

THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 7TH JUNE 2005 MORNING SESSION

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Conference. We must, first, listen to the health and safety video.

(Health and safety video shown)

THE PRESIDENT: I remind Congress that questions on

the Accounts should be submitted by close of play today. Please hand them into the Congress Office which is situated behind the platform.

Let me give Conference advance warning that if we complete our business this morning with time to spare, we may bring forward the Housing debate which is scheduled on the programme for Thursday morning.

We had a wonderful time last night at the Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region. On behalf of all the delegates who attended, thank you very much. I want to announce that the sum raised was £800 for their charity. *(Applause & cheers)*

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT - BIRMINGHAM AND WEST MIDLANDS REGION

1. Membership & Recruitment

Total membership	53,011
Women membership	17,175
Section membership (by each Section):	
Clothing & Textile	320
Commercial Services	5,319
CFTA	2,376
Energy & Utilities	5,029
Engineering	14,216
Food & Leisure	3,521
Process	1,976
Public Services	16,548
Grade 1 members	38,891
Grade 2 members	6,572
Sick, retired & unemployed members	3,842
Total number recruited 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	14,358
Gross increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	3,404 decrease
Net increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	2,877 decrease
Membership on Check-off	36,065
Membership on Direct Debit	8,438
Financial membership	49,305

RESPONSE TO CULTURE CHANGE

Since the introduction of Accompanying Representatives in line with Section 10 of the Employment Relations Act of 1999 we have seen within the Region less dependency on full time Officers for grievances and disciplinaries. Also we have made a point of stressing to Branches that they too have a responsibility for representing members within the workplace. This has given us the ability to divert resources, i.e. full time Officers to organisation strategies as opposed to dealing with day to day issues within the workplace that Shop Stewards and Branch Secretaries should have been doing and now are. The responsibility of Branches to submit an annual recruitment plan in line with the Rule 37.1b helps to maintain a focus on recruitment and organisation within the Branch structure. These recruitment plans are now submitted by almost every Branch in the Region and they are monitored to ensure that the plans are being pursued as vigorously as possible by the Branch. The Branch also within the plan identifies any extra resources that they may need to achieve their planned recruitment targets. I am therefore of the opinion that the culture change put forward in 1997 is now fully accepted by the Branches, Activists and full time Officers within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

From January 2003 through to the end of December 2004 recruitment and organisation has continued to be a priority within the Region. The Region had been organised into four distinct areas, however,

during 2004 we decided to split that down the three areas. This re-organisation came about as a result of the recent VER exercise. We also in 2004 moved from a very old and unsatisfactory Tamworth office to a new office in Tamworth that complies with the disability legislation and is also a bright and modern office as would be expected of a Trade Union in the 21st Century. We have continued to see the shift in membership from the heavy manufacturing based membership to significant increases in public services membership. As at the 1st January 2003 our overall financial membership stood at 52,182 members, the sectional membership in engineering was at 17,003 which by the end of December 2004 had dropped by 2,787 members to 14,216. Public services membership stood at 14,510 members at the beginning of the year in 2003 climbing by 2,038 members at the end of December 2004 to 16,548 members. However membership at the end of December 2004 had reduced to 49,305 this reduction was primarily due to a housekeeping exercise within the Region. Although there is a significant shift in grades of membership and types of membership from heavy engineering to public services we are also mindful within the Region that we need to ensure that we continue to expand our membership base by recruiting and organising greenfield sites wherever possible.

Since January 2003 to 31st December 2004 recognition agreements have been signed with the following companies:-

Stafford Rubber
 Volvo Truck & Bus Limited
 The Brick Business
 Linpac Material Handling Limited (Paxtons)
 ACE Ceiling Products Limited
 LBJ Sheet Metal Company Limited
 Atherstone Industrial Coatings Limited
 BPI Recycled Products Limited
 Oakside Solutions Limited
 Alchem Contract Services

The following companies have also been targeted but as yet no recognition agreements have been signed:-

Britvic Soft Drinks
 Signature Limited
 Jackstone Limited
 I Force Limited
 Keiper Limited
 Securitas Guarding
 Milk Development Council
 DHL Red
 Stoneridge Pollock
 Nationwide Auto Centres

The Region continues to only provide direct debit application forms for new targeted companies and wherever possible we are still encouraging members to transfer from check off to direct debit. Although 2003 and 2004 have been somewhat difficult years due to a fall in membership but also internal problems within the organisation I would still like to place on record my thanks to all the Activists, Officers and Staff within the Region who, regardless of these problems, have put a tremendous effort in to ensure that the Region attempts to grow and continues to provide a first class service to our membership.

OVERVIEW OF THE REGION'S ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The unemployment figures across the Region stood at 86,000 which is 3.2%. However, within Birmingham as a city the figures make some stark reading. Within the constituencies in Birmingham the figures are a lot higher, in fact, Birmingham Ladywood and Birmingham Sparkbrook and Small Heath showed the highest unemployment rate in an analysis of a House of Commons Library Research Paper. Birmingham Ladywood has an unemployment rate of 17.3%, Birmingham Sparkbrook and Small Heath is 13.4%, Birmingham Hodgehill 9.3% and Birmingham Perry Barr at 7.8%. Also manufacturing within the West Midlands continues to be hit very hard. As at the end of December 2004 total UK job losses within manufacturing amounted to 352,390, the West Midlands Region was the hardest hit suffering total job losses within manufacturing of 48,112. Although the Government continue to state that they have a strategy for manufacturing and publish fine looking documents the facts are

that there is not enough investment going into manufacturing and funding needs to be made available and Regional Development Agencies should be given greater power and flexibility with regards to job creation and job security and yet again as in line with my last report to Congress there is still no decision being made on whether we join the Euro which does have a significant impact on companies being reluctant to invest within Britain.

2. General Organisation

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	Nil
Regional Organisers	14
Recruitment and Organisation Officers	2
Regional Recruitment Officers	1
No. of Branches	118
BAOs	0
New branches	Nil
Branch Equality Officers	12

3. Benefits

Dispute	£8,430.40
Total Disablement	Nil
Working Accident	£8,305.65
Occupational Fatal Accident	£3,870.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	£2,166.00
Funeral	£29,696.00

4. Journals & publicity

Since the launch of our regional magazine, GMB Centrepoint, this has become a focal point for communication with our membership and Activists within the Region. Our regional website is also now well established which now has a dedicated site within it for school support staff. Also in 2004 the Region launched a charter for school support staff and held a conference within Birmingham City Centre which was attended by over 150 delegates. This charter has now been adopted by other neighbouring local authorities within the Region. There have been many TV and radio interviews by GMB Officers throughout the area throughout 2003 and 2004 and there have been dozens of press releases issued over many different subjects, redundancies, pay disputes, pension problems, industrial action, manufacturing and also safety in the security industry. We have also placed adverts in newspapers across the Region and also we have regular adverts in the Morning Star and I have had intermittent articles printed in the Birmingham Evening Mail. Our aim within the media is to raise the profile of the Region in a positive light as opposed to continually seeing the Union's name in the papers for what can be perceived by some to be negative reasons such as strike action. I am of the opinion that the manner in which we have handled our media strategy has helped us to achieve just that.

5. Legal Services

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	2,308
Legal Assistance Granted	2,308
Cases in which Outcome became known	
Total	918
Withdrawn	497
Lost in Court	-
Settled	£1,066,691.20
Won in Court	£372,973.40
Total Compensation	£1,066,691.20
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	1,390

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	121
Cases in which Outcome became known	
Total	64
Withdrawn	16
Lost in Tribunal	4

Settled	29(£157,504.36)
Won in Court	-
Total Compensation	£157,504.36
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	58
(c) Other Employment Law Cases	
Supported by Union	19
Unsuccessful	1
Damages/ Compensation	£1,500
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004	11
(d) Social Security Cases	
Supported by Union	44
Successful	19
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004	7

6. Equal Rights

The past two years have seen some changes in the make-up of Equal Rights in the Region, with the appointment of a new Equal Rights Officer - Martin Bevan. The main focus for RERAC in the Region is to raise the profile of the GMB as the champion organisation for addressing inequality issues for our members and potential members in the workplace and wider society. In raising the profile within the Region, Officers can link into these issues and use them as part of their recruitment strategies.

The present Committee consists of 7 female and 2 male members; along with a male representative from the Regional Race Committee, a male LGBT representative and a female disability representative who attends on an advisory basis. A significant number of delegates attended the Equal Rights Conference held in Regional Office, which incorporated a range of speakers from across the Region. The last Conference focused on equal pay and women's safety issues in the workplace. Delegates subsequently returned to their workplace and assessed safety policy and risk assessments, to see if their employers took women's safety issues seriously.

The Birmingham and West Midlands Region continues to champion lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender issues, with articles and advice circulated to members through the medium of the regional magazine. Future debates within RERAC will focus on diversity and how we can integrate various nationalities into the workplace and society.

REGIONAL RACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

The principle aim of the Committee is and always has been to advise Regional Councils, Committees, Officials, Lay Persons, Employers and Members on the retention, recruitment, representation and rights of black, Asian and all ethnic minority workers in the Birmingham and West Midlands Region.

The work of the Committee and the principles involved are now of higher importance than ever before. As the multicultural element of our society grows the potential for misunderstanding also grows. The GMB with its cross culture membership more than ever before, can and should influence people's attitudes and promote a greater understanding further expanding the excellent work the Union has already carried out in relation to racial equality and racial awareness.

The Committee of seven, three Asian, two Afro-Caribbean and one English (two females, five males) although small is dedicated to the task facing both union and society, though at times lacking support from other people and groups has continued to work with and support GMB union members.

The main focus of the group has been to build and maintain links with the various ethnic groups, this has been done by various means, but direct contact has proved to be the most successful.

Officers of the Union, including the Regional Secretary, Joe Morgan, attended the Vasakhi Festival earlier this year. At this festival the GMB promoted its stance against racism; this was welcomed by all but especially by the elders of the Sikh community. The degree to which the profile of the GMB was raised became evident during subsequent meetings when, at both schools and companies, references were made to the GMB attending the festival.

The attendance of the GMB at the festival enabled talks with the Sikh elders at the temple in Telford which has resulted in permission to hold monthly surgeries at the temple. The Committee is now liaising with other temples within the region with a view to expanding this approach.

The Committee considers that young members are the future of both the GMB Trade Union and racial equality in general and has always campaigned not only to raise awareness amongst young black and ethnic groups but also to raise their confidence in the Union and the concept of unionism thus leading to them joining the GMB. Whereas members can then be organised and empowered to have a say in their future and carry the message to friends, colleagues and associates in all walks of life.

The Committee has in the past been working under strength and has at times relied on just a few dedicated individuals, who I thank wholeheartedly for their support. It is hoped that the future will see a visible change in attitude and a commitment by more colleagues engaged within the Union, branch members and all its associated organisations.

The future aims of the committee are to take forward all the excellent work carried out so far and build upon the substantial foundations laid down by previous Officers and Committee Members. We as a society need the GMB to continue to bridge the gaps that exist within our multicultural workplaces and ensure that EVERYONE is treated fairly and equally by creating a healthier workplace culture.

7. Youth Report

Having only recently assumed responsibility as Young Members Officer for the Birmingham and West Midlands Region I would like to set out a report of my activities thus far that have been specifically aimed at encouraging new young members into the GMB and conclude with my future aspirations for both increasing the membership and supporting this group of members within our Region.

REACHING OUT TO MEMBERS AT MUSIC FESTIVALS/FETES:

Attendance at the V2003 and V2004 festivals held at Weston Park gave a high profile for the GMB in the Birmingham and West Midlands Region. On both occasions that we attended the V Festival research was carried out over a period of three days by dissemination and completion of questionnaires. The main aim was to identify young people's knowledge/interest of the Trade Union Movement. It consecutively highlighted that there remains a lack of knowledge regarding the role that Trade Unions play within the workplace and ignorance surrounding the issues that we have been stalwartly fighting for - such as age discrimination linked to the minimum wage. Several of our Young Members attended these events and have continued to support ongoing campaigns.

REACHING OUT TO MEMBERS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES:

Over the last few months links have been forged with various local schools, colleges and universities. Young GMB Members within the universities specifically have shown interest in organising their own cohort. Meetings have taken place with these key activists who have been equipped with a variety of resources to aid recruitment and organisation. We are currently in the process of assessing how we can support their activities through developing links with other agencies that are housed within their complex such as job centre plus and other committees.

Presentations have been ongoing in local schools and colleges in order to increase awareness of the role of a Trade Union and how they can become activists. The most successful presentations identified have been to students who are about to join the workforce. We also have permanent notice boards within several of these vicinities where consistently updated information is available on working rights and moreover how to join the GMB.

REACHING OUT TO MEMBERS USING ICT:

Following the compilation of our Regional Website there can be viewed a page that is specific to our Young Members Section. This is currently being updated.

Clearly there remains a lot of work to do to reach out to the younger generation if we are to keep the Union buoyant. My future aspirations as the Young Members Officer within this region are many.

Regularly evaluating and updating facilities for our Young Members such as our regional website and building up links that are appropriate to this section of the membership is crucial if we are to be successful.

Linking back to the Branches, I aim to host a young members regional conference by inviting Branch Secretaries, Branch Youth Officers and other identified activists to bring their own ideas and aspirations. This will enable a platform to work from to hopefully establish a coherent framework that will not only aim for an increase in membership but to also mobilise more activists. After all the younger members are the future of the Union.

8. Training

The figures below represent the last two years. Advanced training which was provided by National College was taken up by the GFTU & TUC courses.

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
Initial Support Training	-	137	41	178	-
Introduction to GMB (3 days)	7	87	25	112	784
GMB/TUC Induction (4 days)	6	87	19	106	636
Health & Safety Induction (3 days)	6	65	26	91	546
(b) On Site Courses					
Regional Committee	1	4	0	4	4
Interviewing techniques	-	-	-	-	-
Branch Secretaries seminar	2	9	0	9	18
School support staff	1	7	2	9	9
Bullying & Harassment	2	12	2	14	28
Risk Assessment	1	4	0	4	4
Job Evaluation	1	15	3	18	18
(d) GFTU courses					
Advanced Pensions	1	3	0	3	3
Bullying & Harassment	1	4	3	7	7
Public Speaking for women	1	0	4	4	4
Employment Law	1	5	0	5	5
(f) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
Shop Stewards & safety reps	5	9	4	12	60
Computers	3	10	2	12	36

9. Health & Safety

The Birmingham and West Midlands Region has continued to carry out the Union's policy with regard to health and safety. We continue to offer advice and assistance to our representatives, by providing both an information service and workplace visits when requested. During the past two years the Health and Safety Department has been involved in recruitment campaigns within the Region and has played a major role in organising new workplaces. Organisers have been briefed on how they can use health and safety as a recruitment and organising tool, using the National *'Making Your Workplace Safer'* publication and linking with the Health and Safety Department for researching safety issues and problems.

The Department has been driving health and safety issues and raising awareness throughout the Region, thus highlighting the GMB identity and profile. This has been achieved by using the Research and Media Officer to promote health and safety successes and campaigns in the media and helping our representatives produce material for the press and engaging in health and safety research. Health and safety information has been placed on the West Midlands website and features regularly in the Regional Magazine - Centrepoint.

In the last two years the Health and Safety Department has been involved with the HSE in a research project concerning GMB representatives' knowledge of stress in the workplace. This has recently been published under the title "UK Worker Representatives Views on the Causes of Stress in the Workplace". The Health and Safety Officer has been elected onto the IOSH National Public Service Group and is a member of the National Safety Symposium group, which organises one of the UK's most prestigious safety events. All of this further raises the profile of the GMB at national and regional levels.

(Adopted)

(Bro. J. Morgan (Regional Secretary, Birmingham and West Midlands) formally moved the report)

(There were no questions raised on this section of the report)

(The report was adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that you have already been given five documents. During the course of this morning, you will be receiving a sixth document. The first is Emergency Motion 1: Migrant Workers. Emergency Motion 2: ASDA. Emergency Motion 3: Rover and the Phoenix Group. Composite 35: Public Ownership - Coal, Utilities, Water and the Railways. You have also received recommendations on contributions and benefits. The document on lay reps' expenses are to arrive a little later.

Colleagues, you have all received your goodies this morning. The Nestle Selection boxes, which are

on your tables, are from Rowntrees, made at the Fordham factory in Newcastle. The factory has 600 workers and 100 per cent GMB organised. The Union has been in place as long as the factory, since 1957. We have with us in the hall today Steve Southward who for seventeen years has been the GMB Convenor at Nestle as a visitor. Welcome, Steve. *(Applause)* Steve, would you thank our members for sparing their time from producing 500 million Rolos and 50 million pastels made each week for delegates to enjoy. If you think I am giving you my last Rolo, you're mistaken. I would like to thank Jude Brimble and Robert Badlan for the part they played in helping to organise this treat. Here is the good part. You cannot open them or eat them in this hall. I have told you. Whether you agree with me or ignore you, I have told you. You can have them for lunch. That is a decision of the management of this conference centre. Thank you Jude and Robert.

FOOD & LEISURE SECTION REPORT

This report is submitted to Congress 2005. Although the report covers a two year period, Congress will be aware that Jude Brimble as National Officer took responsibility for the Section from March 2004 following the appointment of Harry Donaldson as Regional Secretary to GMB Scotland and the voluntary early retirement of Gerry Veart.

The Food & Leisure Section membership remains pretty static, with membership as of January 2005, standing at 81,042 although this figure is slightly down on December 2004 figures of 81,431. In real terms this does represent a growth given the closures which have taken place across the sector during the last two years.

The Section continues to focus on achieving growth against a difficult background of changing technology, restructuring and competition. This is particularly apparent in food and drink manufacturing and distribution where competition remains fierce between companies within the sector. Many of the well known brands, Nestle, Findus, and Birdseye have continued to lose their market share to supermarket branded products. At the same time, the cost of raw materials is ever more difficult to pass on to supermarkets as aggressive pricing competition continues to intensify with supermarkets having the power to continuously drive down costs. The effect of this has seen massive profits for the retail sector and job losses, factory closures, and reductions in terms and conditions for GMB members.

Whilst job losses in food manufacturing have been less than other sectors of manufacturing, some 4,000 job losses in 2004, it is small comfort for those on the receiving end.

Elsewhere, within the leisure and hospitality sector, this remains a buoyant growth industry, the opportunities that this sector offer for GMB growth are huge and GMB have been quick to take advantage of these opportunities that have been presented, particularly in the gaming industry. However, this sector of the economy is also extremely difficult to break into and recruit a substantial membership. This is an area that we need to re-look at for future growth and an area where vulnerable workers are often exploited and in the most need of protection that a union can offer.

Overview of Section

The Section National Committee continue to play a key role in promoting the advancement, development and recruitment of members across the Section and continue to keep the national officer apprised of key developments within the workplace.

The current membership of the Committee comprises:

Jean Foster, Section President, Southern Region
 Margaret Clarke, Birmingham Region
 Stephen Quigley, Lancashire Region
 John Bradley, Liverpool, N Wales and Irish Region
 Lena Sharp, London Region
 Sandra Allen, Midland & East Coast Region
 Rachelle Wilkins, Midland & East Coast Region
 Richard Robinson, Midland & East Coast Region
 Paul Grieve, Northern Region
 Cathy Murphy, GMB Scotland
 Pauline Russell, GMB Scotland
 Cath Manning, Yorkshire Region
 Val Monger, South Western Region
 The National Committee is serviced by Jude Brimble, National Officer

Meeting and Business of National Committee

The National Committee has continued to meet on a regular basis since the last Congress and has covered the following key areas of work.

- Recruitment and development, National and regional strategies
- Negotiations: Asda, Birdseye, Cereal Partners, distribution, hotel and catering
- Section Conference 2004, planning, organising and reporting
- Working Time Regulations
- Works Council
- Work of Banana Link
- CEC Special Task Group Working Party

The Committee expressed its thanks to Ida Clemo, of the Research Department for her work and support in these areas.

All meetings of the National Committee were minuted; all minutes were approved by the CEC and distributed through GMB regions.

Food & Leisure Section Conference 2004

The biennial Section Conference was held in Scarborough at the Royal hotel, from 17th-18th May 2004.

The Conference was attended by forty delegates including the National Committee and ten regional officers. Also in attendance were Harry Donaldson, GMB Scotland, Regional Secretary, Phil Davies, National Secretary, Jude Brimble, National Officer and Allan Black, National Officer, who all at the time had some national responsibility within the section, following the voluntary early retirements of national officer colleagues and the appointment of Harry Donaldson as GMB Scotland Regional Secretary. Ida Clemo and Charlie King, Research and Policy Officers were also in attendance.

The Conference was Chaired by Jean Foster, Section President. Guest speakers were: Mary Turner, National President, Kevin Curran, General Secretary, Charlie King, GMB Research Policy Officer, Debbie Coulter, Deputy General Secretary, and Amnesty International.

The Conference opened by receiving, the incoming National Secretary's Phil Davies' report that covered the Union's financial position, re-organisation of duties, recruitment and key issues affecting the industries, NMW, equalities, part-time work, working time. Reports were also received from the outgoing National Secretary, Harry Donaldson on Asda/GMB agreement and a presentation on partnership working. Reports were also given by Jude Brimble, National Officer and Allan Black, National Officer, on industrial areas of responsibility within food manufacturing, distribution and leisure. Regional reports were received and accepted by the Conference.

A delegation from Terry's of York addressed Conference regarding the proposals to close this historical site and move production to Poland. Conference delegates joined the campaign by signing petitions

and the local media covered the debate.

An outstanding contribution was also made to the Conference from London delegate Katrina Girdane Bendo on the recruitment of young migrant workers within the UK and the exploitation of young migrant workers across food and leisure industries, particularly restaurants and hotels.

The Conference received eighteen resolutions, all were accepted and covered, Section Conferences, Working Time Directive, Fixed Term Contracts, Foreign Labour, Dominance of Big Supermarkets, Recruitment and Organisation, Health and Safety, Absenteeism Policies, Break Entitlements, Fair Trade, 24 Hour Society, Campaign against Terry's of York Closure, Life Long Learning, Two Tier Workforce, Export of Manufacturing Base.

Although the 2004 Conference was smaller in numbers of delegates, due to the financial constraints, it was nonetheless, a lively, busy and forwarding looking Conference.

People 1st - Learning Skills

A new learning skills council was established in 2004, covering the leisure and hospitality industries. GMB holds the one trade union seat. The new body covers a diverse range of industries including hotels, restaurants, pubs, tourist attractions, the gaming industry and catering.

The official launch took place in December 2004 at the Imax Centre in London.

Key issues for discussion have included the need to develop a wide ranging national strategy for NVQ training across the entire sector and the needs for companies to invest in training of their workforce, to reduce staff turnover and to change the image of the sector.

TRIG (Tourism Review & Implementation Group)

This is a new industry/government body that has been set up to look at employment, training and development of the tourist and leisure industry within the UK.

The group was established in the summer of 2004 and is made up from industry and GMB hold the TUC seat. Through this group, GMB have been able to have broad based discussions on a range of employment issues affecting this growing economy of leisure services, with key employers within the industry.

Section Involvement - Government Consultations

The Section has been involved in making representations and responding to government initiatives, legislation, regulations and lobbying in the following areas:

- Low Wage Commission
- Working Time Directive
- Gangmaster Licensing and Regulations
- EU Sugar Regulations
- Food Manufacturing Sustainability
- Sustainable Tourism
- Power of the Supermarkets

Hotel & Catering

Jarvis Hotels

2003 pay negotiations concluded the following increases:

Provinces 18 years plus £4.50

Young persons 16 -17 £3.80

London & M25 18 years plus £4.68

Young persons 16 -17 £3.99

2% increase on other grades above 4.91 per hour

Supervisor's grades increase: 25 pence, 30 pence and 35 pence depending on grade

2004 pay negotiations concluded:
 a minimum rate for all permanent employees from October 2004 as:-
 Provinces 18 years plus £4.85
 Young persons 16 -17 £4.10

London & M25 18 years plus £5.03
 Young persons 16 -17 £4.29
 2% on all other grades

An increase in annual leave, reaching 25 days after 5 years.
 Unsociable hours
 Split shift - it was agreed to now fully phase out the last few areas where split shift working was still in operation.
 Child care policies

Bourne Leisure (Butlins)

- 2003 pay increase 2.5% increase on all a-c grade
- 2004 pay increase 2.8% increase on all a-c grade
- working party set up to review skilled workers rates and allowances

Negotiations have continued to secure recognition for all employees via the Midland & East Coast region and recruitment at the Skegness site remains high with approximately 90% membership. Recognition must go to the stewards' team for their excellent work in this area.

CORCA Agreement -- National Joint Council

GMB continues to hold the Secretaryship of CORCA for the trade union side which includes, USDAW and TGWU. National meetings have been reduced to three a year by mutual agreement.

Pay negotiations for 2003 concluded:

- Bar staff £4.50 per hour
- Category 1 - £5.00 per hour
- Category 2 - £5.32 per hour

Pay negotiations for 2004/2005 resulted in

- Bar staff £4.85 per hour
- Category 1 - £5.50 per hour
- Category 2 - £5.85 per hour
- All these rates are the minimum standards for CORCA affiliated clubs

Roadchef

2003 pay negotiations concluded a two year deal resulting in 3%

2004 pay negotiations concluded 3% or RPI whichever is greater and 1 additional day's holiday after 2 years' service.

In December 2004, the Company announced a major organisation review on its IT and administrative functions across the business, affecting thirty-one job losses at the head office in Gloucestershire and some ninety jobs across twenty Roadchef sites.

At the time of writing this report, a consultation process was just beginning at site level. Discussions had taken place regarding re-deployment, job pools, pay protection and a redundancy packages; discussions are still ongoing. It is likely that the process will take until November 2005 to complete.

Also at the time of writing, we are awaiting the company's response to re-establish the national shop stewards' forums and partnership on training agenda, following a lack of meetings, the previous year due to re-structuring and commitment in the estate projects.

GMB is still progressing the negotiation of the outstanding issues of the Employees Share Option Scheme (ESOPS). This case still has considerable legal and technical problems to resolve. However, progress is being made and we are aiming to be in a position to consult members in March/April 2005.

Distribution

3663

During 2003/04, extensive negotiations had been ongoing with the company, involving shop stewards, the National Negotiating Committee and the three trade unions involved with the company on proposals to change holiday, sickness and bank holiday working and payment arrangements across the three operating divisions. The proposals also included a buyout agreement of £1,000 for each employee. The negotiations were concluded in May 2004 and accepted by the membership following a full ballot.

Parallel negotiations involving the National Negotiating Committee, a Joint TU Steering Group, ACAS and GMB Productivity Services, also took place to establish a job evaluation scheme, to be applied to grades under the NJC agreement across the three operating divisions of the company. Agreement was concluded on the scheme at the end of 2004. Discussions on devising joint training for stewards and managers were in the final stages at the time of writing this report. It is envisaged that during 2005, the job evaluation will be rolled out on a site by site basis.

2003 Pay Negotiations concluded the following settlement:
3.5% on all basic rates and fixed allowances

2004 Pay Negotiations concluded the following settlement:
3% on all basic rates and fixed and non-fixed allowances

All medicals requested by company or individual costs to be met by the company.

Morrison/Safeway

After much speculation during 2003, as to who would successfully bid to buyout Safeway's retail and distribution operation, Morrison emerged as the buyers in 2004, following a reference to the Mergers and Monopolies Commission.

Since the Morrison's takeover, real concerns have mounted from GMB members across the in-house and third party distribution centres in relation to job security. Morrisons have embarked on a strategy to sell off all their small sites, convert the Safeway lines to Morrisons and continue to develop state of the art new build distribution depots, centred around the Midlands, all of which have resulted in a downturn in volumes, with some sites experiencing redundancies.

After repeated requests for meetings and following a national shop stewards meeting in June 2004, Morrisons finally agreed to meet with GMB to discuss our concerns.

Despite a constructive meeting and reassurances regarding job security, Morrisons continued to disregard local agreement procedures and seemed to have developed a stance of no communication.

In January 2005, joint national stewards meetings were held with TGWU who organise the existing Morrison distribution sites. A joint national stewards committee has now been established, together with a sub group to undertake work on terms and conditions comparisons and to establish a national bargaining agenda. A national members' briefing has also been produced. At the time of writing this report, the trade unions are awaiting a response from Morrisons regarding the need to establish national discussions and to agree proper structures and procedures across the 'new' company's distribution network.

Asda

Asda stores continue to be managed through the agreed structures of the regional quarterly meetings, national shop stewards' group, the National Forum and the Annual National Delegate Conference.

The 2004 National Delegate Conference signed off the new agreement, "Fit for the Future", which while accepted was certainly not ground breaking but it was viewed as a step forward. Part of the arrangement within the new agreement was for the exchange of membership information to take place,

however due to issues around data protection, this exchange, as yet, has not been achieved and is still the subject of ongoing discussion.

Relationships within stores and regional level appears to improve in terms of a warmer approach and engagement, however, there has been ongoing issues regarding de-skilling of Butchers, Bakers and Fork Lift Truck Drivers. The National Delegate Conference debated a wide range of issues from Asda Distribution network.

Asda continue to grow their network to supply their growth on stores acquisitions. However, this has created a number of problems for GMB as this growth has created more non-union distribution centres which allows Asda to bring pressure to bear on the GMB unconvened sites whenever there are areas of potential conflict such as threatening to withdraw volume and redistribute around the network.

The new model of agreements designed to cover these new sites did not include collective bargaining arrangements, which has led to significant criticism in the past. However, given that these sites are non union, the agreements were seen as a strategic development of gaining recognition in the first instance, while at the same time not prohibiting the ability at local level to grow the membership base to a level where we would gain full recognition rights by applying to the Central Arbitration Committee.

Recently, when colleagues in the Northern region ran a ballot at the Washington RDC8 depot for recognition, Asda produced some of the most scurrilous, blatant and anti TU propaganda we have ever encountered within the UK. Also within the Northern region, Asda ran a ballot at the GMB unconvened depot where we do have collective bargaining rights, in the hope that members would vote to move to the new model agreement which did not provide for collective bargaining arrangements.

Again this is being challenged by the region by taking a case to tribunal based on Asda's attempt to induce trade union members to give up their collective bargaining rights which is deemed to be in breach of employment law under recent tribunal decisions.

I can also report that I accompanied the General Secretary when we met with Tony DeNunzio, Asda Chief Executive, to discuss relationships between Asda and the GMB.

The General Secretary made it clear about where GMB wished to be in terms of relationships within Asda with regards to:

- Recruitment
- Growth
- Improving our members' terms and conditions

He made it abundantly clear what GMB wanted from the relationship and how, if we did not move on within this area, the GMB would need to reflect, review and develop an alternative approach within Asda which would assist GMB in growing our membership base.

The General Secretary set out a clear agenda with Tony indicating that he wanted to move forward but had concerns regarding some of the regional relationships.

Asda remain at this point to be committed to the creation of a two tier workforce within Stores and Distribution which continues to cause real concern to GMB and our members.

Health and safety within Distribution has been removed from being national and mainstream to being local and individual, however, we continue to seek the re-establishment of a national structure. Attempts to request national negotiations within Distribution has also been tackled at this stage but there has been an indication that they may be interested in developing some form of relationship of a national nature, but not at this stage for wages and conditions regulations.

National distribution shop stewards meeting continue to be a key forum to allow exchanges of information and network building with key steps having been agreed at the earlier meeting this year to enable this forum to be more proactive across distribution.

Finally, a small strategic review team has been set up at senior management level within the GMB to

monitor our strategic involvement within Asda and to consider the future.

Food Manufacturing

Rank Hovis McDougall

This company continues to be owned by Doughty Hanson & Company. The view to float the company on the Stock Exchange in 2002 has remained on hold.

RHM have relaunched a number of its well known brands during the last twelve months, as part of its campaign to retain its position as a lead market player. The Company have recently undergone restructuring at managerial level and are currently reviewing their human resource structure across the different divisions.

At the time of writing this report, February 2005, discussions were taking place in relation to proposals to change the existing pension scheme due to financial deficits. Although, the scheme will remain a final salary scheme open to new starters

British Bakeries

Negotiations have continued to centre on developing the partnership agreement which was signed in 2000. To this end, the company have been reviewing a range of outdated HR policies, improving communications and developing life long learning initiatives at site level.

2004 saw the completion of a new 'employment security' agreement which was endorsed by GMB members via a ballot.

British Bakeries as a business within the Rank Hovis Group are also affected by the current discussions on the pension scheme.

United Biscuits

Key issues within this company during 2004 were in relation to proposals to close the final salary scheme, due to financial deficits the scheme was facing. Through lengthy negotiations, agreement was reached on a new set of proposals that saw some changes to benefits and increased contributions. However, the scheme remains open to new starters and has been retained as a final salary scheme. The proposals were accepted by members via a ballot.

There have also been a restructuring programme and consolidation process which saw the closure of the factory in Ashby-de-la-Zouch

Pay Negotiations

United Biscuits

A two year pay negotiation was concluded in 2004 with an increase of 3% and 2005 uplift would be in line with RPI plus 1/4%.

Danone

As part of a three year European programme to re-structure the biscuit operation within Danone, restructuring and efficiency programmes were completed with the UK and Irish sites. With all targets for reducing the cost of production per tonnage being met. However, despite the savings being made, in 2004, Danone announced the sale of its UK and Irish operation to United Biscuits. The sale is now complete following a referral of the plans to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. At the time of writing this report, discussions with United Biscuits are about to begin in relation to the transitional arrangements for integrating the Danone part of the business, future bargaining arrangements, and pensions and facilities for shop stewards. The merger now sees United Biscuits as the key player in the UK biscuit sector, and also makes GMB the largest union within the company.

Nestle-Rowntree

A three year pay deal was concluded in March 2004 giving up uplifts of:

- (a) 2004 - 3.25%
- (b) 2005 - headline rate of inflation plus 0.5%
- (c) 2006 - headline rate of inflation plus 0.25%

The head line rate for 2005 and 2006 to be used in calculating the increase is as published in March of these years.

2007 will see pay negotiations being carried out at site level across the entire Nestle Group.

New recognition and procedure agreements were signed in 2004 which establishes new local bargaining structures, together with a national forum for key corporate issues.

At the time of writing this report, discussions were ongoing in relation to agreeing a national framework agreement on consolidation and information structures.

During 2004, structures were also changed for the Nestle EWC, UK seats were reduced from four to three with meetings increased to two a year. GMB retain a seat, the UK co-ordinating role plus a seat on the European Steering Group which meets four times a year. All GMB EWC positions and roles are now filled by lay members.

Arla Foods

Arla Foods merged with Express Dairies in 2004 as the milk and milk products industry continued to consolidate. An 18 month pay settlement was concluded in order to harmonise the Arla financial year with Express Dairies; the deal takes us up to April 2006 and comprises:

- 2% effective from 1st October 2004 for all grades
- 3.25% effective from 1st April 2005 for all grades except distribution who will commence separate negotiations in April 2005
- an increase in Christmas day payment from £115 to £120
- an increase of 9.6 pence per hour effective from 30th September 2004.

Food Manufacturing JIC

2003 an increase of 3.1% rise applicable to all rates for a 39 hour working week.

Minimum wage rates

London £187.12 Elsewhere 186.72

2004 pay negotiations concluded an increase of 3% rise applicable to all rates for a 39 hour working week.

Minimum wage rates

London £192.70 Elsewhere 192.50

Discussions were ongoing as to the future of the JIC, particularly as the rates were only keeping pace with national minimum wage levels.

(Adopted)

SIS. J. BRIMBLE (National Officer, Food & Leisure): I move the Food and Leisure Section of the General Secretary's Report.

Conference, the details of the negotiations are in your report, so I would like to take the opportunity this morning to address a couple of the key points and issues which are facing the sector at the moment: globalisation, exploitation and, of course, organisation.

Let me deal, first, with globalisation, and in particular the power of the supermarkets. ASDA, Sainsburys, Tesco's and Morrisons have different names but they are the same animal, all chasing the corporate dollar with no accountability and no regard for corporate social responsibility. Welcome to the wonderful world of Wal-Mart. The celebrity adverts

might paint a happy and respectable picture, but it is not very respectable if you are the ASDA worker at the end of anti-union bullying tactics. It is not very respectable when you look at the abuse by supermarkets, the sort of power that supermarkets have which allow global players to use ever increasing bullying tactics to drive down the cost of suppliers. I am talking about the power which allows a handful of companies to dominate at an international level supply to demand.

We saw the devastating effect years ago in the UK and in the States when ASDA/Wal-Mart started selling Levi jeans at knock-down prices. Thousands of jobs were lost and thousands of factories were closed.

The process has not stopped. In fact, it has

deepened. The demand for cheaper food and goods has seen an aggressive push for lower wages, harder work and longer hours. Many workers are losing their jobs across the manufacturing and supply sides. Good traditional jobs have been lost. Communities have been devastated as more companies source goods from abroad as the price pressures continue in the international race to the bottom.

I am afraid we have seen the results in this country. We have witnessed the closure of the Bird's Eye profit making factory in Grimsby. Jobs have been lost. We have seen the closure of the historic site of Terry's of York - jobs lost. We have all seen and bought the "bogof" - the "buy one get one free". Who can resist them?

It is usually the GMB members who get bogged off somewhere down the line as price pressures and profits start to pinch and it is not very respectable, wholesome or happy when you look at the supermarkets' complicity in the exploitation of migrant workers. They might hide behind the concept of agency labour; they might pass the buck in terms of responsibility and they might try and dress it up in codes of practice, but it is still exploitation, it is still immoral and it is still in their backyard.

The demand for cheap ready washed salads might be convenient but it is a different story if you are that migrant picker, washer, packer who is criminalised in the press and labelled "illegal". There are no illegal workers, just illegal systems which allow the exploitation of innocent workers in pursuit of a better family life, whilst the gangmasters, agencies and employers have enjoyed a virtual amnesty under UK law.

The whole global machine is working at full speed as food is manufactured and moved around the world at the expense of local communities and workers in pursuit of cheaper products and in pursuit of more profits. You only have to look at bananas, the most profitable food on any supermarket shelf and then you look at banana growers, who are some of the poorest farmers in the world. Welcome to the wonderful world of Wal-Mart.

In the hospitality sector the position is no different. Global names dominate the industry, pushing for higher integrated transnational systems of employment, encouraging low wage and low status jobs. A transnational workforce makes it more difficult for unions to organise them, thereby making it more easy for employers to exploit them. In every bar, every hotel and every restaurant that you and I have ever been in we have seen it when we have had a drink pulled, a bed turned down and a meal served. We all know that person.

Conference, this is the challenge for the GMB - to organise the workers, to organise the unorganised, to name and shame the exploiters, especially the household names, which trade on our consumer

loyalty whilst at the same time trading on the backs of low paid, low status, often young, often women and often migrant workers.

Whilst we welcome the Government's move to introduce the Gangmasters' Licensing Act, it will be no use to workers if it restrict itself to agriculture when the gangmasters and agencies don't.

That is why the GMB is calling on the Government to stop the trafficking and exploitation of migrant workers. We want a campaign to introduce legislation in all areas of employment, on and off the farm, from the production, processing and packaging to the shelf stacking, serving and selling. We face a big challenge and a big responsibility, but it is our challenge and our responsibility.

It is a challenge that the GMB has to face if we are to be the true trade union voice which represents workers in retail distribution, food production and the hospitality industry.

Conference, in the short time that I have been involved in the Food and Leisure Section I have consulted with the National Committee, I have had discussions with regional colleagues and I have had discussions with the General Secretary to develop a robust strategic organising strategy for growth, a strategy that consolidates our membership, opens up new areas where opportunities lie and a strategy with a political campaigning edge which puts GMB members firmly in the centre of everything we do and everything we say.

We do have to grab the opportunities and face the challenges. I believe that we have the talent, enthusiasm and optimism to meet those challenges ahead, to grow our membership and, importantly, to organise our membership. I pledge my commitment to meeting those challenges in the next 12 months. I move my report.

THE PRESIDENT: Pages 61? 61? 63? 64 and 65? Does Congress agree to accept this section of the General Secretary's Report?

(The Food and Leisure Section Report was adopted)

FOOD & LEISURE

THE RIGHT TO RECRUIT IN ASDA STORES FROM DAY ONE

MOTION 208

Congress calls for GMB Union who already has recognition to improve their rights for GMB members to recruit within the ASDA stores from day one of employment for new employees.

A15 - ASDA BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move Motion 208. President and Congress, the present system of recruiting Union members as ASDA is unsatisfactory, obstructive and unfair. This is proved by the fact that branches have to wait for six months before they are allowed to recruit in any new store. We are then shoved into a pokey room at the back of the store where, hopefully, from the manager's point of view, interested colleagues cannot find them. It is every individual's fundamental right to join a union, so why is ASDA being so difficult? We know the answer. Basically, they do not want to know us. It is only through sheer determination that union reps persist with their recruitment programmes, faced with a culture of obstruction and, sometimes, hostility.

We are not allowed to attend any inductions and we are mentioned once only in their terms and conditions. ASDA has undermined the Union's efforts for too long. We have a duty to our membership to fight this appalling lack of co-operation. ASDA needs to understand that a better working relationship with the Union will create a healthier shopfloor atmosphere for all concerned.

The recruitment ban for the first six months in ASDA stores is not a satisfactory arrangement. It must be regarded as the starting point for further negotiations. Many Union reps are being treated unfairly by the company and our fight back needs to begin now.

How do we do this? First, let us demand a lot more respect. Secondly, let's demand better communications and co-operation and, above all, when a new store opens, we must get in and recruit from day one.

Congress, I urge you to support this motion.

(The motion was formally seconded)

ASDA

EMERGENCY MOTION 2

Congress is appalled by the decision of ASDA on 31st May 2005 in proposing to make over three hundred redundancies at the distribution centre based in Washington SAC2.

We view this as an act of retaliation in response to our members' rejection of the company's position on pay and conditions of employment and an attempt to undermine our negotiating rights at this depot; the only depot where we have recognition in the Northern Region.

Congress agrees to a recall of the National Distribution Centre shop stewards to consider a concerted approach to this attack.

(Carried)

BRO. W. HUGHES (Northern): I move the emergency motion on ASDA.

Congress, it saddens me to have to bring this emergency motion before you this morning but, once again, ASDA, or probably its owners, Wal-Mart of Bentonville - I think that address is wrong. It should be Wal-Mart of Pentonville - have taken a decision to make more than 300 redundancies at the only distribution depot to have negotiation rights in the Northern Region. This is at a time when the GMB is currently balloting its members in an industrial action ballot concerning a pay dispute.

Union membership has been growing considerably due to the increasing unreasonable actions of ASDA management. It is also at a time when ASDA is in the process of building another distribution depot in the area with grant assistance from the local authority which, I am pleased to say, the local authority is now questioning. This is nothing more than a blatant attack on the workforce at this depot for being members of a trade union and refusing to sign away their rights to be a member of a trade union and to negotiate their pay on their behalf.

We have become used to ASDA's anti-trade union tactics in the Northern Region. Once again, they are not behaving as the caring employer they portray themselves to be, but as a big brother employer who plays with our members' jobs and livelihoods.

This motion calls for an urgent recall of the National Distribution Centre shop stewards to consider a concerted approach to this attack.

There comes a time when we have to say, "Let's have some real old fashioned trade union tactics" because surprise is the best form of attack. You may hear somebody say, "What about the legislation?" Does the employer think about legislation when he locks the factory doors and says not a word to his members? Does the employer, the Americans who had a purpose built factory and moved back to America with our members' pension money, think about legislation?

This motion calls for the bringing together of the shop stewards because of what is happening at one depot these people laugh at us. If we use the GMB logo, "Working Together: Unity is Strength" we can win the day. However, old fashioned tactics means surprise. Do not let us turn round and say that in three weeks' time we intend to withdraw our labour, because in three weeks' time our members will be doing six months work in trying to get the shelves filled and what have you.

Just imagine for once the ASDA logo on the telly, the hand on the trolley and the pat on the bum: "That's ASDA!" What that should be replaced with is "Ouch! That's the GMB".

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Billy. True to form.

BRO. J. CHEAL (Northern): I second the emergency motion on ASDA. Once again, I am trying to follow Billy Hughes. It is vitally important that the GMB takes a stand against ASDA. We will continue to support our members in the ASDA Washington Distribution Depot. Incidentally, it is the lowest paid depot of all the ASDA depots throughout the country.

As ASDA is responsible to its masters, Wal-Mart, whose attitude and actions towards unions are well documented, especially their scurrilous and cowardly attack on the GMB - our Union - it comes as no surprise to us that ASDA has decided to issue redundancy notices at this time. It is a coincidence that we have lodged tribunal claims against ASDA for offering inducements to our members to give up their collective bargaining rights at the Washington depot. If these claims are successful, we could secure more than £750,000 in compensation payments, so let's hope we are successful. We must have a co-ordinated approach to this problem. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No Response)*

CHEAP LUNCHES

MOTION 209

Congress calls upon the CEC to initiate a publicity campaign to emphasise the impact supermarket price wars has on our members.

Congress believes that there is no such thing as a 'cheap lunch' and recognises that every time a product or service is 'reduced in price' the consequence could be either the Pay/Terms and Conditions of GMB members in this country are reduced in value or a GMB job is lost abroad.

ANWICK & MID Lincs COMMUNITY BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region
(Carried)

BRO. V. RABBETTS (Midland & East Coast): I move Motion 209.

Colleagues, is there such a thing as a cheap lunch? I am not going to bore you with statistics. I am not even going to moan about the disgusting profits made by supermarkets or their bullying of suppliers. Nor am I going to waffle on about globalisation and liberal economics. No, colleagues.

I am going to make you an imaginary meal, consisting of chicken breast, tinned potatoes and frozen green beans. The chicken breast was a buy one get one free, the tinned potatoes was a value brand product and the frozen green beans was a "special" offer price.

The chicken breast was produced by a company that this year, in order to cut costs, wanted to

withdraw the company sick pay scheme, holiday entitlements and to reduce holiday payments. The tinned potatoes were from a company that did not give its employees a pay rise this year, again to cut costs. The frozen green beans were produced by a large conglomerate that has moved part of its production to Eastern Europe because the labour costs are cheaper. That meal was cheap to buy but cost a lot to the GMB members who produced the ingredients. It is not just food. Practically ever industry that the GMB has members in is either worsening the terms and conditions of its employees, cutting jobs or exporting their jobs abroad in order to cut costs so that the consumer - us - can have ever cheaper goods and services.

The problem is self-perpetuating because the person producing the tin of potatoes, not having had a pay rise, has to buy a ten pence tin of beans. They may also decide that the £2.15p they pay for the Union contribution could be better spent on food.

Colleagues, this motion is about raising awareness of the cost of the things we buy as opposed to the price. It is about making the consumer aware that in order to get a tin of beans for ten pence someone somewhere has to take a cut in their standard of living. It is about protecting the jobs and terms of conditions of our members. But most of all, it is about telling consumers that there is no such thing as a cheap meal.

BRO. J. NEEDHAM (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 209.

The farmers campaigned against the pricing policies of the supermarkets. They submitted claims to the Competition Commission. Even some suppliers, albeit very few, submitted claims to the Competition Commission as to the effect that the supermarkets' pricing policies was having on them.

We all know about the poor farmers struggling to earn a living and receiving next to nothing for his produce. It is just like the employers complaining of lower prices for their products.

Yet no one mentioned the farm workers or the food processes workers or how the pricing policies affected them and their families.

The Commission found, in its wisdom, that the supermarkets' buying policy was not against the supplier. I have a quote from a supplier which amused me, and the quote is: "It would be commercial suicide for any supplier to give a true and honest account of all aspects of relationships with retailers."

I have a quote from a chief executive of one supermarket: "Prices are lower now than they were a year ago. That is a sign that the fierce competition in the sector has benefited the customer".

Many people working in the food industry are on the minimum wage, yet one supermarket announced profits of £2 billion. I guess the other players will

now try to secure their share of the market.

Can we accept the supermarkets' claim that it is the consumer who demands cheap food? Yet the supermarkets seem to be the only ones which benefit. With one supermarket announcing profits of £2 billion, many people in the food industry are earning less than £10,000 a year.

Many of our members have seen their terms and conditions eroded by their employers who, rightly or wrongly, claim that the price that they receive for their products from the customer eaves them no alternative but to change terms and conditions or lose jobs.

Our members in the food industry must be some of the lowest paid of this Union's membership. The supermarkets' drive for cheap food is at the expense of the workers in the industry, but we are paying the price. My old employer did not give me and my colleagues a pay increase for three years. He attacked all of our benefits until we had none. Then the minimum wage came out. That sent shock waves through the gaffers but because my gaffer had a social conscience he had to find the money to pay the wage bill and to keep all of his employees in a good paid job and a lifestyle that they were accustomed to. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: I call Jean Foster to speak on behalf of the CEC.

SIS. J. FOSTER (CEC, Food & Leisure): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motion 208, the Right to Recruit in ASDA Stores from Day One.

Before I start, I would like to thank Margaret for her speech when she was speaking for all the shop stewards in ASDA.

President and Congress, recruitment is the lifeblood of our Union and ASDA should be no exception. Now is the time for the GMB to be visible in ASDA. Labour turnover is high and the morale of our members is certainly low. ASDA's policies are constantly contriving to curtail our membership. We cannot and will not wait for six months before we can enter new stores to recruit new members. We need to be in those stores from day one.

You do not get a second chance at a first impression. Whilst we wait to be allowed into new stores, ASDA has already indoctrinated its staff against trade unions, should unions be mentioned,

which is highly unlikely. Most new staff are not aware that the GMB Union is recognised or that such a trade union exists. This is not because we do not have a profile in the store. Far from it. We have an army of loyal and hardworking stewards who get involved at every opportunity in the Union - learning reps and health & safety reps - who are always trying to get the GMB's voice across, but this is a constant uphill struggle.

We must ensure that our stewards are supported and empowered. We should be working with ASDA alongside them, not constantly trying to find a way in.

My statement to you concerns what we are doing in ASDA. What has happened could have been an opportunity for a fresh start, to build a realistic membership database where we can target effective communication and ensure that we have adequate representation in all stores. We cannot leave recruiting to ASDA. They would love to see themselves as a trade union as well as one of the UK's best employers. We need to be part of the ASDA staff induction process and part of the staff pack for every new employee and we need to...pocket the difference, not ASDA, or as you said, Billy, "Ouch!" to ASDA.

Let me assure you on behalf of the members, the National Shop Stewards' Group and this Congress that the National Forum will be pressing home these issues with ASDA when we meet next week on 14th June. Our patience has run out. We, as Paul Kenny said, are not ashamed of belonging to a union, our great GMB Union. We deserve respect and our members certainly deserve respect. We, the GMB, are here and we are not going away.

In the words of Donna Summer - I am not going to sing it - "Enough is enough is enough". I urge you to support this motion.

(Emergency Motion 2 was carried)

(Motion 208 was carried)

(Motion 209 was carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, we now come to the CEC Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives. I intend taking the CEC Special Report and Motion 246 as one debate.

CEC SPECIAL REPORT: QUALITY JOBS QUALITY LIVES

1. INTRODUCTION

Since Labour came to power in 1997 the British economy has gone from strength to strength.

Unemployment is at a record low, we have enjoyed the most sustained period of unbroken economic growth for over 200 years and low interest and inflation rates are now taken as a given. The Chancellor has stated that under Labour there will be no return to 'boom and bust' and that a third term Labour

Government will achieve full employment - a long standing goal of the GMB and the wider Labour movement.

While Labour's economic achievements are beyond doubt, and while the impact of Labour's policies has improved the lives of millions of UK citizens this special report 'Quality Jobs, Quality Lives' suggests that more needs to be done particularly to improve the pay and quality of work in Britain.

Under Labour the gap between rich and poor has continued to widen. The richest 1% in Britain own 23% of the national wealth - the poorest 50% own just 5%. Hundreds of thousands of unionised, skilled well paid jobs in our manufacturing sector have been lost and the many of the new jobs which have replaced them are low pay, low skill jobs in the services sector. Job insecurity and poor work-life balance are real problems for people at work in 2005.

This special report suggests that more needs to be done to help the lowest paid. Quality Jobs, Quality Lives puts forward radical proposals for a new deal for the low paid emphasising the need not only for better wages in the low pay sector, but also better quality of employment and a decent work-life balance - the essential components of a decent job - which GMB believes everyone should be entitled to.

Quality Jobs, Quality Lives also suggests that the GMB focus on the recruitment and organisation of low paid workers - and that GMB takes the lead on campaigning on the issues that disadvantage the low paid through a radical anti-poverty campaign.

2. UK EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW 2005

The most recent figures show that the trend in the employment rate is increasing and the number of job vacancies is on the rise.

The employment rate for people of working age in the UK stands at 74.9% for the three months ending in December 2004¹. This means approximately 28.52 million UK citizens are in employment, an increase of 296,000 on the previous year and the highest level since comparable records began in 1971.

The unemployment rate in Britain currently stands at 4.7% meaning that approximately 1.41 million people are currently unemployed in the UK as of December 2004².

One unwelcome trend under Labour is the number of economically inactive people in the UK. The inactivity rate for people of working age is currently 21.3% - approximately 7.6 million people eligible for employment.

Over 2 Million people are on Incapacity Benefit, and a further 2 Million people have effectively disappeared, in other words, are neither working nor claiming any form of benefit

3. GROWTH IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR SINCE 1997

Since 1997 Labour has delivered and maintained record levels of investment in our public services - particularly health and education.

Recent research indicates that almost 50% of the new jobs created under Labour since 1997 have been in the public sector. The state now employs 25% of the UK workforce. In total, 861,231 additional public sector jobs were created between 1997 and 2004, taking the total number of people employed in the public sector to approximately 6.9 million. This represents a rise of 14.2% in public sector jobs since 1997³.

4. GROWTH IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR SINCE 1997

The private sector accounts for roughly 75% of the UK total workforce, in excess of 20 million employees.

There are now 14.2 Million people working in the just 11 sectors of the Private Services sector (Financial services, hotels, real estate, telecommunications, retail, leisure, air transport, distribution, sanitation/sewage, banking/insurance/pensions and hairdressing/cleaning). There are now over 4 million Small-Medium Enterprises (SME) in the UK employing over 12 million people.

Although not as rapid as public sector growth, private sector employment grew by nearly 100,000 in the period of 2002-2003⁴.

5. THE DECLINE IN UK MANUFACTURING

The creation of some 2 million new jobs since 1997 is contrasted by the alarming decline in UK manufacturing over the same period.

Under Labour, it is estimated that almost 800,000 UK manufacturing jobs have been shed since 1997⁵.

Provided below is the industry differentiation in terms of jobs lost and gained from the period of 1997 - 2004⁶.

Agriculture	- 73,800
Energy	- 26,056
Manufacturing	- 801,048
Construction	+ 336,920
Distribution, hotels, restaurants	+ 566,651
Transport and communication	+ 186,408
Banking, finance and insurance	+ 815,494
Public administration, education, health	+ 790,980
Other	+ 226,262

The decline of manufacturing is evident, as is the significant growth in the public sector as mentioned earlier. In private services, the rise of the 'call centre culture' and the service economy - is visible in the significant growth in banking, finance and insurance jobs, and via the creation of more vacancies in distribution and catering. This portrays the sea-change in UK employment from an industrial / production economy towards a service economy.

As the nature of UK employment has radically changed since 1997, so income inequality has increased and a substantial low pay economy has become manifested.

6. LOW PAY IN THE UK

7. WHO ARE THE LOW PAID?

Using a low pay threshold of around the £6 to £7 per hour range, it is estimated that there are between 6.5 and 7 million low paid workers in the UK today⁷. They comprise of:

- 4 million women (1 in 3 female workers) and 2.5 million men (1 in 5 male workers)
- 3.5 million full-time workers (50/50 between men and women)
- 3 million part-time workers (4/5 women)

8. WHERE DO THE LOW PAID WORK?

- The retail and wholesale sector accounts for more than 25% of the economy's low paid job
- Another 25% of the low paid are employed directly in the public sector, in health, education and social work
- 15% are employed in miscellaneous business services, including private security and contract cleaning
- A further 10% are employed in hotels and catering

The public sector accounts for a sizeable minority of low pay jobs where pay and conditions are at least under the indirect control of central government, and many under the direct control of local government.

Few low paid jobs are in industries exposed to international, low cost, low wage competition. For example, textiles and food processing account for only some 3% of the low paid, while manufacturing only accounts for about 15% of low paid employment. The causes of low pay are from within UK society therefore, not from the outside⁸.

9. IMPACT OF THE MINIMUM WAGE

The introduction of a National Minimum Wage (NMW) by the Labour Government was a major step

toward social and economic justice in the UK.

Since its introduction in April 1999 at a rate of £3.60 per hour for workers aged 22 and over and a development rate of £3.00 per hour for workers aged 18 to 21, the impact of the NMW has, arguably, been incremental, much like its annual increase.

Currently, the October 2004 NMW regulations provide an adult rate of £4.85 an hour, a development rate of £4.10 an hour and a youth rate of £3.00 an hour.

In February 2005, based on the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission, the Government announced its annual upgrade proposals for the NMW. Effective from October 1st October 2005, the specific changes the government propose to implement are that:

- The adult NMW rate for employees aged 22-plus increases from £4.85 an hour to £5.05
- The development rate for 18 to 21 year olds increases from £4.10 an hour to £4.25
- The youth rate for 16-17 year olds (above compulsory school leaving age) remains £3.00 per hour

A number of occupations continue to be excluded from NMW regulation. These include: the genuinely self-employed; volunteers; members of the armed forces; people working and living as part of a family (e.g. au pairs); people under-18 prior to the introduction of the new rate for 16 to 17 year olds from October 1st 2004. Most controversially, the NMW provisos also exclude 16-17 year old apprentices from the young workers rate and apprentices over 18 but under 26 in the first twelve months of their apprenticeships⁹.

A small fraction of UK workers earn below the NMW, some do so legitimately due the exclusive nature of the MNW provisions, others are paid illegally. Data reveals that approximately 260,000 people, or 1% of the workforce, earned below the minimum wage¹⁰.

However, recent research has revealed the impact of the NMW has not been far reaching. The official estimate of the number of people who gained from the introduction of the minimum wage is 1.2 million, or just 5% of the total workforce¹¹.

It has been forecasted that around 1.7 million people will benefit from the 1st October 2004 upgrade, but when we consider that the LPC expected some 2 million workers (8.5% of the workforce) to benefit from the introduction of the NMW in 1999, arguably the impact is not as great as originally anticipated¹².

While it is undeniable the NMW has positively impacted the lives of over 1 million UK employees, there is clearly room for improving its effectiveness.

10. WORKING HOURS

In 2003, British employees worked an average 43.1 hours per week. The average rate in EU member states was 40.2 hours per week. Traditional European counterparts such as France, Germany and Belgium work less hours.

Belgium	39.6 hours p/w
France	38.8 hours p/w
Germany	39.6 hours p/w
Netherlands	38.8 hours p/w
Italy	38.7 hours p/w
Spain	40.3 hours p/w
UK	43.1 hours p/w

Of the 25 EU states, only Latvia has a higher average than the UK where the average is 43.3 hours per week¹³.

Approximately 21% of 30 to 39 year olds in the UK work in excess of 60 hours per week, as do 14% of workers over the age 40¹⁴.

The EU Working Time Directive was introduced as a measure to curb excessive working hours for

employees and restore some sort of equilibrium between a workers employment and personal responsibilities. However, the Government negotiated an 'individual opt-out' from the 48 hour working week limit - the only state in the EU to do so.

It is estimated that 4 million (14.3% of total workforce) employees in the UK work in excess of the EU Working Time Directive (WTD) maximum of 48 hours per week¹⁵. Furthermore, there is evidence that the opt-out clause is being abused by UK employers. Research¹⁶ has revealed:

- Compulsory signing of opt-outs
- Pressure on staff to sign opt-outs
- Workplaces where the law is ignored
- Staff illegally asked to opt-out of their rights to rest breaks and night work limits (the only individual opt-out allowed is the 48 hour average limit)
- Sending new staff opt-in and opt-out forms (probably illegal as there is no need to opt-in - everyone is protected unless they opt-out)

The Government seems both unable and unwilling to curb the UK's long-hours culture relying on a voluntary approach from employers. Unfortunately, it is employees in the low-pay sector of the labour market who generally face a poor work-life balance as longer working hours are required to ensure their pay is effective in maintaining the cost of living.

11. WORKING TAX CREDITS

Working Tax Credit (WTC) tops-up the pay of low paid workers.

It is made up of a basic element, plus extra amounts for people aged 50 or over returning to work, people who work over 30 hours per week, disabled workers, for someone with a sever disability, and to help with child care costs. The amount claimants can receive depends on their income amount and circumstances¹⁷.

The government invests roughly £4.8 billion per annum (amounting to cumulative state payout of £14.4 billion by 2005 on WTC) to finance the initiative. It is estimated that roughly 30% of the British labour market are reliant on the tax credit initiative to supplement their income¹⁸.

In August 2003, 2.8 million children were living in families claiming a key benefit. It is predicted that the introduction of and reliance on the WTC scheme will witness a growth in this figure in the immediate future.

12. THE GMB ANTI POVERTY CAMPAIGN

This chapter puts forward a suggested GMB strategy for tackling low pay and working conditions.

13. A NEW DEAL FOR THE LOW PAID

It is important to begin by defining exactly what we mean when we refer to low pay. Although there is no universal meaning, an appropriate definition for GMB might be:

"A rate of pay that is too low to allow the worker and their family to be free of poverty without means-tested support".

Working on this assumption, the aim of Government should be to create a situation where everyone in work can earn a wage that is a genuine living wage, where the cost of living is sustainable and the reliance on state subsidy minimal. When measured against these criteria it is clear that the present Government strategy is not achieving, nor even working towards, this objective.

14. UP-RATING THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE TO BECOME A LIVING WAGE

Since 1997, the Government have addressed unemployment to the extent that activity is at its highest since 1975. In 2005, on the cusp of a third-term, now is the time to ensure that these jobs provide a living wage for their incumbents.

The GMB believes the first steps in tackling low pay require the need for a significant upgrade in the NMW and alteration of its provisions so that it becomes a living wage.

Research has shown that there are between 6.5 - 7 million low paid workers in the UK today. The body responsible for setting the rate of the NMW, the Low Pay Commission (LPC), suggests the impact of the NMW has not been as far reaching as originally intended, benefiting only 1.2 million people in 2003.

Therefore In simple terms, the NMW has to be restructured to assist the 5 million plus people it is failing to protect.

To address this problem the GMB should campaign for two important reforms to the NMW to tackle growing economic and social inequality in the UK today:

- Increasing the pay of the lowest paid - so that pay provides security and self-sufficiency - by immediately up-rating the National Minimum Wage to £7.00 per hour (an increase of £2.15).
- The abolition of the three-tier National Minimum Wage which entrenches age discrimination and disadvantage by the removing youth rates, and replaced by a standard rate for all workers - irrespective of age or employment status.

In the autumn of 2004, GMB commissioned the NOP to poll a representative sample of adults about their views on living wages and the NMW.

Two-thirds of those polled said that they believed that the rate an individual would need to earn to get a living wage would be over £7 an hour. Some 37% of the total sample put a living wage at between £7 and £8 and a further 26% put the figure at more than £8 an hour.

The GMB believes the conditions for further bold increases to the NMW are favourable. Unemployment is low at 4.7% and the employment rate is high at 74.9%. Furthermore, vacancy levels are high and inflation is low (with a RPI headline rate of 3.2% in January 2005). A £7.00 basic hourly minimum for all employees would not amend the problem of low pay overnight, but would represent a significant first step in the battle against it.

15. A PUBLIC SECTOR LIVING WAGE

The public sector is an employer of over 5 million people - and it contracts services from a myriad of companies who employ hundreds of thousands more. Public sector employers should be required by Government to take a leading role in combating low pay by setting pay and conditions which eradicate low pay in the public services. Those companies who wish to bid for contracts in our public services would be expected to meet those pay levels.

A positive side effect of this approach is that it would raise pay levels in those parts of the private sector competing for the same labour in an economic climate of near full employment.

Government centrally would have to provide some of the money to meet the cost of such an approach. However, if the political will is in place a living wage for all could be achieved. For example, the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, has announced that in future he will require all contractors bidding for contracts in London to ensure that they pay their workers a living wage and that this must be built into bids.

16. NO MORE TWO TIER WORKFORCE

A substantial number of low paid workers are indirectly employed by the public sector through private sector employers providing services to the public sector.

The terms and conditions of existing staff whose jobs are transferred to the private sector are protected through TUPE legislation. However, before long before contractors have a significant percentage of new employees employed on different terms and conditions including lower pay. This depresses pay across the board after a time.

Action by Government to prevent private contractors from undercutting public sector pay and conditions and the ending of two tier workforce's permanently is essential if low pay is to be effectively tackled.

At the National Policy Forum, held at Warwick in July 2004, the Government announced that it was extended two tier protection. While this was a welcome step forward, the GMB should be taking the lead in demanding the outlawing of two tier workforces - beginning in public services - with a living wage for everyone and fair treatment at work for everyone a basic right.

17. MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Improved pay alone will not boost the quality of jobs or lives in the UK. In conjunction with improved pay, the low paid also require improved and fair working conditions. Since 1997, the Labour Government has introduced several new working rights that have had a positive impact on the working lives of Britain's employees.

The time has now come however for the Government to do more. The starting point must be the implementation of a strong framework of employment rights that bring the UK into line with the rest of the EU. In the first instance the Government must comply with all International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions. The UK Government is currently a signatory to these conventions but we do not observe many of them.

18. FAIRNESS AT WORK FOR ALL

The Government should extend the Fairness at Work Legislation so that the recognition laws include all employers and the loophole which excludes small firms employing fewer than 21 employees is closed.

All individuals should enjoy legal protection from day one at work, with the removal of the qualifying period for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights.

19. TEMPORARY AND AGENCY WORKERS

The Government should move to protect another group of workers who have few rights and normally work in low paid work - agency workers. Legislation already exists to protect agency workers - the EU Temporary/Agency Workers Directive - all that is needed is political will and the full and proper implementation of the articles of the Directive.

20. MIGRANT WORKERS

Migrant workers and asylum seekers are making an important and growing contribution to the UK economy. Many are highly skilled individuals whose knowledge and abilities means that they can play an important role in the economy.

However gangmasters and unscrupulous employers are attempting to exploit many migrant workers and asylum seekers paying them appallingly low wages, often illegally, and using them to undercut the wages of the local workforce.

The GMB should be prepared to defend migrant and asylum workers and champion their rights as well as pressing for government action to stamp out exploitation and improve training and language support.

GMB should be seeking to recruit and organise migrant workers and asylum seekers.

21. END UNEQUAL PAY

For too long women have been paid less purely because they are women. GMB Published research shows that the gender pay gap in Britain now amounts to around £150 per week.

Women are disproportionately affected by low pay, part time women workers in particular. One in three women at work is low paid. There are a number of reasons for this but the fact that women earn, on average 19% less than their male counterparts is the major reason.

Closing the gender pay gap by obliging employers to run equal pay audits should be the beginning of a major Government initiative to end low pay among women workers in the UK.

As part of a comprehensive move to stamp out low pay once and for all the GMB calls on Government to compel employers to use equal pay questionnaires to find out whether they have an equal pay problem. Equal pay audits can be used to show up inequalities in women's pay and resolve problems by ensuring equality of pay.

22. WORK LIFE BALANCE

The Labour Force Survey reveals that 4 million employees work in excess of 48 hours each week. The most common reason for this is that many workers are forced to work long hours to boost their income. The EU Working Time Directive (WTD) 1998 set out minimum standards to ensure that workers are protected against adverse effects on their health and safety caused by working excessively long hours,

having inadequate rest or disrupted work patterns¹⁹. The WTD provides for:

- a maximum 48 hour working week averaged over a reference period
- minimum daily rest period of 11 consecutive hours a
- a rest break where the working day is longer than six hours
- a minimum rest period of one day a week
- a statutory right to annual paid holiday of 4 weeks
- night working must not exceed eight hours a night on average

These basic minimum standards should set-out a framework from which to base a progressive social-model of working rights that enhance the quality of working life for all employees.

However, the Government has diluted the implementation of much of the progressive EU law through vetoes and opt-outs since 1997. Consequently, and to the detriment of working conditions, the potential of the WTD has been greatly affected.

To improve work life balance and increase protection for the most vulnerable, in conjunction with an updated NMW of £6.00 per hour, the GMB believes that the Government should signal an end to the individual opt-out from the 48 hour working week.

23. RADICAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGY ON POVERTY

In 1999, Tony Blair committed the Government to abolish child poverty within a generation.

Under the previous Conservative administration, child poverty had risen dramatically from one in seven children in 1979 to one in three by 1997 (more than 4 million children).²⁰

The Government's immediate targets were to reduce child poverty by a quarter by 2004 and by a half by 2010. By 2002/03 the number of children living in poverty was down by 800,000 from 1997 figures.

Since 1997, the Government has also moved half a million 18-24 year olds into employment from the New Deal (independent evaluation of the programme revealed 40,000 young people moved into jobs they would not have done without the support of the programme).²¹

These are impressive developments by the New Labour Government and have undoubtedly improved the quality of life for million of UK citizens.

However, if the Government is to meet its target on child poverty then it must tackle low pay.

A radical strategy from the Government in a third-term is required if they are to meet their poverty targets by 2010. It is not enough to address the symptoms of poverty, or low pay for that matter. A broad, long-term strategic outlook, incorporating determined economic conditions is required. The focus should not be purely on alleviating poverty, but dealing with the issues that lead to and increase poverty - a growing low pay economy, increasing inequality.

The GMB has recommended some basic measures that could form the backbone of a radical Government strategy in this report. If the objective of such a strategy is the goal of a quality job - and all that should incorporate - for the majority of citizens in the UK, then the potential of meeting poverty targets can be achieved. Government must diagnose the problems that cause poverty with a long-term approach, not treat the symptoms with short-term measures.

An anti-poverty strategy - A New Deal for the Low Paid

- ✓ *Upgrade and standardisation of the NMW, the creation of a 'living wage'*
- ✓ *End of the two-tier workforce*
- ✓ *Minimum employment standards*
- ✓ *Fairness at work for all*
- ✓ *End unequal pay*
- ✓ *Better work-life balance*
- ✓ *Radical Government anti-poverty strategy*

24. ORGANISING THE LOW PAID

This chapter establishes the occupations and industries the low paid are concentrated, highlighting the areas GMB might focus on for a potential recruitment and organisation campaign of low paid workers. We will also look at similar campaigns conducted by other trade unions and third party groups.

The number of low pay workers in the UK fluctuates between 6.5 - 7 million. Applying this figure to the domestic context, with a 74.9% rate of employment (28.52 million) the following low pay centres emerge:

Concentration of low paid employees		
Industry	% of low pay workers	Approx. number
Textiles & Food Processing	3%	210,000
Manufacturing	15%	1,000,000
Retail & Wholesale	25%	1,700,000
Public Sector	25%	1,700,000
Business Services	15%	1,000,000
Hotels & Catering	10%	685,000
Other	7%	480,000

Only 15% of low paid workers are estimated to be members of a trade union. The vast majority of these are situated in public services. Within GMB, we have low paid members right across the Sections but again our low paid membership is most heavily concentrated in the public services section, particularly in health, education and local government.

A massive challenge in recruiting and organising the low paid lies in sections such hotels & catering, business services and retail - growth industries where the rate of job creation will surely increase in the immediate future. The GMB is ideally placed to grasp the initiative in these sections so potential membership can grow in tandem with the industry and producing collective strength that ensures greater protections for the lowest paid in these sectors.

25. RECENT CAMPAIGNS ON LOW PAY

The Transport and General Workers Union has recently fronted a public campaign to highlight the low pay plight of the House of Commons contract cleaners. The cleaners who serve the parliament buildings earn the minimum hourly rate of £4.85, receiving only 12 days holiday (plus statutory days), statutory sick pay only and no pension. T&G are campaigning for a London living wage of £6.70 per hour, 20 holidays plus statutory days, company sick pay and a company pension - new minimums that would enhance the potential to sustain the cost of living in the capital while introducing new provisions that would improve work-life balance²².

TELCO (The East London Communities Organisation) has also undertaken some work in this area. In 2003, TELCO was one of the groups which highlighted the plight of HSBC contract cleaners working on the minimum wage while struggling to sustain the cost of living in London.

The city based bank eventually caved into to intense pressure to provide cleaning staff with a living wage, reflective of the high living costs of London and consideration to the huge gulf in earnings of cleaners and the average HSBC city employee.

'The Wharf' newspaper provided the campaign with relentless coverage, and campaigners showed persistence and imagination in their campaign²³. After two years of pressure, HSBC provided a new employment package for the staff consisting of:

- £7.10 per hour for night staff
- £6.40 per hour for day staff with eight extra paid holidays
- 10 days of paid sick leave and a pension

It is hoped that this package will set a new standard for cleaning contracts across the UK.

Barclay's were quick on the uptake to HSBC's example and, most notably, the Mayor of London Ken Livingstone is to establish a Living Wage Unit in City Hall to monitor progress across the capital.

The GMB can learn from these examples - as well as many of the campaigns we have been involved in as a union, for example the successful campaign by GMB London Region to organise Asian food workers at Noons.

It is recommended that it is time for GMB to look strategically at recruitment in the low pay sectors and growth industries. If we act now, we can potentially secure a membership for the next generation. If we fail to act, we will be left behind and ponder on what might have been.

26. THE NEED FOR A LOW PAY RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

Since 1997, income inequality has increased significantly - the disparity of wealth has ever increased²⁴. At the same time, trade union membership has declined, or at best stagnated, to around the 7 million mark. GMB membership has declined, from around 650,000 to 600,000 in the same period.

Many arguments have been put forward for trade union decline - the maintenance of Tory anti-union legislation; the growth of the private sector and anti-union employers; Government dilution of EU social legislation, etc but the fact is that since 1997 the labour market has experienced growth

Furthermore, as employment has increased to record levels, the concentration of low paid workers has increased significantly - the fuelling of income inequality with some 6.5 - 7 million low paid workers. The vast majority of these workers are without collective representation. It would represent a positive step forward in GMB recruitment strategy to pursue a campaign to organise the low paid (as part of a wider long-term recruitment pitch geared towards growth areas in the service economy and private sector).

27. THE CITIZENS ORGANISING FOUNDATION

The Citizens Organising Foundation (COF) is a broad based community organising group working with a diverse cross section of local communities - including trade unions.

COF's aim is to develop alliances of active citizens and leaders from local institutions committed to working together for the common good. TELCO is the East London Branch of COF and has worked to win improved pay and respect for low paid workers.

COF is based upon shared values of justice, dignity and self-respect. It offers organisations a way of acting upon these shared ideals and through organising together win respect and change across local communities.

28. FIVE ORGANISING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Regional analysis

Extensive analysis and evaluation is required prior to any recruitment drive and full participation at a Regional level is essential. GMB Regions have the best knowledge and access at the local level. GMB Regions should carry out a series of workplace and sectoral mapping exercises to identify the pockets of low pay work in their Region and devise a strategy to recruit workers in these companies accordingly, supplemented with the required manpower and resources.

2. Utilising GMB lay membership and developing new organising activists

If we are going to attempt to organise the low paid it is vital we encourage the participation of lay members who can relate to potential membership. GMB Regions should begin the process of identifying and training activists from these sections of the economy. Many will come from the ethnic minorities and many will have had no previous experience of trade unions or trade union organising and the CEC should bring forward proposals for recruiting, training and developing a new group of activists drawn from the ranks of the low paid.

3. Winning the arguments

It is proven that unionised workers enjoy improved pay in comparison to their non-union counterparts, and without collective representation the low paid will have less opportunity to escape its clutches. The starting argument to begin a low pay campaign is that we can deliver better wages and conditions through the GMB anti poverty campaign and our fight for a living wage. GMB National Office should develop a series of briefings and material that can be used in recruitment campaigns amongst the low paid.

4. Affiliate and Work with the Citizens Organising Foundation

GMB Regions should affiliate and get involved in the work of the Citizens Organising Foundation. At present groups exist in London and Birmingham. More are planned in the near future.

5. Organising Working Group

The challenges and opportunities identified in 'Quality Jobs, Quality Lives' should be referred to the CEC via the Organising Working Group (OWG). The OWG should, in consultation with GMB Regions, bring forward proposals for a major organising campaign amongst the low paid, with a written update being prepared for the next GMB Congress.

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(Adopted)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I move the CEC Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives.

Congress, you will see that the sub-title to this Special Report is: "A New Deal for the Low Paid". During the past two terms of a Labour Government we have had new deals for the young unemployed, the older unemployed, lone parents and now, looking forward, we can expect a new deal for the incapacitated. These programmes have had some success in getting people off benefits and back into work. But what kind of success is it to trap hardworking people into low paid job insecurity. All you are doing is sending them to join the ranks of the working poor.

We hear a lot of talk about respect at the moment, yet the lowest paid in our society are often treated with anything but. A new deal and a fair deal for the low paid are essential if we are to reverse the scandal of the ever-widening inequality between the rich and poor in this country.

A GMB report released last month showed that the average pay of the top earners, directors and chief executives is 16 times higher than the pay of the lowest earners in leisure and theme park attendance. That statistic paints a vivid picture. The affluent have access to a wider choice of leisure pursuits in their free time than ever before, but those who work in our leisure industries have to struggle to survive in minimum wage jobs. They have to work long hours, weekends and bank holidays whilst still having to deliver a service.

Every two years the GMB visits the Low Pay Commission and makes a fair and reasoned case for why an increase in the National Minimum Wage should be sufficient to provide a living wage for vulnerable workers. Every two years we have to listen to the bleatings of the CBI and their cronies telling the commissioners why it cannot be done. Those organisations will say that there will be job losses as they cannot compete with labour costs in India or China, yet every time they cry wolf about the minimum wage, the next group of employment figures show another high in the number of jobs in the lowest paid industries.

We are well aware in this Union of job losses caused by companies going overseas in pursuit of cheaper labour, but the leisure industry will be hard

pushed to convince anyone that a higher minimum wage will lead to off-shoring leisure attendance. City banks cannot off-shore their cleaning and security functions. What they are really worried about is not jobs but profits.

The Special Report makes a bold and unashamed call for a substantial increase to take the National Minimum Wage in the direction of a living wage, a living wage that can deliver security and self-sufficiency thereby reducing the need for hardworking families to rely on tax credits.

The Special Report also calls for decisive action by government to tackle the gender pay gap and the long hours culture.

Congress, the Report is not just a set of fine words about what the Government should be doing. It is important for all of us in the GMB to focus our resources on recruiting and organising amongst the low paid in today's society, the group of people and conditions which gave birth to the trade union Movement in the first place.

We need detailed targeting procedures. The low paid is not an easy single group who we can go out and recruit. We need to target migrant workers, young workers, rural workers and part-time workers, to name a few. We must target the most vulnerable groups.

In all our industries and workplaces there are low pay issues affecting our fellow workers, whether they are contact workers, agency workers, casual workers or the workers who do the twilight shift.

The low paid in our society need trade unions. Let us be clear. The trade unions also need the low paid for our long-term survival. We need a revival in the organisation's strength which floats throughout our organisation when workers stand together collectively and demand a fair deal from exploitative employers. No one expects it to be easy to reach these vulnerable groups, but if the trade union Movement does not rise to the challenge posed by continuing exploitation of unorganised workers in the United Kingdom in the early 21st Century, we will have some hard questions to answer. I move.

THE ECONOMY

NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

MOTION 246

Congress welcomes the increases in the National Minimum Wage implemented in October 2004 to:

- £4.85 per hour for adult workers.
- £4.10 per hour for development rate, and
- a new rate of £3.00 per hour for 16 and 17 year olds.

While recognising that the National Minimum Wage has helped the living standards of those most vulnerable within the labour market, significantly more needs to be done.

Congress notes that the introduction and improvements in the National Minimum Wage have not led to mass job losses as predicted by the CBI and the Conservative Party.

Congress therefore calls on the GMB to Campaign for:

- Further increases in the adult rate sufficient enough to secure an adequate living standard without dependence on in-work benefits.
- The adult rate to apply to workers at 18 years old, and
- Significant increases in the 16 and 17 year old rates so as to ensure this vulnerable age group are no longer exploited by those less reputable employers.

ASDA GROUP 2 BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Withdrawn)

SIS. J. GAULD (GMB Scotland): GMB Scotland agrees to withdraw in favour of the Task Group's Report. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)*

(The motion was withdrawn)

THE PRESIDENT: I am now going to go round the regions. Does South Western Region wish to put a speaker into the debate?

SIS. J. SMITH (South Western): President and Conference, I speak in support of the Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives, on behalf of the South Western Region.

We are continuously told by our Government that unemployment is at a record low and that we are enjoying the most sustained period of unbroken

economic growth for more than two hundred years. The report states, quite rightly, that Labour's economic achievements are beyond doubt, but while the impact of Labour's policies has improved the lives of millions of UK citizens, the Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives suggests that more needs to be done, particularly to improve pay and equality of work in Britain.

What is disturbing in the report is the fact that under Labour the gap between rich and poor has continued to widen. It also states, quite shockingly, that the richest 1 per cent in Britain now owns 23 per cent of the national wealth. The poorest 50 per cent owns just 5 per cent.

As the report states, Tony Blair made a commitment in 1999 to eradicate child poverty within ten years. Some inroads have been made in this area but it is an indictment on our society that many children are living in families whose income falls below the recognised poverty threshold. If child poverty is to be eliminated the issue of low pay must be tackled. Hundreds of thousands of unionised, skilled and well-paid jobs in the manufacturing sector have been lost and many of the new jobs which have replaced them are, in the main, low paid and low skilled jobs in the service sector.

Job insecurity and poor work life balance are real problems for people at work in 2005 and the decline of manufacturing is evident as is the significant growth in the public sector, as was mentioned earlier. In private services, the rise of the call centre culture and the service economy is visible, especially in the significant growth in banking, finance and insurance jobs and via the creation of more vacancies in the distribution and catering industries.

This situation portrays the sea-change in UK employment from a once industrial and production economy towards a service economy as the nature of UK employment has radically changed in 1997. So the income inequality has increased and a substantial low pay economy has become manifest.

The report concludes with five organising recommendations, which my region fully supports.

BRO. G. HARVEY (Birmingham & West Midlands): I speak in support of the document. Mary, I would like to apologise for Joe being late this morning. He was looking after my grand daughter, Kiera, whilst I was preparing a speech on foundation schools, so really he was looking after the long-term future of the Union.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry, but he has lost his appeal. *(Laughter and applause)*

BRO. G. HARVEY: I now come to the serious part. Although national unemployment is at an all time low, the quality of jobs which are being created leave a lot to be desired. Another 82,000 manufacturing jobs

have been lost compared with this time last year. Manufacturing jobs are at an all time low at 3.23 million in the first quarter of 2005. This is the lowest figure since 1978.

The National Minimum Wage has not benefited all those who are low paid. There are still more than five million low paid workers in the country who are not protected.

When manufacturing jobs are lost, they have been replaced by low quality, low paid jobs. We are going from being a manufacturing nation to a national of warehouse providers, although if Billy is to be listened to, the warehouse jobs are going as well.

We need a robust set of employment laws which offer both fairness and protection to the low paid in the country as improved pay alone will not boost the quality of jobs or lives of employees in the UK.

Equal pay legislation came into being in 1976, yet we still have blatant cases of unequal pay being allowed to continue. As Debbie said, if the Government are serious about eradicating unequal pay, they need to introduce mandatory workplace equal pay audits. Even stronger emphasis should be placed on flexible working and family working practices. People should be able to live on their wages, not simply to survive on them. So we really do need to support the GMB's anti-poverty campaign and make poverty history by setting an example in this country.

SIS. L. LORD (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, my region welcomes and applauds the Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives. We firmly believe that if you are serious about making poverty history you have to start in your own backyard. Although no one in this conference hall would claim that poverty in this country is anywhere near as devastating as the life threatening poverty in the developing world.

If you ask those workers in the UK who are struggling to make ends meet, you might be in for a shock. Low wage poverty might not be taking lives in this country, but life chances are being snuffed out in communities throughout Britain. If you work long and hard and your pay packet at the end of the week is so low that your family can only survive with State support, the despair must be truly crushing for worker and family. We owe it to them to put low pay at the heart of our campaigning and organising activities.

In my region, as in every other, horror stories about wage exploitation are still a regular occurrence, despite the introduction of the National Minimum Wage. It is clear that the worst employers resent and will always try and resist their legal obligations to pay the statutory minimum wage. We support raising the National Minimum Wage to £7 an hour and have one rate applied to all, but if the

enforcement of this law continues to be as lacklustre as it is, it could be raised to £17 an hour and still millions of workers would continue to be abused.

Let us be straight about this. If an employer cannot afford to pay the electricity bill or the local rates, he/she would not be in business. If they cannot pay or will not pay the statutory wages bill, then they should not be in business. That is what quality jobs and quality lives must be about.

This report calls on the Government to take a leading role in combating low wages by setting pay and conditions which would eradicate low pay in public services and by enforcing equal pay audits in order to wipe out low pay amongst women workers.

The best of luck. As we meet there are thousands of local government workers who are trying to win equality. We have hundreds of officers and representatives trying to secure compensation for women through years of inequality. We have members battling with councils to get what is rightfully theirs but having to keep one eye on the security of their jobs. In local councils it seems that we cannot have equality, proper wages and job security. It is one or the other. Why? Because councils say that they do not have the money to fund equality and services. Why? Because the Government say that they are committed to equal pay but only if it is self-financed by the workers. This situation is a scandal and it has to end.

Support the Report and bring low pay to an end.

SIS. C. LAVERY (GMB Scotland): President and Congress, having missed out on the motion on low pay, GMB Scotland wishes to endorse fully the report.

BRO. G. WELLS (Lancashire): Before I deal with the report, I would like to inform Congress that earlier this morning the ASDA distribution centre suspended one of our shop stewards over a tagging incident. We would like to make it clear that we intend standing by this shop steward to make sure that he is reinstated immediately. Lancashire Region will be doing whatever is necessary.

I now speak on the CEC's Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives.

President, Congress, Sisters and Brothers, in moving the report on behalf of Lancashire Region, we acknowledge the work that has gone into this report but feel that more needs to be done to achieve quality jobs quality lives. The creation of two million jobs since 1997 is contrasted by one million jobs lost in manufacturing, two million on incapacity benefits and a further two million who are not on any system at all.

We must not get carried away with the two million new jobs. Most of them are low paid and of poor status.

Low pay. No inroads have been made. One in three females are on low pay. Four out of five

working women work part-time. I state that 25 per cent of low paid workers are in the public sector. That is a scandalous situation.

We welcome the rise in the minimum wage, which will rise to £5.05p later this year, particularly in the 18-21 year olds to £4.25p., but we cannot understand why 16 and 17 year olds have been left out. They have not received an increase. We believe that if you are good enough to do the job, you should get the rate for the job and no employer should be able to use loopholes in the legislation for not paying the minimum wage, especially our colleagues on piecework. What a nonsense is the daily make-up and the weekly make-up. If you work for an hour, you should get an hour's pay. I do not mean £4.85p or £5.05p but £7. It is scandalous that people work hard all week and have to rely on the Working Tax Credit to get a living wage. Thirty per cent of those in the richest labour market are relying on tax credits to supplement their wages. This means that the Government are encouraging low pay and fat profits at the expense of cheap labour.

All workers have legal protection and trade union rights from day one, including redundancy rights. Whilst we are at it, let's take away the ballot for the Political Fund. It is an unfair and unjust ballot, anyway.

Although we have had many campaigns on low pay, in reality it is one big campaign on low pay, but we cannot keep having low pay campaigns when, within 12 months of joining the Union, we put members' subs up every year. Even if it is only 10p or 15p, when you have now't, every penny counts. We must inform the low paid workers that they cannot afford to be in the GMB. We are the front runner in this campaign. You insure your house against dangers and you should insure yourself with the GMB.

As I said, much has been done. We need efficient manufacturing skills, strong employment rights, equal pay, secure payments, public services which are 100 per cent public and, most of all, a Labour Government that is working 100 per cent with us, not just at election time but all the time. Thank you.

BRO. A. CIRKET (Southern): When I joined this Union some 30 years ago, the biggest problem I saw at the time was unemployment. We heard Gordon Brown yesterday talking about the success the Labour Government have had in reducing unemployment, although there is still some way to go. However, at what expense? As we have heard many times this morning, many people do not earn a wage that is sufficient to live on. The figure of £7 should be a minimum for everyone, and even then you get the feeling that that sum is not really enough.

I can do nothing other than to say, like I have always said to people who have talked to me about joining a trade union, "You have to join a union" because we have to get wages up and see people on a

living wage which rewards them for going to work.

BRO. W. GOULDING (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): I am speaking for the Special Report. In many of the case where we have disreputable employers, the minimum wage has become the maximum. This situation is a disgrace.

I wonder if yesterday's speaker, Gordon Brown, would work for this type of pay. It is imperative that that we utilise our members' experiences on low pay so we can relate to the issues at hand. We, in our region support the concept of the Organising and Working Group and they must bring back a report to next year's Congress. I second.

BRO. V. BAINES (Midland & East Coast): On behalf of the Union, I would like to thank the Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region for last night's superb entertainment. It was wonderful.

I fully commend this report to Congress, especially as we have now gone back to being a campaigning union. I cannot think of a better campaign than to help the low paid workers. The figures in the report are startling, not because we are not aware of the numbers but because after eight years of a Labour Government we do not appear to have made much headway. We have made some headway but not enough. With this Government we should be much further down the line to eliminating low pay.

I want to refer to public services as many branches, including my own, deal with them. With the help of job evaluation we should eliminate low pay in this sector. We should then have the stepping stones in place to push outwards to those firms which are grabbing out-sourced work and, by dubious means, are eroding our members' pay.

Through our members who are TUPE'd across, we should organise, recruit and keep these firms in line, in line with council rates of pay, holidays and sick pay. I know of firms who have won contracts who have, initially, honoured the council rates of pay, given our members nice new uniforms and then not given them a pay increase for four years. New employees in these companies have less holidays, no sick pay scheme and no pensions, or if there are pensions they are a joke. This situation must stop.

With the information in this report, the timing for the tightening up of the TUPE, which has been promised, could not be better to organise, recruit and stop these firms with their low pay culture. Please support.

BRO. J. JONES (Northern): I speak in support of the CEC Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives.

The Northern Region welcomes the CEC Report. In particular we welcome the recommendation to initiate a major campaign to recruit the low paid into the GMB. President, it is a disgrace that only 15 per

cent of workers in a low paid job are members of a trade union. It is a disgrace that those who most need the support of a trade union are currently not in membership.

Invariably the secret to cracking low pay is in recruiting those low paid workers into a trade union. Low pay only exists where trade union membership is also low. It is our job to reverse the trend.

The Northern Region believes that this report is a positive move in the right direction, and whilst we believe that more needs to be done to reduce the GMB membership rate for low paid workers, we recognise the positive move and urge delegates to support. Thank you.

BRO. V. WEST (London): I speak in support of the Special Report. Low pay remains a scandal in this country both in the private and public sectors and £7 must be our minimum target for the National Minimum Wage. As speakers have already said this morning, poverty exists in this country, not just abroad.

However, other issues exist. Britain maintains its long hours culture at work. We must not allow the Government the luxury of the cop out on the opt-out on the Working Time Directive. A forty-eight hour week is the minimum that we should be working towards. People have already spoken at this Congress of a 35 hour week. What is the point of people destroying their lives by a long-hours culture?

There are other issues on the work life balance: four weeks paid holiday plus paid bank holidays. No longer should employees be allowed to role those eight days into the four weeks. This Union has an agenda to get out and organise the low paid workers because it is only through organised workplaces that we will push the agenda of quality jobs and quality lives. London supports.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call the Vice President to reply.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues, for that participation. I have just few general points to make. Low pay and equal pay are part of some other problems. We need more action by Government. We also welcome Gordon Brown's attack on child poverty but there is still more to do; hence the importance of the Warwick Agreement. Unions must press for the higher minimum wage and for a mandate for equal pay audits, which will help Debbie and the Women at Work Commission. Thank you for your participation. We will take everything you have said into consideration.

(The CEC Special Report: Quality Jobs Quality Lives was Adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, it gives me great

pleasure to welcome onto the platform D. Taylor, Gaming Director of UNITE-HERE who will be addressing you a little later.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

CASINO WORKERS

MOTION 109

Congress welcomes the work of GMB Scotland in investigating the occupational health issues faced by casino workers.

Congress notes that among the conclusions of the 2004 survey of workers in Scotland's 12 casinos were:

- 50% of those surveyed complained of recurrent backache, and 35% of neck ache.
- Among croupiers 80% reported musculo skeletal disorders
- There was a rise in the number facing violence and harassment at work.
- Continued problems of sleeplessness, loss of appetite and tiredness due to long hours, shift working and night working.
- There was a serious problem of secondary smoking and poor air quality causing eye and throat irritation for half of those surveyed.

Congress calls for continued resourcing of this sector as a priority for recruitment and organisation.

Congress also calls for health and safety to be a key priority in the GMB's work in this and other areas.

EDINBURGH 2 BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. T. KELBIE (GMB Scotland): I move Motion 109. We call on Congress for continued resourcing in the casino industry as a priority for recruitment and organisation. We also call on Congress to give key priority to the health and safety issues in this area of work.

Among the conclusions of the 2004 GMB survey of workers in Scotland's twelve casinos were that 50% of those surveyed complained of recurrent backache and 35% of neck ache. Among the croupiers 80% reported musculo skeletal disorders. There was a rise in the number of casino workers facing violence and harassment at work. The survey also found evidence of continued problems of sleeplessness, loss of appetite and tiredness due to long hours, shift working and night working.

There is also a serious problem of secondary smoking and poor air quality causing eye and throat irritation for half of those surveyed.

The catalogue of health and safety issues in this motion highlights the hazards present in this industry, hazards which employers pay only lip service to. The employers are in for a rude awakening. The casino industry is not strapped for cash. Let the employers return some of their profits to improve the health and safety of our members.

We welcome the work on passive smoking which has been and continues to be championed in the London Region by Michael Ainsley.

The fact that we have been successful in achieving recognition with Stanley's Casinos provides us with the opportunity to deliver our members' agenda.

The National Casino Strategy, led by Paul Kenny, has assured our position as a major player within the UK casino industry. Please support.

(The Motion was formally seconded)

PASSIVE SMOKING

COMPOSITE MOTION 4

(Covering motions 110 and 111)

110 - Health & Safety at Work (London Region)

111 - Passive Smoking (London Region)

This Congress demands that Government take Health & Safety issues seriously.

The Governments decision to allow employers to decide if they wish to protect workers from exposure to the effects of passive smoking or not, is a travesty.

The Governments own scientists and advisors have given evidence that passive smoking is a killer.

Government has effectively said it will legislate to protect some workers but others in private clubs, which will include casinos, will be left to suffer.

This Congress calls for the GMB to lead a national campaign to call for effective measures to protect all workers from the harmful effects of other peoples cigarette smoke.

(Carried)

BRO. H. VAIDYA (London): I move Composite Motion 4.

Going by the scientific material uncovered the world over, it is now a well established fact that

smoking not only seriously injures the smoker but the non-smoker too. Vast factual research proves this beyond a point of fallacy. Yet when it comes to smoking at the workplaces, the Government appear to look the other way when it comes to the many thousands of non-smokers. By allowing the employers to decide if they wish to protect their workers or for that matter even their clients, the Government can be perceived of doing a Pontius Pilate on the non-smoking class in this country.

Ironically, while the Government, on the one hand, is keen to introduce a ban on smoking in enclosed places and areas where the public will be affected, private places are ignored.

Why? Is it because the Government think that all non-smokers who visit casinos should live a premature life? Or is it because the Government think that all non-smokers and the workers in casinos should be punished for opting to visit or work in such places?

Casinos are a hotbed for workers. The anxiety of making a fast buck or the frustration of losing money makes the person behind the gaming machine puff more than he would do in normal circumstances. So we end up with excess smoke in cloistered places.

What, then, is the plight of the worker in such places? What health and safety measures do such places have for the workers? Is that not discrimination to those who work in casinos?

It is, therefore, imperative that the Government, through their collective wisdom, ban smoking in casinos. The workers, after all, have the right to work in hazard free places. It is, therefore, most important that the GMB lead a national campaign to call for effective measures from the Government to protect the workers from the harmful effects of other people's smoke at their workplace.

BRO. V. WEST (London): I second the composite.

Congress demands that this Government take health and safety seriously. They Government are finally set to act this year on years of scientific evidence that tobacco smoke is harmful, not only to those who exercise their right to smoke, but also to the vast majority of the public who try to exercise their right not to smoke.

The GMB Union has a proud history of not shying away from difficult health and safety issues. We campaigned on asbestos, lone working, safety on building sites to name but a few. They are all worthy causes which have cost our members their health and, sadly, their lives.

Smoking related illnesses claim the lives of an estimated 3,000 non-smokers a year, 600 of whom are workers in the hospitality industries or, to put it another way, two per day.

Look around this hall now. How many people do you see? Imagine this many more workers being injured or killed on building sites or any other

workplace. We would not stand for it.

So what is it about tobacco smoke that makes it such a health problem at work? Our members in the hospitality and casino industry regularly complain of eye irritation, sore throats, persistent coughing, dizziness and nausea. In these industries there is little or no protection from the effects of passive smoking. Those places that do have ventilation or extraction make very little impact. IN some case, they appear to life the smoke, but they do not take away the chemicals and toxins that our members inhale and settle on their clothes when working in such an environment.

Tobacco smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals in gaseous and particle form. Second-hand smoke contains five regulated hazardous air pollutants, 47 regulated hazardous wastes and more than 50 known or suspected cancer causing agents and more than 100 chemical poisons.

The cancer causing agents in tobacco include Benzo(a)pyrene, Benzene, Chromium, Vinyl chloride, Dimethylni-trosamine and Naphthylamine. Toxic gases included ammonia, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, acrolene and hydrogen cyanide. If these agents and gases were coming out of a factory chimney, there would be uproar amongst the Union and the local community, and no doubt the Health & Safety Executive would close it down immediately.

The World Health Organisation recently published its findings that environmental tobacco smoke causes cancer in people and that it includes more than 50 known carcinogens. So if the Government are set to act, why are we moving this motion?

I will quote from the Labour Party Manifesto, chapter 4: "Healthy choices", which says: "We will legislate to ensure that all enclosed public places and workplaces, other than licensed premises will be smoke free. The legislation will ensure that all restaurants will be smoke free, all pubs and bars preparing and serving food will be smoke free and other pubs and bars will be free to choose whether to allow smoking or be smoke free." Here is the important part for the casino industry: "In membership clubs the members will be free to choose whether to allow smoking or to be smoke free. However, whatever the general status, to protect employees, smoking in the bar area will be prohibited everywhere."

Congress, these proposals do not make sense and are unworkable.

I have been told to wind-up. In winding-up, let me say that the way in which the legislation is likely to be framed may possibly be unworkable because certain workplaces, as in the casino industry, will be excluded. This is not a nanny state issue. This is a health and safety issue.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, there is to be no CEC speaker.

(Motion 109 was carried)

(Composite Motion 4 was carried)

ADDRESS BY BRO. D. TAYLOR: Gaming Director of UNITE-HERE

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, it gives me great pleasure to welcome Bro. D. Taylor to the GMB Congress who will now address us.

BRO. D. TAYLOR: Good morning, Brothers and Sisters. The first thing we always do at our labour meetings is a something called a "Union handclap". I know that you have been sitting on your backsides for a few days, so I am going to teach the Union handclap to you because you have been applauding individually but not together. Put one arm up like this, put the other arm like this and you start clapping slowly. *(Slow clapping)* All right!

I appreciate you inviting me to your Congress, but as a fellow trade unionist we have to be honest amongst ourselves. I am going to give you a very blunt report from the United States. The labour Movement is in deep crisis in the United States and throughout the world. In the United States we only represent about 8 per cent of the private sector. Union manufacturing jobs have left and are leaving, just as I have heard the position to be in the last few days in Great Britain. They are being replaced by service sector jobs that I heard about today, such as Wal-Mart, McDonald's, Starbucks, etc. I think the challenge that we face in the United States, and frankly, having listened to speakers during the past three days, and the challenge that you face in Great Britain is to make sure that those service sector jobs are good jobs with good wages, job security, good working conditions and respect and dignity.

We are not going to succeed in this age of globalisation if we remain isolated and divided. We can no longer take on these companies by one city, one region and one country at a time. We became aware of that view in the United States during the past few years. In 2003 the United Food Commercial Workers had a gigantic strike in Southern California with the grocery store chains. The hardline grocery stores were led by Safeway. The Union had a good strike. Seventy thousand workers were on strike for four-and-a-half months, and they kicked the ever-living crap out of the companies. Those companies were public companies. They had to report that they had lost \$1 billion in four months. What happened?

Candidly, the union ended up with a horrible contract. Why was that? The customers honoured the picket line and the companies lost money. Those were all recipes for winning in the past. The reason was because those companies, albeit that they were losing money in Southern California, were making money in all the other stores

that were not on strike throughout the United States and, frankly, throughout the world.

The supermarket chains decided to take on the union because they were being undercut by the non-union sector like Wal-Mart. We know now that, no matter how valiant the workers are and how strong the union is, you cannot take on companies like Wal-Mart one union and one country at a time.

In the United States we used to talk about General Motors setting the trend as to how jobs were going to be. Now it is Wal-Mart. We came to a realisation in the gaming sector that we had to be a real international union because our companies were expanding throughout the world. They were no longer going to be isolated in the United States. They were becoming big and powerful. If we just dealt with them in one city, one state or one country at a time, eventually we would end up like the grocery workers in Southern California.

The union that I am from, UNITE-HERE, represents housekeepers, cooks, people working in hotels, airports, stadiums and restaurants, laundries and distribution centres. We also have members in textiles, which is dying quickly. My union is mainly comprised of members where English is not their first language and the majority are female.

Just like in this country, people viewed service sector jobs as dead-end, low wage jobs, but we have two advantages in the service sector. The first one is that the owners cannot move their hotels to China. They cannot move the casino to Romania, Malaysia or Mexico. It is static. It is not like manufacturing where the business can be moved offshore.

When you examine labour history, it is not as though manufacturing jobs used to be great jobs. They only became great jobs once unions were active in those factories. We fought like hell. We had strikes and we had sit-ins. As a result, we changed the working conditions. The same thing can happen in the service sector if we dedicate ourselves to that.

We have shown that jobs in the service sector can be decent jobs. In Las Vegas a housekeeper can buy a home. A housekeeper in New York City can have a piece of what we call "the American dream"; home ownership, a car and their kids can go to college. So we have shown that service sector jobs can provide decent pay if we organise and fight.

In our experience in the US gaming industry we have had to learn lessons that, hopefully, you will not have to learn the hard way, like we did. It is very important to have strong, democratic worker movements that are local and in each shop. We had to build union density by industry, not by one city at a time. We had to get ahead of where the industry was going. We had to be able to use our political influence both to help them and to hurt them. We had to show both. We had to use the carrot and the stick with the gaming industry. We have also learnt that it is important to build real solidarity nationally

and internationally.

The bottom line is that you have a great amount of leverage with the gaming industry coming to your country. The gaming industry is highly regulated. There are many approval processes to go through, which is a political deal which you can influence greatly. Secondly, the gaming industry does not have a lot of friends. It does not. The owners are so greedy that they will take a nickel from their mother if they can. Frankly, they need all the friends they can get. We can be their friends if they make sure that their jobs are good union jobs.

Our union represents about a hundred thousand people in the gaming industry. The industry has grown phenomenally. In Las Vegas, in the late '80s we had 18,000 members, now we are at 60,000 members and we expect in about two or three years to have 80,000 members in that one city. In places where we have got ahead of the industry, in places like Atlantic City and Detroit, they are 100% unionised. That makes us a lot strong. We are now using our strength in those places where the owners make a lot of money - Atlantic City, Detroit and Las Vegas - to leverage those companies to allow us to get into the third largest gaming market in the United States, which is Mississippi. Organising in Mississippi is quite remarkable. That is a place where you, literally, have cotton fields right next to casinos. The people who used to work in the cotton fields now work in the casinos. So we are able to uplift the standard of living in a place where working conditions have long been horrendous.

We also found out in the gaming industry in the United States that we had to build our base, which we did in Las Vegas, which meant a lot of tough long strikes in the late '80s and early '90s to rebuild ourselves. We had a nine-and-a-half month strike at a place called the Horseshoe. Then we had the longest and most successful strike in US history. We had a strike at the Frontier Casino for six years, four months and ten days and not one single person crossed the picket line. We won that strike. It is a unionised casino again. The successful result of that strike taught a lesson to the industry, that we are going to be there as long as it takes, and do whatever it takes, in order to win.

What we have finally learned to do is to build a national movement of gaming workers in our country. For the first time, we have unified workers from different countries and states, namely, in Canada, Nevada, New Jersey, Illinois, Michigan and now in Mississippi. What have we achieved in dealing with these companies, because I think it is a lesson which will be helpful for you?

When we really work together, not just on the rhetoric, in tangible actions, we achieve our best contracts ever. Just last year in Atlantic City we had a big strike against very powerful companies which are going to be part of the gaming industry in this

country. I am talking of companies like Harrahs, Ceasars and MGM Mirage. We had a big strike with civil disobedience going on in Las Vegas, Detroit and Chicago in support of those workers. We had picket lines established in other places. We used our political pressure in other places in backing up the strike in Atlantic City. As a result, we won the best contract ever. I think that is a lesson for us.

The point is that the same companies that we dealt with, you will have to deal with in the UK. The gaming companies view Great Britain as key to their whole marketing strategy in Europe. They start in the United States. They are in Asia now. They are in Maccow and they are about to be in Singapore. In Europe they view the super casinos in Great Britain as a way to bring in the marketing and branding for all Europe. So you will have the pleasure of dealing with Harrahs, Ceasars and MGM Mirage without question.

I have been to many labour conventions and congresses where people talk about solidarity, but once they leave it is over. We always talk about that but we do not do much about it. Unfortunately, nowadays, we do not have a choice. I have heard your conversations today on Wal-Mart. Dealing with Wal-Mart is not a phenomenon just here in Great Britain. It is a world problem that we have to deal with. We have to deal with this issue in a worldwide way because there is no other way to take on big companies like Wal-Mart and others.

What has happened, not to make this just rhetoric, is that we started to have a real alliance with you and the T&G. Last summer the GMB and the T&G sent a delegation to Las Vegas where you learned that gaming jobs, with union backing, are good quality jobs. They toured our state-of-the-art training centre. They met our members and they were involved with our shop stewards' convention of about seven hundred members. Further, they strategised with us, with the deregulation of gaming, how they could get in on the ground floor to make sure that those jobs are good union jobs.

Last year we sent two delegations to Great Britain. We sent union reps and shop stewards twice to meet with MPs, your local authorities and the press to talk about our experiences in the gaming industry. We talked about both the good employers and the bad employers. We know the difference because we deal with them every single day in the States. Also, in last March, the GMB and the T&G sent delegates to our Executive Board Meeting to report on the progress achieved so far in Great Britain and how also to move the process on in this country to make sure that they are good union jobs.

Some of the companies coming to the UK are okay, which we have forced to be okay, but some are just rotten to the core, and you should know about them, because they might say what they are going to do when they are over here, but that is not how they

are going to act, and you have seen how they act in the United States. Probably the best example of that is the owner of the Las Vegas Sands. He owns the Venetian Hotel Resort in Las Vegas. He has announced casino deals with Glasgow Rangers, Manchester United and the Birmingham blues. He has a lot in common with Michael Glazer, the billionaire, who has, apparently, taken control of Manchester United. Their basic approach is to stop at nothing. He is the only non-union employer in Las Vegas of a significant size. He is aggressively anti-union. He is going to unparalleled lengths to stop workers having a say in the business, including saying that the sidewalks outside of his casino were private, and if you picket outside he will have you arrested, even though anybody else can. We challenged that action and we won. He says of the food service people in his restaurants, "Those are not our employees because they are all sub-contracted out". He pays half of what unionised food service workers make up and down the Las Vegas Strip.

He is also a rotten person. He has been fined just recently a million dollars for rigging casino games. He has on-going litigation based on race and age discrimination going back to 1999. He is incredibly litigious. He will sue anybody. He will sue his competitors. He will sue his own lawyer if he did not like the result. He will sue authorities. He will sue anybody in order to get what he wants. He is the ultimate billionaire bully. He might say something over here as he needs you, but he will turn on you in two seconds. I warn this union and anybody in this country that those are the type of employers who you do not need in this country, and you have the leverage now to keep them out.

As we go forward, we really need a strategic alliance in hospitality and gaming with our two unions. Not only have you helped with gaming but you have also helped with hotels. Last Fall our hotel workers in San Francisco were locked out. One of the leaders of that dispute was InterContinental We sent a delegation to the UK. The Union was extremely helpful in. We had the lockouts stopped and our workers are back to work. As a result, we are going to get the best contract ever in San Francisco. We have helped you. As a result of our operation in Madam Tussauds in Las Vegas, apparently it resulted in you getting a contract here, which is great. You have helped us against H&M Retailer, which is a Swedish company. We were organising their distribution centres in the United States. You helped with that and they came around. Those are just living examples. As we go forward, I think we have to keep something in mind, that solidarity is not about worlds but actions. We no longer have the luxury of just speaking but not undertaking any actions. The point is that the companies that we are dealing with are not national companies. They are multi-national companies which are extremely powerful and

extremely rich. They do not think on a local level or a national level, but on a multi-national level.

I found the conversation and debate you had earlier about some restructuring in your own Union to be quite fascinating. We had the exact same debate in our Union in the past year. We finally woke up and said, "Wow! If we do not act in a much bigger way than we have, we are going to get run over". I think you are on the right path. I think that the kind of solidarity that we need to develop in going forward is to make sure that companies like Harrahs, Caesars or MGM Mirage, if they come to the UK, do in the UK exactly what we have forced them to do in the highly unionised places like Las Vegas and Atlantic City. Those are good quality jobs with respect on the job, with rights on the job and damned good pay, because they make a lot of money. If we do all that together, if we build together and work together, you will get ahead in this industry. You will have an enormous membership which will allow you to grow, which will give you a base into the other hospitality parts of the sector, which will be great. UNITE-HERE will do anything we can to help you to grow and to have a handle on the casino industry. We look forward to working with you. Thank you very much. *(A standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: That was a wonderful and refreshing speech and, as you said, the word "solidarity" means a lot. To us, the GMB, it means friendship for ever and comradeship. Please accept this gift on behalf of our members and those of us who are present. The glasses were made by our members in Birmingham.

(Presentation made amidst applause)

BRO. D. TAYLOR: Thank you very much. I am looking for that bottle of Scotch with it too! *(Laughter)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, thank you very much and I hope you and Debbie do have a wonderful stay.

CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER

COMPOSITE MOTION 3

(Covering Motions 104, 105 and 106)

104 - Corporate Manslaughter (London Region)

105 - Corporate Manslaughter (Midland & East Coast Region)

106 - Corporate Manslaughter (Midland & East Coast Region)

Congress condemns the delay by the Labour Government of the introduction of legislation concerning corporate manslaughter, despite a manifesto commitment to do so. Until companies and their executives are held

accountable, more people will die. This Congress calls on the CEC to continue to actively campaign for a meaningful law on Corporate Manslaughter that will hold directors personally accountable for failing in health and safety policy and operation which, to-date, is not on the statute books, as promised by our Government.

(Carried)

BRO. D. STEVENS (Midland & East Coast): I move Composite Motion 3 on corporate manslaughter. Congress, as workers, we say goodbye to our families in the morning and then return at the end of the day to our loved ones. Well, most of us do, but some do not. The reason that some do not return is because they have been killed at work by an employer who does not care about their safety whilst doing their job.

The past five years show that there have been 2,157 deaths at work. Eleven directors have been convicted of manslaughter. Five directors were sentenced to imprisonment. Another five have been given suspended sentences and, can you believe it, one was given a Community Service Order?

The period of 2003/2004 resulted in 159,809 accidents. About 11,000 enforcement notices are issued each year. About 1,000 prosecutions are carried out each year. The average fine, including fines in excess of £100,000, is currently £13,000. That is nothing to a large company.

It is possible to prevent the majority of workplace deaths and injuries with proper health and safety policies and by following health and safety law. Where management fails to develop safe systems of work and disregards its workers' health and safety, then it should be held responsible for its failure to act. It is not just about looking after the wealth of the directors and shareholders, but looking after the health and safety of those who make the wealth - the workforce.

You will remember Gordon Brown yesterday gave us some sort of a commitment. Consider this. The Centre for Corporate Accountability reported in October 2004. The CCA called upon the Government to impose safety duties upon directors, double the number of inspectors and increase the number of inspections and investigations. These were rejected in the Government's response. The CCA research evidence suggests that formal enforcement needs to be significantly increased rather than kept at the status quo. The Government seem to be ignoring this key research finding.

Congress, not all employers are bad, but the fact remains our people are dying at work through no fault of their own. The trade unions have been fighting for this change for a long time. We have seen the Labour Government start to put together a

Bill. Present legislation is just not good enough; not good enough for the trade unions and not good enough for the workers. We must have a law that will make real changes in the behaviour within these bad companies that will result in a reduction of deaths and injuries.

On 5th May we re-elected a Labour Government. That was done with the help of trade unionists. This Government owe us something. The Government included the Manslaughter Bill in the Queen's Speech. It must now resurrect this Bill and ensure that the consultation and lobby process is used to attain a Corporate Manslaughter Bill that will deliver the justice that our members deserve.

No more should these unscrupulous bosses be able to get away with petty fines after being responsible for a worker's death. It must be clear in law that if they cause a death through negligent health and safety, they go to jail. Let us push the door wide open on this law. Lobby, consult, kick and scream, do whatever you have to do. Get this Corporate Manslaughter Bill into law. Congress, for the sake of all our members, please support this motion.

BRO. D. BERRY (London): I second Composite Motion 3 on corporate manslaughter. The Herald of Free Enterprise, Piper Alpha, Potters Bar and Hatfield have all been high profile industrial disasters with loss of life. However, the highlight of our campaign, in some ways, has been those disasters, but the bedrock of our campaign that has gone on for a number of years has been the consistent and persistent five workers a week who die in British industry. That figure has stubbornly refused to move and we need a change in the law to move that forward. Young workers, in particular, have suffered with high profile deaths in the docks in Kent and on the railways. The level of fines handed out to those employers must be a constant source of anguish to their families to know that society valued their loved ones so cheaply.

However, we are not just asking for a change in the law as a punitive measure or as an act of political revenge. The law, as it stands, is so weak that it affects the policy of British industry. Companies constantly reduce training standards and regard health and safety law as nothing but red tape. We heard from Gordon Brown yesterday. It was a powerful speech -- I did not realise time is going very quickly today -- but sometimes I wonder whether we were just having our egos massaged or our tummies tickled?

Corporate manslaughter law is a key element of the Warwick Agreement. As it stands at the moment, what the Government propose still offers no tough sanction on individual directors, no suspension, no disqualification, the financial penalties are too low and there are no new penalties that are not there in existing law!

We need to mobilize ourselves as a trade union. I think corporate manslaughter is a key test of the Warwick Agreement. We heard from Gordon Brown yesterday that the GMB now has more MPs than the Lib Dems in Parliament. Let's use those MPs. Let's mobilize all the support that we can get on this one. We need to challenge the Bill as it goes through Parliament with our MPs. We need to lobby our own MPs and, if necessary, we need a mass lobby of Parliament.

It has been a long battle. We have been coming to Congress too many years asking for this. We owe it to ourselves as trade unionists, we owe it to those workers who have lost their lives and we owe it to the families of future workers to make sure there is a strong law that protects us all in the workplace. Thank you, Congress.

HEALTH & SAFETY

MOTION 107

Congress, this Union has done more than any other on asbestos awareness and related materials. However, medical statistics show an increase in asbestos related illnesses and deaths. These are expected to increase dramatically over the next decade.

Thompson's Solicitors, along with the Trade Union Movement have, in some areas, set up an "Asbestos Awareness Group". This should have further investigation and participation.

This Congress therefore asks for Regions and National to ensure that our members are protected, and to initiate a group or groups within their area, and instructs Regions to compile a register of persons who have worked with these or have been exposed to any asbestos or related material.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. W. HELEY (Midlands & East Coast): I am moving Motion 107. President, Congress, because asbestos was a good heat insulator and did not conduct electricity, it was widely used in a number of industries. I instance, firstly, shipbuilding. I can relate to that. When I started my working life, I worked at Palmers shipbuilders at Heburn, ten miles down the road on the right side of the river. We are Durham, not Northumberland. Secondly, plumbing. Everybody has had a plumber in the house in one form or another, either a Corgi registered plumber or a normal plumber. Thirdly, the motor trade used asbestos as heat insulators or brake shoes. You all used to blow brakes out. You were smothered in it

and you ate it. Fourthly, asbestos was used in the building trade, housing, schools, hospitals and other public buildings. We have all been into them. Those are to name but a few.

Asbestos was found to be a killer, so its use was stopped. It can take anywhere between 10 to 40 years for asbestos-related conditions to appear. It is a worrying thought that members at this Congress could be walking around totally unaware that they may be one of its victims. God forbid should that be the case.

This Union has done more than any other union in promoting asbestos awareness, but we can and must do more. Thompsons Solicitors, along with the trade union Movement, in some areas have set up asbestos awareness groups, our Region being one of them. The idea is to complete a register of members who have worked with or been exposed to asbestos. To record the dates and the employer is one of the benefits, and then the solicitors can trace back the insurers and have all the details to hand in the event that a claim should arise.

Trying to remember and trace something 10 to 40 years ago is not the easiest thing to do. I have trouble remembering what I did yesterday. It is better to do it now. To highlight the importance of having a register, I will refer, sadly, to the roll call of deceased members that was read out at the start of this Congress. One of those was a member of my branch. Neither he nor his family were aware that he was suffering from an asbestos-related illness. The only benefit is that his wife will now be taken care of.

Congress, we need to work with our regional solicitors, whoever they may be. We need to ensure members' needs are taken care of. Our members need access to these registers. Asbestos kills more people than AIDS, believe it or not. We ask that every region works with its solicitors, whoever they may be, and set up an awareness group and a register.

BRO. R. MORGAN (Midlands & East Coast): I second Motion 107. President, Congress, in seconding this motion, I wish to commend all those members from each region and, indeed, National Office for the support we have had in the past years. The GMB has led the way in this for many years and others are joining us now in our campaign.

This motion calls upon regions to set up and give assistance to support groups and promote asbestos awareness within their regions. It also demands that asbestos exposure registers are set up in the regions in conjunction with the legal companies that we employ. This would enable evidence to be gathered to assist in damages claims for those exposed and harmed by asbestos. It will also enable us to gain valuable data to assist in supporting areas of most concern.

The GMB represents many workers in the asbestos removal industry and many other

construction and service trades. Almost all the buildings erected during the post-war boom right up to the 1990s had asbestos fitted in them. Of particular concern are those erected for the local authorities and government, such as system built schools, social housing schemes, hospitals and offices. Most of these had sprayed limpet asbestos on girders, asbestos panels and ceiling tiles. Indeed, I fitted them myself. Steam raising and heating plant equipment were also insulated with asbestos at that time. Evidence of who is most vulnerable to asbestos disease shows that it can be anyone. Anyone can get asbestos disease. There is no discrimination as to who can be victims. It can even be gaffers, workers, or anybody.

Almost everybody in this hall has been exposed to asbestos at some time. We must raise awareness of the dangers of asbestos, both by informing and protecting all our membership.

PUBLIC HOLIDAY FOR WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY - 28TH APRIL

MOTION 108

Congress calls on the present Government to thoughtfully consider that Workers' Memorial Day, 28 April, be recognized as a paid public holiday to remember those who have suffered for the price of production.

HULL PAINT & ENGINEERING BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. WIDDISON (Midland & East Coast): I am a first-time delegate and moving Motion 108. President, Congress, this is a very sincere motion and I urge you to accept that Workers' Memorial Day, April 28th, be made a national holiday each year.

Firstly, it would be a suitable opportunity to honour and remember all the workers, men and women, who have died in industry. In particular, I am thinking of the tragedies in fishing, agriculture, engineering, manufacturing, those who have worked with chemicals and other hazardous products, transport workers, metal workers, those in building, construction and all the other industries.

Brothers and sisters, we are asking for one day's extra holiday. It is not too much to ask. We want a nationwide day to give tribute to those who will be missing from their workplace, factory or work bench. It is a grim fact that official figures show that during the three-year period, 1999 to 2001, the Health & Safety Executive reported an average of more than 250 deaths each year in industry. Last year another 1,000 lost their lives travelling as part of their work. We must remember that these statistics do not include the many workers who are injured, maimed or disfigured each year or the people who died from

industrial diseases. These shocking official figures cannot be denied or ignored.

Secondly, as you may be aware, the UK has only eight paid national holidays a year. Compare this with some other countries. France, for example, has 11 days; Portugal, 13 days; Japan, 14 and Finland, 15. With our Workers' Memorial Day we pay our proper respects to those who, leaving home for work in the morning, sadly, did not return at the end of the day.

They are the ones who have made the price for production and profit. We should all value and appreciate such a day to remember them as more than mere factory fodder. So I appeal to Congress carefully to consider this proposal for Workers' Memorial Day to be a public holiday.

BRO. K. BRINKLOW (Midland & East Coast): This is my first time at Congress. President, Congress, I second this motion. The Government must act to ensure that Workers' Memorial Day, 28th April, be recognised as a paid public holiday to remember those who have suffered for the price of production.

About 2 million people are killed at their work every year world-wide. That is more than AIDS. This latest global estimate comes from the International Labour Organisation and has recognition in nine other countries with nine other countries pursuing government recognition on securing a national workers' day. In the UK alone, each year 1,500 people are killed whilst at work whilst another 10 to 20,000 die each year from work-related diseases.

A Workers' Memorial Day remembers them as part of a campaign to make workplaces safer, to reduce deaths, injuries and illnesses caused by work and also fight for the living. We should campaign for better health and safety and hold employers accountable so workers do not die and get maimed by occupational illness. Thank you.

MEN'S HEALTH

MOTION 116

Congress believes that men's health issues should be given greater priority. In particular awareness programmes targeted at men focusing on more common illnesses and conditions should be set up by local Health Boards and Health Authorities. The GMB should lobby for this across the country and promote greater health awareness amongst GMB members.

**GLASGOW CONSTRUCTION BRANCH
GMB Scotland**

(Carried)

BRO. M. MIDDLETON (GMB Scotland): I move Motion 116 on men's health. Congress, the reality today in the 21st Century is that we are more aware of health

issues than ever before. However, in some ways increased awareness appears to have bypassed many men. Men have a tendency to ignore the early signs of ill-health and have the inbuilt trait of living up to a false macho image to the detriment of our health. I am sure that is recognised by many here.

Two major areas men ignore are testicular cancer and prostate cancer. Major health concerns are ignored by men either from fear or ignorance; fear of facing up to the reality of ill-health and ignorance by allowing the condition to escalate in many cases into a serious condition.

It has been recognised for many years that in occupations such as driving and the chemical industry, testicular cancer has been a health problem due to the continued contact with diesel and some known carcinogens. Ignoring the early signs of prostate cancer is also common amongst men where early warnings are ignored.

Congress, the GMB has a proud history of campaigning on behalf of health and, in particular, it fought on behalf of our female members on breast and cervical cancer.

We need now to ensure that we campaign on behalf of our male membership. We need to campaign and work with the occupational health professionals to make sure that we deliver a strong message that these issues are important to them and their families.

We need to ensure that men break out of their psychological mindset of continuing to ignore the early signs. This can only be done by information and communication and by the promotion of Well Men clinics. Please support.

BRO. B. TONNER (Southern): I speak in support of Composite Motion 3 on the need for legislation on corporate manslaughter.

More than 100 years ago, my great grandfather, then aged 44, and his 15-year old son were killed by an explosion in a coal mine at Blantyre. They were eventually brought to the surface along with 315 other miners who were killed on that occasion and eventually buried. When the family returned from the funeral, they found that the mine owners had evicted them from their tied cottages.

In Gressford, North Wales, a similar disaster occurred. When the mine workers who were killed in that disaster were buried, the mine owner placed a wreath of white lilies on the communal gravestone. They deducted the cost of the wreath from the wages of the mine workers.

In both circumstances, the miners were not paid for the day's work on the day they were killed because the mine owners insisted there was no way of measuring the production for that day.

Nothing much has changed. So, conference, please support Composite Motion 3 because the victims of those and many other preventable

disasters that caused loss of life still wait for justice; so when you vote on this item, you are voting for the many silent victims who remain unresolved in their right for justice. Thank you.

(The motion was formally seconded)

PRINCE CHARLES

MOTION 280

This Congress wishes to express its disgust at the comments of Prince Charles regarding Health and Safety Legislation and Corporate Manslaughter. This persons obvious contempt for the safety of the workforce of this country defies belief.

Congress agrees to campaign for the establishment of a democratic republic to rule this Country.

PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. S. MCKENZIE (London): Conference, you won't believe it. The geezer that was meant to be moving this motion has not turned up. I am going to get a T-shirt with "MUG" written across it, I think.

Comrades, in all seriousness, we have just heard about some of the horrific consequences of corporate negligence in relation to health and safety. At a time when many working people are having their wages and conditions pushed back to those of Victorian times, at a time when death and serious injury on building sites, on the privatised railways and in privatised deregulated sectors of the economy are on the increase, it is an insult that an unelected, over-paid parasite from a feudal institution that should have been abolished years ago -- I am talking about Prince Charles of the Royal Family -- should publicly denigrate proposed health and safety legislation on corporate manslaughter as unnecessary red tape!

What does he know? He has never done a day's work in his life! *(Applause)* He and his family don't have a clue what an honest day's work is like! It's right for this Congress to express its disgust at such comments. It's right that we campaign for an end to this parasitic, archaic anachronism known as the Monarchy, which costs us billions, and for its replacement with a democratic republic. Please support this motion and let's rid ourselves of these insulting out-of-touch degenerates. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you did very well, "Mug". *(Laughter)*

(The motion was formally seconded)

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to ask the regions if they want to contribute.

BRO. A. SPINKS (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): Whilst I agree with the sentiments on the viewpoint, I have no problem with that at all. What I certainly have a problem with is the fact that there are a hell of a lot of people in this country and in this union who do not want the Royal Family abolished. Thank you very much, Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. This is a very serious subject and the GMB has always led the field in health and safety. Does anyone else in this room wish to contribute to debate on any of these motions or the composite? *(No response)* Does the mover want to exercise the right of reply? *(Waived)*

I call Gary Doolan to reply on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. G. DOOLAN (CEC, Public Services): I just hope Prince Charles does not get in your cab next week, Steve! *(Laughter)*

President, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on health and safety covering Motion 107. The CEC is in support of Motion 107, but with the qualification I am about to give. This motion states quite rightly that the GMB has done more work to tackle the menace of asbestos than any other union and we continue to do so. This Union recognised that asbestos wrecks the lives of those who are exposed to it, never mind their families. We recognise that death and disease caused by asbestos is on the increase all across the globe; so it is vitally important that we, in the GMB, maintain our campaigning and support our work on asbestos at every level.

It is also important that the Union works in conjunction with others, including firms of solicitors who share our aims. In some regions, that will include Thompson Solicitors who have given, and continue to give, great support to the GMB. However, in other regions, Thompsons may not be the regional solicitors so those regions must be free to establish asbestos groups with other firms. Many regions have already established asbestos registers, some in conjunction with Thompsons, and others with their particular regional solicitors. It is a case of each region making the arrangements that are appropriate to that region. Nationally, the GMB will then provide support to those groups as required.

With this qualification, the CEC asks Congress to support Motion 107 so that the Union can continue to fight against asbestos with the broadest support from within the legal profession.

(Composite Motion 3 was carried)

(Motions 107, 108, 116 and 280 were carried)

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT - SOUTHERN REGION

1. Membership and Recruitment

Total membership	93,815
Women membership	41,887
Section membership (by each Section):	
Clothing & Textile	238
Commercial Services	20,284
CFTA	3,073
Energy & Utilities	7,575
Engineering	7,494
Food & Leisure	9,815
Process	2,055
Public Services	43,281
Grade 1 members	65,960
Grade 2 members	21,250
Sick, retired & unemployed members	6,605
Total number recruited 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	23,130
Gross increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	1,861
Net increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	(505)
Membership on Check-off	58,675
Membership on Direct Debit	15,476
Financial membership	86,505

RESPONSE TO CULTURE CHANGE

- Developing recruitment and work place organisations
- Working with branches to revitalise and where necessary, restructure, in order to establish effective organisation
- Working for part-time and full-time release for activists in order to free up officer time for organisation
- Developing a team approach to management

Towards the end of 2004 it became clear that there was a need to establish a proactive approach to officer and staff training. A full programme has now been put in place for 2005.

As part of the response to the culture change, a Regional strategic plan has been evolved for the next two years in order to re-establish a strong Regional identity.

Central to all of the above, is valuing the importance of our employees as an asset and ensuring that there is a proper focus to all activities with appropriate support and training. It also recognises the key role played to our organisation by our activists. During the course of 2005 a re-focused training programme for activists was put in place.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

One of the main focuses for Southern Region organisation has continued to be the campaign to recruit classroom assistants. This has led to a successful development of membership in local authorities across the Region and in some cases in areas where we were very poorly organised before. This campaign has not just been about recruitment but crucial to it is organising support structures.

The Region now considers that the term recruitment is possibly outdated and should be replaced by organisation. Organisation encompasses recruitment but it is after all the organising of the unorganised and also the question of how membership should be serviced.

The Region has successfully achieved Recognition Agreements in a number of areas, some voluntarily and some through recognition ballots. The principal agreements are as follows:

Dartington Crystal; Gleason Works; Watts Blake Bearne; Cleanaway Camborne; Reliance Monitoring Service; Taurus Security; DMJ Security; Odyssey Southwark; ASDA Erith CDC; ASDA Distribution

Centre, Didcot.

The Region has also adopted aggressive proactive policies in regard to workers who have recently arrived in this country, whose first language is not English. We have therefore developed recruitment materials in a number of languages.

Within the West of England area of the Region, the Union has worked extremely hard on the issue of racism and xenophobia within Somerset, where there are appalling employment practices particularly affecting Portugese workers in the food manufacturing and other industries. The plight of migrant workers in the South West continues to be exposed and highlighted by this area.

OVERVIEW OF REGION'S ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

Although the Region has continued to have success in organising, particularly in the public sector, it still suffered a loss of membership in certain areas in particular, manufacturing. There was also some redundancies within the AA section following a change of ownership which resulted in a decision to withdraw from certain non-core businesses.

There has also been the unfortunate closure of Appledore Shipyard in North Devon, which was a particularly hard blow for the West Country Area with a loss of 550 jobs. There was a vigorous protest campaign and occupation of the ship yard prior to closure which attracted national media attention, as well as huge support from the local community. The Region would wish to pay tribute to North Devon branch secretaries, Gary Cook and Roy Harkness, who provided non-stop welfare and support and advice to all members and have set up a Workers Co-operative Employment Agency which is helping to find redundant workers alternative employment. The Dockyard itself, has now been bought by DML who run the Dockyard in Plymouth and at the time of writing approximately 150 employees are back at work in the shipbuilding industry undertaking super-yacht work.

The Region does have large amounts of small enterprises, defined as those enterprises that employ 250 or less. These account for 80% of employment in the Region. The SME market is particularly difficult, but particularly in the last year, the Region is now beginning to make in-roads into a number of smaller organisations.

2. General Organisation

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	20
Recruitment and Organisation Officers	2
Regional Recruitment Officers	2
No. of Branches	13
BAOs	0
New branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	* * *

3. Benefits

Dispute	£22,464.94
Total Disablement	£0.00
Working Accident	£17,601.50
Occupational Fatal Accident	£20,000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	£1,100.00
Funeral	£44,018.00

4. Journals and Publicity

Having been re-launched as Proactive in 2002, the Regional magazine has continued to develop. Proactive goes to all financial members of the Region and is a combination of Regional stories and local interest stories provided by the five areas of the Region. Some limited advertising revenue has been secured which helps support the cost of the journal.

SPONSORSHIP

During 2003 and 2004, the Southern Region sponsored both Charlton Football Club and Wimbledon Speedway which was re-branded GMB Dons. The Region though has recently taken the decision not to

renew these sponsorships.

5. Legal Services

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	1,587
Legal Assistance Granted	1,505

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	1,653
Withdrawn	789
Lost in Court	6
Settled	956 (£11,502,806)
Won in Court	2 (£107,919)
Total Compensation	£11,610,725
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	534

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	218
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	220
Withdrawn	47
Lost in Tribunal	11
Settled	142 (£570,907)
Won in Court	20 (£103,933)
Total Compensation	£674,840
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	15

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	224
Unsuccessful	14
Damages/Compensation	£1,829,582
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004	27

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	18
Successful	17
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004	3

INNOVATIONS AND CHANGES TO GMB SOUTHERN REGION'S LEGAL SERVICES BETWEEN 01.01.2003 TO 31.12.2004

The Collective Conditional Fee Agreement with Rowley Ashworth is proving extremely successful and has resulted in payments of £261,775.00 since its inception in November 2003. This has allowed us to fund and expand the Legal Service.

At the beginning of 2005 we also reached agreement with Thompsons Solicitors to join their Call Centre Free Legal Service to members which has greatly improved members' access to non-employment and personal injury services. This latter service had previously been done by the Union Law Scheme but as a substantial number of solicitors no longer participated in the Scheme it was necessary to find a viable alternative. In addition to the Call Handling Service, Thompsons will also provide telephone advice for the completion of TU56's and this service will also be provided by Rowley Ashworth.

6. Equal Rights

This year the Equal Rights conference organisers recognised the need of the unions' time to be re-allocated to accommodate an investigation resulting in the Henrys report.

The Southern Region committee consists of a broad spectrum of minority groupings which will represent the interests of those minorities disadvantaged by our society

The regional conference was held, but with no need to debate motions to the National Conference. The time was dedicated to affirm our future diverse expectations within the Southern Region. In our view the function of the Equality Committee is to represent and progress the needs of the Southern Region

membership organically metamorphosing our ideals into a radical and revolutionary dynamic. We are however developing motions calling for a vibrant identity. Diversity is our future and we should reflect that in our policies and procedures.

Equality came to our consciousness with the need to recognise women in the workplace and equal pay. Whether you like it or not, all of us came from women, some are born women and some aspire to be women and a large proportion of our membership is women. It was not surprising then that the Southern Region supported National Women's Day on March 8th by following the national campaign for 'Refuge' by collecting old mobile phones for recycling thus enabling the continuing funding of the 24/7 help line that Refuge provide. The Regional Race Advisory Committee has continued to build on the work reported at the last Congress. The Committee has continued to be active, meeting bi-monthly at the Regional Office venues and attendance has remained high.

With the appointment of Ian McNicol to National Office, Kevin Brandstatter has now over the role of Regional Race Officer. The Regional Race Officer role will become more proactive in the future and a senior regional organiser has been given a role in supporting the Race Officer and the Committee.

The Regional delegation to the National Race Conference played a full and active part in the proceedings and is happy to have provided delegates at forthcoming conferences of the TUC and Labour Party.

The Regional Committee was not able to play a full part in last year's Respect Festival but worked closely with the London Region on a major event in Tottenham to celebrate Black History Month.

During the local elections members took part in anti BNP activities around the Region, but especially in Plymouth and in Wiltshire. Then activities involved leafleting and talking to local people to alert them to the dangers of Neo Nazi activity.

In October the Region held a successful Race Conference which was attended by the new Regional Secretary. The Conference considered the Henry Report and its implications for the GMB at Regional and National level and received a report on the national Equality Audit from Dawn Butler.

In becoming more proactive the Regional Race Committee has provided a detailed response to the Task Group consultation document. It will meet with the new National Officer with responsibility for race, and later with the Regional Education Officer to discuss Regional Education.

The Committee has also drawn up a draft role for the Branch Race Officer post and is piloting the use of GMB material in a series of foreign languages as a recruitment and informational aid to union representatives.

The Committee looks forward to increased GMB effort into recruiting potential members from within Black and Minority Ethnic communities and to supporting members from those communities who want to become more active and influential within the Union at national and regional level.

7. Youth

The Region has approximately five and a half thousand young members.

The Region has sent a number of young members to work with the Workers Beer Company at both Reading and Glastonbury Festivals. This not only represents an ideal opportunity to attract young members to the Union but the Union also gets paid for every member it sends. The proceeds from this has been used to fund young members' events such as the Joint Meeting of Labour Students which took place in Brighton.

The Region is currently looking at the structures for young members with the Region and is looking to establish a Young Members' Committee. The Region currently has four officers who are under the age of 30.

8. Training

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
3-Day GMB Introductory	25	216	108	324	972
3-Day GMB Follow-on	20	169	65	234	702
5-Day GMB Induction Part 1	6	51	22	73	365
(b) On Site Courses					
1-Day NHS Pensions Seminar	1	7	1	8	8
2-Day London Inst. Grievance & Dis'y	1	8	3	11	22
3-Day Aviance Follow-on	1	9	-	9	27
3-Day Aviance Negotiating Skills	1	7	-	7	21
3-Day Aviance Employment Law	1	8	-	8	24
5-Day Lay Tutors	2	20	5	25	125
3-Day Negotiating Skills	2	12	5	17	51
3-Day Employment Law	6	35	24	59	177
(c) Health & Safety Courses					
3-Day GMB Health & Safety	15	145	50	195	585
3-Day GMB AA Health & Safety	1	13	3	16	48
1-Day GMB Transco H&S	1	18	-	18	18
5-Day GMB Induc'n Part 2 H&S	3	31	14	45	225
(d) Other Courses					
3-Day GMB AA Introductory	6	62	15	77	231
5-Day GMB AA Follow-on	4	46	12	58	290
3-Day GMB B.Gas Field Sales Intro	1	5	1	6	18
(e) GMB National College Courses					
3-Day Various	2	3	-	3	9
5-Day Various	48	101	18	119	595
(f) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
TUC Various Inc. Union Learning Reps Courses	28	64	17	81	Variable

9. Health & Safety

During 2003 important new health and safety guidance and recruitment leaflets were circulated in this period on discarded needles, lone working and the security industry. The leaflet on discarded needles has proved particularly useful for many of our members working in local authorities (for example refuse workers, caretakers and gardeners) who are frequently exposed to the risk of needlestick injuries. The fact that lone working is on the increase, and the failure of many managers to recognise the health and safety implications of this, has been a consistent topic of debate on training courses within the Region. The new leaflet (which was produced as a result of a specific request by the RHSO) will provide a useful source of guidance on the importance of assessing the risks to lone workers and implementing reasonable measures to protect their health and safety.

The leaflet on health and safety in the Security Industry was similarly published by National Office following consistent pressure by the Region to do so. The final version of the leaflet reflects the expert insight and knowledge of the issues within the industry that was supplied by some of Southern Region's key activists. A small working group was convened to comment upon and suggest amendments to the draft leaflet, all of which were incorporated into the final version which was drafted by the RHSO. This method of producing guidance, with the invaluable input and involvement of senior activists, can only help to ensure that the materials produced are relevant and accessible to our members within the industries concerned.

Gatwick Airport has recently been the focus of a major recruitment initiative centred around health and safety. The RHSO devised and designed a health and safety questionnaire and accompanying publicity and recruitment materials for a this campaign. It was launched in April 2003 with a week of intensive

activity involving Officers, local Reps and other activists from within the Region who spent many hours distributing questionnaires and recruitment leaflets to workers throughout the airport. This activity, coupled with local press coverage, significantly raised the GMB's profile at Gatwick Airport. The distribution of questionnaires continued for many weeks following the launch.

The results of the survey are currently being analysed by Professor Watterson, an occupational health and safety expert based at Stirling University, and will be used to identify the major health and safety concerns of Gatwick airport workers. Professor Watterson's report will be specifically used to:

- provide intelligence on health and safety concerns of non-members that could provide potential recruitment openings;
- inform the Union of the health and safety priorities of existing members in order to facilitate negotiations on improvements and;
- allow the production at national level of a health and safety recruitment leaflet for airport workers.

A Regional delegation of five attended the National Hazards Conference in London. This is an excellent conference, which provides an opportunity for exploring new information as well as having a practiced based approach to health and safety. The delegation who attended all gained a lot from this conference and this can only be beneficial for the members.

During 2004 a Regional delegation to the Hazards conference in Manchester and the feedback from the delegation has been very useful for developing the Region's responses to particular problems that confront our members. In this period we have developed a new health and safety programme for our activists. For example we now have a minimum of 15 days core health and safety training within the Region. We have also developed three new short courses since March, namely Stress at Work, Risk Assessment and Bullying and Harassment and all these courses are now available. The department has also been able to deliver some specific health and safety briefings for reps in particular sectors, such as the gas industry. We have produced a Stress at Work survey which some members have found useful in identifying and dealing with stress in the workplace.

(Adopted)

BRO. R. ASCOUGH (Regional Secretary, Southern): Congress, as Jerry Nelson said yesterday, it is normal for regional secretaries formally to move their reports. I know I might be inviting people to say that I am not normal, but I am actually going to speak on this occasion. The reason why I am going to speak is because I want to update Congress on a very important issue and also to announce a demonstration on Thursday.

On 28th February, we found out that a break-away group had been formed called, laughably, the Automobile Association Democratic Union. I say "laughably" because so democratic were they that they did not consult the 5,000 members about this breakaway group. This was a very serious threat to our organisation. You should know that it is being led by two people who up until 28th February were CEC members and members of the Southern Region's Regional Committee, who were participating in the decisions of this organisation right up to 28th February while planning to stab us in the back. Also, one of those people was involved in the Task Force as well.

Perhaps we should not have expected anything less from these people. After all, one of the people

involved, Ian Allen, had been found guilty of a serious breach in terms of election rules. I suspect that both of them would have been under investigation in the coming inquiry as they were breaking the rules by sending out text messages to all of the AA patrols telling them who they should vote for.

In addition, it is being led by Alistair McLean, who until the end of January was the senior organiser of this Union. He was happy for 14 years to take money, the good pay and conditions that we give to our organisers, but having been left so bitter and frustrated at the fact that he did not achieve the position which he thought was his divine right to have, namely, that of regional secretary, he could not stand the pace and wanted to get out. You will be interested to know he is actually receiving a pension from us!! Despite all of this, he was planning this breakaway.

If it had been about principle, I could understand that, but this was not about principle. This was about people who were scared of the changes in the organisation, scared about what was going to happen to them in terms of the inquiry, that they would get found out, could not stand the heat and they have moved off. This is not principle. This is not

democratic, but it has a serious effect on this organisation.

There has been unprecedented -- I emphasise "unprecedented" -- help given by the management of the AA. It is not like the old friendly mutual that existed a few years ago. These are serious, hard-nosed venture capitalists waiting to make a fast buck when the AA is floated in a year or two's time. They gave unprecedented access to this group. Unfortunately, they have managed in some cases through intimidation and bullying to persuade 4,000 of our members to join them. That has a serious effect on the income of the Region and the Union. It is between £600,000 and £700,000 a year; so it is a serious effect.

However, this great Union is not prepared just to roll over and die on this issue. We are fighting back. I am glad to say that a senior organiser, Paul Maloney, is taking the fight back to them, ably assisted by Steve Pryle and Rosie Conroy. We are getting many new stories in about the AA. We are now beginning to see members trickling back because they have seen that this a union -- it is a shame to call it a "union" because it is not -- which is agreeing to things that no union would do. We have seen the pay-back now with employees dismissed and, in some cases, targeting disability.

For this reason, we are going to arrange a demonstration at the AA offices in Newcastle. They have a big Call Centre here. The demonstration is going to take place on Thursday morning before Congress. We have arranged for coaches to pick up from here at 8.15 am. The AA Call Centre is in William Armstrong Drive. It is just off the Scotswood Road. It is not very far from here. I would ask delegates, please, to let your regional secretaries know whether

you can attend this important event. Perhaps our regional secretaries can let me know how many delegates each region will be sending. We have two coaches booked at the moment, but we are happy to book more if we have a good demonstration. It is important that we stand up for the many people in the AA who are being let down by this organisation.

I can also announce that because of the tactics that have been used, particularly in targeting some disabled workers, we are going to be balloting some of our members who have remained with us. There will be an announcement tomorrow about a strike ballot at the AA; so watch out for that.

Ethical Threads has produced a T-shirt which will be made available to everybody who attends the demonstration. With that, I thank you, President, for indulging me in speaking on this issue, but I think it is very important that Congress knows what is happening and how we have been betrayed by people who are happy to be part of this Union until it did not suit them any longer. I now move my Report. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Richard, for that. This Union views the situation so seriously and, as we have said, we are going to protect and fight for our members' rights. Paul Kenny and I have been to Standing Orders. This Congress will not commence until ten o'clock on Thursday morning so delegates can lobby the AA to fight for our Union. *(Applause)*

(There were no questions raised on this section of the report)

(The report was adopted)

CONSTRUCTION, FURNITURE, TIMBER & ALLIED SECTION REPORT

Introduction

Since the last GMB National Congress the CFTA Section has faced a number of difficult issues, from the imports of furniture from China to a struggle to keep Remploy factory based employment. The Section has lost over 10,000 members since we last met; a sure sign that the government is not doing enough to help manufacturing. By 2020 the UK will have lost the whole of its manufacturing base and be completely dependent on the rest of the world for the supply of basic products.

We have seen massive increases in the cost of energy and this is having an effect on the production of bricks, cement and other building products. The cost of travel has gone up with the means of travel in a chaotic state.

While we have seen a decline in the furniture industry because of imports the construction part of the section has increased in membership, mainly thanks to the hard work of our London construction Officers who have made major increases in membership on some of the high profile sites such as Terminal 5 Heathrow, Wembley and the new rail link at St Pancras. The London Region has provided resources and this has proved worthwhile. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Officers and staff who have worked hard to service the CFTA Section.

1. National Negotiations

FURNITURE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

We have seen a further increase in the imports of furniture outside of the UK; the big threat is China and Eastern Europe.

British furniture manufacturers are taking the easy way out and switching production overseas, including household names such as Fraylings and Parker Knoll. The British public are not aware of the situation, most people do not know where a piece of furniture is made because of the lack of proper labelling. Retailers who sell the furniture to the British public have no concerns about their safety and the amount of furniture that fails UK Fire Regulations is running at around 28%, and house fires appear to be on the increase.

The Section Committee has mounted a campaign to draw the public's attention to this unacceptable situation. The British Furniture Manufacturers Association and the GMB are partners in a government funded project to promote more diversity within the industry. The industry still employs over 200,000 people and is worth over £12b per year. Government needs to help stop the unsafe furniture entering the UK by introducing very strict penalties for those retailers who flaunt the law.

We have set up a Tripartite Committee for the industry. The Furniture Industry Strategy Group is funded by the DTI and has produced a major report which deals with the major issues for the industry such as imports, fire regulation design and public procurement. The GMB has played a major part in the Committee and holds the Chair of the Public Procurement Committee.

At the CFTA Section Committee a major campaign was launched to protect the UK consumer from unsafe upholstered furniture. The GMB managed to purchase some new upholstered suites and with the help of the Lancashire Fire Brigade conducted a controlled test at the Fire Brigade's Training Headquarters in Chorley. The result of the fire test was devastating; within 8 minutes of the furniture being set on fire there were clouds of black smoke and the heat was so intense that you had to stand at least 30 metres away. Copies of the controlled test are available on CD ROM through the CFTA Section.

Not only are cheap imports coming into the UK from as far away as China, 28% of all upholstered furniture is failing the UK flammability tests.

The 2004 pay and conditions agreement was as follows:

MINIMUM PAYMENTS:

That the minimum payments for 39 hours, as specified in the Schedule of Minimum Payments dated January 2004, shall be:

For Journeymen/Journeywomen	£212.84
For Adult Packers	£196.07
For Adult Labourers and Porters	£183.20
For Adult Labourers and Porters	£189.15
	- from 1st October

and the minimum hourly rates for time workers shall be:

For Journeymen/Journeywomen	£545.75
For Adult Packers	£502.75
For Adult Labourers and Porters	£469.75
For Adult Labourers and Porters	£485.00
	- from 1st October

and proportionately for Juveniles.

Formula to Reduce the Three Minimum Time Rates to Two Time Rates:

For the purposes of the National Labour Agreement it is agreed that over a period of 4 years the Adult Labourers and Porters minimum time rate will be uplifted to equate with the minimum time rate of Adult Packers. To this end, it is agreed that with effect from 1st October 2004, the minimum hourly rate for Adult Labourers and Porters will rise to 485.00p/h. Thereafter, in the subsequent Agreement years, effective 1st January from 2005 to 2008, a supplement will be added to the minimum hourly rate of Adult Labourers and Porters. The supplement will be dependent on an in addition to any general

increase agreed. In 2005, the Adult Labourers and Porters supplement will be based on one quarter of the difference between the aforesaid rates. In 2006, one-third of the difference; in 2007, one-half of the difference; in 2008, the rates will be equalised. Proportionate supplements will apply to Juveniles.

Clause 8, Paragraph (iv): Bereavement Leave:

An employee shall be entitled to three days bereavement leave on the death of his/her spouse, child, parent, brother or sister. Two days bereavement leave is due on the death of a grandparent, mother/father in law, brother/sister in law and son/daughter in law. Payment will be at the individual's appropriate minimum time worker's rate.

New Clause 1, Equality and Diversity.

The parties to this agreement recognise the importance to the industry of a diverse workforce, recognising that future success in a highly competitive marketplace depends on employees and their development. To this end, the parties are committed to the development of a code of practice that promotes positive and non-discriminatory policies and practices in employment regardless of employees' age, sex, sexual orientation, transexuality, marital status, trade union membership or non-membership, disability, colour, race, ethnic origin, or religion or belief. This principle applies to the recruitment process, conditions of work, training, re-training, promotion and career development opportunities. It is also recognised that people with dependants have certain rights and may have particular needs or problems deserving special consideration.

The code of practice will be developed during the agreement year and together with associated documentation will be disseminated to the industry and will promote the benefits of equality and diversity and its application in individual companies.

Furniture remains the largest part of the CFTA Section and there is major potential for recruitment within the industry. Consolidation within the furniture factory sites is vital and the Section Committee will concentrate on trying to increase the membership throughout the rest of 2004.

The negotiations for the 2005 increase are being held against a background of factory closures and have yet to be agreed. While the National Labour Agreement (NLA) rates of pay remain low, most GMB organised furniture factories pay well above NLA rates. The conditions such as hours, holidays, guaranteed pay and severance pay remain very relevant to all our members. Some companies within the industry pay £10-£15 per hour and use the NLA Agreement as a base for local negotiations. I would like to thank the negotiating team for all the work that they have been involved in over the last two years.

CWS FUNERALCARE

Disgraceful behaviour by the shop workers union, Usdaw caused a major dispute during the 2004 pay negotiations. Usdaw decided that they would break away from the Joint Trade Union Negotiating Committee and meet with CWS Funeralcare management on their own. A meeting took place on the 25th June 2004 with Usdaw being the only trade union present despite protest from the GMB and TGWU before the meeting. Usdaw agreed a pay offer with the CWS management which had previously been rejected by the Joint Trade Union Negotiating Committee. GMB and TGWU met with the company on the 7th July but no agreement could be reached with the CWS management hiding behind the Usdaw agreement.

An industrial action ballot proved positive and GMB and TGWU members entered into a difficult dispute. From the start, GMB members in London showed the strength and determination to win the dispute. The company tried every trick they could to break the resolve of our members. From October onwards the company tried to induce GMB members into accepting the pay offer and back pay of around £600. In November the same inducement was made to members on condition that they agreed not to take part in any further industrial action. During this period our members were bullied and intimidated by CWS Managers.

On the 23rd November a fresh and increased offer was made to the GMB and TGWU which meant a reduction in Scotland of the consolidated working week by 1 hour, a shortening of the 12 month pay agreement to 10 months and an increase in the London Weighting of 10%. A secret ballot was conducted and our members accepted the new offer.

On the 1st October 2004 the Employment Act was amended and new legislation was introduced to stop employers like the CWS offering inducements to union members breaking away from collective bargaining. Individual grievances were lodged and the company failed to respond. Steps are now being taken to take the company to tribunal.

Since the end of the dispute, Usdaw has continued to cosy up to the CWS and the leadership of Usdaw should bow their heads in shame at the way they have acted.

The industry's public image hides the fact that this is one of the most stressful industries that our members work in. Large profits are very common - who has ever heard of a funeral director going out of business. The owners of the industry are like bookmakers; you never see or hear of a poor one. Again, the British public are unaware of the low pay and long hours of the workers, 70 and 80 hours a week is not uncommon and some of our members go without proper sleep for up to 48 hours when on call out duties. The industry is the fourth emergency service but our members are the poor relations of other groups of workers who work in the other emergency services.

The following revisions to Funeral Arranger's salaries are offered:

A 3.5% increase to all pay rates with effect from 1st March 2004 (with the exception of those employees who are on protected or red-circled rates unless the 3.5% increase takes the rate for their role above their protected/ red-circled rate).

Current Terms

Funeral Arrangers - £12,743

Proposed Terms

Increase to £13,000 per annum (increase of 2.0%) with effect from 12th Jan 2004 + 3.5% ASR from 1st March 2004 (at point 1) giving a new salary of £13,455 per annum

Current Terms

Trainee Arrangers - £11,643

Proposed Terms

Increase to £11,900 per annum (increase of 2.2%) with effect from 12th Jan 2004 + 3.5% ASR from 1st March 2004 (at point 1) giving a new salary of £12,316 per annum

The following revisions to BIE Qualified Embalmers' salaries are offered:

Current Terms

Up to 1199 cases per annum

Proposed Terms

£20,500 per annum with effect from 12th January 2004 + 3.5% (at point 1) giving a new salary with effect from 1st March 2004 of £21,217 per annum

Current Terms

Over 1200 cases per annum

Proposed Terms

£21,500 per annum with effect from 12th January 2004 + 3.5% (at point 1) giving a new salary with effect from 1st March 2004 of £22,252 per annum

Current Terms

Area Embalmer (dedicated embalmer who operates from more than one location)

Proposed Terms

Will carry the facility of a company car with effect from acceptance of offer

Current Terms

Embalming (BIE qualified) as 'other duties' - additional to their primary role.

Proposed Terms

£750 plussage for other roles who perform over 100 cases per year (agreed by manager) - effective from 12th January 2004. This will remain at £750 from 1st March 2004

Current Terms

BIE Trainee Embalmers

Proposed Terms

£500 plussage to current salary - effective from 12th January 2004. This will remain at £500 from 1st March 2004

An increase to standby payments of 3.5% to £15.07 per occasion (£135.63 per week for 9 occasions) for hourly paid employees who participate on standby.

An increase to standby payments for all salaried (consolidated pay) employees who participate on standby to £18 per occasion (£162 per week for 9 occasions)

An increase to the Designated Branch / Hub Allowance of 3.5% for those employees in receipt of that allowance (this increase does not apply to telephone or any other allowances)

The introduction of the new role of Principal Funeral Director to aid career progression from the Funeral Director role.

Principal Funeral Director (England, Wales & N Ireland) - £19,736 per annum (Salary with effect from 1st March 2004 and includes 3.5% at point 1)

Principal Funeral Director (Scotland) - £20,907 per annum (Salary with effect from 1st March 2004 and includes 3.5% at point 1)

The introduction of the role of 'Administrator' at a salary of £12,937 - £15,525 per annum (this range includes the increase effective from 1st March 2004 at point 1).

In addition to this and to settle the dispute the following increases were agreed:

The review date of the Agreement will be revised from the beginning of Period 3, ie March 2005 to the start of the Co-operative Group's Trading year ie 13th January 2005.

Annualised contracts will be based on average of 45.5 hours from 13th January 2005 (core hours remain at 37.5 hours).

Inner and Outer London Weighting will be increased by a minimum of 10% with effect from 13th January 2005, furthermore there is a commitment to review the boundaries associated with this allowance.

The constitution of the Joint Consultative Committee will be revised and will include procedural provisions in respect of the collective bargaining process.

LONDON ASSOCIATION OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS (LAFD)

Industrial relations are quite good with this employers association unlike the CWS. Many of the funeral companies within the LAFD treat their employees with some respect and as a result we spend less time trying to save our members' jobs. There are problems with low membership because of the geographical spread of the industries. If recruitment is to increase then resources will need to be allocated to enable recruitment to take place. The 2004 pay rates were increased by 3% and are now as follows:

Standard Rates & Supplement	Per Week 39 Hours	Attendance Supplement
Funeral Assistant Grade A	£255.30	£10.00
Funeral Assistant Grade B	£243.50	£10.00
Funeral Assistant Grade C	£214.81	£10.00
Branch Manager	£255.30	£10.00

New Adult Recruit	£207.72	£10.00
Funeral Receptionist/Clerk Grade A	£243.50	£10.00
Funeral Receptionist/Clerk Grade B	£232.02	£10.00
Funeral Receptionist/Clerk Trainee (first 13 wks)	£207.72	£10.00
Youths age 16	£139.68	Nil
Youths age 17	£169.79	Nil
Youths age 18	Full adult rate	Nil

Supplements

Per Week

Foremen supervising up to 9 workers	£9.25
Foremen supervising 10-20 workers	£11.04
Foremen supervising 21-30 workers	£13.21
Foremen supervising over 30 workers	£14.99
Resident Manager's Marital Partner	£54.32
Branch Manager's Commission ...sales up to £40,000	2.5%
Branch Manager's Commission ...sales from £40,000 up to & including £60,000	2%
Branch Manager's Commission ...sales over £60,000	1.5%

Allowances

Mileage:	£0.40 per mile
Clothing:	£6.00 per week
Journey work disturbance:	£7.00 per journey
First Aid:	£3.00 per week

Hourly and Overtime rates	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C
Normal Rate	£6.55	£6.24	£5.51
Time and Half	£9.82	£9.36	£8.26
Double Time	£13.10	£12.448	£11.02

The last 3 years pay negotiations have resulted in pay settlements well above inflation but the rates remain low for what is a very difficult job

COLCHESTER & EAST ESSEX CO-OPERATIVE FUNERAL SERVICE

Sometimes, small is best. Industrial relations remain on very good terms, consultation by the management remains high and the union at local and national level have managed to increase pay by substantial amounts. The rates of pay are now comparable to that of the CWS but there is still some way to go to match other conditions, such as hours and standby payments.

The 2003 pay negotiations increased pay by 4% with some individuals receiving a £25 increase over an above the 4%.

The 2004 pay negotiations resulted in a 3.5% increase.

IPSWICH & NORWICH CO-OPERATIVE FUNERAL SERVICE

As a result of our work at Colchester Co-op and our attention to what is a relatively small membership, we have now recruited around 60 members at the neighbouring Ipswich & Norwich Funeral Service. Here we have a classic example of the attitude towards workers and their trade unions that has developed in some parts of the co-operative movement.

The rates of pay are the worst in the industry and the management has been using the Co-operative Retail Agreement to set the pay rates. The local Officer and I met with senior members of the management and ACAS to try to come to an agreement on recognition. Following this meeting the company has increased basic pay by over £40 per week but is still refusing to meet with the union to agree formal recognition. It has become even more ridiculous for the company to refuse recognition as they have now agreed to check-off and recognised a GMB Shop Steward.

The CFTA Section Committee would like to put on record their appreciation to Regional Officer, Glenn

Holdom who has worked tremendously hard to build up our funeral membership.

SAWMILLING

The industry remains fairly buoyant with the increase in house sales and new house builds and has become more reliant on the UK 'Do It Yourself' market. The membership remains fairly low but important inasmuch as our members in the industry are very loyal and are nearly all grade one members. Finforest remains one of the largest sawmilling companies and our membership continues to grow. Industrial relations are very good and the national negotiations with the Employers Association are normally completed in one meeting. Over the last 3 years, pay settlements have been above inflation and since we met the following rates have been agreed.

The 2004 pay negotiations resulted in the following:

An increase of 17 pence per hour for Woodcutting Machinists, making a new National Basic Minimum Rate of £5.68 per hour.

An increase of 14 pence per hour for Labourers, making a new National Basic Minimum Rate of £4.88 per hour.

Proportionate increases for Apprentices and for Boy and Girl Labourers.

The National agreement shall incorporate, under Clause 10 "Holidays", the Joint Council's recommendations that further paid holiday be considered for those employees with a long continuous period of employment.

The Joint Council recommends that employers consider a flexible approach to working hours and the working week, where this helps an employee or employees' domestic circumstances and where there is no detriment to productivity.

It is also the Joint Council's recommendation that employers and employees should maintain awareness of the problem of nasal cancer and the need for screening as a preventative measure.

The 2005 pay negotiations resulted in the following:

An increase of 18 pence per hour for Woodcutting Machinists, making a new National Basic Minimum Rate of £5.86 per hour.

An increase of 14.5 pence per hour for Labourers, making a new National Basic Minimum Rate of £5.025 per hour.

A further day of paid Annual Holiday, making 23 days in total. Clause 10(m) of the National Agreement shall be revised so that an employee's annual earnings (P60 value) shall be the basis of calculation for holiday pay. Other elements of the holiday pay clause in the National Agreement shall remain the same.

A further day of Paternity Leave be granted to any employee on the birth or adoption of a child. This makes the provision of paternity leave at 2 days, the rate of pay being at the employee's personal rate. The alternative contained in the Statutory Regulations (currently 10 days leave at the rate of £100 per week) is unaffected.

While these pay rates appear low, we know that through local agreements the Woodcutting Machinists now average between £6.50 and £11 per hour. The national agreement is a minimum fallback agreement. On the other hand, holiday, holiday plusage, sick pay and hours are set by the NLA for the British Sawmilling Industry Joint Industrial Council. Membership is around 1,500 and there is tremendous scope for recruitment.

FLAT GLASS

The industry is very dependent on the construction industry because over 70% of the furniture supply industry has gone to China and nearly every piece of glass used in furniture manufacturing is made outside of the UK.

The industry still employs well over 100,000 people and Pilkingtons and Solaglas are the largest players. Industrial relations have remained good and the GMB remain the largest union within the flat glass industry. Again, pay negotiations with the Flat Glass Employers Association have produced above inflation increases for 2004. Unfortunately, this year's pay negotiations are unresolved and discussions are ongoing.

SOLAGLAS

The company continues to be very heavily supported financially by the French parent company, St Gobain. Solaglas UK continues to take major losses and this has very much affected pay increases. Our GMB membership within the company has been stable and increased slightly because of the recruitment of members in the Windowcare section. The company has now closed the pension scheme for new entrants although through negotiation and with the help of the GMB Pensions Department, we have managed to reduce some of the company's proposals to worsen other benefits.

There are a number of agreements which are negotiated at national level, most of which we have experienced extreme difficulties to achieve decent pay increases. The membership is well aware of the financial position of the company and because of these difficulties the Solaglas pay has now fallen from being in the top 6 of glass companies to being near the bottom half of pay and conditions within the industry. Our members' patience within Solaglas is now wearing thin.

PILKINGTON GLASS

Issues over the lack of consultation regarding the pension scheme have now started to be resolved thanks to the introduction of a new Consultative Pensions Committee which was the idea of the GMB.

The new minimum rates under the Green Book for 2004 are as follows:

Specialist Advanced Craftsperson and Specialist Processor	£6.04
Advanced Craftsperson and Multiskilled Processor	£5.62
Craftsperson and Skilled Processor	£5.33
General Operative and General Processor	£5.07

In addition, First Aid Trained Personnel will be paid £10 per week

1. Clause 4 - Travelling Expenses and Allowances

1.1 Sub-Clause 4.2 - Lodging and Overnight Meal Allowance

The first paragraph of this clause to be amended to read 'When the location of a job necessitates lodging away from home overnight, payments of £25.00 per night towards accommodation will be made. In addition, any reasonable claim supported by appropriate receipts may be made for an evening meal. The lodging allowance is tax free and unreceipted and is based on an agreement with the Inland Revenue. Any overnight meal claim is subject to Schedule E Tax. Any further reimbursements for lodging and overnight meal allowances will only be considered if prior agreement has been obtained and receipts presented. These receipts must be available for inspection at Inland Revenue PAYE audits'.

2. Clause 7 - Annual Holidays

2.1 Sub-Clauses 7.2.2 and 7.2.3

Wording in both Clauses to be amended to read '...consecutive service to run from the date of commencement of employment with one employer...'

2.2 Sub-Clause 7.4

Wording to be amended to 'Payment shall be calculated at the normal individual hourly rate current on the pay day preceding the day the holiday is started plus 27.5% and shall be paid on that pay day. However, where local agreements currently exist that are preferable to this, they should continue. Any changes in wage rates during the course of the holiday must be taken into consideration'.

2.3 Sub-Clause 7.5

Deleted in entirety.

3. Clause 8 - Public Holidays

3.1 Sub-Clause 8.2

Wording to be amended to 'An employee not working on a Public Holiday shall be paid for the normal hours (if any) that would have been worked on that day, calculated at the normal individual hourly rate plus 27.5%'.

3.2 Sub-Clause 8.3

Substitute the words 'In instances where an operative is employed on permanent night shifts or other activities resulting in normal pay being in excess of the 25% premium, then the holiday pay will be at basic Appendix 1 rate plus shift premium and other payment within the definition of normal pay.' with the words 'Holiday pay shall be at normal individual hourly rate plus 27.5%'.

3.3 Sub-Clause 8.4

Deleted in entirety.

4. Clause 17 - Death in Service Benefit Scheme

4.1 Sub Clause 17.1 - Introduction

The minimum life cover will be increased to £20,000.

5. Clause 1.7 - Wages, Definition and Training

The first paragraph of this Clause will be amended to read 'The basic wages for the operative's structure are those set out in Appendix 1 of the National Labour Agreement (NLA). Wage increases agreed at national level will be paid from 1 January each year and if necessary, backdated to 1 January each year.'

All the above figures should be implemented as from 1 January 2004.

The company has produced facilities for meeting with Shop Stewards on a national basis which we have taken advantage of. There is also a European Works Council which operates on a regular basis. Our major concerns with Pilkington are the continual reduction of labour in the UK and the transfer of work to low wage economies. It seems it is ok to be proud to be a British company but the directors are not so proud to stay in the UK and give commitment to British workers who made the company profitable in the first place.

BRITISH ORGAN BUILDING INDUSTRY

Industrial relations remain good. Pay negotiations for this very small group of valuable members takes no more than one meeting.

Our members travel all over the world building organs in some of the most prestigious cathedrals in the world. The skills of organ builders are very high and local pay rates are far higher than the national agreement, although again any percentage increases are reflected back into the local rates.

Negotiations for 2004 resulted in the following:

The Journeyman's minimum hourly rate will be increased to £6.00 (from the former £5.80), a rise of 3.5%

From age	%	Hourly Rate	Weekly Hour	Weekly Rate
16	35	£2.10	39	£81.90
16½	40	£2.40	39	£93.60
17	45	£2.70	39	£105.30
17½	50	£3.00	39	£117.00
18	65	£3.90	39	£152.10
18½	75	£4.50	39	£175.50
19	80	£5.10	39	£198.90
19½	90	£5.70	39	£222.30
20	100	£6.00	39	£234.00

Negotiations for 2005 resulted in the following:

The Journeyman's minimum hourly rate will be increased from January 1st 2005 to £6.24 (from the former £6.00), a rise of 4%.

Reduction to a 37 hour working week without loss of earnings - claim withdrawn.

An extra day's holiday to be introduced each year for the next 5 years making a total of 5 extra days' holiday - claim withdrawn.

Average pay to be paid for all holidays and sick pay - claim withdrawn. The issue of average pay to be discussed at a separate meeting in early 2005.

Other Amendments to the Working Rules Agreement:

(c) APPRENTICES/ADULT TRAINEES

The minimum rates for trainees shall be based on the published government rates. At present, this changes on 1st October each year. Increments will apply following each completed year of training:

The Revised Schedule of Minimum Hourly Rates from January 1st 2005

Group	Age	Hourly Rate		
		Year one	Year two	Year three
1	16-17	£3.00	£3.50	£4.10
2	18-21	£4.10	£4.85	*
3	22 and over	£4.85	£5.70	*

* Skilled rate (£6.24 for 2005) shall apply provided that training has been satisfactorily completed.

BUILDING MATERIALS

The responsibilities for all the industries included within this sector moved from Allan Black, National Officer to Keith Hazlewood, National Secretary to Phil Davies, National Secretary within a 12 month period. We are now achieving some consistency and a brief report is given for each of the industries.

HANSON BRICK

A two year deal for 2005 and 2006 was reached on the basis of a 4% increase for 2006. Some of the shift premiums were increased and the current redundancy package was enhanced.

BUILDING BRICK

An offer of 3.75% has been rejected by our members and a fresh offer is being considered by the Employers Association.

LAFARGE CEMENT

This is a very well trade union organised company and our shop stewards are very experienced. An increase for 2005 only (1 year) based on an average of RPI for September, October and November 2004 (3 months) plus 0.25% was overwhelmingly accepted by our members. Special thanks should go to our senior shop steward in Northern Ireland who has given a large amount of his own time to help the GMB.

LAFARGE DRIVERS

GMB has a small but important membership. Discussions are ongoing and revolve around the 48 hour directive for heavy goods drivers. Pay negotiations are still ongoing within the industry.

3. Remploy

When we last met in 2003 we reported that employment had fallen below 5,200 within the factory network. While we have managed to stop the closure of any Remploy factory sites there has been a massive reduction in the number of disabled people within Remploy. The numbers of people with disabilities now stands at around 5,200, a loss in two years of over 900 jobs. This has been achieved through natural retirements, ill health retirements and dismissals.

In February 2000 Alan Pedder told us he had identified the solution to the problems that were apparent in Remploy and it was obvious that the problems he had observed were the same problems that were highlighted by the Trade Unions because, after negotiation, the Company and the Trade Unions signed on to the new Remploy 21 strategy that Alan Pedder had introduced.

We all felt that Remploy started this new plan well and in 2000/1 and 2001/2 delivered on its promises - employment numbers did not decline, and things started to develop in terms of a partnership between

the company and the trade unions. The industrial relations became one of the best we had experienced and the Company did initially deliver in reducing overheads and reducing layers of management.

However all of this has slipped away since April 2002 when there was clearly a change of approach by the management. Statistics show that from April 2002 the number of employees in factories have been deliberately reduced. Since April 2002 the number of monthly paid employees has significantly increased. Since April 2002 the number of management layers has increased. Since 2002 the company has needed more government financing and delivered fewer jobs for disabled people and the general consensus of everyone we speak to is that Alan Pedder has lost the plot and is increasingly out of touch with what is needed in Remploy.

It is not a coincidence that April 2002 was when the current Chief Executive Bob Warner joined Remploy as Finance Director. It is clear now that his decision was to adopt a job cutting philosophy in factories to meet the company's cost objectives and revert back to the previous 1990's strategy to run down factory employment in favour of Interwork.

We do not accept the argument from management that jobs in factories are falling because of a decline in UK manufacturing. Manufacturing was in decline in 2000/1 and 2001/2 but jobs were maintained and even today manufacturing makes up over 15% of the UK GDP. There is plenty of work too in the service sector of the economy that could be done in Remploy factories. There is work to be won if people really want it to happen but we are increasingly of the opinion that Remploy management don't want this and would rather grow Interwork.

During the past two years we have seen good Directors leave. Len Boulton, Sandra Knowles and Ray Fletcher, and were all directors that had the trust and respect of the Trade Unions. They have all chosen to leave and we still ask the question why have these directors chosen to leave Remploy?

Our information is that there is growing disillusionment with the current management style amongst the better managers and that a further number of good senior people will leave during the next few months. Senior managers tell us that they cannot do anything without approval from the top and that the Board of Directors are increasingly out of touch with what is required to make Remploy a successful enterprise. It is no wonder that targets are not met if senior managers don't feel they are being listened too either.

We also think that Ministers and Government officials are only being told those things that Mr. Warner and Mr Pedder want them to know giving a very one sided and distorted view of what is really happening inside Remploy.

Our members and all those disabled people who would like to work in Remploy look to us to find out why Remploy is failing and why it costs over £20 million more to run Remploy than it did three years ago and why even with all that extra funding the Company employed fewer disabled people last year than it did the year before?

We have argued for more money for Remploy since the Tories froze the grant in 1995 on the basis that this would lead to more jobs for disabled people but now more money has been made available this hasn't actually happened. Instead the extra public money has gone on employing more non-disabled people and adding in more management jobs which is not what Remploy is there for. We are not asking for more money now because we think a lot of money is being wasted again.

We had a commitment that the company would employ 6000 people as part of the Remploy 21 strategy and they haven't tried to get near to that figure in the last two years. What has actually happened is that they have increased the number of non-disabled people across the company who gain their living off of the backs of disabled people.

We were told in 2000 that the company's approach to organizing the management structure was to have fewer but better paid Managers who would be more professional and deliver more. The truth is that there has been no delivery of results and in fact the company now employs the same number of staff they had in 2000 and at significantly higher salaries. This is not acceptable.

We were told in 1999 that the company had a fleet of over 500 cars used by managers and we

expected this to reduce as the company reduced layers and streamlined its structure. Our information today is that not only does the company still have over 500 cars on its fleet but also it now has another 250 people who get car allowance instead of a car. So car costs have not reduced they have in fact gone up.

Remploy constantly make promises that it does not deliver. We have not known a year go by where it has actually met its own budget.

This cannot go on without a significant inquiry into the way Remploy is being run. We have had incidents in the past year where an individual was dismissed unfairly because she was away, from work in the early stages of pregnancy. We have an incident where an individual lost his job after being employed for 25 years with a good record; he was dismissed for pushing another individual who severely provoked him. Work has been out outsourced when it could have been kept in house. There have been blatant attempts by management to bully, blackmail and pressurize our members to accept a factory merger in South Wales and to accept transferred work in Scotland.

All of these things indicate to us that the current management led by Bob Warner and Alan Pedder has abandoned the partnership we were building in the early stages of Remploy 21. They clearly don't want to work with the Trade Unions - Bob Warner and Jill Hill has tried continuously to rubbish the Ethical Threads initiative proposed by the GMB. The management did nothing about following up the work the GMB did on public procurement with Ray Fletcher until very recently when they have started to realise that in fact this might get them out of the hole they are now in. The Board of Remploy was positively rude to the GMB after inviting the Trade Union to attend a board meeting last year to present developments on public procurement and it seems to the Trade Unions that the Remploy board are encouraging a more aggressive and bullying style in dealing with employees and trade unions.

They should in fact be spending more time and effort in being more aggressive about increasing work and sales and employing more disabled people in Remploy factories

We want the Government to state categorically that it supports the Remploy 21 strategy and that it deplores the continued performance of Remploy in not achieving its commercial and employment targets. We want the Government to work with us to provide the means for Remploy to start increasing the number of people in factories by setting up a process similar to America where there are set aside contracts.

We want the Government to set performance targets on Remploy to increase the number of disabled people in management jobs and we want the Government to set targets to support the joint work we have been doing with Ray Fletcher and Gareth Parry on Training and Diversity. We want the Board of Remploy to be committed to seeing that more disabled people have access to and are involved in training and we want Remploy factories and management to reflect the diversity of the communities they operate in.

We feel that none of these things will happen unless Job Centre Plus and the DWP put their weight behind these objectives. We feel that the Board of Directors and Management of Remploy are becoming more and more right wing and less and less concerned with changing the way managers behave in Remploy who should be more concerned about jobs for disabled people.

The biggest concern of the Trade Unions is that if this decline continues there will be no way back for Remploy. The Trade Unions want to see more jobs for more disabled people. The unions will continue to support the development of Managed Services and Interwork progressions but also want to see more jobs in factories.

We want this because they want to reduce the cost per person in Remploy and we know that we can do that if sales and jobs increase. However the current management seem incapable of being imaginative and "enterprising". They seem to think that direct labour cost control is the only system that works. In fact all this will do is increase the cost per person and that is what makes us suspicious about the company's true intentions.

We want government to see and say that the cost per person in Remploy is falling and that Remploy is delivering really good value for money - the current performance and approach will not deliver that. If

this does not happen we are really fearful that people will start to say that keeping Remploy is not a good idea and if that happens there will be thousands of disabled people in the future who just won't find a job without Remploy factories. It is this concern that is creating real fear amongst our members and we would like you, the M.P. personally to state your support for keeping Remploy factories and increasing jobs in factories.

It is not the fault of disabled people that the company is being badly run. It is not the fault of disabled people if over half a million pounds of public money has been overspent by incompetent management in building the new St Helens factory. It is not the fault of disabled people if the management can't see what sales opportunities there are to increase work in factories.

Our members have always responded positively to new work opportunities with retraining and support for new work as we have seen with all of the recycling work. The Remploy trade unions have constantly stated that we will support business growth with positive discussions to improve working practices and meeting customer's demands but we will find that difficult if our members believe that their jobs will eventually go.

We want Remploy to succeed but we do not believe that this management will deliver success whether it is in factories or in managed services or in Interwork so we are appealing to government to help us and we need a clear statement from Job Centre Plus and DWP that they will support this objective too.

We want to go back to the original promises and plans that were made in 2000 and we want to see a reduction in overheads, a reduction in the number of company cars, a reduction in the layers of management and use of more of the public money provided used to employ more disabled people instead of wasting it on more non-disabled management staff jobs.

We want the management to start being imaginative in developing business opportunities and to start listening seriously to the suggestions we and our members make. We want to see a more professional management that understands that their purpose is to employ more disabled people and we want managers who treat disabled people badly or who blatantly ignore the recruitment of disabled people sacked for incompetence.

We want to see fewer non-disabled people employed on temporary contracts and we want to reduce overtime by employing more disabled people. We want to see work that has been contracted out brought back in to employ more disabled people instead of allowing public money to line someone else's pocket. We don't think it is right that UK public money should be used for example to provide profit to companies in China when in fact this could be used to employ more disabled people in this country. Not only is this an example of public money going abroad but it also means that there will be disabled people who would like to work and come off of benefit but cannot because their jobs have been exported.

The GMB has campaigned for a return of the production of wheelchairs that were moved offshore to China. We are now pleased to report that the company has agreed to bring the work back into Remploy factories; it is a great shame that this work was moved to China in the first place.

The trade unions held its annual conference in September 2004 to decide the Remploy pay claim. Part of the 2005 claim included a motion on the number of disabled people employed in the Remploy factory network. The motion called for a strategy to be introduced which would include employment and instructed the Consortium not to sign any agreement that did not include this strategy.

Despite a number of meetings with the directors and a meeting with the Minister the company has been unable to give assurances that even the current figure of employment can be maintained. The offer of 3.4% without any employment assurances was put to a ballot of our Remploy members and rejected by a majority of well over 3,500. This showed the real concern our members have over the decline in the factory employment of disabled people. Further meetings are currently taking place to resolve the impasse.

We want to see more disabled people in Management and we want the company to take issues of race, gender, sexuality and age seriously. We don't think they do. We want to see disabled people in Remploy properly represented on the Remploy board and we want to see greater transparency from

the Board about their plans for disabled people. Disabled people should have more say about the way the company is run

If all of these things are tackled we will see the number of jobs for disabled people in factories rise and we will get back to the 6000 level that we all agreed. We are confident that you will agree with us in these objectives because it must help you meet your targets in the Work step supported employment programme too.

An old fashioned and conservative Remploy management is no good for this government and no good for our members and the current situation needs to change and change quickly and we look to you as the officials responsible for Workstep and Remploy to support us in these objectives.

The 2002/03 pay and conditions negotiations started in September 2002 and concluded on the 22nd July 2003. The unions finally made a hard won victory and reduced the working week to 35 hours.

UNION LEARNING FUND

Since the start of the learning partnership between the consortium of trade unions and the company July 2002, we have made great progress. As the lead union in this partnership, both of the project workers are GMB members. In the North half of the country we have Tina Brown who has just come into post in the last six months, Tina has picked up the reins and has started to take the role by the forward. In the South we have Steve Sargent, Steve has been in from day one and we are where we are, because of the diligence and commitment of these people.

Ever conscious of gender balance Steve and Tina have just appointed three Lead Learning Reps, one in each of their regions. In fact at this moment there are more ladies filling these posts and representing their regions on the National Steering Group. Credentials for all Learning Reps have now been issued.

Everyone in Remploy is offered a personal development plan. To date they have recorded 3,240. In the last three months (Sept - Nov 2004). 261 learners have started Literacy classes, 328 have started Numeracy classes, and 26 new learners have started ESOL classes. 89 learners have achieved Numeracy Level 1, 59 at level 2, 138 have achieved Literacy level 1, 79 at level 2, and 164 have gained entry level qualification.

In the same period 177 learners have started basic/introductory IT, 98 have started on CLAIT & ECDL level 1, and 13 at level 2. Over 400 NVQs at levels 1, 2, and 3 have also started, with 260 having completed at these levels. In all 1,837 learners have been engaged in learning activity in the last three months.

Learning is thriving in Remploy and I am glad to say that the success to date is largely due to our project workers Tina Brown from the Yorkshire region and Steve Sargent from the Southern region. Both Tina and Steve deserve recognition for the work they have done on behalf of the disabled learners in Remploy and for the raising of the profile of learning in the GMB.

The Union Learning Fund has been put to good use and with over 3,500 people attending courses over the last two years shows that the money received has been well spent.

4. Construction

The industry continues to have major problems with skill shortages and one of the last surviving training boards is the CITB but even with an industry training board there are still skill shortages. This is not helped by the low pay of the apprentices and the way some apprentices are treated.

Health and safety remain a problem, every week two workers die within the industry and thousands are injured and left with severe disabilities. The HSE continues only to prosecute a minority of employers and company directors continue to flaunt the laws.

All of our major projects in the UK have been built on the blood, sweat and tears of our members and their families. It is about time that the HSE and the government came off the fence and started to give custodial sentences to those employers who wreck the lives of whole families of the construction workers.

My experience within the construction industry is limited but these last two years have brought home to me the need for a law on corporate manslaughter. Construction workers are decent and honest people who deserve to be given a safe place to earn a living.

The way forward for the industry is to move away from the current system of tax evasion and extend the direct employment of workers. The attitude of the customer to the industry needs to be changed; the very fact that BAA has insisted that all workers on Terminal 5 are directly employed has reduced the number of accidents dramatically. BAA's policy on health and safety is very pro-active and this has resulted in very few serious accidents and no fatalities; because of the hard work of our London construction branch we have made major membership gains at T5, Wembley and the rail link project at St Pancras.

The 2003 pay negotiations produced a three year deal which contained the following:

With effect from Monday, 30th June 2003 the following basic rates of pay, allowances and additional payments will apply:

WR.1 ENTITLEMENT TO BASIC AND ADDITIONAL RATES OF PAY

Classification	Basic Pay (pph)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
General Operative	(577)	£255.03
Skill Rate 4	(621)	£242.19
3	(659)	£257.01
2	(704)	£274.56
1	(730)	£284.70
Craft Rate	(767)	£299.13

These rates are agreed and promulgated on the basis that any increase shall not be reduced by any adjustment in existing contractual bonus schemes.

WR.1.2.2 Additional Payment for Skilled Work
Skilled Operative Additional rate:

III	(24)	£9.36
II	(85)	£33.15
I	(140)	£54.60

WR.1.5.2 Apprentices Rates

Stage of Training	Basic Pay (pph)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
Year 1	(313)	£122.07
Year 2	(386)	£150.54
Year 3 without NVQ2	(544)	£212.16
Year 3 with NVQ2	(610)	£239.90
Year 3 with NVQ3	(767)	£299.13
On Completion of Apprenticeship with NVQ2	(767)	£299.13

WR.20 **SICK PAY**

WR.20.4 Amount of Payment
Industry sick pay will be £79.70 per week.

WR.21 **BENEFIT SCHEMES**

WR.21.1 (a) Death benefit £15,000

WR.21.3 EasyBuild pension contributions. With effect from Monday, 4th August 2003 the minimum employer contribution shall be £2.50 per week. Where the operative contributes between £2.51 and £7.50 per week the employer shall increase the minimum contribution to match that of the operative up to a maximum of £7.50 per week.

SCHEDULE 2

Extra Rate	(pence per hour)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
A	(15)	£5.85

B	(24)	£9.36
C	(32)	£12.48
D	(37)	£14.43
E	(56)	£21.84

JUNE 2004

With effect from Monday, 28th June 2004 the following basic rates of pay, allowances and additional payments will apply:

WR.1 ENTITLEMENT TO BASIC AND ADDITIONAL RATES OF PAY

Classification	Basic Pay (pph)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
General Operative	(618)	£241.02
Skill Rate 4	(665)	£259.35
3	(706)	£275.34
2	(754)	£294.06
1	(783)	£305.37
Craft Rate	(822)	£320.58

These rates are agreed and promulgated on the basis that any increase shall not be reduced by any adjustment in existing contractual bonus schemes.

WR.1.2.2 Additional Payment for Skilled Work

Skilled Operative Additional rate:

III	(24)	£9.36
II	(85)	£33.15
I	(140)	£54.60

WR.1.5.2 Apprentice Rates

New apprentice minimum pay rates will be promulgated in May 2004.

WR.5 DAILY FARE AND TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

Fare allowances are index linked and will, therefore, be promulgated in May 2004.

WR.12 STORAGE OF TOOLS

Employer's maximum liability shall be £400.00.

WR.13 LOSS OF CLOTHING

Employer's maximum liability shall be £30.00.

WR.15 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE

Subsistence allowance is index linked and will, therefore, be promulgated in May 2004.

WR.20 SICK PAY**WR.20.4 Amount of Payment**

Industry sick pay will be £85.45 per week.

WR.21 BENEFIT SCHEMES**WR.21.1 (a) Death benefit £17,500**

WR.21.3 EasyBuild pension contributions. The minimum employer contribution shall be £2.50 per week. Where the operative contributes between £2.51 and £10.00 per week the employer shall increase the minimum contribution to match that of the operative up to a maximum of £10.00 per week.

SCHEDULE 2

Extra Rate	(pence per hour)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
A	(15)	£5.85
B	(24)	£9.36

C	(32)	£12.48
D	(37)	£14.43
E	(56)	£21.84

JUNE 2005

With effect from Monday, 27th June 2005 the following basic rates of pay, allowances and additional payments will apply:

WR.1 ENTITLEMENT TO BASIC AND ADDITIONAL RATES OF PAY

Classification	Basic Pay (pph)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
General Operative	(677)	£264.03
Skill Rate 4	(729)	£284.31
3	(773)	£301.47
2	(826)	£322.14
1	(858)	£334.62
Craft Rate	(900)	£351.00

These rates are agreed and promulgated on the basis that any increase shall not be reduced by any adjustment in existing contractual bonus schemes.

WR.1.2.2 Additional Payment for Skilled Work

Skilled Operative Additional rate:

III	(24)	£9.36
II	(85)	£33.15
I	(140)	£54.60

WR.1.5.2 Apprentice Rates

New apprentice minimum pay rates will be promulgated in May 2005.

WR.5 DAILY FARE AND TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

Fare allowances are index linked and will, therefore, be promulgated in May 2005.

WR.12 STORAGE OF TOOLS

Employer's maximum liability shall be £400.00.

WR.13 LOSS OF CLOTHING

Employer's maximum liability shall be £30.00.

WR.15 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE

Subsistence allowance is index linked and will, therefore, be promulgated in May 2005.

WR.20 SICK PAY**WR.20.4 Amount of Payment**

Industry sick pay will be £93.60 per week.

WR.21 BENEFIT SCHEMES**WR.21.1 (a) Death benefit £20,000**

WR.21.3 EasyBuild pension contributions. With effect from Monday, 4th August 2003 the minimum employer contribution shall be £2.50 per week. Where the operative contributes between £2.51 and £10.00 per week the employer shall increase the minimum contribution to match that of the operative up to a maximum of £10.00 per week.

SCHEDULE 2

Extra Rate	(pence per hour)	Weekly Rates based on 39 hours
A	(15)	£5.85
B	(24)	£9.36

C	(32)	£12.48
D	(37)	£14.43
E	(56)	£21.84

PERIOD OF SETTLEMENT

The Employers shall not be required to consider any application for a change in the Operatives' pay and conditions, which would have effect before the last Monday in June 2006.

5. Training within the furniture industry

Very few companies take on recognised apprenticeships and therefore the industry faces a massive skill shortage. The rates of pay are so low for apprentices and trainees that most young people opt for a career in a supermarket. The GMB is campaigning for higher pay and better training for our young members entering the industry.

The GMB and BFM are involved in training through the Furniture & Furnishings Industry National Training Organisation (FFINTO). Early in 2003 the government set up a Sector Skills Council called PROSKILLS but because of the employers' disunity and incompetence PROSKILLS is failing although we still hold a seat.

The Alf Tomkins Award for the best apprentice was presented at the 2004 CFTA Conference and shows that we can still produce high quality craftspeople when employers and trade unions work together to train young people.

(Adopted)

BRO. P. DAVIES (National Secretary, CFTA): I am moving the Secretary's Section Report to Congress, which is contained on pages 39 to 52 of the General Secretary's Report.

President, Congress, the CFTA section is probably the most diverse section within the Union with membership in industries from musical instrument makers to funeral workers. In between we have the heavy industries of the quarry extraction and the construction industry. So you had better believe it will be a CFTA section member in the funeral industry who will probably be the last person that puts you down!

The section has well over 50 national agreements which are mainly negotiated every year. There are four major areas of concern, Congress, that have taken up a considerable amount of our time within the section.

The construction industry continues to kill and injure our members with well over 500 people being killed in the last six years and an average of nearly 84 people killed each year. We see hundreds of young men and, yes, young women who are so badly injured that they can no longer work in any job at all.

Employers are to blame; the lack of training and the abuse of apprenticeships is commonplace within the industry. When you next watch England play at Wembley, remember, that stadium was built at the cost of a human life and with many more bad injuries having taken place on that site.

I would just like to thank Tom Kelly, our regional officer in London, who fought a tremendous fight to resolve a very difficult strike late last year. It is not

only the construction industry that kills and maims workers. The furniture, the saw milling and building supplies industries are also responsible for the loss of life and major injuries to ordinary workers. That is why the CFTA section membership will start a campaign for proper legislation that will stop greedy employers from taking short cuts in health and safety. Unfortunately, the proposed legislation that was mentioned in the Queen's Speech will not make any real difference.

We will call for directors to face jail sentences if our members are killed or badly injured because of lack of good health and safety practices. We want to see these bastards put in prison when they harm our members. *(Applause)*

I would like to turn to Remploy. The past 12 months have seen a further decline in the numbers of disabled people working in our Remploy factories. This year's pay negotiations took nearly seven months to complete and our members insisted that, as part of this year's claim, there must be a clause that stops this decline. The members were prepared to take industrial action. In fact, the industrial action balloting procedure was activated. It was only at the eleventh hour that the company was able to come to an agreement with the trade unions. That agreement, we hope, will start to replace disabled people when they leave the company.

We have to say that the Government have been less than helpful; a Labour Government that allows the appointment of non-disabled people to run the company must be challenged and will be challenged. Just because it is a Labour Government does not

mean we cannot complain and fight hard for our members' rights within Remploy.

Remploy remains a jewel in the crown of the GMB. Our members who are here this week at the central cutting unit in Birkenhead are fighting to stop their closure of CCU, but they still have time to demonstrate and fight for our AA members. They should be congratulated for that. *(Applause)*

The campaign in the furniture industry continues. Cheap imports of upholstered furniture continue to flood the UK market. Factories are closing due to this development and lives are being put at risk because retailers are not bothered about the safety of the products they sell. The bottom line is that not only are the jobs of our members at risk, but their lives are also put in danger. Unsafe foam kills, and we must continue to campaign to stop the illegal dumping of unsafe furniture in the UK.

One of the major issues facing the furniture industry is the Public Procurement Directive. The GMB has been at the forefront of negotiations to introduce new legislation. During the past 10 years the GMB has fought hard to make sure that the directive is framed in such a way that it will not only cut red tape, but will also benefit manufacturing. We must thank Kathleen Walker Shaw for all the work she has done for the Union, for the furniture workers and for everybody else in manufacturing.

The last but most important issue that I need to bring to your attention is that of the Co-operative Wholesale Society Funeralcare workers. GMB members working for the Co-operative Funeralcare Service are underpaid, overworked and exploited. The GMB and the TGWU found themselves in a very nasty dispute last year. The company had signed a pay deal with USDAW without any reference to the other two unions. An industrial action ballot produced a "yes" vote and our members held one-day strikes in October and November last year. We actually won that dispute and got a better offer, but the dispute was made worse because of the actions of USDAW; a union, if you could call them that, that has a sweetheart agreement with the CWS. Arising out of that dispute, around 100 tribunal applications have been lodged. I would like to thank Barry and all the legal team at Thompsons for pursuing those tribunals.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the officers, shop stewards and members of the section who have supported me in what can only be described as a personally challenging time, especially during the last 18 months. Special thanks should also go to my PA, Auriol Ware, who has worked hard with all the members of the section.

We need to support the members throughout manufacturing; we need to support our members who are still at the back from Remploy; we need to stop the closures of factories and we need to stop what the AA is doing, comrades, so let's turn up on

Thursday and make sure it is one hell of a demonstration. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: We will be there. I will be doing a roll call! Let me say, Congress, and I do not often make comments during the report, that I was the proudest person in the world, along with some other colleagues here, when we saw the Wembley workers return to their jobs and the gratitude they felt for the two officers concerned, Tom Kelly and Kelly Rogers. Those men were the proudest men because their union had stood by them while the other unions wanted them to "go over the top". Well done, and well done to the members who said, "Enough is enough, we are taking you on", and your union supported you. Page 39?

SIS. J. SMITH (London): In reply to Phil and his report, I have to say something in the interests of our members in East Dereham in Norfolk. We were one of the factories which came under the closure and the furniture trade was taken abroad. There was an underlying current which we found out afterwards. The ex-director, Mr. Burnett, who had previously gone into liquidation, had allowed the company to be taken over by Deeside Cabinets and, unbeknown to us, that factory had been sold. It had got outline planning permission. That company is now going to be a housing estate. It has had a devastating effect within our area. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. I will go through the report page by page. Pages 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51 and 52. Thank you, colleagues. Phil, do you want to answer or not?

BRO. P. DAVIES: Colleagues, we are seeing a decline in the furniture industry. That decline is mainly due to companies going off-shore, like Silent Night, and buying up large manufacturing companies. Ducal is in Andover. It has been there for 120 years and it was bought by Silent Night to get their hands on the land. Production is being moved overseas and we cannot compete with low wage economies, like China.

However, more importantly, the furniture that is coming into this country is illegal. People are buying furniture which is not properly labelled and it has unsafe foam in it in the case of upholstered furniture. Last year we produced a video for the GMB on unsafe furniture. If anybody wants copies of that video they can contact me at National Office. It shows how horrendously a house fire can start. I remember the days in the 1970s when we had house fires which were due to unsafe furniture. We eradicated that throughout the UK. Now we are back to the same old stories of people buying unsafe furniture and they do not even know they are buying it. We do have a problem in the furniture industry, but we are prepared to try to campaign and make

sure that the British public are aware of what they are buying.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress agree to accept that part of the Report?

(The Report was adopted)

CONSTRUCTION, FURNITURE, TIMBER & ALLIED

COMPOSITE COMPANIES

MOTION 194

This Congress condemns the use of composite companies in the construction industry by various agencies and sub-contractors and demands a campaign by the GMB to compel the inland revenue to outlaw this practice immediately.

SOLO BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. MILLER (London): I move Motion 194. During the past few years, we have seen companies use a form of engaging labour called "composite companies". This situation has arisen because of moves by Inland Revenue to clamp down on bogus self-employment and because trade unions in the construction industry, particularly at the GMB, have challenged the use of bogus self-employment in the workplace and at tribunals with great success. Because of this, more and more companies are moving to composite companies.

Let me explain how these companies work. The workers are engaged through an agency. The agency sets up a composite company where the worker becomes a shareholder in the composite company. The worker is then paid a minimum wage and the rest of the money paid weekly as a dividend by the agency on behalf of the composite company.

There are some tax advantages for the workers. However, in the majority of cases, the worker ends up worse off for many agencies charge up to 50 per cent administration costs. Not only is the worker worse off, but he is also denied statutory rights. Tribunals have found that if you are engaged in such a manner, you are not an employee, you are not a worker, but are self-employed.

The Inland Revenue has deemed composite companies lawful. This may well be the case at present, but it diverts money from the Inland Revenue and into the hands of agencies as well as denying workers' rights. This loophole must be plugged. The GMB must campaign for legislation to be put in place to put an end to this practice. I move.

(The motion was formally seconded)

REMPLOY

COMPOSITE MOTION 18

(Covering Motion 196 and 197)

196 - REMPLOY (South Western Region)

197 - REMPLOY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)

Congress, we are all well aware of the decline in manufacturing in the UK, but most people will be unaware that over the last few years over 800 manufacturing jobs have been lost within the Remploi organisation. This has, of course, affected our most vulnerable members and as you will appreciate these jobs have provided members with disabilities, to work within their local communities, thus giving them opportunity of employment which in turn rewards them with a decent standard of living, providing them the dignity and sense of purpose this employment brings to their lives. We therefore ask the CEC to instruct the National Secretary to co-ordinate a campaign to replace all the manufacturing jobs lost within each Remploi factory, thus supporting the local communities and maintaining the level of employment that our members deserve within the Remploi structure.

We call on the CEC on behalf of the GMB to lobby the Government, as in the year 2000 Remploi management agreed to hold factory levels at 6000 employees with no strings attached.

5 years have past where the factories have gone from approx 5900 to around 5100; this is a loss of approx 800 jobs.

Remploi management is adamant that it is not going to replace anyone who leaves. Therefore, what future is there for disabled people when Remploi is totally mismanaged. As a union we need to address this now.

(Carried)

BRO. K. SCOURFIELD (South Western): Colleagues, all of us here today are well aware of the UK's downturn and decline in manufacturing, and there will probably be several delegates expressing their concern on this issue. However, I come to the platform today to highlight the case of the decline of manufacturing jobs lost within the Remploi organisation. We have many members in the South Western Region working in Remploi and we would like to put this case forward for our members.

Like most manufacturing companies, Remploi

has experienced job losses and reductions in its workforce, but perhaps most people will be unaware that 800 manufacturing jobs have been lost within the Remploy organisation during the past few years. However, our Remploy members do not have the luxury of being a mobile workforce and cannot -- to use a well-known phrase of a once well-known idiot, Norman Tebbit -- get on their bike and look for work!

Remploy has been in existence for 60 years and has provided employment opportunities for many workers with disabilities near or within their communities. Without this valuable employment, many of our colleagues would be unable to find suitable or gainful employment, as these jobs have provided them and their families with a sense of purpose and dignity.

It goes without saying that if someone has a purpose in life, it enhances their well-being and existence. That is what the Remploy organisation provides. Therefore, I call upon the CEC to instruct the National Secretary to co-ordinate a campaign to seek actively to replace all the manufacturing jobs lost within each Remploy factory and stop the haemorrhaging of these jobs.

In 2000, the Remploy management agreed to keep the factory levels at 6,000 with no strings attached, but this level has now dropped to 5,100. Remploy management has stated that they are not going to replace workers who leave, but what expectations can our future young disabled workers have when it is their turn to seek suitable employment if these secure and suitable jobs continue to disappear?

Much can be done to improve the level of employment within this organisation. Public procurement is one area. I understand that there are European restrictions surrounding public procurement, but I believe that where there is a will, there is a way. Our Government need to acquire the will, and we will show them the way. *(Applause)*

We have the sites and we have a willing and skilled workforce to produce the goods required. All our members ask for is the opportunity to work for a decent wage and to maintain a good standard of living in an area that is suitable to their needs. The new Works & Pensions Minister, David Blunkett, was last month saying that he intends to reduce the number of people on Incapacity Benefit by a third. What better way than to create more jobs within the Remploy industry?

Colleagues, lastly, our Remploy members are always ready to support other members who are in dispute. They now need our support to maintain their jobs. After all, our disabled members are only asking for a chance to prove their worth. Conference, I move.

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am seconding Composite 18. The campaign has

started. It is the Government and, in particular, the Disability Minister we need to be campaigning with. In February 2000, it was agreed as a compromise that 6,000 would be the minimum number that would remain in the factories with no strings attached. This was adhered to. The compromise was agreed to rather than merging and closing factories, which has happened in some regions where this was never adhered to.

It is important that Remploy is addressed once and for all. When we come to conference after conference, Remploy is mentioned. We want the GMB to address this matter with central Government and, in particular, Anne McGuire, ex-CEC member, now the Disability Minister. She knows we are here because the National Secretary has marked her card. She has been told in no uncertain terms at a recent meeting.

There has been a bit of work done, where the company has agreed now to replace anybody that leaves, but there are still 900 jobs missing. The company have agreed one for one. It is for the future of disabled people and the Remploy workers. The actions of our members show we are taking a stand. We will not accept any defeat. The company has been mismanaged by highly paid, inexperienced non-disabled directors. We need 6,000 in our factories as a minimum before Remploy becomes a failure, as there are a lot of good skills and products produced by disabled members.

We are going to fight this all the way, as we did in 2000. We ask our President, Mary Turner, to take a letter directly to Tony Blair. We do not want any false promises. We want it sorting and now.

I would like to say thanks to the National Secretary and the Remploy consortium for the work they have done. Finally, anybody in the hall can help. Sign up and be a friend of Remploy. I second. *(A standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Congress, I give you the Remploy shop stewards at the back of the hall. Well done. *(Applause)*

I call Paul Wheatley to speak on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. P. WHEATLEY (CEC, CFTA): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting Composite 18 with the following statement. These motions have, to some extent, been overtaken by recent events. The threat of industrial action coupled with effective political pressure brought Remploy to their senses. The company has agreed to replace, wherever possible, all factory-based leavers with a disabled person.

The new agreement is much tighter than the previous one. The positions are now reversed. The onus is now on Remploy to seek a trade union agreement if they cannot comply with their obligations, but implementation is the key. We will accept nothing less than what we agreed.

There are other ongoing concerns. Remploy was created specifically to provide jobs for disabled people. You will be forgiven for thinking the opposite was the case. Human resources specialists are being recruited like there is no tomorrow. Every business unit seems to need its own team. These new recruits are all able-bodied. That is to be expected as only 4% of the senior management team is disabled, which helps explain the lack of career opportunities for our disabled members.

Let's not forget the directors whose pay has only increased by 63% since 1999! Congress, this company is being mismanaged. Increased government funding is being wasted. Lucrative business opportunities, such as Ethical Threads, are being squandered. Good quality work, such as wheelchair production, has been outsourced with disastrous results.

We are seeking a meeting with Anne McGuire, the new Disability Minister, and we will be making our case. Anne, a former member of the CEC, is sure to listen to our concerns. We aim to end the years of mismanagement and management decline. We know the Remploy board wants to close down the factories. For our part, we want a board that can successfully manage the business. Please support this composite.

(Motion 194 was carried)

(Composite Motion 18 was carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I and Debbie will do all we can on the NEC to make sure we go there again. The Labour Government in 1945 opened the Remploy factories and I will be damned if a Labour Government of 2005 allows them to shut. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE ECONOMY

MINIMUM WAGE FOR YOUNG PERSONS 14-15 YEARS

MOTION 247

Congress calls for a minimum wage for young persons employed at 14 and 15 years old.

GUILDFORD G38 BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

(The motion was formally moved and formally seconded)

THE PRESIDENT: I can hear "shame" from one side of the room. Sheila McKane, you have just been made redundant.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

MOTION 248

Congress re-affirms its support for object 3 of this Union's constitution, in particular the importance of promoting industrial democracy.

Congress believes that the UK economy is fundamentally undemocratic with decisions about production in the hands of a minority.

Congress therefore calls for an agenda not just of economic management but economic change underpinned by greater economic and industrial democracy including support for;

Co-operatives and other forms of employee owned business

Greater industrial democracy and participation in decision making for workers through their union in all workplaces.

Democratic ownership and control of pension and insurance funds.

Greater empowerment of women and other marginalised voices in the new economy.

HAWICK 2 BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. C. WATERSON (GMB Scotland): I move Motion 248 on industrial democracy. I need to start off with a confession. I made a speech yesterday that I think tricked a lot of you, probably all of you, into believing that I am only 25! The reason for the confession is that I want to talk briefly on the 1984/1985 miners' dispute when I was an active member with the National Union of Railwaymen, now the RMT. Obviously, it will be stretching credulity for you to believe that I was only four at the time. I was really eight!

In 1984/1985, we did not have much in the way of industrial democracy, but we did have the right to support other unions and causes that we felt were just. I played a part, and was proud to play a part, in what was then the triple alliance of the NUR, ASLEF supporting the NUM from secondary picketing to rallies to withdrawal of labour and support. We were allowed to do these things and it has left me with life-long abiding memories.

Colleagues, UK industrial law, now moving on 21 years, has gone backwards. It has not gone forwards. UK industrial law in the UK economy is fundamentally undemocratic and unfair. Every day decisions are made which affect our working lives without thought or consideration of those effects on our lives. Jobs are exported, as we have already heard this morning,

daily in pursuit of sweat shop wages. More often than not, these decisions are taken by faceless people on faceless boards with no consultation with the workforce.

Colleagues, the pursuit of industrial democracy by us is as relevant now as it was in 1984. Indeed, it is as relevant as it was in the industrial revolution.

This motion calls for economic and industrial democracy. We want employee-owned cooperatives, participation in decision-making, democratic control of pensions and insurance funds, the empowerment of women and marginalised groups in employment.

Make no mistake, the bosses will take every opportunity to undermine our role, but industrial democracy will only become a reality if we deliver a strong GMB voice. Well-organised structures with well-trained and well-resourced GMB activists supported by a strong and vibrant GMB will deliver that strong voice. Colleagues, help yourselves achieve industrial democracy. Support Motion 248. Thank you.

(The motion was formally seconded)

WORKING TAX & FAMILY BENEFITS

MOTION 250

Congress calls on our leadership to congratulate this Labour Government for its achievements in improving the living standards of hundreds of thousands of working people in receipt of working tax and child tax credit.

Had the Government tried to sell this idea to middle England as a tax rebate for the low paid, the Tory press would have had a field day. Love him or hate him there can be no doubting the genius of Gordon Brown with regard to maths, myths and the British media.

NOTTS VOX BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. DAVIES (Midland & East Coast): I am moving Motion 250. President, Congress calls on our leadership to congratulate this Labour Government for their achievements in improving the living standards of hundreds of thousands of working people in respect of The Working Tax and Child Tax Credits. Had the Government tried to sell this idea to middle England as a tax rebate for the low paid, which I think it is, the Tory press would have had a field day. Love him or hate him, there can be no doubt in the genius of Gordon Brown with regard to maths myths and the British media.

There is a serious side to this motion. I suppose, on the face of it, it looks like a tongue-in-cheek Gordon Brown arse-kicking exercise. It is not. I worked at the Citizens' Advice Bureau when they first

brought this benefit, as the Government like to call it, into effect. For the first time ever, we were able to demonstrate that people were actually considerably better off by coming away from their reliance on long-term benefits and out of a hopeless no-hope situation and into the working environment.

What I think the Labour Government have achieved is that they have brought something out that is about lifting people out of a static, no-hope situation and including them in mainstream society for the first time for many, many sections of our society, particularly the low paid. It is about the work/life balance. It is about embedding a work culture where once there was not one. It enables our society to be more fully inclusive.

We knock the Government, we slate the Government, as a trade union when they get it wrong, and so we should do and well may that continue, but when the Government get it right, and I believe in this case they have got it right, we should at least give them the nod.

SIS. D. MILLS (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, I wish to second this motion. This is a family-friendly Government that have made it a priority to target child poverty. The Working Tax Credit and benefit system is targeted to help the lowest paid in our society. This is achieved by giving a guaranteed level of income to all working families and single parents. The poorest 20% in our society will be £3,200 better off compared with the level of income in 1997. This is a most effective way of tackling child poverty by raising the income of those most in need, not giving everyone a much smaller increase. Please support. Thank you.

TOBIN TAX

MOTION 251

This Congress calls on the Government to implement as a matter of urgency a currency transaction tax (a Tobin Tax) on all trades of pounds wherever they are traded in the world to generate billions of pounds in revenue for International Development to help pay for the Millennium Development Goals to halve world poverty by 2015.

LONDON STORES GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. BYRNE (London): I am moving Motion 251 on the introduction of a Tobin tax or, put more simply, a currency transaction tax. President, Congress, the UK Government, along with the other UN countries, have signed up to the Millennium Development Goals to halve world poverty by the year 2015. The Treasury has taken the lead by proposing a doubling of aid for

development by means of an international finance facility. The international finance facility will not alone raise the extra \$50 billion required to pay for the Millennium Development Goals. The marketing currencies, such as pounds, dollars, euro and yen, is now worth a staggering \$475,000 billion a year with banks making profits of between \$40 and \$50 billion.

A stamp duty on sterling transactions alone at a rate as low as 0.005% would earn the Treasury as much as \$3 billion a year -- money that could be spent and used to boost international development. As the market is electronic, such a duty would be technically simple to enforce and collect. Therefore, this Congress calls on the Government to implement, as a matter of urgency, a stamp duty on sterling transactions to help pay for the Millennium Development Goals.

(The motion was formally seconded)

COWBOY EMPLOYERS & COMPANY ASSETS

COMPOSITE MOTION 22

(Covering Motions 252 and 254)

252 - Company Assets (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)

254 - Cowboy Employers - Insolvency/Liquidation (London Region)

Congress believes it should be illegal for company directors to sell assets to successor companies in which they have an interest at below market value. This would prevent the directors of companies which go bankrupt setting up another company with a different name and transferring asset to those companies. This Congress is deeply concerned at the number of companies who deliberately go into liquidation or insolvency and then use this as a means of dismissing a workforce only to begin trading again under a different name shortly thereafter. This Congress deplores such practice and calls upon this Government to put in place legislation to prevent these cowboy employers denying workers their rights.

(Carried)

SIS. B. BENHAM (London): I am moving Composite 22. The fact that we are debating a motion such as this in 2005 is, colleagues, nothing short of a national disgrace. I can recall a similar motion in 1993 at Portsmouth. A colleague of mine told Congress of an engineering firm in Hertfordshire, which conned an exceedingly loyal workforce into working for nothing for two weeks before going into liquidation. There was no money for redundancy pay, so the government, or rather us picked up the tab.

The directors of that firm, you would think, would be in the same boat as their employers, which was unemployed and potless. But no. They went to the liquidation auction, bought the plant and machinery at a knock-down price and started business in the same premises under another name with different employees.

That could not happen 12 years later, eight of which have been under a Labour Government, could it? But, sadly, colleagues, it could and it does. All of you will know of similar cases recently in each of your regions.

I would like to tell you a story of just one in the London Borough where I live. There was a firm called Richmond Mirrors. The MD boasted that union recognition would happen over his dead body -- if only! In 2003, Richmond Mirrors went into liquidation and commenced trading with the same management and machinery in the same premises under the name of "Ardengate". The majority of the employees were retained and we achieved recognition.

However, in 2004, the firm closed for its two-week summer shut-down. Between 40 and 50 employees, our members, received cheques for their wages and holiday pay. The cheques bounced. When they went back two weeks later, the gates were shut. The directors had sold the machinery to another firm, of which they also happened to be directors, and had already started making mirrors under another name. Ardengate employees received no redundancy, their creditors had bad debts and the directors still had a job.

President, cowboy employers such as these are not entrepreneurs contributing to the national wealth. They are leeches; leeches that suck the blood of their employees and creditors in order that they can continue the fat-cat lifestyle they shamelessly enjoy. It is a crime, colleagues, nothing less, and strong enforceable legislation should be put in place to stop it.

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): As you can see, I am actually dressed appropriately for an ice hockey arena today, "Simply the best"! I am seconding Composite 22.

When I first started looking into this issue, it quickly became apparent that it is very easy to set up a company. There are many click on-line guides telling you how to do it. I was almost tempted to start a business for dummies. There is also information on what not to do if you do not want to be disqualified as a director. It seems the worst thing you can do is not to submit proper financial reports on time to Companies House; so follow the correct accounting procedures and you will probably be all right.

Unfortunately, when a company goes bust, it is often not the chap at the top who suffers, but those at the bottom who lose out -- workers, customers

and other small businesses who are owed money. It seems that the old director can come back as a new director with another pot of money borrowed from another group of willing victims -- sorry, enterprising investors -- and continue from where he left off, of course without recompensing the people he left high and dry last time.

For instance, where I live in Yorkshire, we have seen Hatfield Main Colliery changing hands several times over the past few years, going bust twice and the workforce losing their jobs twice. However, the most recent director is still there and, allegedly, it is rumoured, having been able to buy items from his first company at a very reasonable price to set himself up a second time and not even bothering to mine the coal now, just washing the coal from the tip, for which of course you do not need miners. Too often when a company rises like a Phoenix from the ashes, only the workers and creditors get their fingers burned. It is about time this loophole was closed.

FAT CAT PAYMENTS

MOTION 253

This Congress cannot continue to tolerate the lack of control over large payments and bonuses awarded to directors when companies operating within the private and public sectors are poorly performing.

Congress therefore resolves to campaign against any company carrying out such practices.

**HOUNSLOW BRANCH
London Region**

(Carried)

BRO. D. LINDSAY (London): I move Motion 253. President, Congress, I was very moved by Gordon's speech about Africa. It brought to mind something I had read quite a while ago. GlaxoSmithKlein is one of the largest most profitable drug companies in the world. Its top three directors were given £16.5 million between them in pension rights. You may say that is OK because it is a profitable company, but this is the company which fights tooth and nail to protect its drug patents. This, in turn, keeps drug prices very, very high.

The drugs they fight to keep are mostly the anti-viral drugs. These give back normal life to AIDS sufferers. Think of what Gordon saw in Africa. Think of the AIDS-suffering farmer being able to grow maize and feed his family and give hope to his children. I only wish I could raise a new motion in Congress headed "Drugs for Africa". This could be a GMB initiative ready for the G8.

I would like to move on now. I cannot leave this

rostrum without speaking to Congress about the terrible collapse of MG Rover. MG Rover is an excellent demonstration of why the Government must start to regulate fat cat payments. John Towers and his three colleagues bought MG Rover for £10 from BMW who also gave them loan guarantees of up to £427 million to turn the company around. It appears that all these men wanted to do was sell off all the company's assets and reward themselves with large salaries at the expense of the company and its workers. Accountants who investigated the books on behalf of the Sunday Telegraph found that John Towers and his colleagues took £37 million out of MG Rover in pay, pensions and loans over five years.

MG Rover's accountants, Deloitte & Touche, the French company, appear to have deliberately covered up the true financial state of the company and earned £2.5 million in the process. The true financial state, uncovered by PricewaterhouseCooper, was found to be £1 billion in debt with no appreciable assets. However, the Financial Reporting Review Panel, the City's accounting watchdog, which I cannot say I have ever heard of, said that it has uncovered possible evidence of wrongdoing that requires further investigation. When the shop stewards stood in front of the MG Rover workforce and announced 5,000 redundancies, I call that a little bit of an understatement.

Shockingly, the law may be too weak to prosecute these men. Society cannot let another MG Rover scandal take place. The Government must create new legislation which promotes accountability and controls the amount of money company directors can award themselves.

As a union, our first responsibility is to protect our members from people like John Towers and the fat cats who are only accountable to themselves. It is time the Government made their voices heard on this issue and gave accountability back to workers and to our members. I do not have to ask for support. I am sure I have it because this is the GMB. Thank you.

SIS. E. ROLPH (London): I second Motion 253 - Fat Cat Payments. President, Congress, the GMB can be proud that it brought fat cat payments to the national stage. Remember Cedric the pig for British Gas? That was way, way back. In years past, there have been many front page headlines about enormous golden handshakes, share deals and pension rights to chairmen, chief executives and directors who have made a pig's breakfast of running their companies; so many, in fact, that now it barely rates a mention in the business pages and seldom is front page news any more.

There is something morally wrong where significant failure is rewarded with a significant pay-off. Hundreds and thousands of our members have been thrown out of their jobs in past years as a result of poor management by these people who now live a

very comfortable life. Did our members get a cheque for £250,000? Oh, no! Only the dole queue, and through no fault of their own. By their actions, these incompetents distract from the national wealth and place large burdens on pension schemes and State benefits. This cannot and should not be allowed to go on any longer.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call David Clements to speak for the CEC.

BRO. D. CLEMENTS (CEC, Commercial Services): President, I am responding to Motion 248, industrial democracy, on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is recommending that Motion 248 is supported but with a qualification. Industrial democracy has been debated in the UK since the Second World War with the setting-up of co-determination in Germany. It was discussed in the 1970s with the Bullock Report.

The GMB has always been a supporter of the co-operative Movement and has a large membership in the various cooperative societies across the country. The present Labour Government have also introduced partnership funds to enable employers and unions to work closer together. In the past year of Parliament, the Government have introduced the Pensions Act 2004, which will require company pension schemes to have 33% of their trustees come from the employees. These changes will mean that employees will have more say in both their workplace and their pension schemes. This is clearly in line with GMB rule 2, object 3.

However, the motion is not clear as to what kinds of industrial democracy should be pursued or what kinds of democratic control of pension insurance funds should be implemented. Therefore, with that qualification, the CEC is recommending support.

(Motions 248, 250 and 251 were carried)

(Composite Motion 22 was carried)

(Motion 253 was carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, earlier I did not call the CEC speaker on Motion 247. The Region did not withdraw the motion. They formally moved it and seconded. We, as a CEC, in relation to that motion must give our points on the statement and I have reinstated Sheila McKane.

SIS. S. MCKANE (CEC, Clothing & Textile): I have been informed by our colleagues in the Southern Region that the delegate was not able to move the motion because there had been a bereavement in the family.

I am speaking on behalf of the CEC supporting Motion 247. Congress, the GMB applauds the National Minimum Wage as a shining achievement of the Labour Government. However, we oppose the current

three-tier framework. This age lottery means that three people doing exactly the same job get three different rates of pay. That is fundamentally wrong. Because of these inequalities the GMB has campaigned hard for a standardised minimum wage from the age of 16 onwards. It is only right that parity and pay should be there for doing the same job.

Having adopted this stance, the GMB supports a call for a national minimum rate to protect 14 and 15 year-olds in employment. Many of you here at Congress will know of a young person working. It might even be a member of your own family. Newspapers today are mostly delivered by school children. They are shelf-stacking in supermarkets, working in corner shops, working on market stalls and doing many more jobs. Even my own sons delivered milk on doorsteps prior to going to school for the day. You, as an individual, might be opposed to young people working, but it is a fact of life that young people want to earn money and, in some extreme cases, need to earn it to help their families.

TUC research suggests that, at any given time, 2.6 million 11-15 year-old children will be employed out of a total of 3.5 million. The regulations on hours and type of work done by school children relies on patchwork and archaic local authority byelaws and an under-resourced education welfare department.

Only an estimated 1 in 10 of school-aged children have been issued with work permits, as the law requires. Penalties for employers who knowingly break the law are far too low to provide a substantial disincentive. The highest fine that can be given to employers is £1,000.

It can be a positive experience for schoolchildren to gain work experience and income from part-time work, but properly enforced restrictions on the number of hours they work is essential to protect children's ability to study. The National Minimum Wage coverage is essential too, to stop employers exploiting children as cheap labour, especially as the Government now propose to introduce vocational training from the age of 14 years. The GMB will not flinch in its determination to campaign for a national minimum wage for 14 to 15 year-olds. Congress, please support.

THE PRESIDENT: I now put Motion 247 to the vote.

(Motion 247 was carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress returns at two o'clock. Have a good lunch.

(Adjourned for lunch)

AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress reassembled at 2.00 p.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, welcome to this afternoon's session. As you can see, our platform is pretty crowded, but I love it like this. It is my extreme pleasure to ask Dawn Butler MP for Brent South to address Congress. *(Applause)*

ADDRESS BY SIS. DAWN BUTLER MP ON BEHALF OF THE GMB WESTMINSTER PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

SIS. D. BUTLER MP (Brent South): Thank you very much. Good afternoon, Comrades. This is brilliant. I have finally made the top table.

Comrades, Conference, President, General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary, I am Dawn Butler, MP for Brent South. Absolutely wicked! *(Cheers and applause)* I am well chuffed to be standing before you today, and not just because I am an MP but after ten years I am finally able to address Congress. Being an officer and not being allowed to speak at Congress is one of the most frustrating things imaginable. I want to say to all the new delegates and to everyone who has never spoken, please speak at Congress and address your GMB comrades. It is a fantastic view, so make sure you do it, even if it is just to put a poo! For those in the trade, a "poo" is a point of order. So if you have got a point of order to raise, you come to the rostrum and raise it.

I am here to give the Political Report as a GMB sponsored MP. The Labour Party is the birthchild of the trade union Movement. I believe that, instead of abandoning the Labour Party, which people have contemplated, including myself at one stage, and reclaiming the Party, we need to re-associate with the Party. We need to get in there to make sure that we have more trade unionists as part of the Labour Party movement, so we ensure that we do not forget our socialist roots and where we came from.

This election would not have been won without you guys, without the GMB members and without the trade union Movement. The Labour Party would not have returned to power without the trade union Movement. That is a fact. The Labour Party could not do it on its own. We need to make sure that we have more trade union officials in the Party. The Party contains a lot of lawyers, but we have to make sure that we have as many trade union members as possible in the Party.

The GMB targeted a lot of resources into key marginal seats like Phil Wallace of Oldham, Martin Mintham of the Southern Region and many other seats, like Brent South. Although Brent South was a so-called safe seat, to be honest, there is no such thing. Without the help of the GMB and the ordinary members who took time out to help me - all the resources went into Brent East and, unfortunately, we lost Brent East - especially people such as Hitten, Silesh and Barbara, who are sitting in the audience,

and I really appreciate that, there is no certainty that Brent East would have stayed Labour. I also had help from other unions, such as the CWU. Lincoln Beswick was by my side 24/7. What can I say. These people are Labour Party members but, first and foremost, they are trade unionists and that is what drove them to support me.

As much as the Labour Party disappoints us on many occasions, we still have a lot to be proud of. We should be proud that we have won an historic third term. You would never believe it when you read the press. I was sitting on the benches and Howard was talking a load of "b.s." I thought, "Why don't you sit down?" So we do have to be proud that the Labour Party has won an historic third term. I never thought in a hundred years that the Labour Party could win three terms. To be honest, I reckon we can win a fourth as well.

We should also be proud of the Warwick Agreement. That is, basically, the bible of what we have to work to achieve throughout this third term as a Movement. That is what I am going to help to achieve as well as being the GMB sponsored MP for Brent South. We should also be proud of the fact that we have more than hundred sponsored GMB MPs. Make sure you get your MP working for you. Contact your MPs, lobby them, ask them for meetings and get them to hire rooms at the House of Commons. I can tell you a little secret in that they are pretty cheap. The food is pretty cheap. They have no excuse, really. So get the membership out. Get them to the House of Commons and lobby the MPs for everything that we want to see achieved through the Warwick Agreement.

For the future, I am putting forward the three A's: affiliate, be active and aggressive. Make sure, if you are a Labour Party member, that the GMB is affiliated to your local Labour Party. There are many branches which do not have GMB membership affiliation, and it is really important that we affiliate. Make sure you are active, even if you only go to one or two meetings. My meeting used to be just me and a boilermaker, actually. He used to sit opposite me telling stories. It just used to be me and him sometimes in an old dusty room full of cobwebs, spiders and all of that. However, at the end of the day, it grew and grew. We are at the start of the process.

Make sure that you are aggressive in what you want. When we want new members to join the GMB, unless you ask, they are not going to join, so you have to make sure that you ask for what you want.

Finally -- this is a trick I have learnt. You say "Finally", and then you talk for another ten minutes - I am proud, obviously, to be a GMB member and a former officer. Although the GMB has been through some rough times, it has always been the members who have kept me going. They have brought me down to earth and made me realise why I became an officer

in the first place. I urge you all to support each other and to support some of the other groups in the GMB, such as the Race Committee and the Equality Committee, because they work really hard to ensure that the GMB grows stronger and more inclusive. It really is an important part of our Union. Please ensure that we support those committees.

I am known for saying what I think, and it has taken me ten years to get to this rostrum, so here it goes. Don't waste all the hard work that we have done by merging. *(Applause and cheers)* I know that is pretty controversial. I can't even look at the top table, but they cannot sack me now because I am not an employee. I am an ordinary GMB member now and I, for one, will be voting "no" for the merger.

Back to the Political Report. I would like to thank many people but, really, that would take me another couple of days. Without Paul Kenny and Mary Turner I probably would not be here today. Yes, you've guessed it. I am their love child! *(Laughter and*

cheers) Seriously, I would like to thank Mary, Paul and Debbie for all their support. I would like to thank all the staff at GMB Head Office for all their support, including the staff at the London Region. I would like to thank the Race Committee, the Race Task Group, the Equalities Committee and I would like to thank all of you, all the GMB members throughout the country not only for your support but for also keeping strong and keeping GMB. Keep the GMB going. Thank you. *(Applause)* Have a great conference. I must rush off because I have to return to Parliament. Yes, Parliament!

(Sis. Dawn Butler MP left the rostrum to further applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Good luck, Dawn. I didn't know she was my love child. *(Laughter)* Isn't it lovely when we elect one of our own, that they don't forget where they have come from and know where we want to go.

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT - GMB SCOTLAND

1. Membership and Recruitment

Total membership	67,174
Women membership	29,218
Section membership (by each Section):	
Clothing & Textile	2,382
Commercial Services	3,852
CFTA	2,487
Energy & Utilities	2,769
Engineering	6,685
Food & Leisure	11,553
Process	1,852
Public Services	35,594
Grade 1 members	48,105
Grade 2 members	14,278
Sick, retired & unemployed members	4,791
Total number recruited 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	12,269
Gross increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	(16,906)
Net increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	(4,637)
Membership on Check-off	52,537
Membership on Direct Debit	5,303
Financial membership	62,764

Since being appointed as Regional Secretary in May 2003 we have collectively within the Region been focusing on building confidence and pride within Officers and Staff and also in listening to our membership.

These changes are and continue to be driven against the backdrop of the Scottish Economy as a whole which continues to go through major change impacting on the economic background, the Scottish Economy's recent performance and forecasts for the future which affect the Scottish Labour Markets future issues and challenges.

Continued strong growth is projected in services and construction due to the UK Government and the Scottish Executive spending in Public Services remaining the main drivers for growth.

This has impacted significantly in GMB Scotland due to a two speed economy where Manufacturing

continues to struggle with the Service economy continuing to grow however the impact on GMB has been significant as our areas of traditional high membership density have suffered due to closures and off-shoring.

The labour market issues and challenges are going to be significant for GMB Scotland during 2005/06 as we review continuing low employment but rising wage inequality and how we can engage with non-members in terms of recruiting, servicing and retention of existing members.

In 2002=2007 the projected growth in employment within the Scottish Economy list Manufacturing 9th out of 15 Sectors highlighting significantly were we need to refocus our recruitment initiatives.

GMB continues to be a significant voice within the STUC and the engagement with the Scottish Executive attending meetings with the First Minister and the ministerial team on all elements impacting on the Scottish Economy.

The Executive have published the "Refreshed" A Smart Successful Scotland with three broad themes remaining unchanged.

- Growing Business
- Skills and Learning
- Global Connections

However, our concerns are not with the strategy itself but of the commitments by the Enterprise Networks to deliver it.

Representation on this has been made to the First Minister in December 2004 with the emphasis on delivery of the strategy ensuring the Social Inclusion was fundamental.

I would wish in this my first report to Congress to place on record thanks to all Officers and Staff in GMB Scotland who have over the past year worked under tremendous pressure as a result off colleagues who unfortunately due to serious illness have been off long term sick however, ending this on a more optimistic note those colleagues who have been long terms sick are making a recovery which is excellent news for them, their families and GMB.

In moving towards the Election GMB Scotland is significantly involved within the Scottish Trade Unions Committee affiliated to the Labour Party working on the General Election Strategy and re-branding elements of the Warwick Agreement into the Scottish discussion under devolved Government.

Discussion with GMB sponsored MPs is well underway in terms of arrangement with one significant step being that Jim McGovern, Organiser, GMB Scotland is candidate for Dundee West Constituency which was previously held by Ernie Ross. I am sure that Jim's trade union credentials and GMB background will prove a huge benefit when he is elected to Parliament as I am sure he will.

RESPONSE TO CULTURE CHANGE

Since the beginning of 2004 we have been committed to ensuring that we integrate culture change into everything we do ensuring that we deliver the virtuous circle of Recruitment organising, servicing and retention of members.

GMB Scotland has required to overcome significant changes and to once again have a belief and pride in our Union.

By involving all Staff and Organisers within organisational change we are now on our way to fully integrating Culture Change so that it simply becomes a way of life within GMB Scotland.

Local Government has and still remains the mainstay of recruitment opportunity within GMB Scotland and continues to account for a third of our total membership.

We continue to engage in ongoing discussions with the Scottish Executive regarding the Protocols in regard to ensuring that there will be no two-tier workforce. WE continue involvement with the Executive on the implementation of Fair Employment Practices across Local Government and the responsibility of

the Executive to ensure that in all contracts placed Fair Employment practices require to be a prerequisite to contracts being awarded by the Executive. Meetings with the First Minister are attended by the GMB as are meetings with the Scottish Ministers.

GMB Scotland have been involved significantly in the following areas: Protecting public service workers against Abuse. Highlands and Islands Conference. Energy. Renewables. Green Jobs Strategy and Manufacturing.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

Recruitment targets have continued to focus on Public Services and the opportunities within schools as a mainstay.

Figures have clearly shown that in the recent past our attempts to make inroads into the service sector of the economy have not proven successful to date. Greenfield Sites have been slow with small returns to date on the effort and resources allocated. The strategy adopted in the past has not proven success and is currently under review.

We are now moving towards the implementation of a new approach based on developing local networks and clusters of our key lay activists working with Organisers to develop inroads into companies and service providers. This combined with a major consolidation exercise in existing companies where it is clear that in many companies we do not have a sustainable organisation and low membership the opportunities which this presents will be a key area for our attention going forward in 2005/06.

A few early meetings with prospective investors in Scotland have already taken place which may well lead to significant employment prospects however, it is early days in these contacts but it is hoped that these initiatives will prove beneficial in the medium to long term. However, as stated earlier in this report we have unfortunately been operating understaffed due to serious long term absences which has meant that we have underperformed during 2004 however, we are hopeful of a speedy return to our full compliment plus the implantation of our new Strategy with more stretching targets.

The recent Casino Recruitment project within Stanley Casinos has resulted in excess of 50 new members for GMB Scotland this is however part of a National Recruitment Project within Stanley's where we secured a National Agreement and has been managed by Paul Kenny, Regional Secretary, GMB London. It has however to be said that the two new Recruitment Officers from London Region who have been recruiting across the UK have proved invaluable and successful in recruitment as they have come from the industry with excellent skills, knowledge and expertise, a very successful model.

Water Industry - The Water Industry in Scotland while at present is still under the auspices of the Public Sector however there is growing pressure to deregulate the sector in a move which may well lead to the privatisation of this major utility and impact on our membership levels. We are campaigning at present with our colleagues in the T&G and Unison against any attempts to privatise the Industry. GMB has played a prominent role in setting up the new structures of Business Unit Councils and the Overarching Steering Committee in which our member play a significant role.

We continue to campaign vigorously on behalf of our Public Sector members with our current campaigns focusing on Pensions and Equal Pay within GMB Scotland.

ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

Scotland's economic situation and prospects for the future have been set out by a number of commentaries as over recent months.

The Executive have just recently republished their second version of "A Smart Successful Scotland" based on Scotland competing in the Knowledge based Global Economy of the 21st Century. Demographic issues are impacting on Scotland's ability at this point to compete and the Scottish Executive "Fresh Talent" approach has been welcomed where skilled workers from the Eastern European Workers and foreign graduates will be encouraged to fill the skills gap in the short to medium terms.

The two-speed economy continues in Scotland with Manufacturing slow while the Service Sector continues to do much better with higher growth. Within the Labour Market employment rose.

Forecasts from the Fraser of Allander Institute predicted the Service Sector to grow by 2.4% and 3% in 2004 and 2005. Manufacturing recovery to be complete by 2005 with growth of 1.7% and Employment to grow by 58,000 jobs through 2004 and by 52,300 in 2005 with unemployment predicted to run at 5.2% in 2005.

The Labour Market Challenges for Scotland are: Can we improve job creation rates? Where are the jobs now and where in the future? What occupations 2005-2010? Continuing low unemployment but rising wage inequality. The population crisis.

These are the questions we need to review within GMB Scotland so that we can target resources to areas of potential higher membership recruitment returns over the next 12 months.

ENERGY & UTILITIES SECTION

Scottish Power - The Scottish Power Company Council was due to meet today, 14 May 2004. At the Trade Union Side meeting a report was presented on the current threat of disciplinary action against UNISON CS&S stewards in the Manweb area. The threat of disciplinary action relates to matters involving their trade union duties whilst representing their members in negotiations with the company. In these circumstances the Trade Union Side considered the company's actions to be a threat to all the Trade Unions and the elected representatives of the workforce. The Trade Union Side therefore unanimously resolved to abstain from any agreement with the company in any joint forum where Manweb UNISON CS&S stewards are effectively disenfranchised from participation by the threat of disciplinary action. As a consequence of this decision the Company Council meeting was not held.

British Energy - The European Commission ruling on whether to approve the UK Government's granting of state aid to British Energy is now due in the next few months. In making its ruling, the EC has the power to call on British Energy to make compensation if it believes the company might otherwise gain an unfair advantage in the electricity market. British Energy believes that the UK Government's decision to provide state aid from the company is consistent with the principles and provisions of the Euratom Treaty, as well as being justified by the need to protect the security of the UK's electricity supply.

The UK's energy policy considerations, such as security of supply and the need to ensure the safety of current nuclear energy stations in the UK, justify the UK's decision to restructure British Energy and keep it alive in the relevant market. The Trade Unions are confident that the European Commission will take all of this into consideration. The initial state aid application was made by the Government in March 2003. Third parties were subsequently invited to make submissions giving their view on the proposals. Although this issue has yet to be decided, British Energy is encouraged by the findings of the EC's own investigation which has shown there to be no overcapacity in the relevant electricity markets.

BRITISH ENERGY - SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

The Company and Trade Unions held discussion on 13 July regarding security arrangements at our Nuclear Stations. It was recognised during the meeting that a number of security aspects require further clarification. These range from day to day issues such as the achievement of minimum security staffing through to the consideration of wider issues associated Government proposals for the armed defence of stations. It was agreed at the meeting that further information on the day to day issues would be gathered and considered by the sub-group. In respect of the Government proposals these would require further discussions as the plans are developed. It has now been agreed that a meeting will be held between the Trade Unions, the Government Security Advisors, British Energy and BNFL Magnox. The meeting also agreed the need for Company/Trade Unions discussions on current contingency plans associated with terrorist attacks.

Scottish & Southern Energy - Flexible Working - The Preferred Options Trade Union member thanked the Company for their considered response and acknowledged that the Preferred Option document had indeed been jointly agreed by the JNCC. They did however have a number of concerns regarding the way the arrangements were currently applied.

They welcomed that a local understanding had been reached within the depot where the first of their issues had arisen, enabling the staff to remain within the preferred option, and hoped that any other local difficulties would be addressed in a similarly positive manner. Their second issue remained a concern however, in that there did appear to be cases of unacceptably large TOIL banks for some

individuals in certain locations. They considered that these banks should be cleared and that the notion of a settlement period, of four weeks or of a longer duration should be introduced into the arrangements, or that beyond a certain level TOIL should be cleared off by payment at time and a half. On standby they said that we should remain alert to the potential caused by practicalities in the depots, of the burdens involved.

Company members thanked the Trade Union member for their comments. Whilst they stood by the explanations and information set out in their letter, they accepted that it would be helpful to hold further discussions on some aspects, in particular the cases where TOIL banks had extended beyond what might originally have been envisaged or intended. These discussions could also cover the trade unions suggestions regarding the application of some form of settlement period. It was agreed that the matter be referred in the first instance to direct officer discussion and that a further report back be made to the next meeting.

Acquisition of Ferrybridge and Fiddler's Ferry Power Stations - Scottish & Southern Energy plc ("SSE") has acquired the Ferrybridge and Fiddler's Ferry Power Station and associated coal stocks of 1.6m tonnes from AEP Energy Services UK Ltd for £13m in cash. In addition, SSE has acquired fuel in transit and contracts to supply fuel for the power stations for \$208m. The total payment to AEP will, therefore, be £250m (\$456m). Ferrybridge is a 1,995MW coal fired power station in West Yorkshire which was commissioned in 1966. In 2002 it was the first power station in the UK to "co-fire" fuels from renewable sources in order to displace fossil fuels and it remains the market leader in this field. Fiddler's Ferry is a 1.989MW coal fired power station in Cheshire which was commissioned in 1971. Like Ferrybridge it co-fires fuels from renewable sources.

Both are flexible, mid-merit stations and their acquisition complements SSE's existing generation portfolio of 4,300MW of gas-fired stations and almost 1,400MW of renewable capacity. It means that the capacity of SSE's wholly-owned power stations and SSE's share of power station joint ventures is now almost 10,000MW, making it the third largest generator of electricity in the UK.

The Power Station produced 15.3TWh of electricity during 2003, and operated at an average load factor of 43%. Having opted out of the Large Combustion Plant Directive, they are expected to operate at a load factor of around 40% until 2008 and they for a total of 20,000 hours between 2008 and 2015 after which the plants are due to be de-commissioned. Costs associated with this have also been included in SSE's valuation of the power stations. Both plants are expected to receive an allocation of carbon emissions allowances in respect of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

British Energy - As previously announced four engineering teams will be moving to Renfrew when British Energy vacates Peel Park at the end of December 2004.

British Energy announced that it has agreed to enter into long-term lease along with an additional flexible lease for engineering offices on the first floor and part of the second floor in Innovation House at Westway Business Park in Renfrew. The offices comprise three wings across two floors within a purpose built modern office building. Westwood Business Park is adjacent to Glasgow Airport, Braehead Shopping Centre is only 5 minutes drive away and provides a wide range of retail outlets and leisure facilities. The park is predominantly occupied by Mitsui Babcock and is currently the subject of considerable investment in the vacant buildings and surrounding infrastructure. Innovation House sits within landscaped grounds and there is general provision of on-site parking plus 24 hour security provided within the estate.

These offices will house the four engineering teams that are remaining in Scotland - electrical, civils, radwaste and steam & rotating plant. Additional office accommodation has been leased in Innovation House for those staff that will remain in the area following the sale of the Peel Park Offices, pending their relocation, redeployment or severance.

Timing - A detailed moving plan is currently being drawn up and we expect to move staff in during January after fitting out activities have been completed. IMD and facilities staff will begin fitting-out work in the next few days.

Familiarisation Visits - To introduce staff to their offices, a series of familiarisation visits will be organised. These short visits will be for staff to see their new office location, to find out about facilities and to have the opportunity to discuss the accommodation plans with the project team and senior

managers. More information will be available on these visits shortly.

Relocating/claim excess mileage - Staff transferring to these locations should now discuss their potential eligibility for excess mileage support with their line manager. Eligibility will be established against the criteria outlined in the Peel Park Relocation Policy and Employee Guidance Booklet provided during the one to one process.

Any questions should be directed to your line manager. If there are any questions that line managers cannot answer, these should be directed to HR advisors.

Scottish Power - Joint Procedural Agreement for the use of Contractors/Agency Staff Principles - PowerSystems and Industrial Unions jointly recognise the importance of matching permanent PowerSystems manning levels to long term base workload. The Business is, therefore, committed to training and developing its employees according to best practice, and to recruiting additional permanent staff as and when necessary to meet this anticipated long term base workload.

It is however, jointly recognised that in certain circumstances there may be resourcing requirements that can only be met by the short term use of external contractors. The purpose of this procedural agreement is to more clearly define those circumstances, establish joint arrangements for consultation on staff resourcing issues in general and to set out the parameters under which agreement can be reached on the use of contractors.

Procedure: In accordance with the Management of Change Procedural Agreement, it is the joint aim of this procedure to deal with the issues associated with the use of Contractors/Agency staff by agreement. In this connection, the Business is committed to consult with Trade Unions on resourcing issues on a regular basis. This will take the form of an annual review during which the business will outline its resourcing plans for the coming year, review turnover issues, vacancies and recruitment plans, and training and development plans. In addition, on-going resourcing issues will be discussed at the regular monthly meetings to monitor vacancies and advise on recruitment proposals/activities.

Any proposed use of contractors will also be discussed within this forum. In other words, the Business will propose the use of contractors to cover peak workloads predicted by the resource plan, unforeseen resourcing requirements and when specialist skills are required that are not available within PowerSystems. With the exception of the existing type of Framework Contracts (Term Contracts and Specialist Engineering Support), PowerSystems Management will present a business case on any requirement for the proposed use of contractors which will include the following considerations:

- The alternatives/options considered prior to the use of a contractor ie,
- The use of an internal ScottishPower resource for the specific project;
- The use of secondment opportunities;
- Recruitment of new, permanent ScottishPower staff;
- Recruitment of staff on a temporary (fixed-term) contract;
- Compulsory transfer of existing staff;
- Details of any work shadowing opportunities for ScottishPower employees if the project is in a non-specialist area.
- The defined timescales over which the contractor would be required;

Details of the proposed activities to be undertaken. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to agree the use of SAP contractors working on the network. It is jointly accepted, however, that the circumstances around which such a proposal may be made would be unusual and would not be used as a way of replacing systematic resource planning which matches permanent manning levels to long term base workload.

Any proposal for the use of SAP contractors would have to be agreed in line with the framework detailed above.

In order to maintain positive employee relations, PowerSystems is committed to strict adherence to this procedure and to ensuring it is communicated and understood at all levels. Appropriate Unions will be

contacted for discussion and consultation through all stages.

PROCESS

QinetiQ - The longstanding dispute over GMB negotiating rights has recently been resolved with confirmation being given that the GMB has full recognition. The Organiser is visiting the site on 19 August 2004 to enter into wage negotiations.

Memorandum of Understanding between the GMB Trade Union and SERCo Operations at QinetiQ Hebrides Range. This Memorandum describes the relationship between the above mentioned SERCo (hereafter referred to as the Company) and GMB Scotland (also referred to as the Union). It is intended to provide a framework in which properly constituted local recognition and substantive agreements can operation to mutual advantage and not to replace or interfere with them.

Principles

- Both the company and the GMB believe that it is in the joint interest of the company and the union to maintain in good working relations at all levels.
- The Company and the GMB agree that it is in their joint interest to recognise each other as partners in the workplace and that the maintenance of good industrial relations is a priority.
- Both GMB and the company are committed to providing high quality services. We believe that high quality employment and training are the key to these services and that the company's most important asset is its employees.
- The company therefore pledges to operate fair policies and procedures and to offer pay, conditions and training which reflects this.
- Staff who become the company's employees through a transfer will do so with the full protection of TUPE and where union recognition is in place the company will automatically accept this.
- The company and the union will hold twice yearly meetings to monitor the relationship and promote their joint interests.
- The company and the union give a joint commitment to the continuous development of their substantive agreement, along the principles of partnership.

Interfloor, Heathhall - Wage talks began in April with the company when the company offered 2.5% which was rejected. There was a mandate from the branch meeting in regards to a salary increase. However, after negotiations which took place between April and June, the company eventually conceded a two year deal. The offer was 3% -25% on overtime and review of sick pay scheme and all workers being training between a brief period in time up to grade A staff.

The 2nd year deal was a 3% increase and time and a half and double time for all overtime with a review of the sick pay scheme. This was rejected at a consultative ballot. After discussion with the shop stewards, the committee decided it would be better to hold the ballot after the holiday period. This was attempted. However, the workforce demanded industrial ballots to take place as soon as possible. Subsequently, the stewards again suggested that we should hold the ballot or hold the result of the ballot off as long as possible, without pursuing it. Again this was overturned by the membership. We are in further talks with the company there is a meeting on 16 August to discuss the wage claim further. Should there be a further need; a consultative ballot will take place on 24/25 August when all workers return from annual leave.

Chep - The wage claim has been settled at 2.8%. The shop steward had a meeting with all workers and the decision was to accept the company offer after negotiations. Other issues within CHEP - There are various grades of workers A, B, C & D. We intend to utilise C and D workers and bring them up to Grade B. However the difficulty is there, that a number of our members suffer from vibration white finger. They had been put on grade C &D work outside which reduced the vibration issue. However, the company is now intending to implement an instruction from their head office that all workers must be up to grade B. This will cause us problems I imagine in the near future.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

The membership within the Section saw a significant drop with British Airway's decision to close their Call Centre in Glasgow. Other than that the membership has remained reasonably steady.

The Security Industry - There has been quite a significant change to the main players in the Industry and our members in Scotland have had to deal with the consequences of that. In the main terms and conditions affected by these changes have been dealt at a UK level. Our involvement is to try and change our organisational structure to cope with the new employers within the Industry.

PUBLIC SERVICE SECTION

The membership base within the Public Service Section has remained steady over the last two years. We have seen a change in the mix within the Section as the membership in the Private Sector has been the biggest area of growth and reflects the changes expected from the use of Private Finance Initiatives to build and refurbish schools and hospitals.

As the Region emerges from changes in service levels the membership base is likely to see further growth.

Public Private Partnership - The Organisers and Stewards in GMB Scotland have been heavily involved in the consultations and negotiations that arise from the many projects to use this method of procurement. There are currently 30 such Projects which affect thousands of our members.

Our Organisers and Stewards have been working hard to maintain Services in-house. The initial results have been encouraging with all Public Service Organisations who have completed the process keeping Services such as Catering and Cleaning in-house.

Equal Pay - The Region has been involved in eradicating inequalities in Pay throughout the Public Sector. A great deal of work has been done in getting Local Authorities to address this matter and significant progress has been made. Hopefully, we will be able to achieve Equal Pay through negotiations, although there are areas where we will need to litigate against the Employer.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In Scotland we have a Single Status Agreement which has not been implemented fully with very few Councils having implemented any form of Job Evaluation. We have been working hard to ensure the Agreement is fully implemented and many Councils have now got full implementation date for 2005.

GMB Scotland has also been campaigning on changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme in Scotland which in the main mirror the changes proposed for England and Wales.

The Scottish Parliament has under the devolved settlement the power to do something different with the Pension Scheme in Scotland. We will be using this to hopefully address the issues of concern within the proposals to alter the current Pension Scheme.

NHS

As with other parts of the UK the main work within Scotland has been Agenda for Change. GMB Scotland has produced some good material on this and has had several Seminars on how this will affect our members.

Currently our work is centred on the Job Evaluation Exercise and it is envisaged this will be completed by September 2006. The Health Service in Scotland has had a good system of Partnership working up until this year. Unfortunately, this has not been the case with some major decision that will undoubtedly affect our members Terms and Conditions and methods of working.

SCOTTISH WATER

Scottish Water is now the only publicly owned utility provider in the UK. GMB Scotland was at the forefront of creating Scottish Water as a means of dealing with the threat of Privatisation and the Competition Act.

It is to our Shop Stewards credit that we now have a Public Sector Organisation that can compete with the Private Sector and will prove over the coming years that they can not only compete, but provide the

best service. A job well done by all GMB people involved.

ENGINEERING SECTION

The Offshore Industry appears to be particularly buoyant at the present time with oil rigs being brought back into service and reconditioned.

OCA Partnership companies have gained a further £9 billion worth of contracts work, primarily due to the increased need for offshore maintenance on fixed installations which are nearing the end of their life-span.

There appears to be a huge shortage of skilled labour in the industry and many companies are taking on or have introduced new apprentice schemes.

The application of the working time directive remains to be a burning issue in the Offshore Industry.

The OCA wage negotiations yielded an increase of 3.8%. We believe that business will continue to be buoyant given the price of a barrel which is \$52. Speculations are that the price might rise to \$73 per barrel.

MOD

The situation within the MOD is that HMS Clyde, Coulport and Faslane may come under pressure in the near future in regard to the issue of the ship lift system. The MOD have indicated that they intend to reduce the usage of that said lift system from 100% currently to a reduction of 86% usage - this will have a serious impact on the Faslane Naval Base. Equally there will also be an impact in regard to Coulport.

Further issues since Babcock have taken over the HMS Clyde facility they are now in the process of withdrawing from various stabilised agreements that were there previously. Equally, we have difficulties with Amicus who are attempting to nudge GMB out of position within both establishments. The Organiser has raised this issue officially with Amicus Full Time Officials and hopefully can resolve this problem.

In October 2004 72 redundancies have been declared at Faslane and Coulport with the possibility of more to come.

At MOD Beith the Organiser has reported gains for 14 workers through JEGS appeal. Members gained £1,000 back pay and move upward in spinal column. However, other MOD Unions at National Level have protested. This matter has been passed to National Level

MITSUI BABCOCK, RENFREW

Over 100 years of manufacturing history at Renfrew is now on the verge of closing down. It is very sad and disappointing for Scottish manufacturing that Mitsui Babcock's at Renfrew from employing several thousand people fifteen years ago will now be reduced to a sole remaining machine shop employing double figures as the last picture of a proud manufacturing industrial sector which at one time could compete with European and World competition in producing gas turbines and engineering products. The present HR 1 notice of approximately 10 jobs virtually ends fabrication at this site which for a long time employed thousands of skilled workers.

Babcock Renfrew in its prime was at the core of the community within Renfrew as it gave job security for generations for thousands of employees and their families. It is only over the last 10 years that they have encountered the disease of unfair subsidies from their competitors in the European and Far East which has resulted in lack of orders and an ongoing run of redundancies, which has brought them to the level where the fabrication has collapsed and the machine shop will be left with the sole task of keeping the site viable which would be almost impossible.

It is time that the Scottish Executive took a reality check as to what is happening to our manufacturing base. Once again we are losing and having lost the knowledge, skills, and experience, to be able to be in a competitive situation to tender for work within the European Sector.

SHIPBUILDING AND ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES

The Scottish Shipbuilding and Marine Sector Action Plan builds on a study of the shipbuilding and marine industries in Scotland, completed for Scottish Enterprise in 2000, and the Clyde Shipyards Task Force report, published in January 2002 by the Scottish Executive, Scotland Office and DTI. In doing so it addresses the need to enhance the Scottish industry's success in changing global trading conditions as identified in Smart Successful Scotland.

The Scottish Enterprise report concluded that, while there is no longer a full cluster of shipbuilding and marine industries in Scotland, there are sub-sectors and companies that compete successfully in international markets. These organisations provide wealth creation and high quality employment opportunities. They include large employers, SMEs, and further and higher education institutions.

The Clyde Shipyards Taskforce, created in response to a significant BAE SYSTEMS Marine redundancy announcement, produced 29 recommendations. As well as dealing with the reduced number of redundancies, these aimed to secure a long-term future for the shipbuilding industry in Scotland and to ensure the right mix of skills for future contracts. They identified the need to change perceptions of the industry from one of decline to a realistic view of the high value economic activity that shipbuilding and repair now is. The report also recommended looking at the potential for other Scottish knowledge-based marine industrial development, including renewable energy generation and remotely operated vehicles.

A number of major warship contracts identified in the Taskforce report have now been ordered by the UK MoD or are moving towards contract. They present significant opportunities for Scotland and now require action to ensure the maximum benefits are realised.

SCOPE OF THE SECTOR IN SCOTLAND

Previous research has identified that Scotland has three main industry sub-sectors: major shipbuilding, ship repair and refit; marine equipment, engineering and related technologies; general boat building and repair.

Given that the major opportunities in the industry over the next 10-20 years are in the build and through-life support of UK warship and auxiliary vessels, this plan focuses on the Royal Navy's immediate requirements and the existing key capabilities of Scottish companies. More detailed work on non-defence related work will follow.

The Scottish marine sector includes three primarily naval yards, a number of companies specialising in niche commercial markets, important marine equipment providers, and a healthy FE and HE sector. BAE SYSTEMS Naval Ships is the UK's largest remaining warship builder, with two yards on the Clyde at Govan and Scotstoun. The company is headquartered and has concentrated its surface vessel capacity in Scotland.

At Rosyth, Babcock Engineering Services is one of Scotland's largest industrial sites and a major employer in east central Scotland. The company has continued to diversify from being a warship and submarine dockyard to include small vessel build and alternative commercial contract work.

Ferguson Shipbuilders design and build smaller specialist commercial ships, including ferries and fisheries protection vessels. Fergusons is not a warship builder, but has gained ISO 9002 accreditation and can bid for MoD work. It may have opportunities as a sub-contractor on CVF and other programmes.

Garvel Drydock, the repair yards on the Forth, River Dee Shiprepairers, Buckie Shipyard Ltd and MacDuff Shipyards in Grampian all continue to pursue commercial opportunities for newbuild, repair and conversion. MacDuff specialises in fishing, pilot and survey boats, has recently opened a second site with mobile cranage in Fraserburgh, and has sister companies that specialise in design and diesel engines. The Buckie Shipyard is involved in the build, conversion, repair of fishing boats, pilot boats, ferries, yachts and MoD vessels. Like Ferguson's, it works to registered ISO 9002 standards and it has opened a new facility for the refit and servicing of RNLI lifeboats.

There is also activity in submarine repair at the Clyde submarine facility at HMNB Clyde, now operated by Babcock Naval Services. This may offer limited potential for over lapping use of skills on the aircraft

carrier contracts.

In addition, Scotland has key supply chain and marine equipment companies that supply local and world markets. It is home to Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities' world-class Department of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, as well as key FE colleges such as Lauder College, Anniesland College and the (Glasgow) College of Nautical Studies.

OBJECTIVES

The primary aims of the action plan are to exploit near term contract opportunities to create business value and economic benefits and, through these actions, create an advanced, niche shipbuilding and marine industry capable of sustaining long term growth.

MARKET FACTORS DRIVING CHANGE IN SCOTLAND

The prospects for the shipbuilding and marine industries in Scotland have changed markedly since the inception of the Clyde Shipyards Task Force. In 2001, the industry faced a period of uncertainty over the future of Scotstoun and Govan, as well as an ongoing reduction of activity at Rosyth. New and positive factors for shipbuilding include: a relatively greater focus on defence markets as BAE SYSTEMS Marine has absorbed Govan and exited merchant shipbuilding. The award of six Royal Navy Type 45 destroyers to BAE SYSTEMS Marine (now BAE SYSTEMS Naval Ships), with a further two promised. The transfer of surface warship building capability from Barrow to the Clyde yards, bringing all BAE SYSTEMS' Type 45 work to Glasgow. Award of 2 Landing Ship Dock Auxiliary (LSD(A)) vessels to Govan. Award of the future aircraft carrier (CVF) prime contract and the expected appointment of BAE SYSTEMS Naval Ships and Babcock Engineering Services as first tier contractors, with the probability of significant elements of the design, fabrication, integration and fit-out work coming to the Clyde and Rosyth.

The CVF contract will see the design and construction of two of the largest ships ever built for the Royal Navy, with work shared between the Scottish yards, VT Shipbuilding in Portsmouth (formerly Vosper Thornycroft), and Swan Hunter on Tyneside.

In addition, there are important future UK defence contracts that the Scottish yards will compete for:

- FSC (Future Surface Combatant): Type 23 frigate replacement, up to 20, not before 2012.
- MARS (Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability): up to 9 or 10 non-fighting vessels.
- other support vessels, e.g. JCTS (Joint Casualty Treatment Ship).

Further, BAE SYSTEMS Naval Ships, Babcock Engineering Services and Ferguson's continue respectfully to progress a range of export warship design and build and/or commercial contracts. While the details of these are confidential, BAE SYSTEMS has commented publicly on potential contracts in Chile, Malaysia and Thailand.

2. General Organisation

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	---
Regional Organisers	21
Recruitment and Organisation Officers	---
Regional Recruitment Officers	---
No. of Branches	204
BAOs	0
New Branches	2
Branch Equality Officers	41

3. Benefits

Dispute	Nil
Total Disablement	Nil
Working Accident	£20,731.55
Occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	£4,840.00
Funeral	£53,129.04

4. Journals & Publicity

Publicity materials have been provided within GMB Scotland across a wide range of our Sections and focusing on relevant information leaflets continue to be produced and developed and informative for our membership base.

As a direct result of tight Fiscal controls to achieve our budget requirements we did not produce a Regional Journal in 2004 however, constant communications was provided to all our lay activists. Currently we are embarking on producing a Regional Journal focusing on the forthcoming election to be distributed to all members.

National Press releases are also directed to all Branch Secretaries along with those with a Regional focus. Advertising continues to be an area where we seek to ensure that a selective process is undertaken which provides GMB Scotland with the highest possible profile. Senior Organisers continue to be successful in achieving a high media profile within Scotland. Media Monitoring continues to be scrutinised and we currently through London Region's Rose Conroy achieve significant coverage as a result of her excellent materials from which we benefit. We are currently reviewing our media training and development and hope to roll out additional training in this area.

The recent Pensions Campaign has gained significant exposure on TV and Radio with GMB Scotland receiving significant coverage. Publicity to members is also supplied through our relationship with Liverpool Victoria and Membership Services. GMB Scotland has also played a very significant role in promoting the Anti-Racism message through Show Racism the Red Card and has been extensively promoted by our Professional Footballers Branch (SPFA). This approach through football is allowing the message to get across a wide group of the Scottish population.

Our work with and on behalf of Asylum Seekers has also been well covered in the press and we continue to work with Glasgow City Council and other Councils in Scotland to deal with these issues. GMB Scotland was asked to make a major contribution at the EOC Summit held in Edinburgh recently which provided a significant profile given that we were the only Union on the platform. We continue to promote GMB Scotland across the media and our campaigns and publicity vigorously.

5. Legal Services

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	1,724
Legal Assistance Granted	1,724
Cases in which Outcome became known	
Total	1,813
Withdrawn	527
Lost in Court	8
Settled	1,083 (£7,501,038)
Won in Court	195 (£670,974)
Total Compensation	£8,172,012
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	1,922

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	213
Cases in which Outcome became known	
Total	126
Withdrawn	69
Lost in Tribunal	1
Settled	54
Won in Court	2
Total Compensation	£150,812
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	132

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	2
Unsuccessful	0
Damages/Compensation	£255,000
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004	1

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	42
Successful	16
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004	15

6. Equal Rights

GMB Scotland has continued to play an active part in the Scottish TUC's Equal Rights work including the Women's Committee and Conference, Black Workers Committee and Conference and more recently the LGBT Network.

A successful Regional Equal Rights Conference which took place in October 2003 was addressed by Scottish Parliament Communities Minister, Margaret Curran, Margaret Gribbon of Digby Brown, the Regional Secretary and Glasgow City Council Deputy Lord Provost Christine Devine.

The union has continued to work with a range of external organisations including Women's Aid, Beyond Barriers (an LGBT Organisation) and prioritise and promoted Equal Pay Campaigning. Where appropriate this has been in association with the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Scottish 'Close the Gap' campaign.

Anti-Racism work has also been a high priority particularly since the appointment of a full-time campaign worker for the Show Racism the Red Card campaign who is based in Fountain House.

7. Youth

The union continues to work through the STUC structures in identifying and campaigning on issues important to young workers. In recent times both the GMB's Pauline Minnery and Daniel Donaldson have chaired the Scottish TUC's Youth Committee and Conference. The Regional Secretary addressed the 2004 STUC Youth Conference and links with Scottish Labour Students and the National Union of Students continued to be developed. In association with the Scottish TUC a Schools Visits pack is being prepared.

8. Training

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	18	169	63	232	36
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	12	108	45	153	60
Branch Officers	-	-	-	-	-
(b) On Site Courses					
2 Day Job Evaluation	1	11	3	14	2
2 Day Communications	2	19	9	28	4

9. Health & Safety

Health and Safety Executive statistics seem to suggest that Scotland is one of the most dangerous geographical areas within the UK to work. True or not, prevention of accidents and ill-health is one of the key functions of our activists. This can be seen by the increasing number of health and safety enquiries and the number of stewards eager to access our training programme.

With changes in resource, all of our courses are now delivered outwith the GMB by professional training organisations such as Stow College in Glasgow. So far, this has proved to be effective and our thanks go to those who assist in this way.

In the past two years the department has tried to be more active in supporting sister organisations. For example there was a strong Scottish delegation at the Hazards conference and the GMB has given evidence to the Scottish Executive in support of the campaign for Corporate Killing.

In the workplace, we continue to profile our health and safety service while recruiting. Indeed our industry specific leaflets remain a significant tool in recruitment and retention. However as always our

prime purpose is to provide the type of health and safety information and advice which will allow our stewards to continue their work and make the workplace safer for all GMB members.

(Adopted)

BRO. H. DONALDSON (Regional Secretary, GMB Scotland): I move the report. It is difficult to come to the rostrum after the revelation that has just been made because I am sure it shocked everyone here just as much as it did me. What can I say?

Following on from that - Dawn has everyone's congratulations - I wanted to add this point to the GMB Scotland report. As Mary said how wonderful it is to have one of our own elected to Parliament. In GMB Scotland we were successful in Jim McGovern. He was successful in becoming the MP for Dundee (West). From our perspective, we have another voice in Parliament. *(Applause)* I know that many of our English colleagues it is quite difficult to understand how we managed to get two bites of the cherry. The point is that we can elect to Westminster and we can elect our own MSPs. We also have many GMB voices in the Scottish Parliament. With that, I conclude my report.

(There were no questions raised on this section of the report)

(The report was adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: I see that Mr. Blobby and the Sugar Plumb Fairy have arrived at the back of the hall.

THE ACTING GENERAL SECRETARY: It's a Knockout! It's Tony Woodley and Derek Simpson. *(Laughter)*

THE PRESIDENT: Amalgamation talks are taking place now. Look! *(Laughter)*

Colleagues, I am now going to leave the Chair and ask the Vice President to take the Chair.

(The Vice President took the Chair)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Before we begin the Public Services Section Report, I would refer to one item. When Dawn was speaking she said if anyone had the chance, they should come to the rostrum to raise a point of order. As a result, I would like to do a deal with you. You save your points of order until Mary returns and I will keep the red light on. *(Laughter and applause)*

SECTION REPORT - PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

1. Section Membership

At the last GMB Congress in June 2003 the Public Services Section membership stood at 253,441 or 39% of the GMB total. Some eighteen months later at the start of 2005 this had risen to 255,377 now 42% of the GMB total. Growth would have been much greater but for extensive data cleaning in 2004 which removed large numbers of non-payers from the statistics. We recognise and place on record our thanks to all the branch activists and Officers who have contributed to the continuing recruitment into the Public Services Section.

2. People

In March 2004 Mick Graham retired from his post as National Secretary for Public Services and was replaced by Brian Strutton. Jude Brimble moved on to other responsibilities and her public services duties were taken up by Brian. The Section would wish to record thanks to Jude and to Mick for their outstanding contributions.

Sharon Holder continued to be National Officer for the Health and Care sectors - responsibility for Further and Higher Education was moved to Richard Ascough (Southern Regional Secretary) and Sharon has added the MOD to her portfolio.

3. Public Sector Pay and Workforce Strategy

The Government's approach to public sector industrial relations over the past two years has been largely characterised by fine-sounding commitments that either fail to materialise or turn out to be a trojan horse for detrimental changes to the workforce. Apart from providing for increased employment in schools and helping fund Agenda for Change in the NHS, it has been Government policy to seek efficiency savings throughout the public sector including 80,000 civil service posts. For the GMB's 200,000 plus members in local government this means another period of cuts in budgets and the

continuing fight to save jobs.

Trade unions in the public sector have tried to establish common ground on these key issues:

- Low pay in the public sector. Government response is that the existing reward packages need to be explained better!
- Establishing fully funded equal pay. Government is willing to actively promote equal pay but only on the basis of providing no funding!
- Quality public service pensions for all. Government believes pension schemes need to encourage people to work longer!
- In return (!) Government expects the trade unions to deliver flexible working, ie more work for less reward.

It is hardly surprising that the GMB is highly sceptical each time a Minister announces a new initiative, especially if it is claimed to benefit the workforce.

Since the last Congress Report there has been some modification of Government policy on PPP/PFI and on two-tier workforce issues.

In 2003 the “Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Government in England and Wales” (the two-tier code) was agreed. The Code requires private contractors to offer new starters pay and conditions that are no less favourable overall than staff transferred from local authorities - it also requires private companies to offer new starters a pension scheme with a minimum employer contribution of six per cent. Last year a dispute resolution procedure was agreed to settle disputes over certain aspects of the Code. GMB experience of the Code in operation has highlighted numerous loopholes and although Government has promised to extend the Code to other parts of the public sector it is GMB’s policy to get the Code working properly in local government itself.

With ongoing TU campaigns against PFI and privatisation, but perhaps with a greater eye on contractors’ cooling of interest, Treasury made changes to PFI regulations in July 2004. They issued new guidance stating that value for money should not be at the expense of the workforce and that “soft services” do not have to be included in PFI projects. In future, bidders will have to show their workforce costings and show they have not factored in cuts to pay and conditions to either transferred staff or new starters. Other changes mean that for local government, subsidies on the same scale as PFI credits can be available for other forms of procurement, removing some of the incentive to use PFI. These are helpful steps to begin to level the playing field but will be no more than that until Government recognises and accepts that public services are best provided by public sector workers backed by adequate resources.

4. National Committee

The Section National Committee has met on 8 occasions since the report to Congress 2003. The National Committee is currently:

Mary Turner	<i>(London Region), President</i>
Paul Bedford	<i>(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)</i>
Samanda Caveney	<i>(Lancashire Region)</i>
Jean Chaplow	<i>(Northern Region)</i>
Steve Chapman	<i>(MPO)</i>
Linda Clarke	<i>(Birmingham & West Midlands Region)</i>
Keith Cook	<i>(GMB Scotland)</i>
Les Dobbs	<i>(Midland & East Coast Region)</i>
Gary Doolan	<i>(London Region)</i>
Peter Dow	<i>(MPO)</i>
John Faulds	<i>(GMB Scotland)</i>
James Gibbs	<i>(Birmingham & West Midlands)</i>
Peter Hamilton	<i>(Northern Region)</i>
Pamela Hughes	<i>(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)</i>
Brian Jackson	<i>(Birmingham & West Midlands Region)</i>
Kevin Jones	<i>(South Western Region)</i>
Susan Lee	<i>(Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region)</i>

Evelyn Martin	(London Region)
June Minnery	(GMB Scotland)
Jimmy Philbin	(Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region)
Robin Richardson	(London Region)
Heather Starr	(MPO)
Eileen Theaker	(Southern Region)

Matters considered by the National Committee included:

- equal pay
- pensions
- pay negotiations
- the CEC Task Group
- membership and recruitment
- Section strategy
- Agenda for Change
- 2 tier code
- privatisation
- MPO
- schools
- care sector

5. Section Conference 2004

The 2004 Public Services Section Conference was held in York over 24/25 June 2004. The Conference was chaired by Mary Turner who was also re-elected President for a four year term of office.

101 delegates attended (including 2 from MPO) as did 20 National Committee members, 11 Officials, 15 visitors, 2 observers and 3 National Office staff. Of the 121 delegates and National Committee members, 34 were women; 3 attendees were Irish; 1 was Pakistani; 1 was mixed race and the rest were White British.

The Conference was addressed by David Miliband, Minister for Schools; Ian McCartney, Labour Party Chair; Frances O'Grady, TUC Deputy General Secretary; Kevin Curran, General Secretary; Charlie King, GMB Researcher; and the Section National Officials, Brian Strutton and Sharon Holder.

All 41 motions were carried and have been considered by the National Committee and actions determined.

6. Local Government Pay and Conditions

After difficult and protracted negotiations the Employers' Side of the NJC for Local Government made a final 3-year offer in June 2004. The offer comprised:

- Increases of 2.75% in 2004; 2.95% in 2005; 2.95% (or RPI if greater) in 2006. These are compounded so are worth 8.9% over the 3 years.
- Completion of pay and grading reviews by 31 March 2007.
- A joint review of Green Book part 2 conditions.
- Protection of premium payment conditions.
- New guidance on workforce training and development.

This offer was woefully short of our aspirations and did nothing to address low pay. However faced with complete intransigence from the employers GMB members reluctantly accepted that this was the best that could be achieved through negotiation.

7. Local Authority Craft

The Local Authority Craft JNC negotiations on pay for 2004 mirrored the main NJC talks with an identical three-year headline offer but with additional uplifts for tool allowances and a commitment to

joint discussions on apprentices and future salary schemes.

The final offer from the employers was consulted on in December 2004 and was overwhelmingly accepted.

8. Equal Pay in Local Government

Since the 1997 single status agreement that should have delivered equal pay in local government there have been three unforeseen developments. Firstly, in July 2003 the law was changed to establish a back pay entitlement of 6 years for any equal pay outcome; secondly, no-win-no-fee lawyers have been inciting thousands of union members to take cases against shop stewards, their unions and their employers to break negotiated deals; thirdly, the appallingly slow progress with only 25% of Councils completing pay and grading reviews after 8 years of the agreement, leading to charges that the unions and authorities have been complicit in holding up equal pay.

GMB therefore took senior counsel opinion and we issued new advice in July 2004 designed to strengthen our negotiating position and to ensure that we remained at the forefront of the fight to achieve equality.

However, the underlying problem is that achieving equal pay needs funding support from central government and GMB continues to press Ministers to recognise this.

9. Health

The rapid pace of change has continued across all aspects of the NHS: Foundation Trusts are now being rolled-out across England; the private sector, given a seat at the table by Allan Milburn's Concordat, is increasingly being used to treat NHS patients for routine operations; foreign healthcare companies are spearheading the new diagnostic and treatment centres and European doctors are providing 'out of hours' services following the recent changes to GP contracts. Another key development in the NHS has seen a shift in the financial power away from the acute sector towards primary care trusts (PCTs) which now gets some three-quarters of NHS spending.

But the use of the private sector in routine operations has proven unpopular with NHS trusts. A survey of more than 1000 NHS trust chief executives, in England, found that plans to contract-out up to 15% of non-emergency operations and diagnostic tests were opposed by 73% on the grounds that the scheme was not good value for money.

Since the last GMB Congress, there has been a host of national targets for the NHS to meet including waiting times, emergency care, heart disease, mental health, older people, the patient experience and health inequalities.

Most of these policy developments originated from the NHS Plan (2000) which is the Labour Government's strategic blueprint for root and branch reform of the health service. The plan reaffirmed Labour's commitment to free access to services on the basis of clinical need, funded by general taxation. But some very unpopular policies such as the Foundation Trusts and the 'Choice Agenda' were sprung on the health service Trade Unions without any prior consultation.

GMB opposed the profit-making nature of Foundation Trusts as this would lead to a multi-tiered health service.

The so-called Choice Agenda means even greater participation by private healthcare companies. By the end of 2005, in England, patients will be given a choice of five hospitals for non-emergency treatment, including at least one in the private sector. The theory behind this policy is that if patients do not choose to use their local NHS hospital, it would be under pressure to improve its service.

Taking this policy to its logical conclusion it was then no surprise when John Reid, Health Secretary, announced that the government was prepared to let NHS hospitals close if they did not attract enough business under the tough new disciplines of patient choice. GMB opposes this madness. The choice people really wanted was access to high quality, local and reliable public services.

GMB applauded the Labour Government's massive investment to the NHS. Following the Wanless Report (in 2002) Labour committed an extra £40bn in NHS spending in the five years from 2003. By

2008, total UK health spending will be 9.4 per cent of national income, well above the current EU average of 8 per cent.

But, for many of us, this government has too readily adopted failed policies from the Tory years such as PFI, which we continue to oppose. Unfortunately, PFI still seems to be the only show in town. PFI continues to be the favoured mechanism for building our new hospitals and facilities. In the seven years since Labour came to power - just in England alone - some 78 PFI schemes for the NHS have been approved to the value of some £15,321m. In comparison, only five publicly funded schemes, totalling £257m, were approved over the same period.

A new health regulator, the Healthcare Commission, in law known as CHAI (Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection), was created in 2004. It took over all of the current and proposed work of the Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) and the Mental Health Act Commission (MHAC), the national NHS value for money work of the Audit Commission, and the independent healthcare work of the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC). One of the Commission's early pieces of work was to consult on proposals to change the system of performance assessment of NHS trusts.

Also in 2004, GMB responded to the Department of Health's consultation on extending regulation to those health care staff whose work provides direct clinical care, i.e. healthcare assistants but not porters. Extending regulation would require legislation and it is unlikely to be in place before 2007.

Last year, the Department of Health began to review Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) i.e. those organisations such as the Blood and Trans-plant Authority. The review aims is to cut the number of ALBs by half by 2007-08, thereby generating £0.5bn savings but with the loss of one-in-four jobs. Towards the end of 2004, details of a radical overhaul of social care inspections were published which raised the possibility that the Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate might be merged in the near future.

NHS PAY SYSTEM

On 23 November 2004, GMB witnessed the signing of "Agenda for Change", a partnership agreement reached between the four UK Health Departments, NHS Management and NHS Trade Unions, including GMB, reforming the NHS pay system after 50 years and introducing Harmonised Terms and Conditions for all NHS staff covered by the agreement.

During the complex 5 year negotiations, agreement was also reached on the introduction of an NHS-wide Job Evaluation Scheme and Grading System, designed to eliminate unequal pay across NHS occupational groups. The agreement also provides for the introduction of Knowledge and Skills Framework designed to help and enable staff, whatever their current job in the NHS, to develop their skills to the full.

The signing of Agenda for Change also saw the demise of the NHS Whitley Councils and the creation of a new NHS Staff Council to replace the relevant functions of the General Whitley Council. GMB hold two seats.

A new NHS Employers organisation took over responsibility from the NHS Confederation for much of the Department of Health workforce agenda on 31 October 2004, including national negotiations on the new NHS pay system. The Department of Health in future will only act in an observer's role on the Staff Council, although the final decision on funding pay will remain in the domain of the DOH. Understanding the future funding basis for AfC is yet to be clarified by the Department with the Employers organisation and NHS unions.

Final agreement on the new pay system may have been reached but the signing of this agreement also marks the beginning of a process of unfinished business for which the NHS Staff Council is tasked with completing.

NHS PENSION SCHEME REVIEW

Proposals to amend the NHS pension scheme were published in "Moving to a 21st Century Pension Scheme" on 10 January 2005, a joint publication for consultation considered by the review. Significant proposals to change the NHS pension scheme include:

- Introducing a new pension scheme from 2006 for staff beginning NHS employment.
- In line with Government policy, the new scheme may have a pension age of 65 and could be based on a career average revalued earnings (CARE) scheme, as opposed to a final salary pension.
- For existing staff, the proposals are different. Staff currently have a pension age of 60 and this should stay in place until 2013.
- Special class status, including Mental Health Officers, many of which are GMB members, currently have a pension age of 55. These special rights were withdrawn for new entrants in 1995.

GMB strongly argued that those holding these rights have lifetime protection. The review partners - both management and the trade unions - are recommending that these rights should be maintained.

If the pension age is increased from 60 to 65, there will be savings generated. Some or all of these savings could be reinvested in the pension scheme. Benefit improvements in the new scheme that could be introduced from 2006 include:

- An improvement in the accrual rate. Currently, this is 1/80th for the pension and 3/80th for the lump sum. This may be changed to 1/60th for the pension and members can obtain a lump sum through giving up part of the pension.
- Survivor benefits may be paid to financially dependent partners - either same sex or opposite sex. This will include all beneficiaries of death in service, deferment and retirement pensions.
- A range of measures may also be introduced to encourage members to take flexible retirement.

The review conducted on a partnership basis has produced a unique consultation document with the review partners. The partners, although agreeing on some joint recommendations, have not agreed on everything. GMB have opposed any move to increase the pension age from 60 to 65 for either new or existing staff. GMB also does not support the introduction of CARE for the NHS.

NATIONAL BLOOD AUTHORITY - ARMS LENGTH BODY

On 30 November 2004, the Department of Health outlined plans to merge the National Blood Authority (NBA) with UK Transplant (UKT) by 1st October 2005, forming a new organisation called NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT). NHSBT will take over all the responsibilities of both the NBA and UKT.

Once the NHSBT comes into being as one organisation they will be expected to make a significant contribution to the overall savings expected from the Arms Length Body (ALB) review. Already, in talks with the NHS Trade Unions, including GMB, at national level, the NBA are seeking to reduce substantially the number of staff they employ in services to donors and are reviewing all their activities in preparation for merging with UK Transplant.

The Arms Length Body review proposed to move certain functions, such as HR, finance and IT, to a shared NHS service transferring the employment of those affected.

The ALB review is part of a wider programme to free up more resources for the delivery of frontline services to patients by 2007/08. In comparison, the practical application being adopted by the NBA, in the view of GMB, contradicts the government's objective to direct additional resources to the frontline. If necessary high-level representation will be made by GMB to highlight our concerns.

NHS LAY DELEGATES CONFERENCE 2004

The conference was attended by over 50 delegates, a significant reduction created by the election of regional advisory group representatives and the commitment to reduce cost for Industrial Conferences.

Speakers included:

Brian Strutton - National Secretary

Robert Quick from the NHS University

Heidi Benzing - GMB Pensions Policy and Research Officer

Motions debated on:

Training

Agenda for Change

Pensions

Agency workers

Contracting-out of services

AfC for TUPEd and Contractor Staff

Hospital cleanliness

Communications

Campaigns

GMB Democracy

NHS Funding

Worklife balance

MEMBERSHIP

Health Service membership currently stands at 20,600.

10. Social Care

2004 was also a time of change for social care regulators. No sooner had the National Care Standards Commission started work (in April 2002) when it was announced that it was to be abolished. Two years later, in April 2004, a new body the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) came into being. The CSCI carries out local inspections of all social care organisations - public, private, and voluntary - against national standards and publish reports.

One of the key issues for GMB will be how the CSCI deals with the national minimum standards requirement that care home workers are trained to NVQ level II by 2005. Previously the government relaxed some of the environmental standards as a result of the independent sector's lobbying. We know for sure that the independent sector has an appalling training record. So GMB plans to keep a careful watch on the Commission to ensure it does not back-track in this important area which is a key concern of our members.

But some things stay the same. Social care despite recent budget increases continues to be a Cinderella funded service, particularly in relation to the NHS. GMB members know this sad reality only too well. Poor wages and the most basic terms and conditions are too often the order of the day. For many working in the sector pensions are a luxury they cannot afford. We know that funding, or the lack of it, is at the root of all this. Local authorities contract with the independent sector for far less than the real and 'Fair cost of care'. They should pay more but GMB fully recognises that cash-strapped councils already spend at least a billion pounds more than their central government allocation on social services. That is where central government come in. As people live longer there will be strong pressures on the sector in the years to come. More and more people will be needing care services and for much longer than previously. So it is important that adequate and sustainable funding is put in place. Regrettably social care has never been as hot a political topic as is the case with the NHS. As a result the government has closed its ears to GMB calls for increased expenditure on a par with the health service. That needs to change. GMB has previously called for a review into the cost of care so we warmly welcomed the King's Fund sponsored review of the sector led by Derek Wanless whose report led to the massive hike in NHS spending.

Meanwhile, back at the coalface the UK's four social care regulatory bodies, having registered qualified social workers on to the social care register, began consultations in late 2004 on the next groups of social care workers to be registered. It is anticipated that the UK's social care workforce will be required to be on the register in 2007.

HIGHFIELD HOMES AND SOUTHERN CROSS

Highfield Homes, also known as NHP Property Group, de-recognised GMB in 2004. Since then, GMB activities at local level have been limited due to these constraints.

NHP Property Group have continued to experience major financial problems since defaulting on its bank loans in 2000.

Blackstone, an American company, have been linked with a number of nursing home deals in the UK and have agreed terms of a bid with Highfield Homes - NHP Property Group.

A similar bid has been put in for the purchase of Southern Cross Healthcare, where GMB have recognition.

If the bids are successful and NHP Property Group are bought in conjunction with Southern Cross, the merger of the two major social care providers will have a substantial impact on the future of social care provision in the UK. GMB are well placed to take advantage of this situation with the full support of the Southern Cross Group.

MEMBERSHIP

Care Sector membership currently stands at 5,900.

11. Managerial and Professional Officers (MPO)

Activities in MPO have been based around their three key specialist groups namely Probation, the Rent Service and Local Government Chief Officers, with the rest of the MPO membership being covered by the main NJC. The MPO National Advisory Committee continues to be responsible for maintaining the MPO identity and appeal to managers and professionals in local government and related areas, as well as ensuring high quality individual and collective representation.

RENT SERVICE

As the lead Union in the Rent Service GMB/MPO has been heavily involved in a programme of reviewing a series of employment policies although this has been overshadowed by announcements of office closures in 2005 and 2006. Adequate redeployment and redundancy policy will now be the priority.

PROBATION

GMB/MPO represents Probation Chief Officers and the Government's proposals to merge the Probation and Prison Services has had a direct impact on the senior level jobs in Probation. In addition, progress on pay structures has been held up by this process causing additional ill-feeling and uncertainty.

12. School Support Staff

GMB has benefited from the Government's policy to expand the numbers of classroom based teaching assistants and large numbers of them have joined the GMB so that they, along with other support staff, are no longer schools' hidden professionals and they can have a powerful voice speaking up for them.

Our newsletter "School Workforce News" has become the pre-eminent support staff periodical and since last Congress has tackled such issues as:

- School funding
- Teachers 24 admin tasks
- Temporary contracts
- HLTA training
- Cover supervision
- Pay and grading
- Healthy Living in Schools
- Child protection
- Foundation Schools
- 2-tier code
- Exam invigilation

We have also carried out a major survey of school administrative staff and published the results in "The Way Our Schools Work" which highlighted the excessive levels of unpaid overtime worked by school support staff.

GMB continues to be the leading support staff participant in the two main bodies that set the national

framework, namely the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) and the schools sub-committee of the NJC for Local Government (Schools Committee). Unfortunately these two bodies do not work in tandem because the employer's side of the Schools Committee will not agree to make the changes necessary for school support staff pay and conditions to match the pace of remodelling change that WAMG drives. As a result, GMB members in schools are often left at the mercy of heads and governors without the national agreements that protect teachers.

Two of our prime objectives are a national pay and grading structure for school support staff and a fair and consistent way of calculating their pay. GMB has taken these issues to Ministerial and Secretary of State levels but at the moment we are encountering total resistance from local authority employers.

GMB held a lay delegates' Schools Conference in November 2004 with speakers from Sure Start Policy Unit, the Child Protection Policy team and WAMG. Despite the poor conditions of the venue the content of the Conference and the participation was of a high quality.

In December 2004, 300 GMB teaching assistants in Brighton took strike action over their Council's attempts to cut costs by reducing their paid weeks. Despite offers from GMB to refer the dispute to arbitration the Council refused, seemingly preferring to allow children's education to be disrupted. Regrettably the action had closed over 30 schools for two days before the Council saw sense and agreed to arbitration - but this first ever strike by one of the most loyal and responsible workforces showed that teaching assistants can, through trade union solidarity, stand up to their employers.

(Adopted)

BRO. B. STRUTTON (National Secretary, Public Services): Good afternoon, Congress. I will be introducing a note of seriousness into the proceedings.

I want to place on record my thanks to Mick Graham, who retired just over a year ago, and to Jude Brimble, who moved to other duties at about the same time, for their tremendous contributions to the Public Services Section. Sharon Holder and I now manage the section with research support from Helga Pile and Gerry Carr. I am pleased to tell Congress that the Public Services Section is in great health and continues to grow in numbers and strength. Much of that is due to the hard work of our committed activities in the field who are the backbone of the section and is the reason why the GMB, truly, is Britain's best Union.

Working with the National Committee and Mary, as the Sectional President, we have developed and published clear and straightforward strategic objectives for the Public Services Section so that we can all focus our energies in the same direction. I want to up-date, particularly on communications support and the big issues for us, which are equal pay, pensions, Agenda for Change and school support staff.

I believe, firmly, that we all need to improve our communications and I was genuinely delighted that you decided on Sunday that we can have a Public Services magazine, which will supplement the extensive range of bulletins, newsletters and other publications that we issue. Communication is not just about Sharon and myself sending material out.

We need feedback to inform and guide our policy decisions so, please, through your regions, respond to our communications. Ask us to come and talk to you so that we can establish constructive dialogue. That is the best way of ensuring that we are properly representing you.

It also means that we can extend the support we give to activists and officers which we have been building up during the past year through training packs, guidance notes and direct negotiating support. However, we must do more. For example, the demands of establishing equal pay through local authority pay and grading reviews and through Agenda for Change have really stretched us and even exposed shop stewards and this Union to claims of negligence from sickening no-win/no-fee lawyers, which we cannot and will not allow.

Let me show you something on the screen. Does that look like a nice GMB leaflet saying "It could be you", telling our members that they could be entitled to equal pay claims. No, it is not. It is a firm of no-win/no-fee solicitors posing as the GMB, trying to look like us, to con and mislead our members. That situation cannot continue, colleagues.

Equal pay claims and the law around them is a very difficult and complex area. Just to put this situation into some sort of context, reliable estimates put the public services equal pay bill at £20 billion. I repeat: £20 billion for equal pay. This Labour Government must accept that equal pay claims need to be funded. We cannot continue to see a zero budget approach to equal pay because that only forces men's pay down. To me that is no

achievement at all and it makes a mockery of the concept of equality.

I want to see the GMB at the front of equal pay in public services as the leading union and seen to be fighting hardest for upwards equality. Then we will not need to worry about the no-win/no-fee lawyers. We can brush them aside.

We also want the same urgency and priority given to defending our members' pensions in public services, just as we need to ensure that we do not forget all those who, currently, are not in a pension scheme and how we can encourage maximum participation.

Sharon has better consultation arrangements in the NHS than I do in local government, but serious issues exist right across the public sector. Most of those pension schemes are paid for out of on-going taxation, but local government pensions are funded and evaluated, so we can put a number on the problem. It is a £30 billion deficit that has to be paid for. Please note. None of that £30 billion deficit was the fault of employees. In fact, nearly all of it was directly caused by deliberate employer under-funding, especially under the Tories.

In March of this year unions came close to taking industrial action concerning particular changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme. We, in the GMB, believed that the real fight was still to come, and I can tell you that we were absolutely right. I do not believe that local government employers are committed to pensions negotiations and I fear that John Prescott, a Labour Deputy Prime Minister, is going to back them against us. My prediction to you is that this matter will come to a head later this summer. That really will be the right time for us to take action, and I mean strike action. I want us all prepared and in readiness. We will join arms with like-minded trade unions as well.

I want to set out our stall concerning two other battles that we must win. The first is, as Agenda for Change introduces benefits for many NHS members, to secure the same benefits for those contracted out. Sharon is vigorously pursuing this issue with contractors, NHS employers and Department of Health officials, because until someone sees sense and takes all public services back in-house, where they should be, the GMB must give full support to members who have been outsourced.

Secondly, I want to win the fight to end the employment abuse of school support staff, many of whom have joined the GMB and need national pay rates so that they are not exploited because of their loyalty to children's education. Six months ago I had the great privilege of standing side by side with striking GMB teaching assistants in Brighton who achieved an historic victory. Such courage and resolve is what we are all about. To be honest, it is wrong that our members should have to close schools to get fair treatment. Ruth Kelly, stop thinking

about national pay rates. Do it.

We will further strengthen the GMB's position in schools through a new recruitment drive that we launched at the start of this month, running to the end of this year, which we realistically expect will bring ten thousand new members into the GMB. We are already the largest support staff union in the South-East. This initiative can put us in the leading position throughout the country, which is where we want to be.

Congress, the Public Services Section goes from strength to strength, aggressively fighting across all the big issues, to defend and improve conditions for all of our members. I have told you about the £20 billion of equal pay and I have told you about the £30 billion of local government pensions. I tell you those numbers not to worry you or concern you but to motivate you because I do not want you to think of them as employer costs but to think of that money as our members' rights. It is the money our members should have. It is our members' pay. We want to have it and we do not want them to forget it. Thank you very much.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will go through the pages. Page 68? Page 69?

BRO. I. WILLIAMS (South Western): I wish to speak to page 69 of the report, and I do so without the knowledge of my region. I felt I had to come to the rostrum to say that I sincerely hope that in future we, as a trade union, and particularly representing local government employees, will move away from these two and three year pay deals and concentrate on one year pay deals so that we, the membership, know exactly what we are getting and where we are going. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak to page 69?

BRO. B. HULLEY (Southern): Point 6 states the increases which were achieved in local government pay and conditions. Point 7 does not state the pay that was achieved for local authority craft workers. Could you clarify how much was achieved?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak to page 69?

BRO. T. BAILLIE (London): I wish to speak to paragraph 8: Equal pay in local government. Since the 1997 single status agreement one of the developments has been that the agreement can be extended out to 2007. Although there will be a ten year gap, we are only going to be able to claim back six years, but that will be at the discretion of the management. What are we actually going to do about it, Brian?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Page 70?

BRO. B. WALTON (Southern): I reference page 70 of the General Secretary's Report and the paragraph headed: NHS Pay System. The Agenda for Change is the most radical change in the NHS since its creation in 1948, yet the fundamental issue of funding is still not resolved. Ambulance services especially find themselves with a shortfall in funding because the Ambulance Services Association failed to cost the project properly. Going hand-in-hand with that is the framework for lifelong learning, which is in place again with insufficient funding. What is needed is somebody to say, "We got it wrong". Let's look at the funding again and move forward.

Ambulance staff have embraced many new changes ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleague, would you ask a question on the report, not make a statement. At this point, we want delegates' questions on the report.

BRO. B. WALTON: The question is this. I am afraid that your interruption has thrown me. I would like to thank Sharon for her hard work. NHS managements need our support to see "Agenda for Change" through to a successful conclusion. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. M. WATERS (Northern): I have a number of questions to put to Brian on his report, the first of which concerns the pension scheme. Within the Northern Region there seems to be a bit of confusion regarding the industrial action of March 2005. As a result, will communications improve from National Office to the regions and branches; in fact, right down to the activists, who organise industrial action as and when it is needed?

I must congratulate my Northern Region on its excellent work regarding equal pay.

BRO. H. RAJCH (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I have a question on Brian's report which concerns the lack of a national ballot for action on March 23rd. I received a letter from you, Brian, which said, in general, that GMB members do not consider that the phasing out of the 85 year rule to be worth striking for. I thought at first that that was a mistake. The ballot result that other unions had is as follows. This is from the GMB's press office. "Yesterday's Ballot: Amicus, T&G, UCATT and UNISON recorded votes of between 73% and 87% in favour of strike action. GMB members are no different from any other union members." If we had campaigned as well as we had before on the issue of pensions, we would have achieved a successful "yes" vote as those other unions did.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleague, please ask a question. This is not an opportunity to make a speech.

BRO. RAJCH: Do you not think that you have made a serious mistake in not having a national ballot?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else have a question on page 71?

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Why are the Government advising contractors not to implement Agenda for Change for contracted out staff?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Page 72? Page 73?

BRO. D. SUTCLIFFE (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): In relation to school support staff, can Brian tell me why the NEBs, who are assimilated into the TA3s at the top of the scale, are only £29 better off when all other staff members are anything from £1- £300 better off?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak to page 73 of Brian's report? (*No response*) Brian.

BRO. B. STRUTTON: Colleagues, I will do my best to answer the questions which have been raised. The first question asked whether future pay negotiations can go to one year pay deals? That is our policy. We enter into negotiations with that policy. I cannot determine the way the offers go during those negotiations. At the end of those negotiations, our members vote on the outcome, but our policy is for one year pay deals. That is what we will go for in the future. I give that assurance.

The second question concerned craft pay on item 7 of my report, asking what the actual increased amounts are. I can inform the delegate that the amounts are exactly the same as shown in item 6 of the report, the preceding paragraph, the main NJC deal. I thought we had well publicised that information. That is where those amounts can be found.

The third question concerned local authorities doing pay and grading deals and the fact that they have to 2007 to do them. The question asked what we are going to do about it. As I am sure you are aware, the fact that we have put a timescale on it at all, even of 2007, was through the negotiations that we carried out. We are urging our negotiators to bring that timescale forward as much as possible. I issued very explicit advice last June telling everyone of the urgency of this situation and setting out exactly how we should be taking the situation forward. I hope everyone is adhering to that advice.

Another question concerned the NHS "Agenda for Change" and seeing it through. There was also a

question about contractors and the NHS. I will give Sharon the opportunity to answer those because they are her specific area of work.

A question was asked about communications during the early part of this year regarding pensions. Can we improve the communications to branches and activists? My communications about pensions in the run-up to that time were extensive. I sent out 12 bulletins from the time I was appointed last April until March. I have sent out enormous amount of communications. Whether they reach branches or activists is something that is outside of my control. The communications we made from national level were extremely extensive and have been generally praised and highly regarded.

We heard an interesting question on whether we should have held a national industrial action ballot in the spring of this year as some other unions did. My firm expectation was that we were going to do so. I told the CEC at the end of last year that I thought we would. I had set up the necessary things that needed to be put in place to do that. When I sat down with our GMB regions to work out exactly how we should do it, I was told by them that the membership did not want a battle over the specific issues at that time. In fact, we know from where we did our tests - we allowed some branches which were absolutely determined to have a ballot to do so. Actually, we balloted 18,000 GMB members - that out of 18,000 members, less than 50% voted for industrial action. If those members are at the vanguard, maybe our judgment about the bulk of our membership was right. So perhaps some of the stories that other organisations are saying about their members' strength of feeling at that time on those issues were not right. I firmly believe that our decision to hold fire and to keep our powder dry, to wait and see if there was going to be a fig leaf outcome, which there was, to wait until the real battle takes place, which it will, is the right policy.

The final question concerned the specific assimilations of some staff onto some pay scales. I do not have any detailed knowledge of those arrangements. If the delegate could put them to me specifically, I am happy to deal with them.

I hope that answers all the questions as they were put. Please come and see me if you want to talk more about those things, otherwise Sharon can pick up the other couple of points that were raised. Thank you.

SIS. S. HOLDER (National Officer, Public Services): Bill, thank you very much for the recognition. It is appreciated. In reply to your point, frankly, the Ambulance Service did fail to represent ambulance services during the Agenda for Change process. The end result is that now they are playing catch-up and I am going to have to leave them to do that. The point is that our focus has to be to continue the case for

more money in supporting the new pay system, including training, life-long learning and, most importantly, career progression for all GMB members, but particularly those who are low paid and in non-clinical jobs.

In reply to the question around AfC and contractors, the Government are not saying that they do not want them to implement the Agenda for Change. In fact, we are in tripartite discussions now about exactly that. However, the Government have made absolutely clear the fact that they do not want to fund it. They are not putting public money into private contractors' pockets, and I support that approach.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, do you accept the Public Services Section Report?

(The Public Services Section Report was adopted)

PUBLIC SERVICES

TWO TIER WORKFORCE

COMPOSITE MOTION 33

(Covering Motions 210, 211, 212, 213, 214 and 215)

210 - Public Services (GMB Scotland)

211 - Two tier workforce (London Region)

212 - Two tier workforce (London Region)

213 - Two tier workforce (London Region)

214 - Two tier workforces (London Region)

215 - Fair employment (South Western Region)

That Congress welcomes the levels of investment in our Public Services.

We especially welcome new recruitment in the NHS and Pre School Education.

However, the GMB remains deeply concerned about the use of PFI/PPP model to fund Public Service infrastructure investments. We want to work with a Labour Government to secure new investment and where necessary Policy revision.

Congress believes that excellent Public Services are essential to a prosperous, sustainable, healthier, and better educated United Kingdom delivered on the basis of co-operation not competition, responsive to the needs of individuals and their communities, properly funded, delivered efficiently by our members, and driven by a commitment to equality and social justice.

We therefore call for:

- A renewed emphasis on access to Public Services.
- A commitment that Public Services remain directly provided by the Public Sector.
- Closing the equality gap.
- Continued investment in our members who deliver Public Services.
- Greater involvement and participation by front line workers who deliver Public Services in
- Fair employment practices and protection of employment standards for all Public Service workers, including access to Learning and Training, Gender Pay Equality, Protection of Pension Benefits.

This Congress is tired of promises from our Government to put in place legislation to ensure that all Public Service workers are on the minimum terms and conditions of employment as determined by their particular negotiating bodies, regardless whether they are employed by a public body or contractor.

Both the Public Service employers and contractors continue to develop ways of avoiding the Two Tier legislation which this Government introduced in order to provide for a level playing field in the procurement of Public Service contracts.

Congress calls upon Government to shore up these loopholes and that GMB mount a campaign in order to stop this discrimination of Public Sector workers.

This Congress reiterates the GMB's policy on keeping public services in house and notes the limited success of the two-tier workforce legislation. Congress believes that legislation should be introduced to make client employers joint and severally liable for their contractors' employees on their premises so they cannot escape their obligations towards them. Congress instructs the appropriate GMB representatives to ensure this becomes Labour Party policy. Congress instructs the National Officers to campaign further to completely eradicate the two-tier workforce that exists within many areas of employment.

This issue must be put back on the agenda at any meeting between the unions and Government like the meeting in Warwick.

Although there has been significant headway in reducing the two-tier workforce, the Government has allowed loopholes to exist, which are now being exploited by some employers.

It is these loopholes that now need to be filled so as to stop our member doing the same job for less money/benefits.

This Congress condemns the continuation of Two Tier Workforces in both the public and private sectors and calls upon all negotiators to campaign and encourage Local Authorities, when awarding contracts to the private sector that they build in a clause that would provide their staff with decent pay and conditions. The Greater London Authority is introducing a 'living wage' clause into the contracts it awards to the private sector and this should be the aim of all local authorities to ensure that those workers who are transferred from the public to the private sector when public services are contracted out, are employed on terms and conditions which are no less favourable than Local Authority employees would be employed on, which includes salary, benefits, entitlements, hours of work, holiday rights and pension rights. We call on the CEC to mount a campaign to encourage all Local Authorities to follow the GLA's lead.

(Carried)

SIS. B. BENHAM (London): I move Composite Motion 33. President and Congress, public services are the framework of our country. We depend on them for health, education and good order, and thank God for them. In relation to public services, equality is on no one's agenda but ours. The Government, all public service employers and their contractors deliberately conspire to create an unequal society in respect of public service providers. That's us. Despite all promises to the contrary, we still have people doing the same job for different pay. It may be a different hourly rate, it may be overtime treated differently or it could be different holiday entitlements. It could even mean being bought and sold like slaves between contractors. Whatever it is, it is not equal.

This Government trumpets their commitment to public services and have provided increased funding. However, their fanatical adherence to PPP and PFI, readily abated by NHS trust and local governments of all political persuasions, flies directly in the face of their commitment to public services. Is a hospital cleaner on a minimum wage going to make the same effort as a colleague who was transferred from the NHS under TUPE? Will a security guard working a 12 hour shift at single time be inclined to be vigilant when his workmate is getting five of those hours at time-and-a-half?

Our national negotiators have negotiated a rate for the job. That rate should be paid whether an employee is employed directly, by the public service employer, has been transferred from the public service employer or is employed directly by a contractor. That is not only fairness but equality.

You cannot get first class public services when you have second class providers. That is not rocket science. It is common sense. It is time to close the loopholes. It is time to end inequality. It is time to do it now. I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Barbara. GMB Scotland.

SIS. L. MILLAR (GMB Scotland): I second the composite on public services - a two tier workforce. We believe that, with the economy, our most important aim must be substantial investment in the public services, which means new facilities and investment in the people who devote their lives to the service of others. We do not believe that the way forward is selection, elitism and privatisation dressed up as choice, freedom and efficiency. The public service deserves better services, not privatisation dressed up as reform. If you are old, sick and/or poor, you need better services, not privatised ones. With its historic third term, the Labour Government needs to rediscover its roots. They used to talk about the poor. Then they changed "poor" to "needy", then to "deprived", then to "under privileged" and then to "disadvantaged". All I know is that we are failing many of our people and that resorting to the market will not change anything for the better.

There is no question that inequality in this country has worsened. The doctrine of self interest is not the way forward. A society where every citizen can contribute to the well-being of all, not just to obtain some special gain for themselves, is surely better. Millions of our colleagues in the public services already make that sacrifice on a daily basis. They should not be condemned for that.

The end of the two-tier workforce must be delivered. Private enterprise should not be the icon of the public services. Despite an improvement in our standard of living, people do not regard themselves as better off. They are uncertain and insecure with the headlong rush to privatisation and market forces. We must encourage a society which is tolerant and has equal opportunities for all. We are all special as individuals but much better when we can work together for the benefit of society, not just of self interest and greed.

Our belief is social justice for all. I urge you to support Composite 33.

BRO. G. LEWIS (South Western): President, the Greater London Authority is introducing a "living wage" clause into contracts that it awards to the private sector. It is the first UK public authority to do so. It will mean that all public contracts will specify that workers providing services, either directly or contracted out, must be paid a wage that allows them to have an acceptable quality of life. This clause states that employees of contractors must be employed on terms and conditions which are no less

favourable than that of their current employees. The clause must include details on wages, hours of work, entitlements, benefits, holidays and pensions. To include such details was not a straightforward matter because of Government rules and Best Value regimes.

Composite Motion 33 calls on this Union to mount a campaign and encourage all local authorities to follow this example. Please support.

PUBLIC SERVICES - PPP, PFI

COMPOSITE MOTION 34

(Covering Motions 216 and 218)

216 - PPP (GMB Scotland)

218 - Public Services - PFI in Schools (Liverpool, North Wales and Irish Region)

Congress encourages all Local Authorities that are to date not affected by PPP to sit up, take note and learn the lessons from them before it is too late.

This Congress calls upon this present Labour Government to abolish the current PFI Legislation, and return all current Education Contracts, back to the control of their Local Authority Education Departments.

(Carried)

SIS. L. MILLAR (GMB Scotland): I move Composite Motion 34. The economic justification for privatisation is mistaken. The transfer of risk to the private sector is an illusion. Ultimately, the risk is still taken by public finances. There is nothing certain that privatisation improves service delivery or quality. Ample evidence shows the contrary.

Privatisation investment involves uncertain liabilities to the public purse. Privatisation is an uncertain adventure with our futures. With privatisation it is easy to list the risks but impossible to ensure that the risks are not passed back to the public purse. The practicalities of terminating a PFI contract have immense consequences and may not be achievable in reality. There is little evidence to show that the private sector is delivering where the public sector has been labelled as failing.

In the Health Service PFI projects have to be constantly talked up so where are the savings? The Audit Commission has reported that traditionally procured schools surpassed PFI in innovation and building maintenance. There is absolutely no evidence to indicate that PFI improves such a service. Privatisation of the railways is a classic example. Will it affect access and equality? What are the long term costs? Will the public sector ethos be lost, and what about accountability? We have many questions but few answers are given.

Value for money should never be achieved at the

expense of workers' conditions and wages.

In Scotland we have another problem. Because of the introduction of proportional representation we now have to watch Labour govern with the Liberals. This method of voting is now to be extended to general elections. The result will be an increase in Tory and nationalist councillors who cannot be elected in any other way. This bunch of misfits who have no popular support are certainly no supporters of ours. They would extend privatisation with no safeguards given half a chance. Let's learn the lessons of privatisation. We must advance sound public services properly funded and accountable to us all, with workers properly rewarded for their services.

(The Composite Motion was formally seconded)

PUBLIC SERVICES - PRIVATISATION

COMPOSITE MOTION 19

(Covering Motions 219 and 222)

219 - PFI - Privatisation (Northern Region)

222 - Local Government Legislation (London Region)

Congress recognises that PFI and other Government initiatives, designed to force expensive and inefficient private sector involvement into public sector capital projects is economically wrong and anti democratic.

This Congress demands that following the mass externalisation of many Local Government Services where our members lose out on pay, pensions, and many other terms and conditions, that this Government takes of the handcuffs which stop local authorities borrowing money by changing the law.

Many services are externalised as the law says that local authorities cannot either borrow from banks or other financial services, and they cannot make any profits.

This culture has resulted in many of our members jobs being privatised and the contractor then makes extortionate profits of the backs of our members which goes directly into the pockets of the companies share holders, rather than reducing the council tax, or more investment in services.

Congress calls on the Government to stop forcing local authorities into expensive PFI contracts and to allow authorities the freedoms and flexibilities to borrow capital and to determine local needs and priorities.

(Carried)

SIS. B. BENHAM (London): I move Composite Motion 19.

Congress, in 1997 the new Labour Government announced that they were abolishing all compulsory competitive tendering. That was great news, but they failed to mention that they were replacing it with another Tory Scheme: the Private Finance Initiative.

Labour's justification for PFI were on the economic and service delivery grounds in that it would bring in much needed funding to public services and provide value for money. As we know too well, colleagues, their justifications were seriously flawed. Private companies are not bringing in increased funding. What they are doing is lending money, and they want a far greater return on that money than any bank would expect. These PFI deals are far from cost-effective and often result in unnecessary increases in Council Tax and service charges.

With regard to value for money, nowhere do PFI schemes guarantee greater innovation or efficiencies. In fact, the opposite is always the case. The public service has proved that it can perform better when funding, stability and good procurement practices exist. Contrast that situation with the failings of externalisation. Nobody thinks the Benefits Service is providing value for money. The NHS has suffered consistent affordability problems. Services have suffered or have been saved by health authorities and Government subsidies. PFI schools are a catalogue of disaster.

How can it be right that public services are at the mercy of these private firms or loan sharks when public service providers are prevented from borrowing money at a reasonable rate of interest themselves? If they could borrow, services would constantly improve and the profit could be reinvested in service provision, not put into the pockets of a bunch of directors who are more interested in self-service than public service.

We need a complete stop on all PFI schemes and an independent inquiry to quantify their success or failure and decide whether public service organisations would be more cost-effective and efficient were they allowed to borrow money? I am sure they would be.

We must pressure this Government to bring in the required change in legislation. Tony Blair said that he was going to start listening to what people want. Colleagues, is there a better subject than this for him to prove it?

SIS. C. LINES (Northern): I second Motion 219 on public services privatisation.

Congress, PFI is the biggest con trick ever against the British people. The Government tell us that PFI is all about getting private money to finance public projects and, if you do not think about it, it

sounds a good idea. In reality, of course, as we all know, it is to our members' cost!

What PFI really means is private companies building and running our hospitals at twice the cost and for taxpayers footing the bill for the next 29, 30 or even 40 years.

Funding public projects through PFI makes the worst economic sense. No public body given any other option would choose PFI, but that is the beauty of the Government's PFI scheme. There is no other option.

Local authorities and health authorities across Britain have been forced into PFIs and have been refused the option of traditional capital funding.

If the Government are so convinced that PFIs represent value for money, why not give authorities another option, namely, PFI or borrowing the money and funding the repayments from revenues? The answer is simple. Given the choice, no authority would choose PFI. The reality is that PFI has nothing to do with funding desperately needed capital projects. It's all about privatising public services and fat profits for private contractors.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

MOTION 220

This Congress calls upon the CEC to put pressure on this Labour Government to reverse the Government principle that Local Authorities should be purchaser of local services to a provider and that the Government make funds available for this to happen.

2 BRANCH

Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. SUTCLIFFE (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): President and Congress, I move Motion 220 - Local Government Funding.

My motion is not just about funding the public sector. It is more about what the Government understands about funding of the public sector. How many times have we seen on the news or in the papers "Extra millions for public services"? Then we see the words which follow it: "The Health Service or education". This means the NHS or the teachers. What about the rest of the public services? What about leisure, the social services, the library services, the street cleansing departments, never mind housing and environment? Do I need to go on? These other elements of public services suffer as a result of the high profile of the NHS and education. The other departments I have referred to are as important as the NHS and education are to our members.

Further, the Government say they are giving millions of pounds for this and that. What do they mean? There is no new money. It means that money

is taken from existing budgets in other public services.

I ask the CEC to demand an honest view from the world of the Government. Gordon Brown wants to be our friend. Is it not too much to expect to have some honesty in what they say? Please support.

(The Motion was formally seconded)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

MOTION 221

This Congress calls upon Government to introduce a system to monitor the quality of service delivery of private contractors who have won Local Government contracts. If a contractor is not meeting the required quality standards then the contract should automatically revert to the "in house" provider.

CAMBRIDGE 2 BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The CEC support Motion 221 with a statement.

BRO. K. ROBERTS (London): I move Motion 221. We were told by the Government and the Audit Commission that Best Value was about improving services to the public. For the past seven years local authorities have used Best Value for an excuse to privatise frontline services, but who is monitoring these private companies who win the contracts?

We all know that privatisation is about who can deliver the service at the least cost. It has never been about quality. Was the privatisation of the hospital cleaning services about quality or cost? We all know the answer to that? Local authorities should be held accountable to the contractors to whom they award their contracts. If there is no measurable improvement by the way in which the contractor provides the service, that service should be transferred back in-house. The GMB should lead from the front in exposing poor contractors and ensuring that our members are where they should be; that is, providing a quality service and being employed directly by the local authorities under local authorities' terms and conditions. Please support.

BRO. C. ROFFEY (London): Brothers and sisters, I speak in support of this motion regarding local government contracts. In the past five years the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, which are my employers, has experienced three private contractors failing to give a proper clamping and removal contract service. To those of you who have had experience of such a service delivery and quality standards failure, this is yet another example of the

mistaken belief of successive governments that privatisation is best and cheapest, whereas in-house or nationalised is worse or dearest.

Too often a council knows that a private contractor is not performing but does not have the will to say in mid-contract, "Enough is enough". The current Labour Government are well aware that this situation happens, and the case of Railtrack immediately springs to mind. For those who do not know, you will remember that Railtrack was put into administration and its duties were taken over by Network Rail, the not-for-profit organisation that was set up to succeed it.

The monitoring of the quality of service delivery of private contractors is simple, provided the political motivation is present and can only be of benefit to local council tax payers. I second this motion and urge you to support.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, does any other delegate wish to speak in the debate? *(No response)* In that case, I will ask Mary Turner to give the statement.

SIS. M. TURNER (CEC, Public Services): Congress and Vice-President, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC supporting all three composites and Motions 220 and 221.

We were promised that the third term would be unremittably new Labour. One we I and we get a taste of what that is going to mean, and it was a nasty taste.

Friday, 13th May was the day that Patricia Hewitt chose to announce the Extended Choice Network. To you and me that is privatisation. Three billion pounds of our money, during the next five years, will be going straight into the coffers of the new independent treatment centres. That is the private sector to you and me to line the pockets of the fat cats. So we all going to enjoy the benefits that such competition brings. However, there's an unremittably new Labour word for competition now, and that is "contestability". That means bargain basement operations, cheap and cheerful, cherry-picking the easy cases and leaving the NHS to pick up the pieces.

We are told that the private sector delivers. We are told that if standards are not met there are penalties but, Congress, these fines are peanuts compared with the profits that these companies are getting. This is why they seem to have so little effect. It is like docking 10 pence pocket money from a child who has got hold of her mum's credit card.

You would not expect me to be at this rostrum speaking on this subject without mentioning school meals. Isn't it amazing that only now do people realise that schools are locked into poor quality contracts with multi-national companies and schools are threatened with fines if they try and pull out of such contracts? No one is fining the contractor for

failing to provide decent food. Only now are school headteachers realising that the shiny new PFI schools they signed up for means they cannot take out the junk food vending machines.

Last month Compass boasted that bad publicity on school meals had not lost Scolarest any major contracts, but who the bloody hell do they think they're kidding? It's time for the Government to get unremittably tough on failing fat cat contractors.

Privatisation kills. We have proof it kills. It has killed on the railways; it is killing our members in the hospitals with MRSA and it is killing our children because they are not properly fed? When are we going to stop the sell-off of the services which belong to us? They do not belong to the private sector. They should be run by us, for us and not for profit. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, Composites 33, 34 and 19 are being supported by the CEC and Motions 220 and 221 are also being supported by the CEC.

(Composite Motions 33, 34 and 19 were carried)

(Motions 220 and 221 were carried)

SCHOOL WORKFORCE REFORM

MOTION 223

Congress notes that in January 2003 the GMB and other school workforce trade unions, together with the Government and employers signed a national agreement on workforce reform in schools. I can understand why the GMB signed the agreement; it was a visionary statement of intent and offered support staff recognition and joint working with teachers

But what has happened in practice. There were three statutory changes which improved teachers' conditions, which have been/will be implemented between September 2003 and September 2005. The resulting reduction in workload and responsibilities undertaken by teachers has had to be absorbed by support staff.

The Government does not want to see national pay grades for support staff to reflect increased responsibilities and workloads, and prefer to see solutions achieved by local bargaining. But how many local authorities have provided fair and just amendments to support staff grades to reflect changes brought about by the national agreement. My own authority Sheffield has introduced a new pay and conditions package which shows a pay reduction for one group and virtually no change for the other groups of workers.

Congress calls upon the National Secretary of the Public Services Section to commence negotiations with the Government to remove teaching assistants from the NJC, and for the Government to assume responsibility for teaching assistants pay and conditions on a par with teachers.

**SHEFFIELD LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF
BRANCH**

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

THE PRESIDENT: The CEC supports this motion with a statement.

SIS. M. ANDREWS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I move Motion 223.

The GMB in January 2003 signed the National Agreement on Workforce Reform in Schools in good faith believing that it represented recognition of the role of support staff and a partnership with teachers in the running of schools.

The National Agreement introduced three statutory changes. In September 2003 admin duties were transferred from teachers to support staff. In September 2004 teachers are not to cover classes for more than 38 hours per annum? In September 2005 all teachers are to have a minimum of 10% non contact time.

These changes have increased the workload and responsibility of our members, yet the Government did not want to see national pay grades for support staff and preferred to see solutions achieved by local bargaining.

Let me tell you what has happened in my own authority - Sheffield. The Education Department unilaterally imposed new pay and conditions for teaching assistants from the summer of 2004. The old pay and conditions were withdrawn on 1st January 2005, except for existing staff, but schools are putting pressure on members to transfer to the new conditions. The new pay levels are as follows. Levels 1 and 2 have the same pay as previously. In relation to Level 3, the authority offered one extra increment but required extra hours and worse conditions. Level 4 is a new level, but the rate was poor compared to other authorities. Clearly, in my authority there has been no attempt to meet the Government's aim of negotiating fair and just new pay and conditions for teaching assistants which reflect their additional responsibilities. Nor have I seen any evidence of movement at the NJC level.

I am not aware of how many local authorities are in the same position as Sheffield, but if I, as I suspect, the failure to reach fair settlements by local bargaining is countrywide, the only solution is by other means.

Therefore, I call upon Congress to support this motion which calls upon the National Secretary of

the Public Services Section to commence negotiations with the Government to remove teaching assistants from the NJC and for the Government to assume responsibility for teaching assistants' pay and conditions on a par with teachers.

(The Motion was formally seconded)

PAY DIFFERENTIALS - EDUCATION LEARNING

MOTION 224

Congress, vast pay differentials between teaching support staff and teachers are unacceptable. We ask Congress to demand from this Labour Government a narrowing of the pay differentials upwards for those workers who jointly deliver education within our schools.

HULL NO.1 BRANCH

Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. H. WARE (Midland & East Coast): In moving this motion, I would like to inform Congress why we should demand more specific funding for learning support staff from this Labour Government and why we need to end the blatant inequalities between workers delivering education.

Under the re-modelling agenda, Levels 1 to 4 were put in place. In my school I pressured the headteacher to value the work and commitment of learning support staff, and I was able to get the best grades for my members. I know that in other schools in Hull, which are not GMB organised, learning support staff were not as fortunate and are getting paid at a lower grade. I and my members are glad that the GMB negotiated at a national level to get recognition which has brought us a long way in a short time, but we are not there yet.

We are no longer just mothers from the playground. We are professional in the way we work. We are committed to the job we do and we jointly deliver teaching alongside the teachers. Within the remodelling agenda, there is now a career path for learning assistants, but even this does not address the vast differences in pay and conditions between ourselves and teachers. Teachers do not have job evaluation. Teachers are not paid for term times only. Learning support staff and teachers have the same employer, they work in the same environment and, in many cases, they do the same job, but we do not enjoy the same terms and conditions.

The remodelling agenda has increased the hourly rate paid to our members but local authorities are changing contracts so that members who were paid for the full year are now only paid for term time. So local authorities are giving with the one hand but are taking away with the other.

Education is vital to this country. Children are our future. This motion is calling for our members to receive the same pay and conditions when they do the same job. We should not be used as a cheap alternative to teaching. Our task of our members is to complement, not supplement. Please support.

BRO. S. CLARKSON (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 224 on pay differentials and education learning staff.

President and Congress, I have two children who are at different levels in the education system. When I come home from work and my little lad says to me, "Dad, I have learnt some new words", he won't shut up. It's, "Miss said this", "Miss said that", "Miss showed me this", "Miss showed me that". I asked the question, "Who is this 'Miss'?" He said it was Miss Smith. I thought, "Is this the same Miss Smith who lives round the corner?" I enquired and found that it was. She has been involved in the school and community for years. I see her walking along the streets and she has been involved in all sorts of events, both in the community and at school. The influence that this Miss Smith has on my children is unbelievable. Miss Smith is part of educating, moulding and developing my sons. A Jesuit said, "Give me the child before the age of 5 and I will give you the man".

The learning support staff have a massive role in the joint delivery of learning to the most important asset to our future - our children. Learning support staff should not be provided on the cheap. Learning support staff are an integral part of any school. They are an integral part of the education team. More and more use of learning support staff is being made. If this approach is to be continued, then they should be rewarded with terms and conditions comparable to teachers. Thank you.

SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

COMPOSITE MOTION 20

(Covering Motions 225 and 226)

225 - Public Services - School Staff (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region)

226 - School Support Staff (London Region)

This Congress demands that the Government protect school support staff from financial demands put on Head Teachers and allow them to be used in the way that honours the spirit and intent of the Remodelling Agreement, and that National Pay Grades and Job Descriptions are implemented. This Congress calls upon the CEC to lobby the government to fund the "Work force remodelling agreement in schools". If this is not funded our members of the school support staff will end up picking up the 24 tasks without pay

due to emotional pressure put upon them.

(Carried)

BRO. D. SUTCLIFFE (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region): I move Composite Motion 20.

President and Congress, this motion is about the Workforce Remodelling Agreement in Schools and its funding. The Government said at the start of the negotiations that funding would be available. Then they changed it by saying it would be available during the next three to five years. Now they say that "Oh, it is all part of the funding that we've already give you", which is not enough.

The fact is that because of school budgets, the head teachers are having to make cuts, and they affect our members. The 24 tasks taken from the hardworking and worn out teachers, the PPA which was referred to before - planning, preparation and assessments (I am not knocking the teachers. It is not a job that I would do) - has meant that our support staff members have ended up picking up all of these tasks. Yes, they do have a decent pay rate or a pay rate. Whether it is decent is a matter of issue. They have a progression from a TA1 to a TA4, which is a higher level teaching assistant, but did they not deserve that before? I believe so.

If this agreement is not funded properly schools will be forced to shed jobs because of budget cuts in future and support workers will have to do more work with more emotional pressure put on them to pick up these tasks at a lower rate and, as I said before, a reduction from full-time to term-time working. Please support.

BRO. M. HOLLAND (London): I second Composite Motion 20.

Congress, support staff in schools are at present being used and abused. Some are having to stand in front of classes without any agreement with their local authority on pay and conditions. Some are standing in front of classes without any pay and conditions agreed in their school. Some of our members are getting time-and-a-half, some are getting double time and some are getting instructors' rates. Some are being paid on a step-in/step out role. This means, for example, that if someone works for two hours as an HLTA, taking a class, then they earn an extra pound before tax. There is a whole raft of job descriptions that differ from the nationally agreed high level teaching assistant job descriptions.

As an example, there are specialist teaching assistants and classroom supervisors. Some are being paid as cover supervisors when they are working as high level teaching assistants.

If, for example, looking at my local authority, you will see that the higher level teaching assistant 2 job description is, basically, a teacher's job disguised by

the fact that it says, "You work under the professional direction and supervision of a qualified teacher".

Then thrown into the pot is the position that the Government want all schools to have foundation status and the ability to abuse the support staff becomes easier. In fifteen years time 45% of all teachers will have reached retirement age and who is going to be teaching our children then?

This Congress demands that the Government protect our school support staff from the financial demands put on head teachers and allow them to be used in the way that honours the spirit and intent of the Remodelling Agreement, and that national pay grades and job descriptions are implemented.

I urge Congress to support our support staff because they are a growing and important part of our membership and they need our protection. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Delegates, would anyone else like to speak in the debate? (No response) In that case, I will ask Sue Lee to give the CEC statement.

SIS. S. LEE (CEC, Public Services): Congress, I speak on behalf of the CEC supporting Motion 223 on school workforce reform.

Top marks to Ruth Kelly for finally agreeing to look at the national pay structure for school support staff. Our members are picking up new responsibilities from teachers and heads, working flexibly, undertaking new training and delivering quality education for pupils. The number of support staff working in schools has nearly doubled since 1997 and the revolution in roles was happening well before the Workforce Reform Agreement was signed.

Now that Government policy has caught up with the importance of support staff, there is no excuse for them continuing to wash their hands on pay and grading matters.

GMB negotiators are doing a great job negotiating grading structures locally, but too many of them face the "give with one hand/take away with the other" treatment. Hardworking staff are being asked to pay for their own re-gradings by accepting a reduced number of paid weeks per year.

In too many cases heads are still refusing to pay staff at the right level and we are having to advise them not to take on the extra responsibilities and not to give in to emotional blackmail.

Across the country we have a huge variation and inconsistencies between what people are getting paid for doing the same jobs and working to deliver the same educational policy outcomes. The CEC wants to see action on the pay and conditions of all school support staff, teaching assistants, nursery nurses, technicians, midday supervisors, site keepers and all the staff who keep our schools running.

We are clear that any new system must deliver

nationally negotiated and nationally binding rates and conditions for all school support staff. The national grades and conditions must be binding on foundation schools, academies, Phoenix schools and all the other 57 varieties that the Government are promoting. Whether this can be achieved within the NJC or through some new negotiating body remains to be seen, but we are clear that we will pursue this matter with the Government with all our might to ensure that GMB objectives are achieved. I ask Congress to support.

Motions 223, 224 and Composite Motion 20 were carried.

PUBLIC SERVICES - NO TO PERCENTAGE PAY DEALS

MOTION 229

This Congress instructs the National Secretary for Public Services, that when the next round of pay talks start it must be made clear to both the National Employers, and our fellow Trade Union Partners, that this Union says NO to any PERCENTAGE pay awards. All future pay awards must be across the board, with bottom loading to close the differential.

Why should those on the lower scales continue to pay for the few at the upper echelons of the pay spine? Close the differential and stop discrimination against the lower graded workforce.

BARKING BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: In relation to Motion 229, the CEC is asking for referral.

BRO. T. BAILLIE (London): I move Motion 229.

Congress, we have a duty to our fellow workers, especially those in the lower echelons with their pay differentials. We must stop the differential weighting. How do we do that? This can be achieved only by our national officers following the instructions of Congress. This Congress must instruct the national officers to stop the use of percentage pay deals. That is how easy it is, or that is how easy it is to say but not to do it.

We have to top the poverty trap from widening any further. Say "no" to the growing divide between the haves and the have nots. Percentage pay deals mean that the poverty trap widens and the differentials expand in leaps and bounds. Who suffers the most from this situation? Our members, of course, the majority of whom are at the bottom of the divide.

It is they who have to go cap in hand with the begging bowl and ask, "Is there something for us, boss?" This is at a time when the some of the fat cats of industry can put in place £10 million wage deals for themselves, and a further £600 million goes into their pension funds whilst the pension fund of the workforce is in deficit. Isn't that nice? You may say that that is private industry for you, but it is still public money.

This Government gave £600 million to Rover. Rover workers never received that sum. Four greedy blighters got it! I won't call them what I was going to call them.

Our members in public services have to accept a 2.95% pay rise and they are told that it is the best they will get. So nothing in the kitty! No bottom loading and 2.95%. I am talking about 2.95% of 10K!

When the fat cats of industry are cracking their backs, our members are cracking their proverbial nuts - peanuts, of course. We have to watch that we say the right things.

After my seconder leaves this rostrum, someone who Brian Strutton asks to come to this rostrum will tell you, "I agree with Tom, but there is a problem and that problem is UNISON, who outvotes us and the T&G combined". That is a fact. That is not a myth. What Brian will be saying is totally correct. The reality of the situation we face is that UNISON does outvote us and it is time for us to get our seating arrangements sorted out both at NJC level and at the Provincial Council level. This issue should be sorted out properly.

No one union should be able to dictate to their partners how and what is acceptable. It is not acceptable that I, as a non-UNISON member, could actually participate in their ballot, so why the hell are we allowing them to dictate to us to accept percentage pay deals? I urge you to support this motion.

SIS. S. VINCENT (London): I second Motion 229. Say "no" to the percentage deal. What does a percentage pay deal mean to many of our members? Let's look at the difference. We have already been told that the high earners earn 16 times more than lower earners. High wage earners would most likely own their own home or homes. They pay into private pension schemes and, of course, receive the appropriate tax concessions. They invest.

Let us look at the position of the low wage earners, who are our members. Our members on low wages, in the first instance, will never be able to afford a home of their own at today's prices. They will never be able to put money aside for a pension for their old age. Their pay means that they can live for today.

The seating arrangements around the negotiating table are unequal and overpowered by another union and this situation must be addressed

immediately as a matter of fairness to our members.

What does the difference mean? The difference means that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Congress, please support this motion against percentage pay deals.

PUBLIC SERVICES - NATIONAL PAY AWARD

MOTION 230

This Congress supports a motion that in all future ballots on wages in the public service section, are conducted and counted on a national basis and not by regions for and against. This will ensure a much truer feeling of the whole public service section.

SOUTHEND BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. T. WALL (London): I am a first-time speaker. My legs are going! *(Laughter)* Congress, President, this motion calls for a national ballot on all national pay awards. Our current system of consulting with members on national pay bargaining is a farce. National negotiations are, by nature, national. Our balloting or consultation methods are piecemeal, with each region, and in some cases branches, determining their own method of ascertaining members' views. This must not be allowed to continue. National pay awards deserve a national postal ballot. Failure to alter this system questions the validity of national negotiations, the national union and the need for national officers. I move.

BRO. M. HOLLAND (London): For the first time in 20 years we agreed a three-year pay deal on behalf of our members in public services. Let me ask you a question. How many members were given a chance to voice an opinion about such a deal? How many people understood what was done and why it was done? How divorced from our procedures do our members feel? I cannot answer those questions and I wonder what our members' response would be.

Is it that we treat our members as though they cannot think for themselves, or is it that we are so poorly organised that we do not have the ability to ask them? I remember for years before I became active resenting what the unions were agreeing on my behalf. When you look at the dictionary definition of "union" it says "joining as one". Why don't we?

If we are a democratic union, we need to be talking to the individual members, drawing them into the debate rather than alienating them. We need to be stronger than ever, and that means the participation of members on major issues that affect them. Congress demands that our members are consulted. I second.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, in relation to Motion 231, the CEC is asking for referral.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CRAFT PAY CLAIMS

MOTION 231

Congress calls on our National Officer to take account of our members' concerns when negotiating annual pay claims.

Local Government Craft Workers have been in negotiations since April 2004 culminating in a 3 year pay deal only resulting in an offer 1.65% above the original claims of 7% for one year, making a total of 8.6% over 3 years.

NORTH KENT ENGINEERING Z39 BRANCH
Southern Region

(Referred)

(The motion was formally moved)

(The motion was formally seconded)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Conference agree to refer?

(The motion was referred)

CONTRACTOR SHOP STEWARDS

MOTION 233

Congress calls that a full scale review should take place on how we can involve private sector stewards more in the GMB process, in the public services section.

B43 BIRMINGHAM CITY GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region
(Carried)

BRO. D. KEMPSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, this motion is calling for a full-scale review into how private sector shop stewards can become more involved in the GMB process. In most cases, they have been transferred to the private sector, and not by choice. With further PFIs, PPIs and contracting-out under Best Value, the issue of contractor shop stewards will just not go away. These former public service shop stewards and any new ones enrolled will need the GMB more than ever in the private sector.

As we are fully aware, even with a Labour Government just gaining a third term, the issues of PFI, PPI and contracting-out will not go away. By having a full review on how to include the private sector with the public sector and the voluntary sector, this Union will then be in a position to challenge the Government on all these issues. Therefore, Congress, I will conclude by saying three

words: Inclusion, not exclusion. I move.

BRO. C. MURRAY (Birmingham & West Midlands): This is a problem that we must resolve, as any public service shop steward, convener, branch secretary or organiser will realise in the regions where we just did the ballot on pensions. Every day the phones are red hot: "Where is my ballot paper?" "Sorry, you don't work for a local authority. You work for a private company." "Well, my terms and conditions are negotiated by the public sector. Does the GMB want me?" "Of course we do."

If we are going to retain these members, we have really to sort this section out and make sure that they have a voice. I do not know how we are going to do it. I am not trying to tell my granny how to suck eggs, but it is something that we have to do. Other organisations were using this mess to make mischief with our members. I am not going to say who they are, but you all know. Congress, I second.

HOUSING FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY SITE STAFF IN "TIED" ACCOMMODATION UPON THEIR RETIREMENT

MOTION 234

Congress calls that local authorities' need to ensure that members working as Site Staff and living in 'tied' accommodation are adequately re-housed upon their retirement. The re-housing should be both as close to the original accommodation as possible and also of a similar size. There needs to be no limit on the number of offers the local authority makes to the member with regards to re-housing.

Congress calls upon the CEC and the GMB National Officers to seek negotiations with national employers to seek implementation of this.

S30 SOLIHULL LOCAL AUTHORITY BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region
(Carried)

SIS. S. TANNER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, although the CEC's Special Report on Housing to be heard later makes reference to protecting workers in tied accommodation, we do not believe it goes far enough. We believe there should not only be a requirement for employees to be adequately rehoused upon retirement, but that they should be allowed to remain within the community they have lived in for what could have been most of their working life. At the moment, all the local authority has to do is meet the "adequate" requirement.

This new adequate home could be on the other side of the town, placing their previous employees in

a totally new environment and living amongst strangers. We also feel that the house should be of a similar size to the property they have to leave, and the authorities should not be able to browbeat people into accepting a house because they are told, "This is the final offer."

Why should a local authority employee or a private industry employee be penalised after giving many years of loyal service to their employer just because they are due to retire? Retirement should be a time that you look forward to, not dreaded because you are worried about what is going to happen regarding your home.

We, therefore, call upon our national officers to seek negotiations with the employers, and call upon the GMB nationally to use all its political muscle to ensure that legislation is introduced to achieve this. Congress, I move.

SIS. M. CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, loyal, hard working local authority workers who have resided in tied accommodation to the benefit of their employers are worried about their housing prospects when they retire. As they reach retirement age, usually after many years' service, they face the prospect of being removed from their council-owned property.

As you can imagine, this can be a very traumatic experience; yet, during this difficult time, the only obligation on the employer is to make an offer of alternative accommodation. If the offer is not accepted, for whatever reason, the member is treated as homeless. This could result in them being offered a hostel or hotel as a temporary measure to rehouse both them and their family. One example is a GMB member being moved from a three-bedroomed house into a two-bedroomed flat 15 miles across the borough.

As a strong campaigning trade union, working on behalf of our members, we cannot let this situation continue. I call upon national officers to seek agreement with the national employer adequately to rehouse loyal employees into suitable accommodation. I ask Congress to support this motion.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 235, Child Care. GMB Scotland to move and second and the CEC is supporting this motion.

CHILDCARE

MOTION 235

Congress welcomes the Governments continued commitment to and investment in Childcare, however this Congress calls on the CEC to press the Government to guarantee:

1. Access to training and career development for childcare workers.
2. Decent pay and conditions.
3. A safe and healthy working environment.
4. Child protection policies and procedures.
5. Equal opportunities and family friendly working arrangements to be implemented across this sector.

SCOTTISH CHILDCARE SERVICES BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

SIS. E. McLAUGHLIN (GMB Scotland): Congress, we are living in a changing society where women now have the choice of having a career and a family. The Government, in recognising this, are pursuing family friendly policies and investing in developing child care provision. Whilst we recognise the Government's childcare policy and also their intention to achieve zero unemployment, we must ensure that changes in terms and conditions are not imposed upon our members within childcare.

Have the Government considered the effect that the increase in nursery places and the possible changes to working conditions will have on childcare workers? It is imperative that the work-life balance of our members is not impacted by any changes brought about through the implementation of these policies.

As industry reflects the changes in society, it is conceivable that childcare provision will move forward in line with these changes. Nurseries will be open longer and employees will be asked to work longer hours or work changing shift patterns.

To protect our members working within childcare, I call upon Congress to urge the Government to negotiate any changes on a national level; to set up a regulatory body to monitor the implementation of any changes and the progress and standard within childcare; to implement a national standard of excellence in training and, finally, to introduce a national pay scale that reflects the importance of the childcare role. Support this motion. I move.

(The motion was formally seconded)

THE PRESIDENT: I call on Jim Philbin for the CEC.

BRO. J. PHILBIN (CEC, Public Services): The CEC is asking Congress to refer Motion 229. The content of this motion is in line with the existing policy, but as it deals directly with negotiation issues under the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, it will be more appropriate to refer the matter to the National Secretary for Public Services. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now take the vote. The CEC has asked that Motion 229 be referred.

(Motion 229 was referred)

(Motion 230 was carried)

(Motion 231 was referred)

(Motion 233 was carried)

(Motion 234 was carried)

(Motion 235 was carried)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Before I vacate the seat, I would like to read a letter that Paul has received today: "Dear Paul, Re. GMB Annual Conference 2005. Please convey to your delegates ASLEF's fraternal greetings and our best wishes for your conference this week. We hope that you have an excellent

conference and that all your deliberations will be successful. We have no doubt that all the issues debated will be done so with tremendous commitment and enthusiasm." That is signed "Yours in solidarity, Keith Norman, Acting General Secretary, ASLEF."

Congress, I will now with great pleasure ask our President, Mary Turner, to resume the Chair. Thank you very much indeed. *(Applause)*

(The President resumed the Chair)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. I think he has done a wonderful job, don't you?

Colleagues, I would like to call the London Region to move the Regional Secretary's Report, pages 92 to 97.

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT - LONDON REGION

1. Membership and Recruitment

Total membership	88,230
Women membership	42,332
Section membership (by each Section):	
Clothing & Textile	514
Commercial Services	18,319
CFTA	6,357
Energy & Utilities	5,078
Engineering	3,189
Food & Leisure	9,981
Process	2,404
Public Services	42,388
Grade 1 members	60,152
Grade 2 members	19,699
Sick, retired & unemployed members	8,379
Total number recruited 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	27,246
Gross increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	-1,179
Net increase/decrease 1.1.2003 - 31.12.2004	826
Membership on Check-off	54,645
Membership on Direct Debit	25,603
Financial membership	83,590

2. General Organisation

Regional Senior Organisers	4
Membership Development Officers	-
Regional Organisers	19
Recruitment and Organisation Officers	8
Regional Recruitment Officers	4
No. of Branches	156
BAOs	-
New Branches	3
Branch Equality Officers	47

3. Benefits

Dispute	£3,735.63
Total Disablement	£4,000.00
Working Accident	£9,766.95

Occupational Fatal Accident	£4,000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	£1,100.00
Funeral	£37,887.50

4. Journals and Publicity PUBLICITY

Many hundreds of press releases issued over the last two years have helped to raise the profile and awareness of the GMB in media.

The trade union side position of major industrial disputes such as those at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick airports with British Airways, Groundstar, and Aviance and others have been told successfully. Other disputes such as the Co-operative FuneralCare, Wembley Stadium steel workers and the prison maintenance staff.

Individual member's issues such the case of a blind member who was not allowed to keep his guide dog with him at work was helped by garnishing public support for his cause and embarrassing his employer into backing down.

GMB London Region Organisers have become very proficient at using the threat of exposing bad employment practices to the media and brandishing a press release across a desk to pursue employers to mend their ways without even publishing releases.

A definite decision was made in mid 2004 to raise the awareness of the work of GMB members in the public services and this had met with success. Success is measured in media terms, not measured by the number of press releases sent out. It is measured by the amount of column inches achieved in newspapers and the number of radio interviews given by GMB Officers and the number of listeners reported for those radio programs and read those papers. In these terms, the first five public services stories reached over 25 million readership and radio listeners. This successful start is very largely due the support and co-operation of several regions and the work of their officers in meeting the demands of their local media by giving interviews and explaining the work of our members. It has meant that we will continue with the campaign in the public services and likely extend it to the political arena in the run up to the election. The articles in the local press that result from the information we release also opens up the opportunity for correspondence in the letter pages. This in turn gets the local activist involved and the GMB position is put very clearly. As the local reps become known to their local journalists the amount of GMB coverage increases as they are asked to comment on various issues relating to their Councils and Health Services.

In 2004 the government's intention of relaxing the gaming laws and the investment made by the CEC into the campaign to ensure that the GMB is ready to take advantage of any increase in the number of people employed in the industry, saw the Regional Secretary fronting up the media on the employment issues.

CANDID

CANDID is published three times a year. It is directly mailed to over 80,000 members homes. Additional copies are sent to new members in their welcome pack. Articles and material are provided by invited columnists, GMB Branches, Organisers and Regional Council members. Part of the cost of the production and postage is off set by selling space to approved advertisers and affinity partners.

5. Legal Services

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	1,871
Legal Assistance Granted	1,866
Cases in which Outcome became known	
Total	2,802
Withdrawn	891
Lost in Court	-
Settled	£9,241,183.76
Won in Court	£433,200.00
Total Compensation	£9,241,183.76
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004	1,643

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)		
Claims supported by Union		456
Cases in which Outcome became known		
Total		456
Withdrawn		49
Lost in Tribunal		64
Settled		270
Won in Court		73
Total Compensation	£1,338,123.78	
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2004		249
(c) Other Employment Law Cases		
Supported by Union		30
Unsuccessful		-
Damages/Compensation	£80,892.61	
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004		20
(d) Social Security Cases		
Supported by Union		17
Successful		14
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2004		10

The past two years have seen further changes in the Legal Department.

Administration Charges are no longer deducted from our members' compensation settlements which, has been well received by our membership.

The London Region has entered into CCFA Agreements with our panel solicitors. These Agreements will be financially beneficial to the Legal Department.

We continue to offer a comprehensive employment law services to our Officers which, allows them to support their members with a first class employment law service including, a monthly surgery for one to one appointments.

There has been a continued demand from members and family members for TU56 and Road Traffic Accident claims.

The Free Legal Advice helpline and Free Wills continue to be very popular with increased numbers of members utilising this service.

Finally, the Legal Department has assisted many members with Medical Appeal Tribunals and Social Security Appeal Tribunals.

6. Equal Rights

2004 has seen us consolidate our work on organising migrant workers and in mobilising opposition to racism and fascism in our City. We have also continued the process of reviewing our own policies and practices to make sure our union responds to the particular needs and aspirations of black and minority ethnic workers.

RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

Our work continues to focus on helping the Asian communities of West London recruit and organise where they work and we have continued to succeed in building membership in a wide range of food production companies and air industry related employers. This work continues to involve the production of organising and campaign material in 22 languages and has recently brought us into contact with Polish and Eastern European communities.

Contacts with the Portuguese Workers Association continue to develop and over 120 members have joined us in the last year as a result of our joint work on employment rights, trade union representation and learning at the workplace. Our challenge in the future is to help these members build workplace organisation where they work.

As a result of the organising work conducted in recent years, Branch Secretary Hiten Vaidya was successful in securing funding from the HSE to work as an adviser to local employers and workers on safety issues. This work has enabled the union to gain access to workers in more workplaces, particularly where English is not the first language.

Equal Pay continues to be a major impetus to recruitment in the public services with local authorities still failing to implement their equal pay commitments eight years after exchanging the Single Status agreement with us. School support staff in particular are joining us to ensure a full evaluation of their role is carried out at a time when Time for Standards is seeking to give them even more duties and responsibilities.

MIGRANT WORKERS - NO WORKER IS ILLEGAL

Our intervention at the June Respect Festival this year was in close collaboration with TGWU Region 1 and centred around launching a campaign for Migrant Workers' rights. Working under the slogan "No Worker is Illegal", this joint campaign was taken forward to the European Social Forum, Black History Month events and the TUC Migrant Workers Conference in October 2004 where the aims of the campaign were debated and clear policy positions developed.

This campaign informed our position on the DEfRE Gangmasters Forum where, once again, we joined with the TGWU to promote migrant workers rights as the new regulations on employment agencies were being developed.

The work on helping Migrant Workers gain rights, respect and union organisation builds on the work undertaken in 2001 and 2002 in the sweatshop textile factories in Tower Hamlets and has been informed by the organising campaigns run in West London manufacturing companies, where undocumented workers are a major feature - especially the Video Duplicating Company.

VDC workers voted for union recognition via the CAC in 2002. The extent of the use of agency, casual, informal and gang labour by the company undermined the opportunities of our members to improve conditions. By campaigning for the rights of these workers to decent employment and by ensuring VDC stayed within the law, the company has begun to open more serious negotiations with us.

The exploitation of un-documented workers by manufacturing and service businesses in the London economy is massive and to intervene in these industries to help workers organise without a clear policy is not credible. With the TGWU we will continue to engage in the campaign for migrant workers rights and develop our policies into action.

INCLUSION

GMB London enthusiastically participated in the Elizabeth Henry report into the internal structures of the GMB and seconded our previous Race and Equalities officer to National Office to assist in the implementation of the action recommended.

The challenge for our region in the previous five years has been to ensure that members newly recruited from black and ethnic minority communities are able to fully participate in the operation and democracy of the union and receive a service tailored to their language and culture. We have worked to ensure that our union at all levels is sensitive to the aspirations and needs of all our members.

In 2003 we invited Dr Jane Holgate from Queen Mary's University to work with our predominantly Asian branches, and our officers and Stewards to assess how well we were integrating new members from the range of Asian communities. Working on a commission from the TUC, Dr Holgate reported in November 2004 in the published document: "Organised Black and Ethnic workers: Trade Union strategies for recruitment and inclusion".

Dr Holgate was similarly "embedded" with TGWU and USDAW and found that, although our structures were far from perfect and not above criticism, our commitment to fit our union operation around our members rather than expect members to fit into our culture and methods was "impressive."

FIGHTING THE BNP

In the summer of 2004, two by elections were held in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, both contested by the BNP. In the first, the BNP were defeated by a majority of just over 400 after a

massive campaign by local GMB activists, Branch officials and Organisers.

The next election was lost and preparatory work has now started to fight the 11 BNP candidates standing in the forthcoming General Election in London's East End.

Our work to mobilise and organise opposition to the BNP involves reminding our members forcefully of the BNP's opposition to trade unions, to women's rights and to democracy. But it also involves drawing our members attention to the BNP's denial of the holocaust, the racist and violent history of their candidates and their campaigns to incite racial hatred and violence.

Critically, we aim to educate our members of the role of the BNP in demonising migrant workers and refugees and the support this position gets from the right wing press, migrant watch and mainstream politicians of all parties.

To do this we will continue to work with Searchlight and the Unite Against Fascism campaign and encourage our branches to affiliate, get involved and make a public show of opposition to the BNP in their neighbourhoods.

7. Youth

The job of the young members section is to find the next generation of activists and organisers who will take the GMB forward.

Young members (where the age of the members is known) make up approximately 5% of the region's membership. They predominate in the public services, utilities and commercial services.

AMERICAN INTERNS

Over the last two years, GMB London Region has helped to train four American students from Cornell University who are studying to become union organisers in the USA. Their contribution to the Regions Recruitment and Organisation team has been enormous and they have benefited from the experience that they have gained from our Recruitment and Organisation team headed by Martin Smith whose initiative this exchange is. The secondments cost the GMB very little as all travel is paid for as part of the interns' course. By providing a London Transport travel card, accommodation and a mobile phone the GMB gets an enthusiastic young American who brings out the enthusiasm in the London Region young trade unionists getting them involved in campaigns and demonstrations (shown below) and informing them about American trade unions and politics first hand.

Young Members Retail Campaign and Demonstrations

Oxford Street in London is full of young workers in the prestigious shops who are treated poorly and know nothing of the work of trade unions. Young members have targeted those workers, gradually working their way along Oxford Street, spreading the word about unions and signing up new members.

GMB young members have held several demonstrations since 2003, outside global multinational store chains such as Disney, Gap and Nike. In 2004 they held a demonstration outside the Levis Jeans in Regent Street, in order to put pressure on the company to ensure that the treatment of the Haitian workers who make Levis jeans are treated properly by the local company. The Young Members have raised over £2,000 in the last two years to send to the Haiti workers to help them build trade unions in their local workplaces. They raised the money when they represented the London Region at Britain's major music festivals. They worked as an official Server Team with the Workers Beer Company, pulling pints and serving festival goers in the bars at Glastonbury and Reading festivals for six hours a day. When they had finished work they had the rest of the time to themselves to make friends and discuss politics and trade unionism with the other 1,100 young people from other unions and many diverse campaigns that were also working in the bars, and broadened their views and debating skills.

COLOMBIA - WAR ON WANT

One young member travelled to Colombia with War on Want to see the working conditions of the people there.

TOLPUDDLE SUMMER WEEKEND SCHOOL

Young members attended the Tolpuddle Summer School in 2003 and 2004

8. Training

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
Introduction to GMB (3 days)	21	161	60	221	663
GMB Follow On (5 days)	15	92	34	126	630
(b) On Site Courses					
Health & Safety (Enfield)	2	3	4	7	14
(c) Health & Safety Courses					
5 day	15	103	37	140	684
(d) Other Courses					
Accompany Reps	2	8	5	13	13
Union Learning Reps	14	36	29	65	170
Put it in Writing (2 days)	2	19	10	29	58
Gala Casinos (2 days)	2	14	6	20	40
Public Speaking	1	7	7	14	14

9. Health & Safety

The Region continues to show a commitment to Health and Safety as an organising and recruiting tool by investing in both a Regional Health and Safety Officer and an Assistant Regional Health and Safety Officer. This enables both action and information to be accessible to Officers and Safety Reps in a quick and efficient manner.

It is obvious that even with an evolving national workforce health, safety and welfare problems are not diminishing. Indeed in some areas, workplace welfare for example, they are actually increasing. With the GMB needing to sustain its profile in many, varied workplaces it is important this commitment remains. The Region believes that well trained safety reps are fundamental to both recruitment and organisation. This applies to workplaces where recognition already exists and where health and safety concerns can be used to maintain and grow membership levels and, in newly recognised workplaces where health and safety can aid recruitment and retention. Consequently safety reps in the London Region undergo a full programme of training. This training is evaluated to take into account of any changes in health and safety legislation.

In workplaces where recognition has already been established or in organisations where the relationship between the employer and the GMB have deteriorated joint training for managers and reps has proven to be very constructive. The training programme is based on the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 ("The Brown Book") and this approach has proved very successful in a number of ventures within the Region.

We are also looking to develop, with the Education Department, specialist courses in an attempt to fill the void left by the demise of the National College. These are to include Stress and Bullying and advice on Practical Workplace Inspections.

In response to suggestions from Officers and Activists, or changes in legislation, the Health and Safety Department continues to produce easy to use bulletins and news services on a wide range of health, safety and welfare topics. The region also played a major role in developing the "*Health and Safety in Refuse Collection*" leaflet and will be contributing to the upcoming leaflet on Casino Workers to assist with recruitment and organising in an often exploited industry.

The department also acts in an advisory capacity for officers, safety reps and individual members. Often problems can be sorted out over the telephone, though this needs to be followed up by supporting literature. Increasingly advice is sought and answered by electronic means. In more serious situations there will sometimes be a request for a site/workplace visit with a follow-up written report. Again the presence of a specialised officer can raise the profile of the GMB and help the safety reps maintain, and demonstrate the benefits of GMB membership.

Perhaps the most interesting development has been the successful bid by the Region to the Health and

Safety Executive - Worker Safety Advisor (WSA) fund. Out of seventy projects bid for, the London Region was one of only twelve successful bids.

Our bid involved targeting small and medium enterprises working in the food industry, by offering Health and Safety advice, literature and training in nine different languages, (Five Asian and Four European).

The project and the Worker Safety Advisor, Hiten Vaidya, have exceeded expectations and it is planned that the bid will be extended for another two years and expand into other industrial sectors within the Park Royal Industrial site located in West London. Recruitment will initially be slow but over time and with raised awareness among employers and workers there will be an opportunity for serious recruitment.

In conclusion the last two years have seen an expansion in the service available to officers, reps, activists and GMB members. Campaigns, such as the workplace ban on smoking which included public events on Workers Memorial Day, lobbying in Parliament, public meetings and a register for exposed members, continue to need adequate recourses to enable delivery.

Recruitment and organisation seldom hinge on one single issue and the Region has demonstrated that by raising, and solving health, safety and welfare issues the GMB can remain not just strong, but optimistic.

(Adopted)

Bro. P. Kenny (Regional Secretary, London) formally moved the report.

There were no questions raised on this section of the report.

The report was adopted.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I would like to remind Congress the questions on the accounts must be submitted to the Congress office behind the platform by close of play today.

EQUAL RIGHTS REPORT

Introduction

Rehana Azam took up the role of National Officer with responsibility for equalities in November 2004. This appointment followed the departure of Karen Constantine in September 2004 following a prolonged period of sickness absence, during which Debbie Coulter, Deputy General Secretary, provided cover.

The past two years have seen some progress in terms of new legislation aimed at or contributing to greater equality within our society. In 2004, the GMB secured a hard-won victory in amending the new European Public Procurement Directive. The GMB's amendment now allows for public contracts to be reserved for supported workplaces and programmes for disabled people. This progressive change should be the catalyst, in the UK, for creating thousands of new satisfying and rewarding jobs. More work needs to be done however to ensure that the directive is not diluted as a result of the views of other interested bodies, for example the Office of Government Commerce.

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 now outlaw discrimination in employment and vocational training on the grounds of sexual orientation and religion or belief respectively. Moreover, the Government recognises that as intermediary organisations, unions play an important role in supporting the practical application of this legislation, and have offered practical support to unions so that we can offer advice on sexual orientation and religion or belief employment issues.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 make a number of changes to the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) including ending the exemption of small employers from the scope of the DDA and ending a number of occupational exclusions (e.g. the police, prison officers, barristers in chambers and partners in business partnerships).

In 2004, the GMB also gave evidence to the Low Pay Commission's fifth review of the National Minimum Wage. Included within our advice was that a NMW of £6 an hour would make substantial inroads into the stubborn gender pay gap. In addition, the GMB concluded that with legislation on age discrimination due during 2005, the time is right for age rates to be progressively removed from the NMW structure in favour of a uniform development rate linked to accredited training provision.

Perhaps the greatest single initiative has been the proposal to create an equalities super-body in the Commission for Equalities & Human Rights. The GMB believes that while there are potential benefits that could arise from a single equality body, the proposals contained within the White Paper fall well short of making the case for such a body and that it must be far stronger if it is to advance economic and social justice in the UK. The GMB has continued to ensure that GMB members are fully informed of the relevance of these issues to the bargaining agenda and our organising strategy.

NERAC, the National Equal Rights Advisory Committee, has continued with their good work, drawing on their considerable years of experience and diversity of knowledge to reflect at a national level on the needs, concerns and priorities of our members. Two of our long standing NERAC members recently retired from the Committee and I am sure Congress will join in recognising the contribution from Mandy Knight of Southern Region, and Joan Pruden of Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region, for their work in equalities and within the GMB. Mandy and Joan will be extremely missed by NERAC and we wish them both every success in the future.

The GMB has broken new ground with its approach and enthusiasm for dealing with domestic violence as a workplace issue. However there is much more work to be carried out on this issue to ensure our members do not feel isolated and alone when suffering from domestic violence. Many Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committees have put this issue at the forefront of their activities and although it has benefited from national discussions in the past, recent activities have been implemented that will refocus national attention to the issue of domestic violence.

It is extremely important that the relationship between National Office, NERAC and the Regional Equal Rights Officers (REROs) continues to deepen to ensure best practice is developed and exchanged. The role of RERO is, in every region, vital to ensuring effective dissemination of information, and critical to developing the capacity to deliver on a range of equality issues.

Nationally, the priority is to ensure that equality remains on the bargaining agenda and integrated into all GMB activities. We believe that these activities support the cultural change and the focus on recruitment, retention and the organisation of our members.

National Equal Rights Advisory Committee (NERAC)

The National Equal Rights Advisory Committee is made up of the following members:

Richard Edmunds, Birmingham & West Midlands Region

Jayne Norton, Birmingham & West Midlands Region

Sandra Tanner, Birmingham & West Midlands Region

Shirley Buckley, Lancashire Region

Margaret Gregg, Liverpool, N Wales & Irish Region

Jackie Nield, London Region

Alistair McLean, London Region

David Lascelles, Midland & East Coast Region

Harpal Jandu, Midland & East Coast Region

Jean Chaplow, Northern Region

Cathy Murphy, GMB Scotland

June Minnery, GMB Scotland

Jennifer Cole, South Western Region

Brian Farr, South Western Region

Jill Richards, South Western Region

Noreen Metcalf, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

GMB Membership and Workplace Representatives

As more women enter the labour market and as our union continues with its success in recruiting working women - 50% of all new members are now female - this remains a core issue. We need to continue to address unequal pay in the workplace by pressing the government to mandate all employers to carry out equal pay audits. We also need to ensure that we continue to encourage our

members to take an active role in their workplaces and within their union.

Commission for Equalities and Human Rights

The GMB believes that following specific issues must be addressed:

- The introduction of a single equality act;
- A structure that delivers a clear and equal voice for each existing commission included under the proposed CEHR;
- That the proposed CEHR is adequately resourced, with a clear commitment from Government that its budget will be much higher than the current 3 bodies combined;
- There must be trade union representation on the CEHR at board level and at regional level;
- Each region should have a CEHR office and trade unions should be involved in developing targets and strategy in each region;
- The main role of the CEHR and its powers should be set out in primary legislation;
- The CEHR should play a role in reviewing the UK Government's implementation of EU agreements on equality and human rights;
- The main priorities of the CEHR must be enforcement of the law and legal redress for victims of discrimination.

Equal Pay Audit Training

Over the last few years the GMB nationally has trained 77 reps, Branch Equality Officers (BEOs) and officers to a competent standard sufficient to be able to carry out workplace reviews. Some of our reps and officers are ensuring that the outcomes of reviews are incorporated in to the bargaining agenda to ensure fairness and equality.

Domestic Violence as a Workplace Issue

Regional Equal Rights Officers (REROs) and some Regional Education Officers continue to bring domestic violence as a workplace issue to the attention of employers. Due to the reorganisation of REROs in some regions the need to develop workplace policies incorporating the "Daphne Project" continues.

Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

Some regions have developed LGBT Forums and nationally we are encouraging that this is regarded as best practice and adopted across the Union.

Equality Profile

GMB maintains its high profile on the equality issues. Our Deputy General Secretary is a member of the Women and Work Commission and we support delegations to TUC Women's Conference, the TUC LGBT Conference, and the TUC Disability Conference.

RACE REPORT

Introduction

Rehana Azam took up the role of National Officer with responsibility for race and diversity in November 2004. This appointment followed the departure of Karen Constantine in September 2004 following a prolonged period of sickness absence, during which Debbie Coulter, Deputy General Secretary, provided cover.

The GMB has faced many challenges over the last 2 years. The presence of the far right has been a massive challenge for everyone in society. The National Race Committee has worked hard regionally and nationally to ensure that racism and fascism is challenged in whatever form it has presented itself. Complacency has not been an option. Many of our members have been directly targeted by fascists and the motion passed at Congress 2003 to suspend the benefits of far-right party activists is extremely welcoming.

At the time of writing this report, the work of the GMB in the field of improving race relations continues to be as important as ever. The rising tide of Islamophobia as a result of the dangerous situation in the

Middle East, the electoral success of the BNP and others in council elections in the UK and the task to act to put our own house in order have combined to create a huge workload for the GMB National Race Committee.

Before looking at some aspects of our efforts in detail, it is worthwhile putting on record appreciation of the efforts over the last two years of the lay members of the National Race Committee who, individually and collectively, work extremely hard on behalf of existing GMB black and ethnic minority members. Just as importantly, they work hard to ensure that more black and ethnic minority workers see the merit of GMB membership and that the black and ethnic minority communities throughout the UK know that they can look to the GMB for support, particularly in times of trouble. I also commend to Congress the efforts of our Regional Race Officers, who contribute mightily to our successes in this area at Regional and local level.

This report briefly highlights some of National Race Committee priorities since Congress 2003.

National Race Committee

The National Race Committee is made up of the following members:

Harpal Jandu, Birmingham & West Midlands Region
 Edna Greenwood, Lancashire Region
 Steve Westergren, Liverpool, N Wales & Irish Region
 Andy McGivern, Liverpool, N Wales & Irish Region
 Simon Carter, London Region
 Richard Robinson, Midland & East Coast Region
 Peter Foley (President), Northern Region
 Georgia Cruickshank, GMB Scotland
 Cathy Murphy, GMB Scotland
 Charles Adje, Southern Region
 Vacancy, South Western Region
 Charlie James, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

CEC Reserved Seats

In 2001, Congress changed the GMB's rules to ensure that five seats on our governing body the CEC would be reserved for black and ethnic minority members of our Union. I cannot overstate the importance of this as a signal of the seriousness of our commitment to ensuring appropriate levels of representation for our black and ethnic minority members. Most of the CEC reserved seat members now sit on many CEC sub-committees and are now actively contributing in shaping union policy.

CEC Race Task Group

Following acceptance at Congress 2003 of the CEC Race Task Group's report of the race audit conducted by Dr Elizabeth Henry, the CEC's aim is to ensure that the GMB becomes an exemplar of good practice in the field of race equality. Our responsibilities as a trade union include ensuring that the GMB has effective race and diversity policies and procedures in place to cover:

- admission to membership
- treatment of members
- disciplining members who discriminate
- disciplining office holders who discriminate
- expelling members/office holders who discriminate
- positive action
- training and information
- victimisation
- discrimination and it's avoidance
- union involvement in equal opportunities policies.

The CEC Race Task Group is responsible for overseeing the major programme of work involved in implementing the recommendations of Elizabeth Henry's report. Dawn Butler of London region was seconded by the CEC to the position of National Race Audit Co-ordinator to support the CEC Race Task Group and progress its work. To date, most progress has been made in terms of completing

internal monitoring, by conducting the first ever race audit of all employees within the GMB. The data from this audit is in the process of being analysed, and the results will provide a basis for developing an appropriate programme of action in relation to GMB employees.

The next phase of action will be focused on training. Training is fundamentally important to ensure a sound understanding of the issues involved in developing a race equality culture and strategy throughout the GMB. To this end, all employees will be trained on race and diversity and this programme will be rolled out through the regions to incorporate everyone within the Union's structure. The first phase of training to be conducted will include all GMB senior managers. The CEC Race Task Group has been considering the design and development of the training programme and examining how best to utilise the skills and experiences available to the Union, both internally and externally. Issues also under consideration include identifying any possible sources of funding that could be accessed to ensure the most cost effective and efficient method of delivering the training programme.

Unite Against Fascism

The National Race Committee has regionally and nationally worked with broader coalitions to ensure the BNP and other right wing parties are challenged at the local and European elections. Although the BNP did not get the success they hoped for in some areas they have demonstrated that they have become a real threat. Our work to unite against fascism will continue to build as long as the threat is prevalent. Some regions have worked extremely hard to combat the BNP and I am sure Congress will join in congratulating their success.

All Congress delegates will have been shocked by the success of the BNP and other elements of the far right in securing council seats in by-elections over the last couple of years. Their success in depressed inner-city areas in the North West and in Yorkshire has been particularly alarming. The kind of race hate aimed at black and ethnic minority citizens, at asylum seekers and at other minorities by the BNP and their like is poisonous in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society. There are resolutions before Congress on this matter and when they are passed I am sure all delegates will take them back to their communities and join the fight against the BNP and the others who would scapegoat black and ethnic minority communities for our social and economic problems. At the time of writing this report the General Election has not been called but many anti - fascist campaigners will be aware that the BNP and other right wing parties will continue to organise themselves ready for the local elections in the coming year.

National Race Conference 2004

Despite the reduction in delegation the conference was a success. GMB members are given the opportunity to network and exchange best practice at events such as this and hopefully in the coming year we can all strive to implement these practices. The conference was attended by our General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary and the President. Delegates discussed their concerns and passed motions on fighting fascism, campaigning for migrant workers and asylum seekers, the importance of implementing the race audit, strengthening equality structures, and lobbying and campaigning on a host of issues which will form part of the National Race Committee's 2005/2006 organising and campaigning agenda.

Monitoring Results - National Race Conference 2004

ETHNICITY

White

White UK	12
Irish	1

Black or Black British

Black African	2
Black Caribbean	4

Asian or Asian British

Indian	3
Pakistani	5

Mixed Background

White & Black Caribbean	1
White & Black African	1
White & Other	1

Other

Black & Asian Caribbean	1
African Caribbean	1
Black British	1
Black Caribbean	1
White Welsh	1
Jewish	1
Bangladeshi & Pakistani	1

GENDER

Male	23
Female	13
Gender not specified	1

AGE

16-25 yrs	1
26-35 yrs	7
36-45 yrs	12
46-55 yrs	10
56-65 yrs	7
66-70 yrs	0
Over 70 yrs	0

Conclusion

Over the last two years the GMB has continued to play a full part in the anti-racist efforts of the TUC. We also affiliate to various organisations leading this struggle and lend our support whenever we are able to do so.

(Adopted)

SIS. R. AZAM (National Officer, Equal Rights): I move the Equal Rights Report. You all know that I began in my post in November last year and I was also given responsibility for equality and diversity.

As National Equal Rights Officer, I want to take this opportunity to thank Mandy Knight from Southern Region and Joan Pruden from Liverpool, North Wales and Irish Region, for their contribution to the National Equal Rights Advisory Committee during the past 25 years. Mandy and Joan will be sorely missed by NERAC and we wish them every success and happiness in the future. The new Chair, Cathy Murphy from GMB Scotland and Vice-Chair, Jane Norton from Birmingham & West Midlands Region, are determined individuals and eager to take up the challenge. They will be building on the good work that has been done in NERAC under Mandy and Joan.

One of the challenges we have faced recently is to change the way the National Equality and Diversity Committees work. During the past few months, the National Equality Committee has begun meeting in regions to develop their profile on equality and diversity in the Union. We want our members setting our agenda. We will be listening to our members and using their concerns to empower them to become active.

The Daphne Project, which raises awareness of

domestic violence as a workplace issue, has attracted attention from many European human rights organisations. The Committee is also hoping to work with regions to promote this project. We were recently requested by a sister organisation in Slovakia for the GMB to take a lead partnership the Daphne 2. It is something on which we are very much looking forward to working with all the regions this year.

Our Deputy General Secretary, as you know, is a member of the Women and Work Commission, which was born from the Warwick Agreement. As a union, we need to ensure that the Government will make it mandatory for employers to carry out equal pay audits.

As I also have responsibility for the National Race Committee, the election last month has shown once again that the threat of organized racism in our country has not gone away. Members of the GMB took a central role in ensuring that right-wing parties were unsuccessful. They deserve every respect, but no one involved believes that our work is complete. We must continue to work collectively in the communities where these racist political Parties peddle their filth to make sure that they do not capitalise on this year's votes in next year's local elections. For those of you who have just attended our fringe meeting at lunch time, it was great to see

so many people supporting this particular campaign.

Midlands and East Coast Region will be sharing best practice on organising migrant workers with the National Race Committee and NERAC next month. We look forward to rolling this practice out nationwide. We will be doing much of that, listening to what is happening in regions and trying to get Regions to adopt the best practice because that is the way forward.

At the National Race Conference last year, one of the motions debated was for the GMB to organise an event in Black History Month. It is going to be the biggest project that the NRC will be involved in this year. We are hoping to host it in Liverpool. People might ask: "Why Liverpool?" It is because of the significance Liverpool played in the slave triangle. This event can only work if regions actively support the initiative. So if you want to get involved, our Equality stall is in the exhibition centre, or come and speak to me. The more people we can get involved, the more the project can work and, hopefully, we can make it a biennial event.

Perhaps the single greatest Government initiative in equalities and diversity this year has been the proposal to create an equalities super-body in the Commission for Equalities & Human Rights. Nevertheless, we will be lobbying the Government to ensure that this body is effective in advancing economic and social justice in the UK.

The GMB, therefore, looks to the Government for the introduction of a single equalities Act, a commission that delivers a clear and equal voice for every community suffering from inequalities, adequate resources, trade union representation on the commission at board level, and that the commission should play a role in reviewing the Government's implementation of European agreements on equality and human rights.

The GMB's Equality and Diversity groups have led in many debates at TUC conferences this year. Once again we have elected GMB members on the various TUC Equality and Diversity Committees. This will ensure that our profile and the GMB's engagement in the wider trade union Movement continues. I want to take this opportunity to thank members of the National Race Committee and the National Equal Rights Advisory Committee. I have been in my post for just a matter of months, and the support that the committees, the regional race officers and the equal rights officers have given me has been absolutely fantastic.

Dr. Henry's report, which was debated and endorsed at the last Congress, provided the GMB with another great challenge to become more inclusive. I want to take this opportunity -- and it is a shame Dawn has left the platform -- to congratulate her on behalf of the NRC and the equality structure. As you know, Dawn led the CEC Race Task Group, and I have now been given responsibility for that. We wish Dawn

all the best in the future. We know that Dawn will be a real advocate in the field of equality. I move my Report. Thank you.

(No questions were raised on this section of the report)

(The report was adopted)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

EQUAL PAY

COMPOSITE MOTION 2

(Covering Motions 96, 97, 98, 99 and 100)

96 - Equal Pay (GMB Scotland)

97 - Equal Pay (South Western Region)

98 - Equal Pay (South Western Region)

99 - Equal Pay (Northern Region)

100 - Equality (London Region)

Congress recognises that despite 30 years of equal pay legislation the gender wage gap in the UK remains.

This Congress notes that despite several raft of equal pay legislation the gender pay gap still stands at around thirty per cent, dependant on whose research is examined.

It is over thirty years since the Equal Pay Act gave women the right to equal pay, but many of our sisters are still undervalued and not receiving the same salary as their male colleagues. This is particularly obvious in women graduates who on average will receive a salary 15% lower than their male graduate colleagues. This is unacceptable and must not be tolerated, in the main girls are out-achieving boys as far as A level results are concerned and their expectations as far as salaries are concerned should be comparable to their male colleagues.

Cuts and privatisation coupled with anti union legislation have driven down the wages and conditions of the lowest paid workers while executive pay has spiralled out of control.

For too long employers have been able to hide behind a veil of secrecy with regard to pay, mandatory pay audits now would have led to real progress for women.

Occupational segregation is still a major contributor to the gender pay gap with women being concentrated in the lower paid occupations.

The “Glass Ceiling” and “Sticky Floor Syndromes” currently act as barriers to women’s progression as they struggle to advance into higher grade jobs and still predominantly in four of the five lowest paid occupations.

Congress therefore calls on all negotiators to Campaign for the introduction of:

- Mandatory transparent equal pay audits.
- The introduction of set time limits for the implementation of Action Plans following the results of Equal Pay Audits.

Congress applauds the success of the GMB’s campaign in the public sector and in particular recognises that retrospective compensatory payments and the introduction of new pay and grading structures in both local government and the NHS will have an enormous impact on the gender wage gap.

We ask Congress to continue lobbying for equal pay audits and equalities impact assessments to be undertaken by all employers and not just within the public sector. Even in the public sector who, as part of the three pay award, have been tasked by the NJC to undertake equal pay awards, employers are dragging their heels as many have still not implemented single status job evaluation schemes. We request Congress share good practice across regions where local authorities have undertaken these audits with the GMB input.

By having a JE scheme does not give automatic right of an equal pay structure - why do we still have part-time women workers in the care sector, cleaning, catering and schools still earning less than their male equivalents.

When a restructuring or reduction in services are being undertaken, local authorities should be made to undertake an equalities impact assessment jointly with the trade unions. This would show any inequality that may result from any changes to both services and staffing implications. The Equal Pay Commission, Working Group on Equalities is currently working on this but employers appear less than keen to progress this.

Discrimination in the private sector remains widespread and requires urgent action to address. Congress is deeply concerned that the Women and Work Commission has decided to delay the decision on whether to pursue mandatory pay audits for a further year.

This Congress therefore resolves that the union

will redouble its efforts, industrially, legally and politically to end the scandal of a gender pay gap that still exists at the start of the 21st Century.

Congress calls upon the CEC to continue to campaign for improvement in the legislation on Equal Pay. We welcome the setting up of the Women’s Work Commission to look at Equal Pay and the Pay Gap and Trust that the Government will take on board their findings.

Congress calls upon the CEC to commission detailed research into the gender pay gap in the private sector and to plan the required legal and financial resources to campaign to eradicate discrimination in the private sector.

We should now demand that this legalisation is amended and no longer should our sisters, daughters and granddaughters be treated as second class employees.

Congress we call upon you to support this motion.

(Carried)

SIS. R. HAYWARD (South Western): President, Congress, although it has been three decades since the Equal Pay Act, many of us are still being undervalued and are not receiving the same salary or wages as our brothers. Of course, we welcome the setting-up of the Women and Work Commission to look at equal pay and the pay gap. We hope that this new listening Government will look carefully at the findings and act accordingly.

It is appalling that young women graduates can expect to receive a salary of 15% lower than their male colleagues. Just to recap, there is an 18% gap between the hourly rate of pay for women and men in full-time employment. Women working part-time earn 40% less per hour than full-time employees. In fact, 75% of women work in the five lowest paid sectors. Women hold less than 10% of the top positions in the FTSE 100 companies, including trade unions. This situation should not be allowed to continue.

We are all aware that public sector local authorities are charged with undertaking equal pay audits. Good practice should be shared on a national basis, so that a databank can be set up on what most local authorities are doing. Across all of the regions, part-time women workers in the care sector, cleaning, catering, school support and admin are not earning as much as their male counterparts.

Of course, this issue could be addressed by equal pay audits as long they are done properly with GMB input from the beginning of the process. We need to

continue the campaign of bottom-loaded pay awards for the low paid. Percentage pay awards can only help to increase the gap.

Secondly, we need to break down occupational segregation by enabling more women to work in male-dominated work groups and more men to take up jobs in what has previously been perceived as caring roles.

Thirdly, we need to continue our promotion of career paths in posts enabling people to enter at a low level who can then work their way through changing from a job to a career.

Equal pay is not a 30-year issue. The first motion on this subject to a TUC Congress was over 100 years ago and, colleagues, it was carried. Brothers, you would not have waited this long. Get fully behind this composite, support not only your trade union members, but your wives, partners, mothers, sisters and daughters. Don't let them face an old page of poverty. Congress, I move.

SIS. M. BOYD (GMB Scotland): President, we ask Congress and all negotiators to continue to campaign for mandatory equal pay audits undertaken by all employers. The Equal Pay Act 1970 is now 35 years old, for God's sake, and here we are all are, still working, still campaigning and still fighting for equal pay in 2005! The gap as it now stands is 18%. At 40% the gap is even bigger for women who work part-time. Women are nearly half of Britain's workforce.

The EOC's investigations have shown that action to close the pay gap is needed from both the Government and employers. The Government needs to take the lead by getting its own house in order and delivering equal pay to the 3.75 million women who work in the public sector.

I work in manufacturing. Many employers today are not bothered with an equal pay review, never mind any kind of policy. Most employers believe that it is enough that they have job evaluation schemes in place. Where I work in industry, we have seven different gradings across the workforce, all of them for specific skills; the lowest being the packers. The management believe more strongly in flexibility. That could possibly mean all of these different grades working together doing light work where necessary. Compulsory pay orders would improve all types of grading in employment.

To sum up, a few lines from the STUC's Women's Committee Conference song says it all:

“Growing older a pittance I'll collect,
Based on a Lifetime's inequality.
Equal pay is the only way I know
To get me out of poverty.
Joined a union looking for support,
Duly paid up all my union dues,
Then I found and wasnae surprised,

Equal pay's a fight we can't afford to lose.

If I get paid £500,

Then he'll get 500 more.

Sisters, if you think that's crap,

Join the fight to close the gap.”

So, ladies, don't get angry; get even, get equal. Thank you.

BRO. S. MCKENZIE (London): Comrades, brothers and sisters. I have it on good authority that in the Health Service in Cumbria, using the Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value legislation in a claim dating back to the mid 1990s, a UNISON officer has won backpay and upgrading for hundreds of women members to the tune of £320 million. Women cleaners, caterers and nurses had cases put forward by their union official based on comparisons with male-dominated jobs.

These women workers and their officer went through tribunals, appeals, attempts to buy them off and legal shenanigans dragging on for years. However, sticking to their guns, they won a famous victory with some women members receiving tens of thousands of pounds in back pay. The final settlement was arrived at in February this year and was reported in papers like the Guardian, the Financial Times and the Morning Star. I had the privileged information of how the battle was won in a bit more depth because the officer who initiated and led the battle has been a personal friend of mine for 25 years.

There can be no doubt that our own union in the Northern Region has also been doing a fantastic job, winning equal pay claims for women members. But, because of the introduction of single status and the Agenda for Change, which is designed to prevent future claims of this nature, the whole issue has become very complicated. However, because many authorities have failed to implement single status agreements and because many contract workers in local authorities and in the NHS are not covered by such agreements, the opportunity exists for us to pick up the weapon of the equal pay for work of equal value legislation, to learn from successful cases that have taken place and to start a campaign on a national basis to get the Government to properly fund equal pay. If they do not do that, then we will have the weapon, if we prepare properly, to hit them with. I urge you to support fully this motion and let's get cracking on really doing something about bringing our sisters up to the level of the brothers.

SIS. J. JEPSON (Northern): I am supporting Composite 2 on equal pay. Congress, the GMB's campaign in local government and the National Health Service to end discrimination has been extremely successful. The Northern Region wants CEC to ensure that the success is now extended to the private sector and that, once and for all, sexual

discrimination and unequal pay is made a thing of the past.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to come into the debate? *(No response)* I call Kath Manning.

SIS. K. MANNING (CEC, Food & Leisure): President, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC in support of Composite 2. It is sad to say that the gender pay gap has not narrowed since the CEC set out its position at Congress 2003. It remains at 18% for full-time workers and 40% for part-timers. The position is even starker for a total average income of women. It shows half that of men.

More than two-thirds of family incomes, where couples work, comes from men. In pensioner couples, women's income is an abysmal 30% to that of men's income. This is an appalling reality of the pay gap in the 21st Century. We have won some battles on this gender pay gap, but we are a long way from winning the war.

We know the enemy: low paid, poor quality, part-time jobs, educational and occupational, gender segregation, difficulty balancing the work and family life, lack of quality, affordable childcare and overt discrimination.

The Government have gone some way to addressing these issues, but they must go further. A priority of this historic third term must be a strategy to close the pay gap and lift all women out of poverty. We are not impressed that the Minister for Women is not being paid for the job, but establishing the Women and Work Commission, on which the Deputy General Secretary sits, was a step in the right direction. We look forward to its recommendations this autumn.

We also await the introduction of a public duty to promote gender equality under the Equality Bill. We must continue pressing for a mandatory equal pay audit, which would have a significant impact on the pay gap.

We should use existing research, particularly in the private sector pay gap, to inform our campaign. Achieving pay equality has a price, but the rewards will be priceless. We must continue to keep equal pay at the top of our bargaining agenda to secure a proper reward for our members. Congress, there is a huge mountain to climb and I urge you to support this motion.

(Composite Motion 2 was carried)

EQUALITIES, LBG ISSUES

MOTION 101

Congress is asked to support the campaign to extend the sexual orientation legislation to goods and services. We consider this only goes

someway in addressing the inequalities experienced by the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual community in relation to work related bullying, harassment and victimisation. It is not acceptable that many experience discrimination relating to the way in which their services are provided or they access them.

We therefore ask Congress to support the extension to the current sexual orientation legislation.

BRISTOL PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
South Western Region

(Carried)

BRO. I. WILLIAMS (South Western): Congress, I move Motion 101. We recognise that the Employment of Equality Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003 is currently being amended to take into account the civil partnerships' legislation which is coming into force on 5th December 2005.

As well as giving formal legal recognition, civil partnership brings with it rights and responsibilities between the partners themselves and third parties, including the State and employers. This will include ensuring that access to employment, vocational training and related benefits will achieve, as far as is possible, equality of treatment between spouses and civil partners.

The purpose of this new provision is to make it clear that the status of a civil partner is comparable to the status of a spouse. The effect is to enable a civil partner, who is treated less favourably than a married person in similar circumstances, to bring a claim for sexual orientation discrimination under the Sexual Orientation Regulations. Congress, we welcome these changes, but consider they do not go far enough by excluding goods and services.

Many members of the lesbian, gay and bisexual community experience direct discrimination due to their sexuality when buying goods and also service provision. For example, a lesbian presenting herself as homeless through an abusive same sex relationship may not receive the same level of support that a heterosexual woman who is in an abusive relationship receives because the services are ill-equipped to deal with the situation.

Even in the 21st Century, many LGB individuals experience verbal abuse or blanking when entering shops, et cetera, and there is no way of tackling this situation. This is unacceptable behaviour and, although local authorities and organisations are taking up training on the LGB issue, the focus is very much on employment in relation to discrimination and victimisation. We, therefore, ask Congress to support this motion, to continue the campaign to extend the legislation to include goods and services. Thank you.

BRO. D. LASCELLES (Midland & East Coast): I am proud to second this excellent motion from our colleagues in the South Western Region.

Goods and services are things that we take for granted, but not, it seems, for lesbians, bisexual or a gay men like myself or my partner. I cannot see him from this distance. The glasses do not work that far! If you are accommodated in a hotel this week, I can -- you cannot -- by law, be discriminated against in booking a room for two people seemingly of the same sex.

The new employment law with respect to sexual orientation means that, quite rightly, the employees in any workforce coming from the lesbian, gay or bisexual community cannot be discriminated against, but the customers can. Crazy, isn't it?

Clearly, the needs of all people must be equal in the 21st Century and laws to reflect this state of affairs put into place.

I inform Congress that this issue is on the agenda of the TUC Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee, which, with your support, and in my own position as the GMB Chair of the TUC LGBT Committee and as a member of the TUC General Council, I will do absolutely everything I can and go wherever I have to go, probably to the Department of Trade & Industry, and it will not be for the first time, to ensure equality and dignity for all and to report back to the Central Executive Council in written report form accordingly.

Congress, I am honoured to second and encourage your support for Motion 101.

EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED PEOPLE

MOTION 102

That Congress is shocked that disabled workers are seriously underrepresented in the workplace.

Discrimination against disabled people in the UK labour market is a social, moral and economic indictment of our society which cannot be excused.

Congress recognises that Government has acknowledged that more needs to be done to tackle discrimination and that support and assistance is vital in assisting disabled people to find and sustain employment.

We are therefore calling for Congress to support the following:

- That all our negotiators work to gain the commitment of employers to address the under representation of disabled in their workforce.
- That Disability Audits be made mandatory

for all employers.

REMPLOY INTERWORKER BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. J. DOLAN (GMB Scotland): President, Congress, John Dolan, GMB, from the country of Scotland, not the region. I move Motion 102, Employment of Disabled People.

The Government have introduced the Disabled Persons' Tax Credit and other disability discrimination laws to help protect the disabled in our society. There is a need within the workplace for specialists to ensure that the care and needs of disabled people are introduced and maintained in the workplace.

This is a particular need for people with mental health problems. We can all see physical problems and do what we can to help, but mental health problems cannot always be seen, but still need help. Returning to work after such an illness can bring its own problems. Benefit reduction and poor quality jobs can also add to the anxiety disabled people suffer and could set them back instead of helping them to return to work. There is a need for GMB reps to audit employers and make sure employers give their disabled employees a hassle-free and discrimination-free environment both in pay as well as access to all facilities.

The message is quite clear. Let us remove the pressure, remove the stress and increase the care. Thank you.

BRO. P. WHITELAW (GMB Scotland): I am from GMB Scotland -- also referred to as "Scotland" -- and seconding Motion 102. Whilst fully appreciating the importance of what my colleague has just said in relation to civil members getting back to work, or trying to get back into the workforce, they really need a great deal more protection than a normal employee would expect or need. I think we must be careful with regard to the type of work that disabled people are asked to do. Various companies are trying to get people back into work now. It is laudable to do that. Certainly, we would love to see anybody with a disability get back into work, but, as John mentioned, people particularly with mental health problems will be really struggling at times and it can worsen their condition if they have to go back and work in a stressful job.

They are really the most vulnerable in society and they can be exploited very easily by unscrupulous employers. This is particularly so in light of the review of the laws on Incapacity Benefit. The Government have a five-year plan and a two-tier system where people are going to be forced back to work. There really is a problem.

People with mental health problems, in particular, are entitled to certain benefits when they

are out of work. First and foremost, they are entitled to Incapacity Benefit. Obviously, they will lose that if they return to work. They are probably on Disability Living Allowance and that can be in danger as well. Depending on the amount of money they are earning, they could lose their housing benefit and their assistance with their council tax. In my job as a welfare rights officer, I deal with such matters. I try to make the best calculation for them. However, when some people return to work they may only be earning peanuts, but that is more than they are getting when they are off sick. It can actually cause again a great deal of stress.

So we have really to be mindful of the situation. Obviously, as I said, although it is laudable to get people with disabilities back into work, we have to be mindful of the financial situation and the stressful situation.

I finish off by saying that I would hope that Remploy get all the support they deserve in maintaining and, indeed, adding to jobs of the future. Thank you very much, Congress.

REPRESENTATION IN PUBLIC LIFE

MOTION 103

Congress believes that the current and continuing under representation of black people in public life is shameful.

In particular we have deeply held concerns over the failure of all political parties to select a single black candidate for a winnable seat in the Scottish Parliament.

The Conference calls for the CEC to meet with each of the major parties building on the excellent initiative taken in Glasgow at the 2004 European Parliament Elections to raise with them the need for action before the next Elections.

FORFAR BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

SIS. D. KING (GMB Scotland): Congress, the current continued under-representation of black communities in public life is shameful, as is the case with other marginalised groups. The Government are committed to ensuring the diversity in the public appointments process with the need for broad and non-departmental public bodies. However, the reality is that we have deeply-held concerns over the failure of all political parties in Scotland to select a single black candidate for a winnable seat in the Scottish Parliament.

We need to ensure that Government promotes fully equality and diversity in public appointments

and that they are more reflective of the social and cultural mix across the UK. Barriers to participation by under-represented groups can potentially be introduced in a number of ways, where consideration is given to equality and diversity, where unnecessary skills are specified, where the criteria is outwith the experience of under-represented groups, the composition of selection panels, the lack of training and the conduct of the interviews.

There may well be some broader contextual and cultural barriers, such as a low level of awareness amongst the general public of public appointments, and the capacity of some groups to participate clearly identifies a level of social exclusion unacceptable to us in the GMB. There is a pressing need to ensure training for all involved in the appointments process, a good practice model and links need to be developed with under-represented groups.

Ability does not discriminate and neither should political parties or public bodies. We are calling on the CEC to meet with the political parties to effect more positive action before the next election. Please support.

(The motion was formally seconded)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to get into the debate? No? I will now call Peter Foley.

BRO. P. FOLEY (CEC, Energy & Utilities): On behalf of the CEC, the CEC is supporting this motion but with a qualification. Let me start by dealing with the general thrust of the motion with which the CEC agree. We agree with the Forfar branch that the continuing under-representation of black people in public life is shameful. Like them, we are appalled that not a single black candidate was selected for a winnable seat in the Scottish Parliament. We continue to be appalled at the poor level of representation of black people at all levels of Government.

In the 2005 General Election, there were 113 ethnic minority candidates standing out of the 645 Parliamentary seats. How many of them do you think were successful? Three-quarters? Half? A quarter? No, none of them. Only 15 won. That is 13 per cent. The Tories had 41 ethnic minority candidates standing. Guess how many are now MPs? Two. The Lib Dems had 40 ethnic minority candidates standing. Guess how many are now MPs? None. Now, if that is not tokenism, what is?

Labour had 32 ethnic minority candidates and 13 of them are now MPs. One of the small victories was that of our very own Dawn Butler, a former GMB officer, taking over the safe seat of Brent South. This afternoon we wished Dawn all the best and I know she will do a great job for us.

The qualification to this motion is outside our remit. The GMB is affiliated to the Labour Party. We

can influence, negotiate and discuss issues with them. This is an issue which we would be happy to raise and will be happy to raise with them. We are not affiliated to any other political party. We would, therefore, not be able to raise these internal matters with other political parties. We, therefore, support Motion 103 but with that qualification. I move.

(Motion 101 was carried)

(Motion 102 was carried)

(Motion 103 was carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, for a number of years, whenever we have had discussions and debates on equal pay and equalities, Congress halls used to empty. It is wonderful to see how everyone has stayed in, how our education system has worked and proof of our awareness is that there are people in the outside world other than ourselves who need our support. Well done to you all. Thank you.

Congress, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our international guest who has just arrived in the hall. Angel Salas is the General Secretary of the Colombian Health Workers' trade union, ANTOC. He is in the UK as a guest of Justice for Colombia. He was forced to flee his home region and live in internal exile in the capital, Bogota, after receiving death threats from military intelligence in Colombia. He is forced to move around accompanied by armed bodyguards at all times as the army and their allies in the paramilitary death squads are trying to kill him for his trade union work, in particular, his leadership in the struggle against privatisation and his denunciations of human rights abuses.

In Colombia, 4,000 trade union activists have been assassinated in the past 15 years by the Colombian security forces and the paramilitaries. Congress, that is seven times the number of people in this hall. His union alone has lost 110 members to the death squads.

He will be speaking at a fringe meeting on

Colombia on Wednesday in the main conference hall. Please attend and hear more about the atrocities which have happened in Colombia to our trade union brothers and sisters. I had a call from Justice for Colombia last week. They said that Angel was arriving at the Congress. I phoned back after discussions with the General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary. I believe he should be here on the platform with us in solidarity. Angel, welcome on behalf of the GMB. *(A standing ovation)*

BRO. A. SALAS (Through an interpreter): Thank you for that applause of solidarity with the Colombian people. Today the situation faced by the Colombian trade unionists is unparalleled in its past atrocities. Today Colombia remains the most dangerous country in the world in which to be a trade unionist. Trade unionists in Colombia, especially in my union, the healthcare and the public sector workers, are regularly threatened and displaced from their homes, if not assassinated.

For this reason, I am here today to ask for your solidarity to help reduce the number of trade unionists who are killed on a daily basis. In the name of all the workers of my union and all of the unions of Colombia, I would just like to say thank you for inviting me here today. Tomorrow, I will be talking more in depth about the situation faced by trade unionists in Colombia. The aim will be to consolidate the solidarity which has already been shown by British trade unionists. Thank you. *(A standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Angel, I give you this promise: the GMB will continue to highlight the atrocities in Colombia. I believe we should carry out exactly the campaign as we did on anti-apartheid in South Africa. I believe it is time to stop. It may ease the pain a little bit!

(A presentation was made amidst applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Congress.

ENERGY AND UTILITIES SECTION REPORT

Introduction

As caretaker National Secretary to the Section, my main responsibility has been to run the National Section Committee which has been meeting on a regular basis. I have also been involved in pay negotiations for British Energy; however, most of the industrial work has been undertaken by National Secretary, Brian Strutton and National Officer, Allan Black, therefore the report is heavily supplemented by the two Officers concerned. I would like take this opportunity to thank all Officers and Shop Stewards for their hard work.

1. British Energy

As a result of my workload, I have not been able to attend many of the meetings. I did however attend the pay negotiations for the industry and an offer above inflation was accepted. The main bulk of the work has fallen to our Shop Stewards and in particular Adrian Cirket who has worked tremendously well

for the GMB and our members. Without the efforts of Adrian and our Shop Stewards we would not have maintained our membership.

2. Coal

The relentless onslaught goes on; pit closures very rarely make the headlines nowadays but our members continue to be affected. The UK economy is still using coal but not so much British coal as high cost imported coal. The selling off of the pits to build houses needs to be reviewed. The communities that depend on the coal industry have been let down not only by the vicious Tory government of the 1980s and 1990s but by our own Labour government.

3. Gas

National responsibility for the gas industry is held by Brian Strutton who was National Secretary for Energy and Utilities until April 2004 when he moved to Public Services. Gas continues to be a GMB dominated industry and by working with the main employers we have been able to encourage the growth of the engineer population which has helped to maintain the level of membership of the whole Energy and Utilities Section.

NATIONAL GRID TRANSCO

A pay and Stagger working dispute which ended at ACAS Arbitration Service with a disappointing pay increase award for a two year period and the setting up of a joint working party chaired by ACAS to examine the terms and conditions issues raised by Transco failed to deal with the issue and in September 2003 the TJIC TU voted against recommending the Company proposals.

Local arrangements on work patterns have now been put into place.

During 2003 Transco offered voluntary redundancy to 125 network employees aimed at non-core roles. We felt this was the wrong approach and did not agree with it. Transco proceeded anyway.

A 2004/5 pay claim was tabled on 12 January 2004 and both sides agreed a better approach to ways of working together, committed to achieve completion by due date April 2004.

Agreement was reached in February 2004 with a fully recommended settlement which went to a ballot of the membership. This was for an increase of 5.25%, Lump Sum £250 and improvements to rest time. It was put to the membership and accepted by 2-to-1 majority.

NGT suggested that five networks would be put up for sale and have now announced these four:

Network	Being sold to
North of England	Gas Network Limited, a consortium of United Utilities. Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings Limited (CKI). Li Ka Shing (Overseas Foundation).
Wales & the West	Macquarie Investment Management (UK) Limited.
Scotland	Consortium of: Scottish and Southern Energy. Borealis Infrastructure Management Inc. Ontario Teachers Pension Plan.
South of England	Consortium of: (as for Scotland) Scottish and Southern Energy. Borealis Infrastructure Management Inc. Ontario Teachers Pension Plan.

They have agreed prices of £5.8bn, a premium of 20% over the end March 2004 regulatory asset value of the distribution networks being sold and a 14% premium over the projected March 2005 regulatory asset value. Sale completion is expected in June 2005.

We have obtained guarantees on:

- full TU rights as now

- pension assurances
- no loss or detriment

We will seek guarantees on

- Job security
- Commitments to direct labour
- Pay and conditions protection

We have also asked for a loyalty payment for staff, just like the massive bonus that shareholders will get.

Talks are ongoing with the NGT and the new Companies.

BRITISH GAS

During the 2002 pay negotiations it was clear we could not reach the Engineers aspirations and achieve an overdue substantial increase in salary, despite a 5.2% basic award.

Following the 2002 pay and conditions settlement we reviewed our position and decided that in order to try and meet this objective it was jointly agreed that a strategic review of the salary package would be undertaken which would also include a pay settlement.

The aim was to deliver a good salary package, review all job roles, and provide the opportunity of lifestyles choice job roles.

There was also a need to introduce increased earnings for commitment and determine how the salary package could be made more attractive to aid recruitment and retention of engineers.

The shape of salary package would also need to enable the business to move forward and meet the challenges of future competition over the next 3-5 years.

Following analysis of the pay and conditions package GMB decided to carry out a national Engineers pay and conditions survey that would involve over 4000 Engineers. Each shop steward surveyed their members and submitted the results to the regional shop stewards.

Following analysis of the survey results a list of priorities were drawn up which formed the basis of the trade union side's strategy for the review that would effect engineers from both the service and installation side of the business.

GMB strategy was to achieve a substantial increase in basic pay from £22,201 to £25,000; to increase the level of guaranteed earnings; introduce lifestyle choice job roles; increase payments for unsocial hours working at weekends; introduce additional pay for in advance availability commitment; maximise pensionable pay and increase existing variable payments.

Other low priority areas of interest were private use of company vehicles, less commitment for engineers over 50 and an increase in holiday entitlement.

A prime objective however was that the outcome must not undermine existing terms and conditions.

The strategy on salary alone was to consolidate as many of the variable payments and allowances as possible and maximise the Technical Engineers salary by introducing lifestyle choice job roles. The company's aspirations were to replace the existing Team Reward payment scheme and establish a new Balanced Scorecard reward scheme that would include payments at an individual level and introduce a more flexible salary package that would allow individuals to choose from a Flexsa scheme - how they might maximise their earnings or benefits potential. Individuals could choose to trade off up to a maximum level of annual leave and buy from a range of alternative benefits. These included private health care, a dental health plan, AA membership, tax advice, and critical illness & life insurance cover.

Benefits are chosen and exchanged for holiday entitlement. Engineers would not have the option of

trading more than 8 or 10 days leave dependant on the total entitlement which could be 30 or 28 days.

As part of the package it was agreed to introduce two new job roles giving a total of six. Technical Engineer would replace the Service Engineer role and continue with the current role and responsibilities.

The new voluntary Servicing Engineer role would require less commitment and would attract a lower salary.

The new Technical Installation Engineer role would replace the old Installation Engineer role and would attract existing duties.

The new Installation Engineer role would require less commitment and would attract a lower salary.

The new Field Support Engineer role would provide job opportunity for existing Engineers who could no longer carry out normal duties due to ill health and would attract a substantial reduction in duties. The job would involve supporting and coaching apprentices and existing Engineers.

The Technical Support and Quality Assurance Engineer job role would continue with no change.

In order to provide additional reward for commitment over and above contractual hours a voluntary Reserved Hours scheme would form part of the new salary package which would allow Engineers to commit to overtime in advance and attract a higher hourly rate paid in advance over twelve months

Overall the package delivered a substantial 10% increase in guaranteed earnings with a 6.3% increase in hourly rates and increased payments for working weekend rosters. The Technical Engineers salary moved from £22k to £25k with London based Engineers averaging £28k.

The new voluntary job roles with less commitment provided an opportunity for Engineers looking for a less demanding role.

Although these complex negotiations took around two years to complete, in essence we achieved our twin aims of a basic £25,000 salary for engineers and a new job for those who choose to trade down to a less demanding role.

The package also delivered a real prospect of addressing the recruitment and retention issues facing both the company and trade union side, offering new job roles and a competitive salary. It was strongly endorsed by GMB and was well received by the members resulting in a 90% vote in favour of accepting the package.

3. BNFL and Magnox

Following the reorganisation of National Officials' duties in the wake of the VER departures, I assumed temporary responsibility for our members employed by BNFL and at the Magnox generating stations. The following is a brief report therefore of events since March 2004 to date.

BNFL

The UK nuclear industry is currently undergoing a massive reorganisation following the passing by the Government of the Energy Act. With effect from 1st April 2005, a new body - the Nuclear Decommissioning Agency (NDA) will assume responsibility for overseeing the decommissioning, clean up and closure of the aging Magnox Nuclear Electric generating stations. In addition, the NDA will have the same oversight responsibilities for BNFL (which is to be restyled the British Nuclear Group) including our large membership at the Sellafield site in the GMB Northern Region.

The structured change has persuaded BNFL to propose the effective abolition of national collective bargaining for the BNFL as a whole. The Company is being effectively split into a number of separate operating companies and thus wants to devolve responsibility for bargaining on terms and conditions to business level. The BNG Unions collectively have opposed this because:

- We want to hold the group together so that the strong protect the weak.
- We see this as a possible first step towards a sell off to the private sector of the profitable parts of the Group.

This issue has preoccupied the CJIC, the main negotiating body in the industry, for the six months from September 2004. At the time of writing the issue remains unresolved. As a consequence of the internal turmoil the unions opted for a short sharp pay negotiation for 2004. Following a vote of our members a pay increase was accepted of:

Year 1 - 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005

- 3.1% increase to basic pay rates.
- 3.1% increase to apply to all allowances with the exception of shifts, which are subject to a separate agreement, and on-call rates (see next point).
- Company on-call rates to be increased by 10%
- Increase of £40 to TAS, making the maximum payment available £1,100.
- In addition, a maximum payment of £100 will be available for separate targets, determined locally, primarily related to business transition/preparation for NDA.

Year 2 - 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006

- 3.1% increase on basic pay rates or RPI + _ %, whichever is higher.
- The % increase to apply to all allowances with the exception of shifts, which are subject to a separate agreement.
- At 1.4.05, the targets for the TAS payments of £1,100 and the new separate payment of £100 will be agreed locally as per current arrangements.

MAGNOX

Due to pressure of other commitments I was unable to properly pick up the National responsibility of the Magnox agreement. However, Glen Holdom (Regional Officer London Region) kindly stepped into the breach.

The issues facing GMB members in Magnox are essentially the same as BNFL and over the period of my responsibility we have, thanks to the efforts of our lay reps, kept both groups moving forward together. Thus a Magnox pay deal identical to the BNFL one above was put in place.

(Adopted)

BRO. P. DAVIES (National Secretary, Energy & Utilities): I am moving the Energy and Utilities Section Report, which is contained on pages 52 to 55 of the Report. I must, first, apologise to our members in the water industry for making no mention of their industry in the General Secretary's Report. I must pay tribute to my fellow officers and shop stewards who, in the absence of a dedicated National Secretary or Officer, have continued to support our members in the industries that have been subjected to massive takeovers and have been broken up not once but several times over.

In 1979, Thatcher declared war on the national industries that since 1945 have served the British public so well. We have short memories, but the coal industry was the envy of the rest of the world. The water industry gave the whole of the UK quality drinking water at a very low cost. There were very few problems with the quality of our household water. The sewerage plants that the Victorians made were of the highest quality. We should not forget that it was our members in the water industry who took on Thatcher in 1983 and was the only industry to

win a dispute in that period.

The rail network was well-maintained and delivered a better service than it does today. Power stations of all descriptions were not short of employees and were run at proper levels of skilled workers. Nuclear power was an invention that has given us clean and low price power and is run by highly skilled, dedicated workers. Gas workers were the providers of power for industry and the home.

The British utilities were the best in the world when these industries were run not for profit but for the good of the people. They were the best when service came before profit.

Since privatisation of our utilities and railways, we have rail crashes; we have problems with our water; the coal industry has declined to such an extent that we now import coal from Australia and Poland, which actually costs more than British coal and the cost of energy has increased by an alarming rate. Since 1977, household bills have trebled and trebled again. Industry during the past three years has seen fuel increases of well over 30%. Every aspect of our economy depends on some form of

power and our members are at the forefront of all industries that produce that power.

The effects on the section membership because of the privatisation of these industries has been devastating and tens of thousands of well-paid jobs have been lost.

Negotiations in all parts of the section have only been possible because of the commitment of the regional officers and our shop stewards. Brian Strutton, our National Secretary, has done a tremendous job representing our gas members at the national level. For that, I would like to put on record my thanks.

For my part, I have tried to give our members in British Energy a decent service. Pay negotiations in that industry have already started. The shop stewards, led by Adrian Cirket, have also done a tremendous job. I would like to thank Jim Moohan, our senior officer in Scotland, for his part in the British Energy pay negotiations. We also need to thank Allan Black who until recently has represented our members in the nuclear industry. The Energy & Utilities Sectional Committee has continued to give support to me throughout this period.

I would also like to make comment to Congress that without our members in the UK utilities and energy industries, there would be no water, no gas, no electricity and no energy for manufacturing. We all owe these members a great big thanks.

I would like to take this opportunity of also thanking all the staff at National Office for the fine work they have done in keeping the section functioning.

(The Energy & Utilities Section Report was adopted)

ENERGY & UTILITIES

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP - COAL, UTILITIES, WATER, RAILWAYS

COMPOSITE MOTION 35

(Covering Motions 198, 199, 205 and 314)

198 Coal Industry - Re-Nationalisation (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)

199 Transport and Utilities (Northern Region)

205 Labour's Pledge to The Nation and This Country's Water Workers (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)

314 Public Ownership of the Railways (London Region)

Congress believes that the British coal mining industry should be re-nationalised in order to prevent any further loss of access to our coal reserves.

Congress agrees that the most safe, efficient and effective way to organise our utilities in the best interests of UK citizens is through nationalisation. This will ensure that the profits are invested back in the industries rather than to shareholders who pay indecent salaries to industry heads.

Congress, we call upon you to remind this Labour Government of its pledge that when and if it came to power it would return the water industry back into public ownership. The water industry is still waiting for them to carry out that pledge they made so long ago and still remains on file.

Congress congratulates the GMB delegation at the 2004 Labour Party Conference for supporting the successful TSSA minority position calling for the taking of the railway network back into public ownership.

It expects the GMB to take every possible opportunity to ensure that Labour Party policy is not ignored and that it is included in future Labour Party election manifestos.

(Carried)

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, do you remember "Sid"? How about "Frank 'n' Stein"? The Tory Government spent a lot of money advertising the sales of our public utilities in a failed bid to increase share ownership, but I bet you never saw any adverts for the sale of the coal industry. Poor old coal. Poor relation. No adverts; just up for grabs to the highest bidder, who happened to be Richard Budge, escaping the failed Sheffield Airport fiasco, who borrowed "loadsamoney" to buy what was left of UK Coal in December 1994.

We used to have a poster in the snooker room at National College, which was closed by the Tories. On this poster the arrows are pits shut since privatisation. At the time of privatisation, RJB had 22 deep mines. Other operators, including Scottish Coal, Tower and Hatfield had maybe half a dozen between them. Eventually, RJB got rid of Budge and his name, but both RJB and UK Coal have done only one thing well, to close pits. They now have seven left. Bad geological conditions is the main reason given. I would say bad management.

Look at Ellington. It was twice saved with Government funds after massive lobbying. Then there was flooding earlier this year. The lads said: "Give us three days to get topside of it." The new chief exec took one look and said: "Close it immediately." It turns out there were plans from two years ago for building housing on the site. Perhaps they were only waiting for an excuse.

UK Coal is rapidly turning itself into a property company. The latest issue is with the Selby pit. The planning consent was quite explicit. Once coaling ceased, the sites were to be returned to agriculture. Locals are now having to fight UK Coal which wants to overturn that planning consent. We have hundreds of years of coal left in this country. The few pits left, originally paid for with taxpayers' money, are mostly now in the hands of a company more interested in the real estate value of the land. At least there used to be a logic behind coal dug in Selby and transported to the local Aire Valley power station in the old days of nationalised industries. Since privatisation, there has been no energy policy, just market forces.

The BBC had a programme on privatisation in 1997 just before Labour's landslide victory, which said: "No question who lost the most, the employees. Most efficiency was gained from making people redundant." Gordon Brown, interviewed on the programme, said: "When people look back, they will see a government so anxious to sell that it allowed assets to be sold at half or less than the price they were worth." I hope he still remembers that. After all, we are still burning coal to produce one third of our electricity.

We should not have to import coal. We are losing our workforce and our skills and, worst of all, we are losing access to our coal reserves. The only way to halt this decline is for the Government to take the coal industry back into public ownership linked with a proper energy policy and investment in new mines and stop coal mines becoming museums. After all, we now have almost more mining museums than working coal mines.

BRO. D. POLE (London): I am seconding Composite Motion 35. I trust the conference will forgive me if I speak primarily, as a worker for a rail union, on the latter part of the motion, but the principal points I wish to make refer to the motion in its entirety.

I make no apology for referring again to a speech I made at Congress 2003. Then I recalled that at the GMB Commercial Services conference in the mid 1990s, I was assured, and conference was assured, by a Labour MP, still sitting, that the very first thing a Labour Government would do when returned to power would be to take back the railways into public ownership without compensation. That promise, along with those in respect of the water industry and comments re "our air not being for sale", looks pretty pathetic now. In fact, those of you who were at the recent Labour Party Conference when TSSA won a major battle on the issue of rail re-nationalisation are likely to be aware of the intimidation and bullying that went on (1) to prevent the minority position being debated, and (2) to prevent it being carried. Those, including the GMB delegation, who supported the TSSA, deserve full support because the shenanigans that went on did no

credit to our Movement.

Despite this now being Labour policy, little or no reference was made to this in the recent election campaign, despite the fact, as every opinion poll shows, that re-nationalisation of the rail would be a massive vote winner. When taken back into the public sector, the reliability and punctuality of South Eastern trains improved and they out-performed other train operators. What did Labour do? They sold it off yet again.

The rail subsidy now exceeds that provided to British Rail, yet services are substantially worse. Since privatisation, train operating companies have received £10 billion in public subsidy and banked £1 billion in profits. Similar arguments can be made in respect of other services and utilities, and yet Labour is now even considering attacking the Post Office.

We, in the GMB, have quite rightly been totally in opposition to the "fat cat" culture, which is prevalent in many of the ex-nationalised industries, those essential services we need on a day-to-day basis. How can it be right in the 21st Century that these are run for profit and not need? GMB must continue the fight to re-nationalise. It must pull out all the stops to ensure Labour Party policy is not sidelined or ignored. This motion should be central to our beliefs and I urge maximum support. Thank you.

BRO. P. SAWDON (Northern): I am supporting Composite 35. Congress, this Northern Region motion calls for the nationalisation of utilities and transport as the best means of ensuring safety and efficiency. The Tories privatised our railways, degraded our transport services and the standards have slumped across the UK.

Colleagues, almost every week we read of serious and fatal accidents. Whilst the investment is reduced, shareholders and directors simply dig their noses deeper into the trough with fat wages and increases of dividends. Congress, our public services and utilities and transport are far too important to be left to the private market. I urge Congress to support.

BRO. C. ROFFEY (London): Madam President, Congress, good afternoon to you all. I was originally scheduled to support Motion 314 by the London Region on the public ownership of the railways, but, nevertheless, I am pleased to be able to say a few words on public ownership.

Our railways are and have always been a very emotive subject to me personally. In my early years, shortly after leaving school -- I am talking about 1966 -- I joined British Rail, as it was then, in the clerical grades. I was proud to be a member of staff at Britain's nationalised railway industry. I know that many of my then colleagues were of the same mind. Never, ever did I think at the time that this country's railways would be denationalised and sold off cheaply

by the Tories.

Britain's railways are now an uncoordinated hotchpotch of separate individual companies which do not even attempt to synchronise services for the benefit of customers -- I am sorry, I mean passengers -- but are only run for profit. Only by the taking back of the railway network into public ownership will services be run for the benefit and convenience of the general public and the profits ploughed back into the public purse. I urge you to support this motion and our brothers in TSSA. Thank you.

SIS. M. GREGG (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): I want to tell you that not only have the Labour Government privatised companies, but they are still privatising them. In Northern Ireland, water is a public service. It is not privatised. However, because money has not been spent on the infrastructure for many years, the people of Northern Ireland are now going to have to pay for water services in respect of which they already pay a certain percentage from their rates otherwise Northern Ireland will go along the same route as the rest of the United Kingdom. When you are looking at this motion, Mary, we ask that you bring this subject up with Peter Haine and Paul Murphy, because we have not been privatised yet and they can stop it if they want. I wanted to draw that fact to your attention. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, Margaret, the Tories tried to, didn't they, and we stopped them?

(Composite Motion 35 was carried)

ENERGY AND UTILITIES - DEMISE OF UK

MOTION 200

We the members of the Energy and Utilities section Liverpool Region call on the Government to halt the drive by major companies moving work abroad in the pursuance of more and more profits at the expense of British Workers.

1 BRANCH

Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. W. GOULDING (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): Colleagues, I have found an area where we are leading the way in Europe, but -- and it is a big "but" -- it is nothing to be proud of. The league we top is the jobs exporting league. In areas like health and safety, working time, information and consultation, we lag behind our European neighbours. However, when it comes to sending jobs abroad, we beat almost everyone else hands down.

Britain is so big in the off-shoring league that last year only the USA sent more jobs abroad than we did. To mention just a few of the major

announcements made last year: HSBC said it would off-shore 4,000 jobs; National Rail Enquiries and Lloyd's TSB announced 1,000 jobs, each going to India; the insurer Aviva said 2,350 jobs in call centres and IT processing sections would go east and, more recently, and with an impact very close to home for me, Marconi announced a cut of 800 in its UK workforce, including the closing of its Edge Lane plant in Liverpool. The reason given was a decision to concentrate on its sites elsewhere in European and North America following its failure to win part of a major BT contract.

I don't want to get bogged down in quoting figures, but one to remember is that more than one million manufacturing jobs have been lost since 1997, jobs at large and small companies, manufacturing all kinds of goods that people here need. Food, clothes, furniture, pharmaceuticals, electrical goods have all gone or gone abroad.

The pace at which jobs are being lost is accelerating. This deepening crisis in British industry demands action from the Government. Increased state aid and state intervention are needed to sustain growth. With continuing low levels of Government support and chronic under-investment, things will only get worse. Here, we're back in our usual position, well down the European league. In terms of state aid for manufacturing, we lag behind our European partners. The dramatic decline compared with the rest of Europe is due mainly to a lack of Government support, weak rights at work and low levels of business investment. France, Germany, Italy and Spain all give at least double the amount of state aid that we do. These state aids are all within the EU rules and provide support for research, development and training innovation.

GMB members demand action from the UK Government now, action to protect the remaining jobs, investing in new jobs and providing training to tackle the chronic skills shortage. Colleagues, I move.

(The motion was formally seconded)

ENERGY AND UTILITIES - ENERGY POLICY

MOTION 201

We the members of the Energy and Utilities section Liverpool Region call on the Government to review its Energy Policy to reassure the public that the private sector is working in the best interest of the community.

1 BRANCH

Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. DELAHUNTY (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): Congress, this motion calls on the Government to review their policy on energy and to assess whether

it is working in the public interest. For example, I would like to refer to the gas industry. The GMB has been a major influence on the gas industry with a simple negotiating policy of a highly paid, highly skilled workforce to work in the public interest and to give a high standard of service.

Along comes privatisation and during eight years with natural wastage and redundancy policies, the skilled workforce has been supplemented by agency staff. This is not working in the public interest. Our concerns are that the standards of service and safety will decline. I ask for your support.

(The motion was formally seconded)

ENERGY POLICY

MOTION 202

Conference believes the UK should be self sufficient in energy supply and reaffirms its commitment to a balanced energy policy and calls on the UK Government to begin to pursue as a matter of the utmost urgency an Energy Policy based on secure energy made in Britain.

Conference recognises that this policy cannot be realised without a sizeable dependency on nuclear energy provision
SELLAFIELD BRANCH
Northern Region
(Carried)

BRO. P. KANE (Northern): Congress, our motion seeks to do two things. Firstly, it reaffirms the GMB's longstanding support for a balanced energy-generating policy. Today that policy is based on three key pillars; renewables, clean coal and nuclear.

Secondly, it calls for new investment in these three energy pillars that could greatly help Britain's beleaguered manufacturing industry. For the past two years, we, nuclear workers, have been campaigning with colleagues in the coal union, NACODS, for what we call a balanced but secure energy policy "Made in Britain".

To meet our greenhouse gas emission targets, Britain must develop all the "clean energy" we can, including clean coal and nuclear power. We, nuclear workers, wholeheartedly support renewable energies, wind, wave, solar and others, and we support the continued investment in their development.

However, Congress, renewable energies on their own will not reverse the process of global warming that is already well underway. We are going to need all the "clean coal" and all the nuclear power plants we can muster. We also need a secure energy policy that will unhook us from more and more dependence on Middle East oil and Russian gas and ensure economic growth.

As some groups do, it is foolish to set renewables against clean coal and nuclear power. Simple arithmetic tells us we need them all. Both coal and nuclear are base load suppliers. They produce 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks of the year; so it gives us security of supply whether or not the wind blows or Russian gas supplies die off.

However, both Britain's coal fired power stations and our nuclear power stations are coming to the end of their lives. That is why we need a programme of new clean coal and new nuclear power stations. We have the technology. Congress, the Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC) power plant can now be produced in the UK and represents a major advance in clean coal technology.

Countries like India and China, which will continue to burn massive amounts of coal for many years to come, could also benefit from IGCC clean coal plants that can be made in Britain. British Nuclear Fuel's new nuclear power plant, the Westinghouse designed AP1000, also represents a major advance in nuclear generation technology. Like the IGCC, 90% of the AP1000 can be sourced and manufactured in Britain. I say that both the IGCC and the AP1000 can be manufactured in Britain, but time is not on our side.

If UK manufacturing and engineering continues its rapid decline, if we continue to lose jobs and skills, we soon won't be able to make widgets, never mind embark on an ambitious programme of new clean coal and nuclear power plants.

So support our motion for a balanced energy policy that will keel Britain's lights on and give a much needed boost to Britain's manufacturing industry. I move.

(The motion was formally seconded)

ENERGY POLICY

MOTION 203

Congress recognises the proposals to develop wind farms as an integrated part of a responsible energy policy of the future. Wind farms provide a clean safe source of energy with the associated job creation that the building of the farms would create. Congress welcomes proposals for a diverse, sustainable energy policy that includes wind power, and will campaign to ensure that the jobs created from this initiative are directed towards those areas that have suffered through the decline of manufacturing and pit closures.

HARTLEPOOL 4
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. B. TAYLOR (Northern): Congress, I move Motion

203.

Everyone is aware that carbon emissions are a major threat to our environment. Obviously, they have to be reduced. So it is no surprise that the Government have set targets to increase renewable energy by 15% during the next ten years.

Wind energy is clean, safe and, obviously, renewable, so those people who protest against wind power need to start to live in the real world. Everybody accepts that we need wind farms but we have an issue of “not in my backyard”. Everybody says that we should have wind farms but when plans are put forward to site them in any area, most people say, “No, we do not want them in Durham”, “We don’t want them in Yorkshire” or “We don’t want them in Devon”. The later example is Burnhope Parish Council. A report in the press yesterday said that they are opposed to having four turbines within their boundary. However, the majority of people in the country realise that we must reduce carbon emissions and, obviously, they support the idea of having wind turbines otherwise our environment will suffer.

It has been estimated that we will need between 15,000 - 20,000 turbines to reach the Government’s criterion. That is an investment of about £30 billion. That investment can produce many manufacturing jobs, especially in places like the north-east and in the Tees Valley where I come from. Therefore, we are asking the CEC to support a sustainable energy policy, which includes winds, but also to campaign to ensure that any manufacturing jobs come to places like the north-east because of the decline of manufacturing work during the past few years. I urge Congress to support the motion.

BRO. A. DALL (Northern): I second Motion 203 on our energy policy. This is my first time at Congress.

The mover of the motion has highlighted the power and influence of the NIMBY in this debate, the “Not in my backyard” brigade. Colleagues, we have to ask ourselves where would we be today if the NIMBY had been around two hundred years ago?

If something is as clean and safe as a wind farm can be controversial, I think it is safe to say that the industrial revolution would ever have started if the NIMBY had had their way. Surely, the time has come for common sense and to limit the influence and impact of the NIMBY. I urge Congress to support Motion 203.

THE PRESIDENT: Well done.

POWER GENERATION POLICY

MOTION 204

Congress believes that as many Magnox Generating Plants reach the end of their life and

many coal fired power stations begin to creak with age, that the UK faces a potential power crisis as a result of privatisation and the lack of long term planning and a coherent energy policy.

Congress calls upon this Government to introduce an energy policy which guarantees long term energy supply, demonstrates long term planning and includes proposals for construction of generating plant over an extended period.

**SOUTHAMPTON NO. 1 Z42 BRANCH
Southern Region**

(Carried)

BRO. B. HULLEY (Southern): I move Motion 204. There is, potentially, an energy crisis on the horizon for this country as a result of privatisation, the lack of long-term planning and a coherent energy, many power generation plants in the UK are nearing the end of their useful lives.

It is about time that the Government introduced a coherent energy policy which guarantees a long-term energy supply. We need long-term planning proposals for construction programmes of new generating plants and an end to the “bury your head in the sand” policies of this Government. Thank you.

(The Motion was formally seconded)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak in this debate?

BRO. P. SILLITO (Liverpool, North Wales & Irish): I am a first time speaker and seconding Motion 202.

In supporting this motion I want to address how the Government can signal a balanced energy policy. This is imperative because peak energy demand in the UK now exceeds supply, even with imported sources. We face a real danger of blackouts this winter. As a result, the Government should declare their targets and market shares for all sources of energy supply, including nuclear and coal new-build. We must preserve our dwindling gas supplies for domestic use.

Come on, Government. Get off the fence.

BRO. A. CIRKET (Southern): I work in a nuclear power station and I have done so for a long time. I even got a mention in the Utilities Report for the work I have done for my colleagues in the nuclear industry. All the comments you have heard so far about the crisis that is going to affect this country if we do not plan for the future about our power is quite true.

Consider last winter, as an example. If you think about your electricity bill, you pay about 10 pence per unit for electricity, but at one point during the winter it was costing 40p per unit for the

distribution companies to buy electricity off the generators. You can see on those economics that it is not going to take long before we are going to run out of power because what drives the level is demand. Obviously, the demand that existed within the country at that time was far greater than what we could generate.

If you examine the nuclear industry - you will have seen on the television the debates - the big thing that people are coming round to is "We don't do carbon dioxide". If all the nuclear stations were shut tomorrow, the result on the environment would be equivalent to putting 50% more cars on the roads in one go. That is how much carbon dioxide we save in this country by having nuclear power.

I should also make the point that at the nuclear power station I work at there are just over 500 permanently employed staff. I think there are seven people who do not belong to a trade union. Some of the nuclear stations have had no lost time accidents in years. I am talking of two to three years. So our safety record is one of the best. We have skilled staff on good wages. I know we had the debate earlier on, but the equal pay issue was dealt with years ago.

When you leave this Congress and people talk to you about our energy policy, talk to them about nuclear because that is what we are going to need. Thank you.

BRO. P. PERRY (Lancashire): Chair and Conference, we are going to lose a lot of plant in the next five or six years. I hope that when we decide to rebuild everything is built in this country and not sent abroad. This work must not go out of our country.

BRO. W. WHITFIELD (CEC, Energy & Utilities): I am responding to Motion 204 - the power generation policy.

The CEC is recommending that Motion 204 be referred. The GMB is one of the largest trade unions in the energy sector with membership in all sectors of the industry. Since the 1980s the GMB has proposed that the UK should have a balanced energy policy based on a mix of indigenous coal, gas and oil, combined with the technically based approach using nuclear and all renewables.

The GMB believes that a balanced energy policy must also include conservation measures, investment in renewables, combined heat in the power, research and development into clean coal and alternative fuels.

For far too long the energy policy has been based on market and price alone. The GMB's view is that an energy policy must also include security of supply, investment in new technology, jobs and what the best programme is for the UK and our economy.

The Government are committed to reducing the emissions from the energy sector and they have set a target across the UK of providing 10% of electricity

from renewable sources by the year 2010, and to double that figure to 20% by the year 2020. Scottish targets are better and higher, namely, 18% and 40% during the years mentioned. This is in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 20% below the 1990 levels.

However, it is possible that these targets will not be met and that the trade union Movement is concerned that this gap will be filled by imported natural gas. The CEC is recommending referring the motion to the GMB National Energy & Utilities Section Committee to be considered in line with the existing balanced energy policy of the GMB.

(Motions 200, 201, 202 and 203 were carried)

(Motion 204 was referred)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Congress. I will see you tomorrow morning at 9.30. Have a good evening.

(Congress adjourned)