of a system that fairly and transparently accredits the work of students. The system must not be manipulated in terms of numbers. It is the quality of the work that matters and not the quantity or number of students that pass. Add to this the crude accountability regime imposed on schools based upon exam results, and you create a highly toxic mix. Confidence must be restored quickly and effectively. The debate must not fuel the Secretary of State's damaging intentions. It is essential we have examinations graded fairly without political interference based on the quality of work consistently and fairly accrediting achievement in a way that is fully understood by all stakeholders. Achievement is what must be accredited. The biggest losers of a system that relies on quotas of passes will be those we most want to encourage, many from poorer backgrounds. An elitist system must not emerge from fuelling the debates related to the number of passes but focusing on investigating what truly happened and taking robust remedial action, if required, so no individual candidate is disadvantaged by the awful events of this summer. Support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** I am now going to put EM3 to the vote. The General Council is supporting.

\* *Emergency Motion 3 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Congress, could I now draw your attention to Appendix 3 from page

185 of the General Council's Report, which is the TUC Accounts. The auditor is present on the platform. Does Congress accept the Accounts as set out in the appendix? (*Agreed*)

I now call formally Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3. Delegates that completes the formal business of Congress. I now ask Congress to adopt the General Council Report. Is that agreed?

\* *The General Council Report was ADOPTED.*

### **Votes of Thanks and Presentations of Gold Badges of Congress**

**The President:** Congress, I now wish to make a number of votes of thanks to those who have contributed to the smooth running of Congress. They will be brief because of the time but they are very sincere and heartfelt.

First of all, I would like to move a vote of thanks to the staff of the Brighton Centre for all they have done to ensure that Congress has run so smoothly. (*Applause*) I would also like to move a vote of thanks to the stewards for all their assistance during the week. Thank you very much, indeed. (*Applause*) To my colleagues on the platform and to all the TUC staff, who don't just operate this week but who spend months preparing for this Conference. Thank you very much for your professionalism and dedication.

I would also like to thank the verbatim reports – Phyllis Hilder, Linda King and Mike Thear. Colleagues, if you have occasionally drifted off listening to some of the

debates, have a bit of patience to them. They don't only have to listen to it and write it down. Thank you very much, indeed. (*Applause*)

To our visitors who have listened to us throughout the week, I say thank you, and to the tens of thousands of workplace reps, who upon which our trade union Movement is built, thank you for all you do. (*Applause*)

Congress, it is now time to say farewell to a number of colleagues on the General Council: Paul Noon from Prospect is retiring from the General Council at this Congress and has served on the General Council for 11 years, leading on environmental matters. Paul, I have great pleasure in presenting you with the Gold Badge of Congress. (*Presentation made amidst applause*) I invite you, Paul, to address Congress.

**Paul Noon** (*Prospect*): Congress, it is a great honour and a particular pleasure to have the Gold Badge presented by my own General Secretary. I have been a member of the GMB and before that Apex for 38 years. When I started work in 1970 it was natural that I should not only join the union, the Civil & Public Services Association, but also become active. My dad had been active in the CPSA – he will be watching this on line today – and a delegate from that union to Congress. My paternal granddad was a postman in Crewe and a lifelong member of the UPW. My maternal granddad worked at Crewe Railway Works. Many of my relatives were in the National Union of Railwaymen. I have always been grateful for the example that they set me, an example that I have always tried to live up to. It has mostly been a pleasure being on the General Council. There have been odd moments, maybe of

irritation and tedium, but they have been more than offset by the highlights, including, particularly, dancing the salsa until daybreak in a nightclub in Bogata with the General Secretary elect of the TUC and others. I think that Frances was dancing the salsa. My dancing owed more to the rum than to the rhythms. There are other examples that I could give, but time does not permit that.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to my own union, Prospect, and to thank, particularly, all the lay representatives and full-time officers who have worked so hard with me to make Prospect a genuinely cross-sectoral, growing, professional trade union, providing the best possible services to members individually and collectively. I am sure that Prospect will go from strength to strength. I know that the TUC will, too. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Colleagues, Jonathan Baume from the FDA has served on the General Council since 2001. Jonathan, I have great pleasure in presenting you with the Gold Badge of Congress and in asking you to address Congress. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

**Jonathan Baume (FDA):** President and delegates, I, too, accept this Gold Badge with great pride – again, as with Paul Noon, as a GMB member myself since the mid-1980s – from you, Paul, as President. I joined NALGO in 1974 having just left university, and my father was a life-long member of NALGO. It was in 1982, exactly 30 years ago, that I attended my first Congress in this very hall as a young CPSA delegate. That week I seconded a motion on the problems of unemployment and its



effects on women. Thirty years on our debates are still dominated by problems of the economy and unemployment.

Over my 38 years as a trade union member, I have witnessed many changes in society, politics and the economy. I think the financial crash of 2008 is a catalyst to further profound change. I don't think anything will be quite the same again. But over those 38 years, representing the most junior staff as well as more recently, chief executives and other senior managers, I have learnt that there is one constant. Regardless of your role in the workplace, regardless of your socio-economic background, gender or profession, you face much the same problems and you need a union by your side. I think that the TUC is all the stronger for the diversity of its membership. We should never allow the inevitable debates and differences to become so profound that they threaten the breadth and scope of the Movement as a whole. History shows that our influence is at its peak when we can speak as a broad church. It has been a great privilege to have had the opportunity to strive for social justice and fairness in the workplace with NALGO and the CPSA, as a member of the TUC staff and, since 1989 working for the FDA. I would like to thank everyone who I have worked with throughout those years and, of course, in particular, all my friends and colleagues at the FDA who have allowed me the opportunity of such an enjoyable and fulfilling career.

I thank, too, Brendan, Frances and the staff at the TUC. I was very proud to have been one of your colleagues. I wish you every success in the very challenging years ahead. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

**The President:** The next General Council member who will be retiring from the Council is Alison Shepherd from UNISON, and former President of Congress. Alison has served on the General Council since 1995, and she was only the third lay delegate to hold the post of TUC President. I have enjoyed working with Alison tremendously. Her contribution to the General Council has been just fantastic. I have great pleasure, Alison, in presenting you with the Gold Badge of Congress and inviting you to address Congress. (*Presentation made amidst applause*)

**Alison Shepherd (UNISON):** Thank you very much, Paul, and it is very nice to have a badge which says “Union and Proud”. My own Congress said “Unions making a difference”, so I think it will go very well with that, because unions do make a difference to our working lives, and we should all be very proud of being trade unionists. We do make a difference and we are the solution to so many issues.

I always used to scribble on my notes when I was chairing events, seminars or conferences saying “Don’t forget the staff” because it is very easy, when you are winding everything up and rushing home, that you forget to say all the thank yous, so I want to get that in first. First of all, I would like to say thank you to UNISON, my own union, to all the people who I have met and worked with, because everybody makes a difference. Everybody makes a contribution and everybody helps you to make your part of the union work.

One thing we learn is that everybody is different. Everyone has different skills and no one has a monopoly. It is the teamwork which makes the difference to being in a trade union. Thank you very much, UNISON. You have been fantastic to me, and I

have made some of the best friends that I am every going to make, so thanks.

*(Applause)*

Like the other retirees, I think we all joined at around the same time. I joined the former NALGO in 1972 when I left college and went to work. It was a pretty natural thing to do. Someone came round and said, "Would you like to join the union?", and I said, "Yes, of course", because that was just so logical and so expected. I did find some of my pre-contractual staff and it was all old local government things and it was expected that people belonged to the union, and if you were not belonging to the union you had to report why that was not the case. I think the early legislation probably swept that away by the time I started work but I thought it was really quite interesting. The other automatic thing was, of course, that I joined the pension scheme, and jolly glad I am of it, too.

I need to say that I do not believe anything about it being a golden age and that all the old battles we fought were the best, that we were wonderful and all the rest of it. Quite honestly, you organise from where you are, with the skills, knowledge and the contribution that you make now. I think now is as good a time as any to be an active trade unionist. We are certainly needed. We have a terrific role to play within the union and the country. We make a difference to the way our society works. As we have seen this week, the top quality knowledge and experience we have in this room, the people we have heard from, I know that we've got it all. We are there to make the big difference.

This is a good time to go as well because it is now an all-women team at the top. Frances and my very good friend, Lesley, who was one of the people who moved my vote of thanks, is taking over as the next President of the TUC following Paul. I do not find it at all strange that we have an all-women team, because I have always worked with active women leaders, often active young women leaders, and they have always been present. As we know, there are more women than men in membership of the trade unions now. If Frances and Leslie can help to get that message out *there*, that will be absolutely great. So thank you very much, everybody, and thank you, Paul. You've been a great President. I have really enjoyed working with you. I will miss all my friends and colleagues within the TUC who have been fantastic, and I will miss the General Council as well. It is not all blokes around the table, as some people would think. There has been a lot of friendship, a lot of good humour and a lot of absolute passionate commitment to make lives better for working people in the society we live in. Thank you very much everybody. I've had a great time being an active trade unionist. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Colleague, Paul, Jonathan and Alison will be greatly missed. Their contributions have been absolutely fantastic. Congress, I would also like to mention George Guy from UCATT, who left the General Council during the year.

Congress, also leaving us from the General Purposes Committee is my old mate from the GMB, Phil Davies, and I am proud to call him "my mate", who will be retiring later in the year. He has done a fantastic job. I made a tribute to him earlier in the week and I am happy to repeat it. He is a fantastic person. He has done a great job

on the GPC and a great job for workers in this country. Good luck in your retirement, Phil. *(Applause)*

The GPC will also be losing Mike Clancy, who is actually coming on to the General Council, which gives a balance, because as Brendan leaves, he being a staunch Evertonian, he is replaced by a Mike, who is an even more staunch Evertonian and somebody to sit next to Ged, so he will not be alone.

I am sure that Congress will want to show its appreciation for the contribution and commitment of all the colleagues who are leaving the General Council and the GPC. I would ask you to put your hands together one more time. *(Applause)*

Just to confirm what Alison slipped out the bag that the next President of the TUC, I am proud to say, who will take office from the close of business today, is Lesley Mercer, from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists. *(Applause)* I wish Lesley well and I hope she enjoys her year as President as much as I have done.

Congress, before I present the Gold Badge of Congress to the General Secretary, I would like to say a few words about Mary Barber. Mary started work in the TUC International Department in March 1978 where she worked for 21 years. She met Brendan, apparently, on her first day at work in the lower sub-basement, where the staff play table tennis. Apparently, and I'm letting you into a little family secret, their pet private sweetheart names for each other are "Ping" and "Pong". I'll leave it to you to work out which one is which. *(Laughter)* They married three years later in 1981 in one of the great ironies that falls to trade unionists. They married on a Friday

because the registrars were on strike on the Saturday. Mary and Brendan have two wonderful daughters, Amy and Sarah, and she in her own right has always been a fantastic trade unionist and a fantastic support to Brendan. She is a good friend to many of us here today.

Mary, we are pleased that you are here at Congress, and I am delighted to be able to present you with a small gift as a token of our appreciation and thanks. *(Applause)*  
Mary, please say a few words to Congress. You have been telling him for years what he should be saying.

**Mary Barber:** President and Congress, I am Mary Barber, former TUC member, former GMB member and Brendan Barber's warm-up act. *(Laughter)* It's a brave man who gives his wife a microphone and an audience. It is true that we met in the lower sub-basement on my first day at the TUC. I have a lot to thank the TUC for, and the best thing about it was, obviously, the husband. We had other things in common besides table tennis. Brendan, by the way, is still very good at table tennis. This year he won the silver medal in the TUC table tennis championships. So he's still got it. *(Applause)*

We had other things in common. We were both born in sedate seaside towns. He comes from Southport and I come from Eastbourne. Both our dads were bricklayers, and we are both Everton supporters. Actually, that's a lie. I wasn't an Everton supporter when I met him but I am now. When I can't sleep at night, I go through the Everton squad. If that fails, Brendan talks me through his latest round of golf. *(Chuckling)*

The most important thing we have in common is a commitment to the labour and trade union Movement to its values of solidarity, social justice and decency and fairness at work. We will, obviously, follow the TUC's activities with a close interest and support everything that you all do. I am so happy that Frances is going to be the next General Secretary because she is going to be completely outstanding.

I would like to say that I spotted Brendan's talents and potential when he was young and when we met, but I didn't. I had absolutely no idea that he was as talented as he is. I don't intend to sing his praises because you know his abilities. He is a kind, good and very tolerant person. I am not going to do a Michelle Obama and talk about him like she talked about Barack.

Finally, it's been mostly wonderful being Brendan Barber's wife, but I was particularly happy when Brendan went on one of his first international trade union conferences and I worked in the International Department. Everybody who he met who knew me said, "You must be Mary Barber's husband." (*Laughter*) He still is and I am very happy about that. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Mary. Congress, as you know, Brendan Barber, our General Secretary, will be retiring at the end of this year and there will be other opportunities for colleagues around the Movement to make their contributions to Brendan and to thank him for the work that he has done. I think it was pretty clear from the standing ovation that Brendan was given after his address that there is a depth of feeling, warmth and support, gratitude and thanks not just for Brendan

Barber, the General Secretary of the TUC, but for Brendan Barber the man, the trade unionist, the person who has spent his life caring about those less fortunate in our society. I can say, during the past year, that I have probably got to know Brendan much better than I probably would ever have had the chance to do. I have been absolutely amazed at his desire, fire and passion to secure a better life for working people in this country. Perhaps his measured approach at times tends to mask, hide or confuse some of our colleagues about his intent and desire, but let me assure you that he is as passionate and as much as a firebrand as anybody in this hall. Brendan, it has been an honour to have worked alongside you. I have great pleasure in presenting you with the Gold Badge of Congress, and I hope that you will consider everybody here as not just your comrades and colleagues now but your friends in the years to come. *(Presentation made amidst a standing ovation)*

**The General Secretary:** Congress, this is my most difficult speech of the week. Paul, first, thanks so much to you for this kind words and for this Congress Gold Badge which I have seen presented to so many other good colleagues over the years, and which I will certainly treasure in the years to come.

I am particularly pleased that my badge has your name on it, Paul. You have been a great friend and colleague and it is so fitting that your badge proclaims our pride in being trade unionists. You have had a fantastic year as TUC President, and a terrific week here in Brighton steering the Congress with calm authority but also with wonderful good humour. Paul, you have been a joy to work with. *(Applause)*



Congress, what a week we've had with victories already registered on the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme and even on 'Monti II', and let's hope for another win, that today's report on the Hillsborough tragedy at last brings some comfort to all those suffering families who have waged such a brave campaign to find the truth for the last 23 years. (*Applause*)

As you said, Paul, I have a few more months to serve before my final farewells, but as we come to the close of this, my last Congress, it is a particularly poignant moment for me. This Movement, the TUC, has been my working life and it has given me so many opportunities and so many wonderful friendships, too. The last 37 years have been a fascinating journey. When I first walked through the doors of Congress House in 1975 the TUC was absolutely central to the life of the nation. It was deeply engaged with the then Labour government in constructing what became known as the *Social Contract*. The historians focus on the breakdown in that agreement, which led to the so-called 'Winter of Discontent', but you must remember that that understanding, initiated by the TUC, succeeded in bringing inflation down from over 25% to under 10%, and embraced the establishment of institutions like ACAS and the Health and Safety Executive that endure to this day.

That period was followed by the turmoil of the Thatcher/Major years, and the onslaught on everything that this Movement stands for. We were labelled *The Enemy Within*. Those were tough and difficult days and there is no disguising the damage that was done, but amidst all the darkness this Movement showed its resilience, too. When they brutally banned unions at GCHQ, for example, we simply would not go away. We campaigned with dogged determination in the snow, wind and rain in

Cheltenham every January on the anniversary of the ban, alongside those brave men and women who were sacked because they simply refused to give up their union card. Remember, one of the first acts of the Labour Government was to give back to GCHQ workers their trade union and human rights. That was a hugely important victory. Of course, more, much more, could and should have been done by the Labour Government of 1997—2010 to support people at work and trade union renewal. Nevertheless, through the twists and turns of the last 40 years, we have remained a formidable fighting force. Of course, all our spirit and determination is needed now as we face a Coalition Government whose policies are causing such destruction in our economy and across our communities.

When I think about over these years, and perhaps the last 10 years in particular, there is so much to be proud of. As the abject failure of the Government's economic policy is being ever more exposed as each day passes, we are, undoubtedly, winning the battle of ideas on the need to shape a new progressive future. I would like to think that the TUC has won wide regard and respect for the high quality of all the work that we do right across the policy agenda. But we are not only winning the arguments. We are mobilising as never before. March 26<sup>th</sup> last year saw ordinary people in unprecedented numbers rallying behind a TUC banner, as we saw again on our Day of Action for Pensioners' Justice on November 30<sup>th</sup>. I am confident that October 20<sup>th</sup> will, again, bring the nation together in a powerful and united demand for this Government to change course.

Our policy and campaigning work is hugely important, but we have made great strides in other areas, too. Our commitment to equality is now, rightly, central to all

of our work and increasingly reflected in all of our structures, in a way that would have been unrecognisable to previous generations of trade unionists. Our international work remains hugely important, whether delivering absolutely vital solidarity to workers right across the globe from Colombia to Fiji or in giving leadership closer to home in Europe as we continue to grapple with a deep economic and social crisis.

Our work on skills, the establishment of our dedicated learning organisation, *Unionlearn*, now delivers new opportunities and new life chances to around a quarter-of-a-million people a year. One of my most moving days in the TUC was when I received around a dozen letters from members together on a literacy course, each telling me that that was the first letter they had ever written in their lives and they decided to use that letter to thank their union and the TUC for giving them that chance to transform their lives.

I am also proud of our work with so many unions, giving support to their efforts to resolve sometimes desperately difficult disputes, often working behind the scenes, sometimes late into the night. I've had my share of pizzas and fish and chips in the search for settlements. What I have learnt over the years is that we have always been most effective when we have been most united, and let's be clear. That's not an easy option. It's tough and difficult sometimes to find the give and take, the generosity of spirit, that's needed to build a unified Coalition. It is a lot easier to achieve in rhetoric than in reality. Although we have not always succeeded, I have always tried my very best to build that unity.

Paul, you said kind words about me, but whatever has been achieved down the years is the result of a fantastic team of highly talented and hugely committed people right across the TUC. Let me thank them publicly for everything, again, that they have done to organise this week's successful Congress.

Let me also put on record my huge appreciation for all the kindnesses and personal support that the TUC staff have always given to me, none more so than Claire, who has been my endlessly patient and utterly dedicated secretary for the last 19 years, and who is the one person in Congress House who can actually read my writing.

Let me publicly thank, too, Mary and my two wonderful daughters, Amy and Sarah, whose patience, love and support has been so important to me, particularly on some of those difficult days at home with the family when the phone just never stops ringing and a problem is proving particularly intractable.

Finally, when I told the Executive Committee of my decision to step down I said that one of the reasons why I thought the time was right was my confidence that the leadership of the TUC would be passed into very, very good hands, and that confidence was borne out by the wisdom that you have shown in giving Frances such a strong and a decisive mandate to succeed me. I know that she will not only be the first women General Secretary but, undoubtedly, a very, very fine General Secretary. She is tough and smart with a good brain and a big heart. So I urge you to give her the backing and support that she will need, not only in making the easy decisions but the hard ones, too.

At the end of the year, when I finally pass on the torch to Frances, it will be quite a wrench for me and a step into the unknown, but I will make that step with optimism for the future, with hope in my heart for this Movement, which still has so much to do on behalf of the millions of people we are privileged to represent and, above all, with enormous thanks to you all for the chance to serve, the solidarity and, above all, the friendship that this Movement has given me throughout the whole of my working life.

Thanks. (*A standing ovation*)

**The President:** Colleagues, this is the bit he doesn't know anything about, by the way. Many thanks, Brendan. Just stay where you are for a moment. You mentioned in your remarks the pride you felt about the TUC's role in securing the restoration of trade union rights at GCHQ. In recognition of your role in that historic victory, I would like to invite Fred Jarvis to present you with a very special gift. Colleagues may know that Fred was the President of Congress in 1987, so I am especially delighted to invite the trade union Movement's very own resident paparazzi to make this presentation to Brendan on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his presidency. Fred.

**Fred Jarvis:** Thank you very much, President. I gather I am the oldest Congress President present here at Brighton this week, which dates me somewhat. I go back in TUC terms to 1975 when Brendan began working for the TUC. I began my membership of the General Council then and we worked together. He was secretary and I was chair of a number of committees, and in that connection I quickly came to appreciate his great abilities, his judgment and his courage. I learnt to tolerate his support for Everton. After all, we can't all be West Ham supporters, and maybe we wouldn't want to be, anyway.

As the President has said, at a TUC dinner Tony Blair said that I was Labour's own paparazzi. I was very thankful that he didn't say "New Labour's own paparazzi", because otherwise I would have been up to move an amendment straightaway. I took pictures at various General Council dinners over the years, and I am very grateful to the colleagues at those occasions who were so tolerant. I assure you that I didn't flog any of the pictures to *Private Eye*, but what I did do over the years was to take pictures of many marches and demos, organised not only by my own union but by the TUC. They were demos about health cuts, education cuts, the council tax, pensions and various others, but the occasion which I valued most in terms of the pictures I took was in respect of GCHQ. I do have a picture for Mary because we discovered that we share a common interest in photography, and I took a picture at the first march in which you will see that those in that picture were none of what you might call "the usual suspects". They were, clearly, people on their very first march. I don't think they had had many marches in Cheltenham before the GCHQ issue arose. What was very encouraging and something to admire was that they were at the last demo as well. That's a measure of their loyalty to the cause that we were demonstrating for. Of course, the best occasion was the victory march. This was the occasion – I don't know whether you can all see it, but I can assure you that it was pissing down that day (*Laughter*), or as they would have said at GCHQ "Il y avait beaucoup de pluie ce jour-là" – when they carried on the march. They were soaked to the skin but they were triumphant. I said to Frances some weeks ago that I would love to present *this*, my best demo picture, to Brendan as a token of appreciation of his terrific work as General Secretary and also, more personally, the help and

encouragement he gave me over the years with my exhibitions at Congress House, the last at which raised over £7,000 for the North London Hospice.

Brendan, this is a measure of the importance of the occasion which you yourself have stressed. I hope, in time, when I have also given Mary her picture, that you will put them both up and, as you have your croissant, cornflakes and coffee, you will look up at the two pictures from time to time and say, “That’s what it’s all about, the struggle, the battle, the campaign for justice and basic rights.” Brendan, it gives me a great pleasure to give you this gift. (*Applause*)

#### **Vote of Thanks to the President**

**The General Secretary:** Congress, I call upon the Vice President to move the Vote of Thanks to the President.

**The Vice President** (*Michael Leahy OBE*): Congress, it is a great honour and privilege to move a vote of thanks to the President. As a Welshman, I can say that he is big. He is not tall and he is certainly not from Porthcawl. He is, uniquely, Paul Kenny. Actually, he comes from London, from a family of Irish immigrants, and his first job at 15 was in a brewery. With a background like that, is it any wonder that he has been a great President of the TUC and the General Secretary of GMB. A trade unionist he was at any early age, and a full-time officer since 1979. He has done an unprecedented job in his own union where his union has grown in membership since he became General Secretary in 2006; getting the first recognition agreement in Asda, and he has campaigned tirelessly in such campaigns as *Sedric the Pig* against the fat cats and concerns about private equity, Southern Cross, tax evasion and pensions.

His stewardship of the GMB since 2006 has seen a significant growth in membership, and I think there are very few of us in this room that can claim that success. I am sure you will agree with me when I say that Paul has been a great President of the TUC. As my good friend and colleague, Bob Crow, said in his vote of thanks to the President, he is the lovable Arthur Daley of the trade union Movement.

At the General Council dinner he was in top form making his speech to the General Council. In his attitude all week, I am sure you agree with me when I say that he has been a credit to the trade union Movement with his wit, incisiveness and humour. I hope you agree with me – I know you will agree with me – that he has been a great ambassador for the whole trade union Movement, and for his union, the GMB. Thanks for the red light, boys. *(Laughter)* Montesuma's revenge. He has demonstrated that not only this week but all the year round. Paul, on behalf of Congress, our warmest and heartfelt thanks for your stewardship of the TUC over the last 12 months. You have made the TUC and its six million members union and proud. Thank you. *(Applause)* I would now like to present Paul with the Gold Badge of Congress and a little memento, a gift, on behalf of all of us, with sincere thanks. You have been a brilliant President. *(Presentation made amidst a standing ovation)*

**The President:** Thank you, Michael. Congress, thank you for all your support and patience this week, particularly my friends in the GMB. I have not seen as much of them this week as I would normally like to and I apologise for that. It is back to business as normal as from Monday.



Can I just say to all of you, and again repeat the issue about our lay member activists, thank you for all you do for the Movement. Everything we do and everything we are able to achieve is built on that cornerstone of organisation locally. Let us not just preach to the Government on the basis that you cannot cut your way out of a recession. Let us also remember that we have to organise our way out of a membership decline. That is my hope for the future.

As I move now, unfortunately, to declare the 144<sup>th</sup> Congress closed, we are going to roll a short video and slide show. Thank you very much. Have a safe journey home everybody. I declare this Congress closed.

*(Congress video shown)*

