

GMB – BRITAIN'S GENERAL UNION

PROCEEDINGS

at the

ANNUAL CONGRESS

The Brighton Centre, Brighton

on

Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2007 – Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**FOURTH DAY**

Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2007

## **FOURTH DAY'S PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2007**

### **MORNING SESSION**

*Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, come to order, please.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE PRESIDENT: I remind delegates that this is the last morning that the GMB Congress TV via the GMB website will be broadcast so this is the last morning that you will be on television. So you are all now stars.

Please remember your fire and safety drill. Please make sure your mobile phones are switched off. I have done very badly this year. I will have to do something about it.

Congress, just to remind you, tonight is the President's Night and it is at the Holiday Inn Hotel. You are all welcome. Entry is by your credentials. It is a *Tribute to Elvis Presley Night* and our members are in the band. They do these gigs, which are really great, for Kidney Research. So please come along. Our sponsors will be very grateful when we spend their money tonight.

I have a couple more announcements to make. The *Troops Out of Iraq/Don't Attack Iran* fringe meeting at 12.45 will be on the fourth floor landing area of the Brighton Centre. When Ronnie Waugh comes in will you tell him that I have made the announcement.

Can the Asda Stores NSSG, whatever that means, members meet with Jude Brimble for a huddle at 10 a.m. to the corridor to my left. The GMB Southern Region Migrant Workers' Fringe Meeting is at 12.45. The Thorn Credit Union: the brandy draw result was the blue ticket and the winner is Margaret Cartwright, Midland & East Coast Region.

You all have a card on your tables addressed to the Rt. Hon. John Hutton, Secretary of State. Please send them off because it is to support our Remploy members. Thank you.

Finally, there is a fringe meeting in the Skylight Restaurant: *We will return to Diego Garcia*.

Just to remind you that the Southern Region has membership forms.

### **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 4**

THE PRESIDENT: I call on Gerry Ferguson to give Standing Orders Committee Report No. 4.

BRO. G. FERGUSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): I formally move SOC Report No. 4.

Withdrawn Motions. The SOC has been informed that the following motion has been withdrawn: Motion 192: Prospective Parliamentary Candidates – Constituency Labour Party – All Women Shortlists, standing in the name of Southern Region.

President and Congress, I move Standing Orders Report No. 4.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does Congress agree?

*(Standing Orders Committee Report No. 4 was adopted)*

THE PRESIDENT: I have seen that Mr. Toomey is in. When I told him that we were having a *Tribute to Elvis Presley Evening* tonight, he said to me, “That’ll take me back”. I said, “I wish some sod would take you back”. *(Laughter)*

Let’s get on with the business.

## **REGIONAL SECRETARY’S REPORT: NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION (pages 135-147 of the General Secretary’s Report)**

### **NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION**

This report covers the confirmation of the new North West & Irish Region and covers the former Liverpool, North Wales & Irish and Lancashire Regions for the period January to December 2006.

Congress will be aware that there have been some boundary changes. It is therefore appropriate that we take this opportunity to thank all the Staff from both the former Liverpool, North Wales & Irish and Lancashire Regions, who over the past year have worked extremely hard in servicing the membership through a difficult period. We would like to put on record a thank you to all the Senior Representatives, Shop Stewards, Officers and Staff who have now transferred into the South Western Region. We wish them and their new Region good luck for the future and we know, having worked with them so long, that they are a credit to the GMB. We also said goodbye to other colleagues from the former Lancashire Region who, together with Staff and Officers have moved across to Yorkshire, Northern, Midlands & East Coast and Birmingham Regions. We wish them and their new Regions all the best for the future and would also like to thank them for their commitment over the years to the former Lancashire Region.

We would also like to put on record thanks to the NAU on behalf of the former Lancashire Region for their professionalism in dealing with some of the sensitive matters during this time.

#### **1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT**

Financial Membership	87,873
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	25,284
MANUFACTURING SECTION	26,543
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	36,046
Grade 1 members	61,000
Grade 2 members	16,733
Retired, Reduced Rate and others	10,140

Male Membership	52,628
Female Membership	35,245
Total number recruited 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	1,0278
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	N/A
Membership on Check-off	57,755
Membership on Direct Debit	16,782

## RESPONSE TO THE ORGANISING AGENDA

Following decisions reached by Congress 2005 the Region has continued with its policy of freeing-up officers' time by reducing the number of officers that sit on committees and have been proactive in promoting lay representatives to take up these positions. Therefore allowing officers to concentrate on recruitment, retention and organisation and allowing lay representatives to gain valuable experience from sitting on these committees. This will further assist them in their development as lay representatives which will lead to a stronger, more active representative structure within the Region.

Given the on-going issue of single status and in particular equal pay, it is accepted that the regional organising agenda will continue to be dominated by Public Services and that the Region will maintain its position of promoting equality using all methods available to us, including the regional magazine, website, bulletins and mailshots to members.

Lay representatives are also actively encouraged at various meetings within the Region including Regional Council/Committee, sectional conferences and equality meetings to become actively more involved in the Region to assist recruitment either by joining up with Officers in teams or improving or recruiting and retaining members within their own workplace. The emphasis on lay representatives' involvement at all levels and the focus on recruitment and retention will continue on to the new Region.

In Northern Ireland it has been very necessary to go back to the drawing board in respect of ensuring that all officers, staff and lay representatives fully understand and are completely committed to our new organising agenda. In far too many instances in Northern Ireland, officers are involved in providing constant hand-holding support to lay members, which can best be provided by our team of lay representatives. It has been explained that we must achieve this objective, and in order to do so, we have to ensure that all of our lay representatives are suitably briefed and suitably trained, which will allow us to move away from this "dependency culture" on officers, who can best spend their time in developing the GMB organisation in areas where there is potential for growth and where we do not have a current infrastructure of lay representatives.

Upon early examination, it is self-evident that we have a number of very able and dedicated lay representatives, particularly in Public Services, and also in many other sectors of industry in Northern Ireland. It is therefore the intention to develop and nurture the full potential of this group of dedicated representatives, in order that they can become much more involved in the day-to-day support of our members and also so that they can play a vital role in recruitment, whilst also maintaining an effective GMB organisation within their workplace.

In Northern Ireland we have been able to secure the release of some of our more experienced lay representatives, a number of whom now play an important role in helping to assist members, and who also play a role in recruitment. We will continue to develop this approach in the coming year, as this will serve to underpin our plans for growth generally.

A further important additional aspect of our organising agenda in Northern Ireland is for us to carry out a

comprehensive review of our branch structure. In far too many instances, officers are responsible for the running of branches. The branch review will be carried out in full consultation with members and present lay representatives, in order to ensure that we establish branches that are better aligned to supporting the needs of our members in the workplace, and branches that once again can be run and serviced efficiently and effectively by properly accredited branch officers.

## **RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS**

This Region has adopted a policy on recruitment to consolidate the membership in every industry where we currently organise and where we have recognition agreements. Throughout the year there have been various meetings with officers and representatives across the Public Services Section as there has been continual activity within this area of local government over the last 12 months, most notably surrounding the Local Government Pension ballot in March 2006 and the ongoing issue of equal pay across the Region.

The Pension dispute was very well supported within the Region and a large number of new members were recruited around the time of the one day of action.

We have also seen a number of new members recruited into the organisation on the back of the launch of the equal pay claims. This has been particularly noticeable in Liverpool City Council and Sefton MBC.

As a Region we have followed on from the National Organising Team's recommendations on recruitment and have campaigned in G4S, Southern Cross and also schools, with varying degrees of success. As a Region we have also targeted such companies as Morgans and P.H. Jones, where we have now consolidated a membership base and it is our intention to increase that figure and move towards potential recognition.

Throughout 2006 the organisers have continued to operate in recruitment teams. This will continue into 2007 and will be used to complement the Regional Organising Team which has been set up as a result of the forming of the new North West and Irish Region.

Public Services, Southern Cross Residential Care Homes and G4S Securicor continue to be our prime recruitment targets in Northern Ireland also.

We are developing plans for a strategic recruitment campaign in Education. Regrettably our present database does little to provide us with the knowledge of where we have members in schools in varying parts of Northern Ireland, and it will therefore be necessary to develop not just a geographical knowledge of the schools we intend to target but also to identify issues that effect members of staff at those various locations.

As a first step to this recruitment campaign, we have embarked upon a media campaign whereby we have identified the fact that one in three schools is up for review in the future. The Government enlisted a review of future educational needs in Northern Ireland, and in doing so they have established what is now commonly known as the Baines Report. This report identifies 457 schools that could potentially close through this review process. Comments made to the media were to create public awareness and to empower local communities to participate in the debate in ensuring that future educational needs of young people in this area are properly provided for.

There is grave concern about the prospect of schools closing in remote rural areas, which would then make it very difficult for young children to travel long distances to attend school. We have also emphasised through the media the risk of job losses to our members who provide vital and dedicated

support services for the needs of children attending these schools. We have also undertaken a mailshot to 4000 members of staff, creating further awareness of the GMB in advance of our forthcoming recruitment campaign.

We have secured recognition with Regency Carpets, which has led to a significant growth in membership, and this forms part of an ongoing campaign to consolidate our membership to the maximum in this area.

We are delighted to report that the GMB in Northern Ireland is coming alive again. We have embarked upon many media campaigns raising the profile of the GMB in Northern Ireland. For example, we have made the public aware and drawn comparison between the average rate of pay in the UK to that of Northern Ireland, and it is clear to see that there is still a major problem of workers being undervalued and underpaid in Northern Ireland.

It is part of our role to ensure that the input of workers in Northern Ireland is better valued, and that we go through a proper skills audit, making comparisons with workers in the UK, in order to ensure that we get pay up to level of that in the UK. Presently the average worker is paid over £100.00 per week more in the UK than that of the average rate of pay applied in Northern Ireland.

Another of our most recent media campaigns has focused on Social Services and the provision of care in the homes for the elderly through the Home Help Service. Presently 25,000 elderly people benefit from the support of home Helps but there are many others in our local communities who are in equal need of this vital support service. All in all, these media campaigns have helped to raise the GMB's profile and the many links we have with the local communities, and most importantly the vital role that we can play in supporting the needs of the community and our members who are employed in the many support services in Northern Ireland.

A big thank you must also go to the former Lancashire Region Shop Stewards and Officers for the magnificent result achieved against JJB Sports at its Wigan Depot and across the country, assisted by National Office (media) and the other Regions who came to our assistance when bodies were needed during this dispute.

## **ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION**

The Region has adapted well over the years to the demise in manufacturing jobs which has seen the Region's membership shift considerably towards the Public Services Section. Within public services we continue to see local authorities transferring out services over to private enterprises and the Region has carried out a number of industrial action ballots against some of these contractors over the last 12 months.

The Region has been hit by a number of redundancies over the last 12 months, most noticeably the recent announcement at Liverpool John Lennon Airport with the loss of 110 jobs, with the transferring of the baggage handling service from the Airport's own ownership to Servisair. Within Northern Ireland we have seen that the clothing and textile industry has been completely decimated and there is only a fraction of the membership remaining in this sector. We have also seen losses in such high profile company as Shorts (presently known as Bombardier). It is anticipated that with the formulation of the new North West and Irish Region this will open up the number of opportunities and that throughout 2007 we will be able to grow the new Region.

As already indicated, we have seen a major decline in manufacturing in Northern Ireland, and this has given rise to growth in retail and the service industry generally. It is encouraging to see that unemployment has now gone down to 4½% and this is in stark contrast with previous years when it was

as high as 16%. The present growth in jobs provide for new opportunities for the GMB to recruit.

Our present branch structure has been in place for many years, and has not kept pace with changes in industry, whereby we need to realign the roles and the function of the branch in a way that we will be best equipped to offer the maximum support to our members, particularly within an economy which is seeing a major shift from manufacturing to that of retail.

Now that the peace dividend has become permanent in Northern Ireland, we are seeing a massive increase in outside investment, and the GMB is determined to be at the forefront of these developments and the changing communities, which will provide for a major opportunity for growth, unlike nothing we have previously seen in Northern Ireland.

The current national unemployment rate is 5.5% and the national claimant rate is 2.9%. Across the region the claimant rate is as follows:

**North West : 2.7% Northern Ireland : 2.4 Wales : 2.4%**

The Region has thirteen areas which have been identified as above the national claimant average:

Blackpool: 3.9%	Rochdale: 3.0%
Halton: 3.3%	Salford: 3.0%
Knowsley: 4.4%	Sefton: 3.0%
Liverpool: 5.5%	Wirral: 3.0%
Manchester: 3.9%	Belfast: 3.8%
Oldham: 3.0%	Derry: 4.5%
Strabane: 4.7%	

## 2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	4
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	31
Organising Officers	-
No. of Branches	262
New Branches	3
Branch Equality Officers	26
Branch Youth Officers	6

## 3 BENEFITS

Dispute	23,180.00
Total Disablement	4,000.00
Working Accident	11,472.85
Occupational Fatal Accident	19,723.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	1,052.00

#### 4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

Two editions of the Liverpool, North Wales and Irish Region magazine CoastLines were published in 2006 and mailed directly to all members in May and November. The Lancashire Region magazine Reunion was relaunched in summer 2006 and a new North West & Irish magazine with a new title is planned for summer 2007. There were two editions of CoastLines Cymraeg the Welsh language newsletter which includes stories from CoastLines of particular interest to members in North Wales and the range of publications in the Welsh language was extended with translations of a number of GMB Health & Safety leaflets. These were used for local authority workers in Gwynedd in particular. 'Protecting People at Work', an A5 booklet that includes information on benefits and services as well as rights at work and advantages of union membership, is used in the new members pack as well as for recruitment purposes. An updated and revised version is planned for early 2007. A wide range of in-house literature designed for particular workplaces or particular target groups was produced. This included recruitment fliers, leaflets, posters and a booklet aimed at dispelling some of the myths about migrant workers.

The Local Government Pensions dispute was by far the biggest press story with widespread coverage in the lead up to the strike and plenty of good photos on the day. The closure of both Mersey tunnels attracted national as well as regional media. Of the thousands of workers taking action it was the withdrawal of labour of this small group of workers that made the biggest impact on travel to work and received the highest profile coverage. The national Remploy demonstration in Liverpool in September was well reported including colour photos with GMB placards prominent. Thanks to Remploy workers from near and far who braved wet and windy conditions to swell the crowds. It is not always easy to quantify the impact of press coverage as much of this is to do with awareness raising and profile but in particular cases it can help get results. In North Wales strong press coverage brought pressure to bear on the Leader of Conwy Council to apologise for false accusations about refuse collectors and in Liverpool, accusations of bullying of street cleaners provided unwelcome publicity for the company that was helpful to the Union. When the European Court ruled in March that rolled-up holiday is unlawful it represented a very significant legal victory not just for the individual and the Region but for workers throughout the country. This decision was widely reported in specialist publications. The presence of Prime Minister Tony Blair and to a lesser extent Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Hain at Congress, resulted in more coverage than usual in the Region. This was a good opportunity for positive reports on campaigning issues such as asbestos compensation and bank holidays. Congress also generated publicity for the campaign for justice for Cammell Laird workers imprisoned for their part in an industrial dispute in 1984. Survey style national press releases continue to create interest and the Coach & Horses demonstrations in the Region provided eye catching coverage of the Asda dispute. National and regional press coverage has been monitored using individual websites.

The issue of equal pay has been highlighted in regional magazines and also on the regional website where a claim form can be downloaded. The equal rights section on the website has been expanded with additional pages for young members and LGBT members. The Liverpool, North Wales and Irish Region site has been amended to provide a temporary site for the North West & Irish Region while a new site is being developed. The national Asda website has been maintained by Lancashire Region and after a slow start has attracted regular contributions from members in Asda stores and depots across the country. This very successful site was submitted for the TUC Media Awards 2006.

The Region has advertised in the Morning Star on a regular basis for conference editions and has also supported a wall planner produced and distributed by the Merseyside Coalition Against Racism and Fascism. Sponsorship of Salford Reds Rugby League team included advertising on shirts, at the ground

and in match programmes.

The Northern Ireland Children's Hospice and Zoë's Place Baby Hospice in Liverpool have been supported through fundraising.

Two Women's Conferences have been held in the Region in 2006. The first in Bolton on 7th/8th March marked International Women's Day and subjects covered included adults with learning difficulties, women's health, racism and bullying. The second in Liverpool in October was the largest to date with sessions on palliative care, medical negligence, work-life balance, pensions and making resolutions. At this conference National President Mary Turner formally launched Learning Routes a GMB/ULF project that has seen a double-decker bus converted into a fully equipped mobile learning centre.

## 5 LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
1275	1275

#### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
1411	647	2	761	1	
			£4,086,559.42	£7,781.75	£4,094,341.17
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006			2425		

### (b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	241
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#### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
328	231	0	90	7	
			£304,958.99	£551,040.00	£855,998.99
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006			67		

### (c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
4	1	£4.900.83	2

**(d) Social Security Cases**

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.20
10	4	1

The Region undertook a review of the legal services and with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> June 2006 Francis Hanna & Co Solicitors were appointed to act on behalf of the Union and its members in Northern Ireland in connection with personal injury and industrial disease claims as well as the field of employment law. This complements the services currently provided by EAD Solicitors and Simpsons Solicitors.

**6 EQUAL RIGHTS**

The Region's Equal Rights and Race Committees have met regularly, with the majority of these meeting being well attended. Both Committees have prioritised the year ahead and have submitted action plans, which at the end of 2006, most of the priorities had been achieved, with only a slight overspill into 2007. The reason for this being the proposed Regional changes would almost certainly impact on particular objectives.

This year also saw the formation of a Regional SHOUT forum and plans to broaden this forum are underway with hopefully a campaign in 2007 to publicise around the local gay communities. Regional delegates have been elected to stand on the national SHOUT forum, and delegates report back to RERAC on their activities, delegates also supported the launch of the National SHOUT forum by participating in the 2006 Gay Pride event.

The Region organised its 5<sup>th</sup> Women's Conference, again education and empowering being a strong theme that still remain instrumental in all of our conferences past and future. This particular conference in a workshop raised the issue of formulating successful motions; it was particularly interesting how very little guidance there is, either nationally or regionally on this. As a result the Region has decided to publish a guidance booklet to send to all our women activists.

Women and Men's health awareness were promoted with a one day seminar and the Region again celebrated International Women's Days (also with a one day seminar).

The Regions also supported and promoted the following campaigns:

- Breast Cancer Awareness – raising £400
- Fylde's Women's Aid – raising £1000
- National Refuge Campaign recycling old mobile phones, which carry a donation of £3 per phone to aid women suffering against domestic violence across the country.

The Regions Race Committee has committed itself to supporting the national Stop the BNP campaign and promotes and publicises this wherever it can. Migrant workers are also high on the agenda. Regional and national publicity materials have been widely publicised to branches and are available for download on our website. Kerrygold in Leek saw an increase of members from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, as English was not their first language, regional and national resources were extremely useful. Vision Associates Senior Diversity Officer, Barsit Shah has signed up to the GMB and hopes to work with the Region in promoting Equality/Diversity in the workplace.

Both Equal Rights and Race held Regional Conferences, the themes of which were overviews on the

Women in Work Commission results given by EAD Solicitors and Stop the BNP Campaign given by Mick Rix. James Piper, a medical student at UMIST who is a member of both NUS disability and LGBT Committees gave an overview on the law and how this affects disabled and LGBT communities. A taster session on branch equality/race training was also put together and it is hoped to further extend this in 2007 with a one day training event. National Equal Rights and Race Conferences were attended and motions forwarded were all carried.

The re-launch of the Branch Equality/Race Officer position saw the Region revise and update its current database to pull together the link between its Committees and Branches. This re-launch did give an increase in the numbers of both Branch Equality/Race Officers, but there is still a great deal of work to do. Communications are now sent direct to these branch positions.

Both Committees have been strongly promoted in the Regional magazine and our website has been rejuvenated to show current Regional and National campaigns and links to other useful sites. It is hoped that we can further improve in 2007.

The ethnic breakdown – North West is as follows

17 Delegates:

2 Black

1 Asian

1 Irish

7 White male

6 White females

Northern Ireland is beginning to experience a very notable increase in the number of migrant workers now taking up jobs in many sectors of the economy. Migrant workers are mainly coming here from Poland, and we are presently pursuing an important recruitment initiative in the Mid-Ulster area. In order to take an effective and measured approach, we recognise the importance of bringing an interpreter onboard with our team to meet with the growing Polish community. We are presently seeking the release of a lead Polish representative from the Southern Region.

There is an Equal Rights Committee which consists of 8 representatives. There are 2 black female representatives on this Committee, and this equates to 25% of that combined representative group. The remaining 6 representatives are from Northern Ireland.

## **7 YOUTH**

The Region has maintained its commitment to promote our Young Members Section in a year that has seen many changes.

A survey was undertaken to aid the Region in developing an active group of branch youth officers. Sadly, results of the survey highlighted the fact that even in the most organised branches there was a lack of activity in this role. In response to this branches were again written to and it was reiterated that this was a rule-book position. Again this seems to have made little difference to the total number of branch youth officers.

The Region's website has been updated and youth has been publicised in editions of the regional magazine and to branches. The Region further publicised young member services in sponsoring a parent/pupil handbook that went out to 25,000 students/parents and teachers across Liverpool.

On a more positive note the Region was represented at the TUC Young Members' Conference and initially participated in the GMB' National Young Members' meeting with Debbie Coulter which was convened in

response to an earlier meeting with Debbie at the TUC Young Members' Conference. Unfortunately our delegate, Julie Sillito, has had to step down in the latter part of 2006. She was unable to commit the time due to her own changing circumstances in her chosen career to aid the Region any further at this time in its efforts to promote the Youth Section. Sadly this also left our Region unrepresented in the national relaunch of Young Members that took place in December. Despite our efforts to address this with further publicity on finding a replacement delegate in a relatively short space of time.

From regional and national feedback, this section in its current format, is virtually totally inactive and fails to grab the attention of our young members. The Region is aware that at last the GMB is taking steps nationally to address this with the relaunch and more importantly allowing young members themselves to write their own agenda in respect of how this is best progressed.

## 8 TRAINING 9 HEALTH & SAFETY

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	15	139	31	170	340
GMB/TUC Induction (6 days)	5	53	13	66	396
Branch Officers (please specify subject)	-	-	-	-	-

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Women's Event	1	2	16	18	18
European Launch	2	29	13	42	84
Communication	2	9	3	12	24
Age Discrimination	2	19	5	24	24
Pensions	1	6	2	8	16
ULR	1	14	1	15	75
Tutor Review Day	2	12	6	18	18

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Health & Safety (2 days)	14	158	32	190	2,660
H&S Inspection (2 days)	4	30	5	35	70
H&S Worker Involvement (1 day)	1	29	2	31	31

On Site H&S (1 day) Workplace Training	1	7	5	12	12
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(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Women's Conference	2	4	75	79	79
Northern College	7	26	0	26	182

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Combination of 10 day & short courses	192	788	169	957	
ICTUC / NW TUC	22	15	7	22	220

## 9 HEALTH & SAFETY

All courses including Health & Safety representative induction courses are delivered around the organising agenda. Recruitment/retention specifically organising around Health & Safety issue in the workplace, using contact with members/non members through workplace inspections to organise and educate also building on safety representatives successes.

Inspection courses, best delivered in the workplace, deal with real issues in the workplace ensuring representatives and are seen as proactive and raising the awareness to members/non members of what we do. Delivered at Henry Wincanton where we raised the profile of representatives on site both with members and managers.

Another initiative to cross the Atlantic, Behavioural Safety Programmes are being rolled out by consultants and to a degree supported by HSE. The role of the Education Officer has been to raising the awareness around the down side of such programmes and to date have been involved after such initiatives have been consulted to representatives and managers. It is important that representatives are forewarned about BSP's and what they are about i.e. blame the worker not the system. Hierarchy of measures turned upside down and big emphasis of PPE rather than elimination. It is felt that BSP's should have alongside them a public health warning to all representatives.

A number of Safety representatives attended Hazard 06 and submitted reports back on activity they were involved in. This was a successful event.

Workplace inspections are very time consuming but useful in raising profile of GMB in the workplace. Many other unions do not seem very active in this area, but we continue to support representatives at the coal face, meeting management and a big emphasis on ensuring safety representatives are enforcing their rights. The feed-back we get from representatives is that the course gives them an opportunity to develop their practical skills, which allows them to be more effective in their workplace role.

Workers Memorial Day 06 was held in Manchester City Centre for the second year running. This has been a well attended and publicised event with speakers ranging from MP's, trade unions and victims' families. GMB

has played a major part in the organisation of the event in partnership with Manchester Hazard Centre, which was well attended by activist members and the public. This event is growing year on year, being organised around health and safety and Safety representatives' rights. This day is also acknowledged at offices across the Region and workplace Health & Safety representatives are encouraged to introduce initiatives in their workplace which coincide with the day.

Mesotheloma Day 06 was held in Manchester Town Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> February, an event bringing together trade unions, victims' families and government bodies to discuss issues around legislation and compensation for victims' families. GMB have supported this event and will continue to do so to promote the work GMB are doing and to fight for better controls – i.e. enforcement.

All officers receive updates and fact sheets on health and safety and other employment related topics on a monthly basis. Representatives receive information specific to health and safety through their branches. Health and safety Induction courses are provided to equip representatives with knowledge and skills to effectively organise in the workplace and provide representation/communication skills.

The Region responds positively to requests from representatives who want specific health and safety training related to their workplace and we have delivered this course in 2006.

A one day Health and Safety Worker Involvement seminar was delivered at the Columbus Quay Office to respond to the HSE briefing document on worker involvement. This was well attended.

A Men and Women's Health Awareness course is positively promoted and delivered within the Region and is proving to be beneficial and well received. This has been a recent initiative that it is intended to develop further.

Safety and Welfare at Work is delivered also through our women's conference, which help to raise awareness of different issues that affect not only women, but men at work.

A Bullying & Harassment training seminar continues to be offered to workplaces within the Region.

(Adopted)

**BRO. P. McCARTHY** (North West & Irish): Formally move.

*(The Regional Secretary's Report: North West & Irish Region was formally seconded)*

**THE PRESIDENT:** Thank you. Pages 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146 and 147. Do you agree those pages, colleagues? *(Adopted)*

I thank Midland & East Coast and Birmingham & West Midlands for a lovely reception last night. Thank you very much.

I ask the movers of Composite Motion 17 and Motions 179, 180, 181 and 183 to come to the front of the hall.

**COMPOSITE MOTION 17**

(Covering Motions 177 and 178)

**177 – Labour Leadership/Deputy Leadership (North West & Irish Region)**

**178 – Labour Party Leadership and Deputy Leadership (London Region)**

**LABOUR PARTY LEADERSHIP AND DEPUTY LEADERSHIP**

This Congress calls for an open and wide ranging debate between all candidates in the election for the Labour Party Leader and Deputy Leader. These elections provide an opportunity for the Labour Party to examine its policies and allow all sections of the Labour Party, including the affiliated trade unions, to contribute to the future direction of the party.

In the event of an election for the Leader and/or Deputy Leader of the Labour Party being held, Congress agrees that the GMB will only consider supporting candidates in these elections who support and are in broad agreement with GMB values and policies in defence of working people. Any candidates who are not in broad agreement with the policies of the GMB will not receive our support.

*(Carried)*

**BRO. V. WEST (London):** I move Composite 17. In a couple of weeks time we will have a new Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. We will have a new Labour Prime Minister. Here in Brighton we have had the opportunity to listen and question all the Deputy Leadership candidates and yesterday the new Leader and Prime Minister in waiting.

However, in many ways I regret the fact that there will not be an opportunity for a leadership as well as a deputy leadership election, not because Gordon would not or should not have won but because it has been a missed opportunity for Party members, for trade unionists and others to engage in a debate about the future direction of the Party and the Government. But we are where we are, so let us make sure that we grab this opportunity to raise that debate

We had our chance on Monday and we made our choice in favour of Peter Hain. Let's make sure that for the rest of this campaign that the debate moves out of this Conference hall into our branches and local constituency Labour Parties so that when our members receive their ballot papers in the post, they will vote with confidence and with the information needed to make the right choice for the right candidates who reflect our values and aspirations. Thank you.

**BRO. I. LOWES (North West & Irish):** I second Composite 17. President and Congress, for many years politicians have come to the GMB and ask for our support, whether that be financial, physical or votes when they are standing for office. Sadly, on too many occasions after getting our support, they have turned their backs on us. The vote against the policies of the GMB and they vote against policies which are not in the interests of our members. I believe that this Congress must send out a clear message to those who seek our support. Our support is not unconditional. There is a price to pay, and that price is quite simple: if you want our support, then you support the policies of the GMB.

The current Deputy Leadership contest gives us an idea opportunity to re-state that policy. Anyone who does not support the GMB's policies does not get our support. I second.

**MOTION 179**

**LABOUR LEADERSHIP/DEPUTY LEADERSHIP ELECTION CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS**

In the event of an election for the Leader and/or Deputy Leader of the Labour Party being held, Congress agrees that before our vote is cast, widespread consultation on who to support is held amongst the membership. The CEC to determine the nature of the consultation.

5 BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Withdrawn)*

BRO. I. LOWES (North West & Irish): President and Congress, this motion calls for widespread consultation amongst the membership, but you cannot get more widespread than a ballot. I would like to commend the CEC – it has taken me 37 years to say that – and say that they have done a good job on this one. On that basis, I would be more than happy to withdraw the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Did I hear right? *(Laughter)* Is that agreed, Congress? *(Agreed)*

## **MOTION 180**

### **LABOUR/GMB RELATIONSHIP**

This Congress believes that both Labour Party membership and active democracy within the Labour Party would be greatly improved by encouraging activists from GMB to take out membership of the Labour Party and that GMB Branches also resolve to affiliate to their local Constituency Labour Party.

113 MANCHESTER BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. WILSON (North West & Irish): I move Motion 180 on the Labour Party Relationship with the GMB.

President and Congress, despite ten years in power the sad fact is that a lot of Labour Party activity is in freefall decline, certainly because of disillusion and anger with many aspects of new Labour and many thousands of members have left the Party and cannot be persuaded to renew previous membership. Many of those ex-members remain loyal but find it difficult to find the time or energy to campaign in election activity. All too often the victory of a local council candidate may be down to the efforts of a very few, even half-a-dozen, determined activists. A moribund or inactive branch may only be galvanised into action by the appearance of the BNP and the local party might have to see off the threat relying on the dynamic support of anti-racists from the United Action Against Fascism.

To be a dedicated trade unionist at work and an active socialist can be a time-consuming business and there are only so many free-time activities that one can commit to. So the campaigning objectives of our union can be undermined by the lack of local representation at local Labour Party meetings. Let me give you an example. In 2004 my own CLP, Denton & Reddish, had two very good candidates, who were also members of this union, found it impossible to progress through the Parliamentary Selection Panel as there was not one local GMB branch affiliated which could nominate them. One of them is sat in this hall, who is Gerard from London.

Veteran councillors can also be short-sighted and luke warm about rising issues outside of the local doorstep agenda. The Labour Party nationally also seems to have made a pig's ear of its own membership recruitment. Subscriptions are more expensive and recruitment information is difficult to obtain. There never seems to be a publicity stall for the Labour Party at this or previous Congresses.

We ask the CEC to intervene and place as a campaigning priority with the new leadership of the Labour Party all aspects of recruitment policy. The new Deputy Leader and Labour Party General Secretary should take a completely fresh look at Labour Party recruitment. In the meanwhile, I would apply to delegates to apply for and take out direct Party membership, and also to ensure that branches do affiliate and, if possible, send a delegate to CLP meetings. Use the opportunity of the fresh start offered by Gordon Brown and the urgent need to campaign on issues such as Remploy and the Cammell Laird Justice Campaign to spur you on in this regard. I move.

**BRO. P. PERRY (North West & Irish):** I second Motion 180. I think it is time that our activists within the organisation encouraged all of our members to join the Labour Party to go to ward meetings and city council meetings. As more members attend these meetings, they can help push forward the union's policy. I think this approach is really essential because many city councils are doing things off their own back without our members having any input because we do not have a lot of delegates attending city council meetings. That is why, I believe, if we increased membership they could put forward our policies. It is important. If we want our policies pushing forward, we have to get people involved and that is the only way we can get people involved.

The other thing is that when we put the recruitment forms out, it would not do any harm if we added a piece on the end saying that if people wished to join the Labour Party they could do so by paying their contributions even weekly. If that is what it takes to get people to become a Party member, that is what we should do. I ask you to support this motion.

## **MOTION 181**

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LABOUR PARTY**

Congress agrees that a full review of GMB policy in regard to our future relationship with the Labour Party takes place before the next General Election at regional and national level. The review to also include future funding at local and national level.

B43 – BIRMINGHAM CITY GENERAL BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

**BRO. D. KEMPSON (Birmingham & West Midlands):** I move Motion 181 – Relationship with the Labour Party.

Congress, this motion is in regard to our future relationship with the Party. We have waited 18 years to get the Party into power. The Labour Party has been in office for ten years, three terms, so being a member myself of the Party for more than 25 years I would not expect, for example, our Party to treat disabled members like our Remploy members are being treated at present. For the Party to say Remploy members need to be in mainstream employment is a joke. We should remind them, Congress, because they have continued contracting out, that

disabled members in local government, which was near the 3% target, is now zero. Contractors totally disregard disabled staff.

Congress, I would not expect our Party, the Labour Party, its MPs and local councillors, to continue to shaft their members by continuing the Tory policy of contracting out local services through PPI, PFI etc. There is no excuse or argument after ten years in office to continue the Tory policy. Reform, yes; contracting out, no.

Just on the NHS, for example, all the additional funding is clear to see. It is then scuppered by NICE – the National Institute for Clinical Excellence. We are seeing treatment based on cost. Consultants should decide medical treatment, not accountants. We would expect our sponsored MPs to be banging the GMB drum. We want the Warwick Agreement in full now. We want employment rights for all now.

Congress, I could go on all day. We have had our ups and downs in the Party. We need a fourth term and we will get it if they act right. To sum-up, I think the Party should have the same message as our General Secretary gave in his address to this Conference this week, which is that the GMB will not take no as an answer in future. I move.

*(The Motion was formally seconded)*

### **MOTION 183**

#### **LABOUR PARTY TRADE UNION LINK**

This Congress notes with concern that the 'cash for honours scandal' has led to suggestions that the Labour Party Trade Union link should be weakened. Trade unions were at the forefront of the founding of the Labour Party and have throughout its history been the bedrock of financial support for the party. This congress calls on the CEC to vigorously oppose any legislation that seeks to weaken this historical link.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

**BRO. V. WEST (London):** I move Motion 183. I am proud to have been a member of the trade union Movement and Labour Party for over 25, nearly 30, years. But what I am not proud about are the allegations and suspicions that the party recently has been put into hoc to multi-millionaire and billionaire donors, in return for which they have received their knighthoods, ermine robes and a seat in the House of Lords.

However, the real scandal of this debacle is that it has raised the issue of party funding, an issue which threatens our traditional links with the Labour Party. The cash-for-honours scandal has been an excuse for those both within and outside of the party who wish to weaken or even completely destroy the link between the party and the unions.

Well, I have a message for them. That link is not up for discussion and it is not up for negotiation. We do not fund the party for the promise of honours. We fund the party to advance the cause of our members, the working people of this country. The Labour Party was founded and funded on the contributions of our members. The Party was founded to give working people a real voice in Parliament. That link between organised labour and the Parliamentary process may not have produced all that we want, but without it many of the

gains that we have made, particularly since 1945, would have been set back forever or at least for decades.

David Cameron and the Tories know that is the reason, and that is why they are so keen to break the link. The Tories will always outstrip the Labour Party in getting individual donations, but if Labour is to fight elections on an even playing field, we need to ensure that the link to our party is maintained and that our ability to put our money where our members' mouths are is maintained. Don't let the Tories or others tell you that this is about cleaning up party politics. This is about seeking electoral advantage. End the cash-for-honours scandal but keep the link. I move.

*(The motion was formally seconded)*

BRO. M. HUSBANDS (London): President, Congress, this motion is not just about cash for honours, it is about making sure our link with the Labour Party is maintained. It is about making sure we fight elections on a level playing field with adequate finance. It is about making sure we continue to provide support for a party that we founded. Do not let David Cameron and, I do not know, the party, destroy the links with the Labour Party. This is our party. We have to support it fully. Thank you. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Michael. Colleagues, there will be no CEC speaker because Ian Lowes has just made Malcolm redundant by withdrawing 179. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? Those who want to, will they please come to the front?

BRO. R. GEORGE (Southern): I would like to speak in relation to 181, our relationship with the Labour Party. I will be as brief as I can. In 1979 Thatcher came to power and she ruthlessly pushed through the employers' agenda. The top rate of Income Tax was 99 pence in the pound and she brought it down to 68. The anti-union laws, we know she then used them to smash the unions and paid the police to do that. She privatised utilities, sold council houses, introduced student fees, PFI, racism, and anti-asylum. There was absolute outrage and by the time people voted Labour in they were not voting Labour in because of pink salmon documents, they were voting in because they recognised that despite what Thatcher said she was pursuing an employers' agenda and did not recognise their interests.

What did we get when we had the biggest majority since 1945 when we brought in the Health Service? The Labour Party continued with the employers' agenda, they continued transferring council stocks, they continued privatisation in social services, in education we did not have loans, we had fees, and anti-union laws are still on the books, the minimum wage they negotiated with the CBI and Digby Jones was on the radio the other day crowing that it was thanks to him they had the low settlement they did, and the Corporate Manslaughter Bill, even the watered down version, is still not on the statute books.

The jewel in the crown is the health service. If you speak to any worker in the health service – I am a nurse, right – everyone from the porters to the Chief Executive knows it has been privatised under our feet, privatised through schemes like PFI. The children's hospital here is going to cost £160m for a £42m hospital and in 30 years it is going to be owned by Kajima. Gordon Brown had the brass neck to come here and talk about social justice when venture capitalists are embarrassed about the sums of money they are working with. We are in an abusive relationship with the Labour party. They treat us like a gimp. They are screwing us. The reason is because they are not frightened of us. We need to reassert why the Labour Party came in. We are the parents of the Labour Party, OK. We are not in a relationship with

them, we gave birth to them. They owe their existence to us, OK, and we need to establish that through action, we need national action in every single area, from the health service to public services. We can pass motion after motion criticising the Labour Party but they do not give a damn. They come here, they smile, and they take the money. We need to organise action.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

BRO. A. HUTCHINGS (Southern): Good morning, Congress. On May 3<sup>rd</sup> this year I had my contract terminated by the electorate after 24 years as a Labour councillor, but I would just like to say that I never forgot why I was there. I was there for the electors but I was equally very grateful for the sponsorship I had from the GMB. I never forgot that. During my time in the council chamber I was very pleased that I abolished minimum wage on my council. I campaigned very strongly on bus passes and I never forgot why I was there. I would just like to say thank you to the GMB for the sponsorship I had over all that time. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Anyone else? (*No response*) Thank you. Can I now put Composite 17, Motions 180, 181 and 183 to the vote? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*(Composite Motion 17 was carried.)*

*(Motion 180 was carried.)*

*(Motion 181 was carried.)*

*(Motion 183 was carried.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now ask the movers of 184, Composite 18, 189 and 191 please to come forward?

## **MOTION 184**

### **LABOUR FUNDING**

This Congress believes that a proposed 'cap' on donations of £50,000 to political parties would have grave implications for the future campaigning role of the Labour Party. In particular the historic link between Trade Unions and the Labour Party would be seriously impaired.

We would strongly urge that those Trade Union donations made to Labour on a collective basis are recognised as such and kept legally separate from those donations received from rich and wealthy individuals.

113 MANCHESTER BRANCH  
*North West & Irish*

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. WILSON (North West & Irish): President, Congress, public uproar against the disclosure of both secret loans and alleged promises of high honours and favours in return resulted in the Government commissioning a special report by Sir Hayden Phillips to investigate the reform of funding to political parties. Some of the published findings give quite sensible and acceptable recommendations to regulate unnecessary enormous spending at election time on campaigns that can ultimately be a turnoff for many voters.

Let's make no mistake, behind the supposed even-handed approach on political fund-raising poses a very serious and direct threat to both the Labour Party and the trade unions, organised since 1900. That is because a limit or a cap on individual donations of no more than £50,000 will spell disaster for a cash-strapped Labour Party and its ability to defend marginal seats against a well-funded and well-oiled Tory machine. Just over half of the £21m raised by Labour in 2005 came from union money and this was in fact down from the 90% of total funding given up to 1993, by comparison 51% of the £20m raised by Conservative Central Office came from an assortment of extremely rich individuals.

With the historic campaigning link broken the Labour Party might never see elected office again. Traditional trade union funding towards Labour is made in a democratic spirit and has to be officially regarded as separate from multimillion pound individual donations. All money collected from subs, collected from individual members, is subject to a 10-year legally required democratic mandate. It is transparent. It is open. It is honest. It is open to audited scrutiny. Of course, it is this aspect that has always driven the top Tories wild. In this regard David Cameron and Francis Moore are at one with Margaret Thatcher and Norman Tebbit. The proposals submitted suit their purpose very well to buy political success with the help of the rich to safeguard the rich. Cameron's Conservatives can barely contain their delight and anticipation that the historic common bond that unites unions and Labour may be broken.

The key to Labour winning a fourth term rests on the basis and ability to raise money from the political levy and money raised on the collective basis. Individual members also have the right to opt out. The whole labour Movement needs to put on a united front to ensure that these particular proposals and financial capping do not become mandate: down with all secret loans and dodgy deals and full support for the financial and political solidarity between the trade unions and Labour, long may it continue. Congress, I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Seconder?

BRO. S. COUGHLIN (North West & Irish): President, Congress, sorry about the T-shirt, I could not find a 5XL! The report by Sir Hayden Phillips to limit and cap donations is unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of the Labour and Trades Union Movement. The trade unions played no part in the alleged loans for honours scandal. It is in the political interest of the membership that we will be made to pay the price of possible implementation of Sir Hayden Phillips's recommendations. Trade union membership brings individual members into direct political life with a vote via affiliation. Unions have a clear and defined role. Our historical relationship sets us apart from the secret loans and donations from wealthy millionaires to all political parties and whose motives triggered this crisis. Congress, I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Can I now call the movers of Composite 18, London Region to move and Midland & East Coast Region – you will wear that carpet out, Vaughan – to second. Carry on.

## **COMPOSITE MOTION 18**

(Covering Motions 187 and 188)

**187 – Warwick Agreement – (London Region)**

**188 – Full Implementation of the Warwick Agreement – (Midland & East Coast Region)**

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WARWICK AGREEMENT

Congress is concerned that the Labour Government has not fully implemented the Warwick Agreement.

This Congress calls on the CEC

- to continue to campaign and press for the full implementation of the Warwick Agreement before the end of this parliament;
- calls on the Government to honour the Agreement in full; and
- further calls for the development of a Warwick '2' agreement in preparation for the next Labour manifesto.

*(Carried)*

BRO. V. WEST (London): President, Congress, last week I chanced upon one of those silly articles you get in the newspaper about how much some women politicians are willing to pay for a handbag. Usually I would have instantly dismissed such an article as the same journalist would not have the cheek to ask a male politician perhaps how much he paid for his ties or his cufflinks. What made me change my mind was the comment from one of the Deputy Leadership candidates about a £500 bag, and that the response was the Labour Party should not be afraid to be the party of the “aspirational”.

We have often heard that term “aspirational” used by leading Labour politicians. What they really mean, what aspirational is the code for, is in reality middle-class consumerism. As if our members do not have aspirations of their own. Perhaps not aspirations for a Gucci handbag or a flashy tie but aspirations for affordable housing, a decent school for their children, aspirations for a world-class health service, a living pension, aspirations for decent pay and a reasonable job. That is why we need a Warwick 2 Agreement so that those aspirations are articulated and are central to the next Labour Party manifesto.

We need a Warwick 2 so that the next manifesto reflects our values not the values of increased credit card debt and consumerism, the values we all came into politics and the Trades Union Movement for, to promote quality public services, affordable housing, employment rights and equal pay, a first-class education for every child in this country, a health service to be proud of. We need Warwick 2 so that our voice is central in the next manifesto. We need Warwick 2 so that the manifesto is written based on achievable but real gains for working people and not a manifesto on the false belief that aspirational consumerism and a false basis of choice will win us a fourth term. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Vaughan. Midland & East Coast to second.

BRO. S. CLARKSON (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, visitors, the Warwick Agreement was the final report of Labour’s national policy forum in July 2004. It was endorsed by the Labour Party’s Annual Conference in September 2004. The agreement formed the basis of the May 2005 General Election manifesto and there are many examples of the agreement being delivered.

Around 6 million workers will benefit from the extra 8 days holiday each year, benefiting part-time workers, low paid workers, and ethnic minority workers; family-friendly rights including a right to request flexible hours of work, maternity, paternity, and parental leave. On pensions, the Government has said it will restore the link between the basic state pension and average earnings; all good things for our members and it must be applauded for what has been implemented so far.

The Warwick Agreement was designed to transform the lives of working people, improving the services they use, their working environment, and ensuring adequate pension provision. The Labour Party Chair agrees that there are still some difficult issues to discuss and some details to be finalised but she promises to deliver Warwick in its entirety over the course of this Parliament. That is what this motion calls for and it is what GMB members want. Please do not let us down. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Cheers, darling. Can I now call the mover of 189, London Region?

## **MOTION 189**

### **LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE**

This Congress deplores the action of the Labour Party leadership who consistently follows its own agenda acting only on conference motions that it agrees with and then choosing to disregard conference policy motions passed that they disagree with.

Party conference has had strong support in opposing privatisation in the NHS and for a return to public ownership in the railway industry, plus many other issues.

The party must understand that this practice must end if the party is to be a democratic party in any sense of the word.

MILTON KEYNES CITY BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. HIOM (London): For too long now the Trades Union Movement has been a soft touch. The Labour Party leadership have shown complete contempt for resolutions passed at any party conference and we have allowed them to get away with it. We cannot continue like this. Many party members have seen it as a pointless exercise in going to conferences and wasting branch money sending delegates. This motion needs to have a unanimous vote and backing from the whole of the Trades Union Movement if we are to have any effect. If we are to have a democratic input on how this country of ours should be governed, then we should have to do something about it. If we allow it to remain as things are, then it is a talking shop and nothing more. Let's start getting angry and put a stop to it. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jim. Seconder? Morning, George.

BRO. G. FRASER (London): Morning, Mary. President, Congress, in the GMB our Congress is a supreme decision-making body of the organisation. Democratically elected delegates debate motions put forward by members and our leadership is bound by any decision made, whether they like it or not. Democracy is somewhat different, however, in the Labour Party.

On issue after issue, year after year, the Labour Party Conference delegates carry motions against the leadership but these decisions are ignored. Take, for instance, council housing and the fourth option, this has been carried every year since 2003 with no action by the Government. On Monday in this hall five Cabinet Ministers agreed we needed more council houses but why have they not said that in Cabinet since 2003, election year?

Blair's response to these conference defeats was to shamefully say that he deeply regretted Labour not taking the lead in selling off council houses in the 1980s. This is going

completely against his own membership. From 2005 there has been similar treatment over motions on the foundation hospitals policy put forward by the trade unions, rejected by the Party and the unions but not by government. In the GMB our leadership listens and obeys the rules. It should be no different in the Labour Party. Congress, please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, George. 191?

## **MOTION 191**

### **MAKE LABOUR MP'S MORE ACCOUNTABLE**

This Congress notes the sometimes less than helpful attitude adopted by Labour MP's who have enjoyed physical and financial support from the GMB at election time.

Congress also notes the unsatisfactory situation of overburdened Officers being given the role of Political Officer, which they have little time or support to develop.

Congress therefore calls on the National Executive, along with the relevant National and Regional Officers, to examine the feasibility of developing a more organised and professional approach. Such an approach should involve the financial and administrative support necessary for setting up small lay member political committee's who, in conjunction with the relevant Regional Officers, would meet quarterly in order to hold GMB sponsored MP's to account by:

checking voting records, signing EDM's and work in Parliamentary or Local Council committee's in relation to trade union issues

ensuring strong support at Election times for those who have approached union work in an appropriate manner

politically motivate and organise GMB members who are prepared to get active in the Labour Party in pursuit of GMB aims, values and policies.

GMB PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. T. FLANAGAN (London): In moving this motion I think you have to be aware there is a shower of people who have their hands in your pockets. It is not a good idea to cross the Professional Drivers Branch, London Region, or the GMB Congress. Any MPs here, I would advise you to open your ears. I have a message for you. Robert Maxwell said the gravy train has hit the buffers. He went off the back of a boat. I sent them Brenda Dean's name. We are waiting. One day. Never mind. We will see. Our MPs, you sponsor them, your money is in their pockets. Three-quarters of them failed to sign an early day motion on trade union legislation. Is someone extracting the urine? I think so.

Let me tell you about a meeting we organised in the House of Commons under the name of Paul Kenny. I think you might know Paul, the big fella sitting down there. We organised with the help of Iain McNicol – a good little boy, little “chisser” he is, he is a good boy, he does the job – a meeting on the issue of chauffeurs working 80/90 hours a week, 18-hour shifts, falling asleep at the wheel, killing people. There was the good and the great from the entire industry, all the legislative people there, press coverage, but how many MPs do you think turned up? I will give you a clue, you only need one hand: two. Two! I think what they

were saying was – my interpretation - not happy. Paul was lucky, he had a dodgy Ruby Murray that night so he could not get there! Me and Martin Smith sat there humiliated. Two MPs walked in, stayed for 15 minutes, and shot down to the bar. Now, I like a drink as much as anyone else but there is a time and a place. This has got to stop.

What I am saying to Congress and what we are saying to you, Paul, is, don't please sort them out, this is an instruction, sort 'em. It has gone on for too long. They do not respond to our needs. They do not respond to our policies. They have their hands in our pockets; no longer. The gravy train has hit the buffers for you lot. I do not think we should reduce the number of MPs that we support, I think we should, if possible, increase the support but let's make sure that those people we are supporting are responsive to our needs. At the moment they are not. At the moment they are extracting the urine. We have to do something about it.

I said to Steven McKenzie - some of you know Steve, he moved a similar motion last year – “Give me a few notes.” He has written War and Peace on it. I could not read this lot, I would be here for ever. This has got to stop. Take it seriously, everywhere, councillors and MPs. I will give an example. In Camden two councillors nominated by the GMB, continuously supporting and moving our motion, the electorate in Camden tell them to get stuffed. They still move it. End result? Tories running Camden. That is the town hall where we had the red flag on the clock tower. This has got to stop. Paul, sort 'em. I am not asking you, I am telling you, sort 'em out. Someone do me a favour, get up and speak on this because then I will have another go at it.

BRO. S. ELLIS (London): President, Congress, I come from a building workers branch and very little, if anything, has been done as far as health and safety legislation is concerned. At the moment, the Government is cutting rather than increasing the number of inspectors. The directors of some of these companies do not face prison for their criminal neglect of health and safety because this Government will not legislate for it. New Labour, new failures. Betrayals and failure to legislate in relation to equal employment rights for agency workers, failure to bring in legislation to make corporate manslaughter an imprisonable offence, the incredible decisions to cut rather than increase the number of health and safety executive inspectors, all of these and many other failures of this Government and its MPs in relation to the ordinary working people like us who put them in office is allowing employers to make super profits out of the most vulnerable workers in our society. It is time to say, enough is enough. We have to have a tighter reign on these people. We have to hold them to account. This motion being passed and acted upon will be a big step in the right direction. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Colleagues, I remind you that 192 has been withdrawn. Can I ask for the mover of Composite 19, New Labour, London Region to move, Northern Region to second.

## **COMPOSITE MOTION 19**

**182 – Link with the Labour Party – (London Region)**

**193 – GMB and “New” Labour Party – (London Region)**

**194 – Political – (Northern Region)**

### **“NEW” LABOUR**

This Congress believes that the GMB, in this year of transition in the Labour Party, should take

responsibility and leadership in organising and campaigning to win the Party back to its socialist roots and traditions, a party based on the trade unions for trade unionists.

Congress is concerned that falling membership of the Labour Party and reduction in activity by lay activists is seriously undermining the representative process of the Labour Party.

Congress further recognises that without a substantial increase in membership, particularly of working people, the Labour Party will continue to decline and in the near future face difficulties in both local and national elections.

Congress agrees that as a Union we must do everything in our power to re-ignite the fire and passion of socialist principles back into the Labour Party.

Faced with the prospect of the return of the Tories, Congress calls on the CEC to campaign to substantially increase trade union membership of the Labour Party.

Congress requests that the GMB through its TULO officers, regional secretaries and regional committees and branch secretaries carry out an audit to ensure that every branch is affiliated to its local CLP or CLP's. Once the audit is carried out, to then ensure that every branch is indeed affiliated to every local CLP within its scope and to carry out a recruitment drive among GMB members to build our strength within the Labour Party. On this basis with GMB branches and activists affiliated and active in their local CLP's we as a union can begin the campaign to win the Party back for socialism and trade unionism.

*(Carried)*

**BRO. T. BAILLIE (London):** Congress, this Labour government has done many things and made a number of significant changes to the benefit of GMB members, in education, the National Health Service, and many other areas within the public sector, but even this is inadequate to maintain the service requirements of today's society. We in the public sector need more from this Labour government. When changes have been made it is often at the cost of jobs within these services. The PFI, schools, foundation hospitals, arm-length housing trusts, not for profit partnerships that run old people's homes and home care, I shudder to think what next. All this came from a Labour government. They tell us it is a Labour government. I am not too sure.

The fact is that we have had to depend on Europe to provide us with legislation to protect the Trades Union Movement and even then our Labour government only watered it down to make it so ineffective the employers can drive a horse and cart through it. Then we see them back every election time promising the trade unions the earth. Shame on us for getting caught time after time! We are told, in the next term and the next term; be damned, brother and sisters, it is not good enough. Our Labour government should have done it in the first term as was promised. They have had four terms to keep these promises and hardly a promise kept. How can we trust a Labour government who will not keep their promises even to us?

There are individual Labour MPs out there who are like-minded to us and we need to get and keep them on board. What we do not need is the Margaret Hodges of the Party, who lay the blame of their failures on other groups other than themselves. We do need the likes of Jon Cruddas and like-minded MPs to give us their support on the way forward. I am a member of the Labour Party and I am not afraid to say so, so I must also take my share of the blame for not doing enough to stop our government attacking the public sector since coming to power, but I will remain with them attacking what is left of the social conscience, constantly trying to reach into the bright burning flame of our own Labour principles, trying to get back our trade

union rights, to get the legal right to strike, the right to secondary picketing, removal of all anti-trade union legislation from the time of the Iron Lady, Maggie Thatcher no less, and to return our Party back to the labour Movement which first gave it birth. Congress, I move this composite.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tom. Northern Region.

SIS. J. JEPSON (Northern): Congress, the time has come to reclaim our Party, to return the Labour Party to its rightful place as the party of working people. President, the motion calls on all of us to do what we do best, to organise. To those who say it cannot be done I can only say this, the task that we face in reclaiming our party is nothing, nothing, compared to the task that confronted the founders of our union. Will Thorne, colleagues, built this union from nothing but frustration and discontent and into the bargain he helped to form the Labour Representational Committee that later became the Labour Party. Will Thorne as well as becoming the union's first General Secretary became a Labour MP, and despite the fact that he was uneducated he served as a Labour minister. Who says it cannot be done, colleagues? Support the campaign to win back our party. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. 195, Midland & East Coast Region. Are you well enough to do it?

## **MOTION 195**

### **ABOLISHING OF THE POLITICAL LEVY BALLOT**

Congress calls on the Labour Government to abolish the political levy ballot for all Trade Unions.

The procedure is costly, time consuming and unnecessary.

HULL PAINT & ENGINEERING BRANCH  
*Midland & East Coast Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. HOCKING (Midland & East Coast): Congress calls on the Labour Government to abolish the political levy ballot for all trade unions. The procedure is costly, time-consuming, and unnecessary: unnecessary because when members first join they have the opportunity to opt out at any time; time-consuming because while I am convincing members why they should be voting yes, I could be concentrating on more important member issues; and costly because it costs a quarter of a million to run a ballot. On Monday we had assurances from six Deputy Leader candidates that they would also like to see it abolished. Here is the message to the lucky winner: We are watching. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

BRO. V. RABBETTS (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, as my colleague has already said, what a waste of time and money, just the same comments coming from our members. This ballot happens every 10 years. Our members can vote every hour of the day every day of the year by opting out of the political fund so why bother to have this ballot? The reason behind this ballot was a Tory government to stop the Labour Party getting funds. Please support to get rid of this farcical ballot. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Any delegates wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)*  
OK, thank you. Can I call Tommy Brennan?

BRO. T. BRENNAN (CEC, Manufacturing): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and supporting Motion 191 but with a qualification. Have no doubt, Congress, this body and the members generally will have noticed the regime and policy change in the GMB, both industrially and indeed politically. Our respected General Secretary has stated on more than one occasion that he does not genuflect to employers and nor can he limbo dance. That is not because he is of a sizeable frame with dodgy knees but because we all, like New Labour, in a way see it as the new GMB and, on the other hand, Asda, JJB Sports, and the AA, ask them about the political change within the GMB.

Likewise, I have to say in the political arena why is it that in two years running we have had two Prime Ministers address GMB congress. No other union has achieved this. We are taken seriously, politically, at the very highest level. We have certainly reasserted our position within the political arena. Our General Secretary, along with our National Political Officer, meets with our GMB Members of Parliament on a regular basis and has set clear and concise lines of communication in terms of what our expectations are of them. To be fair, we have had a good response to requests, for example, for early day motions. At the same time, in the regions we have political sub-committees, in the Northern Region, for example, and we have had the ability to interview aspiring politicians both nationally and locally for these particular positions. We can monitor performance and we can bring these politicians to account.

We do appreciate in the resolution, however, despite the constructive criticism, the difference between Labour and the Tories, and we should not forget that. The qualification, therefore, is to recognise the good work that has been done and is being done and that this motion should complement and not detract from the very good progress made to date whilst agreeing with the spirit, intent, and sentiment expressed in this particular motion. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. Does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I now put 184, Composite 18, 189, 191, Composite 19, and 195 to the vote, please? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*(Motion 184 was carried.)*

*(Composite Motion 18 was carried.)*

*(Motion 189 was carried.)*

*(Motion 191 was carried.)*

*(Composite Motion 19 was carried.)*

*(Motion 195 was carried.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can we now move on to item 3, Political: Democracy & Constitutional Reform, Composite 20 to be moved by GMB Scotland, 198, Birmingham and West Midlands Region, 199, London Region, and 200, Immigration Controls, London Region.

## **POLITICAL: DEMOCRACY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

### **COMPOSITE MOTION 20**

**196 – GMB Opposition to an Independent Scotland – (GMB Scotland)**

**197 – Independence – (GMB Scotland)**

### **OPPOSITION TO AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND**

Congress is called to adopt the position of opposition to an independent Scotland.

Whilst we support devolved decision making to a local level, a fully independent Scotland would lead to the political break-up of the U.K. and undermine our strength of unity both as a country and as a union organisation.

Congress calls on the GMB to take an active role in guarding against independence in Scotland.

*(Carried)*

BRO. C. ROBERTSON (GMB Scotland) moving Composite Motion 20 said: Comrades, Scotland has narrowly voted in favour of a new political leadership and with it comes a new challenge for the trade unions. The SNP are committed to an independent referendum and over the next four years they will campaign to enforce this referendum, and with it their plan to take Scotland out of the United Kingdom. Whilst the SNP are still fighting the fights of 300 years ago we in the Trades Union Movement only need to look back over the last century when the Labour Party was established; it has played a prominent part in British politics.

Trade unionists and Labour politicians as far afield as the Welsh valleys, the north and east, the west, the Midlands, the Scottish central belt, and from across the country, a united country, joined together to create a National Health Service, to develop a welfare state, to implement health and safety rules for our workplace, and more recently to introduce the minimum wage. The trade union is an international movement, we achieve more together than we could ever achieve working on our own. Despite occasional disagreements with the Labour Government one thing is clear, being part of the union has created a stable, growing economy with high levels of employment.

Scotland materially benefits from being in the union with the minimum wage. Would it be as high in an independent Scotland as it is in the United Kingdom? Would public spending be as high in Scotland without the Barnett Formula and where would taxing need to go to meet the level of public spending? Scots who live elsewhere in the Union, and the English, Welsh, the Northern Irish, who live in Scotland, these people are British as well as Scottish British, as well as English British, British as well as Welsh, and they are not clamouring for a single identity. These people are embracing a world where nationalism is a form of identity but not necessarily a form of government. We are all embracing a long held international belief of the Trades Union Movement so to push for independence now is simply going against the grain of society and unionism.

Finally, let us look to the future. Members of the SNP argue that if Scotland was independent it could turn into a small European country, a Utopia. In this vision we would have the dynamism of Estonia, the corporate investment of Ireland, the healthcare of Finland, the educational system of Sweden, the pension system of Norway, and no doubt the work ethic of Santa Claus and his elves. *(Laughter/Applause)*

In reality the picture is more complex. Ireland has low tax and increased investment. Scandinavian countries have raised tax and rely on domestic business to succeed internationally to survive. Ireland has slashed healthcare provision and it now costs €50 to visit a doctor. Trade union levels in Estonia have fallen dramatically over the last decade. Tax in Scandinavian countries is 50% and perhaps the hardest to swallow a pint of beer costs €8.

I would argue we should stick with what we know works and what we can see working again in the future. As a trade union we believe in collectivism and internationalism and most of all in solidarity. Until someone can show me that these and all other aims of the Trades Union Movement can better be achieved in an independent Scotland, I will continue to fight against the Scottish National Party who peddles it. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Charlie. Secunder?

BRO. T. KELBIE (GMB Scotland) seconding Composite 20 said: President, Congress, the threat that independence in Scotland poses to our United Kingdom is very real. The SNP will pursue the goal of an independent Scotland. It is their sole reason to exist. The GMB union is also under threat of the consequences that independence would bring. Let us not be complacent by thinking that the SNP cannot achieve their goal. Who would have thought a few years ago that we would have Alex Salmond as a First Minister in Scotland?

The GMB stands for unity, that is our strength, and I call on Paul Kenny to take the gloves off in this political fight against the SNP. Let us use all the power of GMB's political clout to defeat the insidious ambitions of Alex Salmond and his nationalist cronies. Congress, support the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Birmingham and West Midlands Region? That is all right, I will wait for you.

## **MOTION 198**

### **HOUSE OF LORDS**

Congress calls on the CEC to use its entire political links to ensure that the Labour Government in its reform of the House of Lords has a fully elected second chamber. The length of office for these members must be a maximum of a ten year term after which they will be debarred from standing again for election to the second chamber.

W50 - WELLINGTON BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. C. MURRAY (Birmingham & West Midlands): I will keep it short. Congress recognises that the House of Lords has been a bastion of privilege for far too long and to make the final break with patronage we must ensure that in the final reform, which has taken hell of a while to come, it is a fully elected chamber with no one serving more than 10 years. If Labour had had the balls to do this before we would not have had the problem of the scandal of patronage. Finally, if they make it a fully elected chamber never again can we be accused of patronage and pandering to cronyism. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder? Formally?

*Motion 198 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I now call 199, Ministerial Salaries and Benefits, London Region to move.

## MOTION 199

### MINISTERIAL SALARIES AND BENEFITS

Congress is disturbed by recent calls from Westminster for an increase of up to 40% in MPs' salaries to take them to £100,000 per year. It notes that when a minister leaves the government he/she receives 25% of ministerial salary, which for a cabinet minister is £16,750 irrespective of length of time in office (some like Alan Milburn, Peter Mandelson and David Blunkett have been entitled to two such payments!).

The spectacle of our representatives feathering their own nests in such a blatant manner, while ordinary workers are restricted on the whole to cost-of-living index increases and statutory redundancy payments is offensive. Congress therefore call on GMB sponsored MPs' to oppose such a scale of salary increases and mandates the Unions' leadership to initiate a campaign for the ending of the disproportionately high payments to ex-ministers for whatever reason they may leave government.

NORWICH GENERAL BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. WHISTLECRAFT (London): For too long MPs have been getting rises and benefits well above the cost of living index while we the ordinary people have to survive on rises in many cases below the cost of living and unlike MPs we do not get such a comfortable package after leaving our job, certainly not as good a package as ex-Prime Ministers who not only get an index-linked pension but also get a free car and driver for life. I wish I could get that. In fact, we are lucky if we can get any benefits until we have filled out various complicated forms to claim a few quid but with MPs they get them automatically on leaving government. Does this seem fair to Congress? This is very doubtful as this goes against GMB belief in equality for all working people.

I move Congress to support this motion and to call on the GMB sponsored MPs to oppose these scales of salary rises and benefits that feather their own nest and to look at other ways of getting better payment and benefits for all working people, and further to initiate a campaign to put an end to these high payments and benefits that they receive when they leave government for whatever reason. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

BRO. J. HOWARD (London): The GMB has consistently advocated that the Movement should be a model of democracy, a model of fairness, and setting the standards in fairness generally for others to follow. MPs get to enjoy terms and conditions of employment most of us can only ever dream of. I think now is the time to ask the question, do they actually deserve it?

Let us take a quick review of what they get: £60,000 in salary, travel expenses, up to £20,000 for funding a second home in London, administration expenses, and favourable pension arrangements. Generous or not? In business they say you do not get the talent if you do not pay the rate. I say, if this is the case, show me the talent. *(Applause)* If an MP faces the sack but is given the opportunity or chance to resign, then they will claim a quarter of their annual salary back as compensation pay as long as they are not reappointed within just three weeks. This is as incredible as it is disgusting. I cannot think of many of our members who enjoy such a luxury. It is time to bring these people back down to earth. Say no. Support this motion. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Well done. Can I ask London Region to move 200, please?

## **MOTION 200**

### **IMMIGRATION CONTROLS**

This Congress resolves to work towards an end to all immigration controls and for freedom of movement and equal rights for all regardless of nationality or immigration status and to initiate an amnesty for people with a private and family life in Britain.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Lost)*

BRO. C. WHITMORE (London): I am speaking without the support of the London Region and moving Motion 200 standing in the name of the London Central General Branch.

President, Congress, immigration controls, the formal state-driven process that divides all humanity arbitrarily into two groups, those that can come and take part in Britain Day and those who cannot and are therefore illegal. The dividing line is a mobile one and has in the history of the UK been moved about and driven by two dynamics. One is a progressive dynamic, pretty rare, I admit, but it was there. The second is the full panoply of reactionary ideology ranging from naked racism – you do not need to look much further than Sky News the other morning when one of the people being interviewed referred to every Tom, Dick, and Abdul coming to our country - ranging from that kind of racism in our society to the protection of a distribution of resources that is based on an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor.

Where did immigration control come from? With the exception of merchant seamen the first attempt at stigmatising groups who wanted to make their lives here was the 1905 Aliens Act which was passed as a result of a wave of anti-Semitism fanned by the fascist British Brothers League, people who would not be out of place in today's BNP. Similarly, the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act was passed after a shameful media frenzy after the so-called race riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill fostered by Moseley and his fascists.

A quick look at the way that campaigns were fostered by those on the right to demand immigration controls might remind us all of what it is about, the three Fs. Fear: fear of the other. Flood: the threat that some myth of an indigenous British population or British culture is going to be overwhelmed by other people. Fantasy: myths about resources. Most of us, I think, will be familiar with those kinds of myths in BNP election leaflets talking about “them coming here, getting hospital treatment before we do,” and all the rest of it. So here is why all those who want to build a wall around our country are wrong and it matters not if that wall is EU wide or just built around a set of Daily Mail editorials.

Fear: I challenge anyone, anyone, here to explain to me why I should fear someone, my brother, my sister, who wants to come and work and live alongside me. I just do not get it.

Flood: In 1948 the British Nationality Act, and this was the one that was passed by a progressive dynamic, gave the right of residents in the UK to 800 million people worldwide. The Tory press went so far as to suggest that if they all came to live here Britain would

physically sink into the sea. But more seriously, the flood of immigrant arguments is based on the unholy myth now being shamelessly exploited by New Labour ministers that it is possible to be more or less British, more or less acceptable, or that you can protect wage rates by creating an underclass.

Finally, there is the fantasy that you can protect limited social resources through stigma and exclusion. No. If we need jobs for all those who want to work, create them. If we need housing, build houses. You get the picture? It is not rocket science.

One last point, this motion calls on Congress to take a stand, to adopt a really simple principle, that is, that a worker is a worker is a worker, wherever they may come from and no one, no one, Congress, is illegal by virtue of an accident of birth. There are two counter-arguments: one, that no other country has no boundaries and, second, that what we seek is impossible. If we genuinely believe that standing alone, standing alone and isolated when you are right is foolish, then many of us have wasted years supporting Cuba. If to seek the impossible is foolish, then I ask you to remember that is exactly what they said to Will Thorne about the 8-hour day in 1889. No one is illegal. Demand the impossible. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

BRO. D. FAITH (London): I am seconding Motion 200, again without the support of the region.

President, Congress, there are really two philosophies regarding immigration. One philosophy is that immigrants are the cause of unemployment, poor housing, and the rest of it, and immigration controls are somehow part of the solution. It is this philosophy that led to immigration controls being introduced, as Chris said, back in 1905 after a vicious campaign led by the Daily Mail, at that time against Jews who were escaping oppression in Russia. All that has really changed ever since is the object of that hatred and scorn: first the Jews, then the Irish, then the West Indians, East Asians, etc. etc.

I have a different and second philosophy, which is unfashionable these days. It is called a socialist philosophy. That philosophy says that our problems are caused by capitalism and the free market system, and that unity between workers is the solution. When you look at the question from this point of view, you begin to see the injustices of our system of immigration controls.

I will give you one example. There has been over the past couple of days the quote from the Bible up there from time to time, which says that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to pass into the kingdom of Heaven. Well, when you move from the kingdom of Heaven to the United Kingdom it looks quite different. If you are a rich man, i.e. if you come with enough money, you are automatically granted citizenship of the United Kingdom. If you are poor, of course, you are subject to harassment with the fear of deportation, to the clutches of the gangmasters and the like.

Congress, my point is this, if the rich can move around the world without restriction, why shouldn't we? If it is good enough for them, it is good enough for the rest of us.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. I now open up the debate to delegates. Does anyone wish to come in on the resolutions that have been debated? Anyone else? Please come to the front.

BRO. A. GOODFELLOW (Southern) supporting Motion 198 said: Congress, President, nepotism and favouritism are the two pillars of corruption, that is what underpins the House of Lords. I always used to ask my father why is it when we get a Labour government in office we never get the Tories out of power? The House of Lords is the establishment. That is the last bastion of Tory power. We do have an opportunity coming in the future. When eventually Elizabeth Windsor pops her clogs I think it is time to go to the British people with the question: do we want a constitutional democracy or do we want to live still under a constitutional monarchy? The four pillars of the establishment are the armed forces, the judiciary, the church, and the monarchy. To take those on the only way we can win is through democracy. So there we are, I open it up to a referendum. I can imagine Charlie Windsor and all his mates knocking up on the tower blocks up and down this country. Congress, that is reality TV. I support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

BRO. R. GEORGE (Southern): I believe I am probably speaking in a personal capacity. I want to speak in opposition to Motions 196 and 197. Although I fully support the sentiment, I do not want to see an independent Scotland and Salmond has no answers. However, I believe that we have to support the right to self-determination. That is the decision that has to be made by workers in Scotland. I would rather the motion said something like, fraternally the GMB would request them to remain part of us, with us.

Secondly, in terms of the House of Lords, the qualification, yes, fair enough, they should have gone in the first year of office. It is an embarrassment and it is a liability. It is anti-democratic and has always been used for cash for favours.

Lastly, I would like to speak very quickly in support of opposing immigration controls. Basically, immigration controls are used to set us against each other. We are recruiting a lot of immigrant workers and these are the arguments we need to have. Housing - they built 300 a year, we need to defend council housing and have a huge council housing campaign like the defence council housing project which is being pushed for at the moment. Healthcare - we need to oppose privatisation and in terms of decent wages and health and safety we need to make sure that every worker has a decent improved minimum wage and is safe to work. We need to do that for the Trades Union Movement and that is why we should oppose immigration controls, they are divisive.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Anyone else? Does GMB Scotland wish to come back after that last speaker? (*Right of reply declined*) Can I call Mary Hutchinson on Motion 200. Mary?

SIS. M. HUTCHINSON (CEC, Manufacturing): The CEC is seeking withdrawal of Motion 200. If withdrawal is not agreed we ask Congress to oppose. Motion 200 deals with immigration controls. We understand the sentiments but the practicalities of the GMB or of government supporting this policy is unfeasible. That is not to say we should pander to those who attack and denigrate migrants. There is not one developed country in the world that has no immigration controls regardless of nationality or immigration status. The GMB already has an excellent policy on migrant workers. At Congress last year a motion was passed seconding a positive GMB position on supporting and working with migrant workers. Therefore, the CEC asks the mover to withdraw or otherwise the CEC must ask Congress to oppose.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. Can I now put Composite 20, Motion 198 and 199 to the vote, please? All those in favour please show? Thank you. Does the mover of 200 wish to withdraw? No? Do you want the right to reply?

*(Composite 20 was carried.)*

*(Motion 198 was carried.)*

*(Motion 199 was carried.)*

BRO. C. WHITMORE (London): Thank you, Mary. I just have two very quick points. The point on impossibility and practicality, I would remind Congress that we, as I understand it, as a union have a policy on the abolition of a monarchy which would probably not carry public support and probably not fall into the election manifesto of any of the political parties, including the Labour Party. I do not really think that is a barrier. The point about GMB's work with migrant workers, I would just like to say that it is an enormous red herring because there is nothing in this motion that is critical of the work that our brothers and sisters do with migrant workers. I am extremely proud to belong to a union that is welcoming those brothers and sisters into membership and organising them, and fighting for them. The only difference between me and what you are being asked to support is that I would have no borderlines, I would welcome brothers and sisters from anywhere with the hand of friendship, the hand of freedom, and in that hand a GMB membership card. I urge you to support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Congress, the CEC is seeking withdrawal. The mover and the region has said no, therefore the CEC is asking you to oppose 200. All those in favour please show? Anyone against please show? That is lost. Thank you.

*(Motion 200 was lost.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I have two announcements. There is an amendment to Standing Orders Report this morning. The SOC has authorised the DVD, Hope not Hate, to be shown to Congress, which we will be doing in a couple of moments. Also, someone has lost a little gold earring which was found in the toilets. If anyone has one earring, can I have the other one, please, so I can have a pair? *(Laughter)* I have it up here. Thank you.

Can I now move into the debate and ask you to watch the film, Hope not Hate.

*DVD shown to Congress.*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress I would like to thank all the staff and the organisers and the artists that took part in that, in particular the youngsters. It was wonderful. Just on our behalf, thank you for raising the profile of hope and hate. Can I now move to Racism and Fascism, 201, Stopping the BNP, London Region to move.

## **POLITICAL: RACISM & FASCISM**

### **MOTION 201**

#### **STOPPING THE BNP**

This Congress recognises we have a serious responsibility to stem the rise of the BNP, and we must continually re-examine the best way to achieve this. We recognise the need for our union to develop a

broader based strategy that can bring together activists from a spectrum of organisations to help defeat the fascists. We note the successful events Unite Against Fascism has organised in Trafalgar Square, and elsewhere, bringing together tens of thousands of anti fascists, as an example of this.

It is difficult to see how we can achieve our aims if our anti fascist campaigning is exclusively centred on supporting one political party. We need the participation of those with different political opinions. There would be many more activists prepared to get involved if we do open our campaign up in this way and we would be more effective at stopping the BNP.

We will continue our affiliation to UAF and resolve to circulate its material, encourage members to take part in their events and send a senior officer as delegate to their steering committee.

HOLBORN APEX BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Withdrawn)*

BRO. D. FAITH (London): I am speaking on Motion 201 without the support of the region.

The first thing I would like to do as somebody who has been involved in fighting the Nazis and the fascists for 30 years back from the days of the Anti-Nazi League and Rock against Racism is pay tribute to all the work that has been done in all the regions in the fight against the BNP. I think we have a proud record on it and we clearly have to continue.

Down to the resolution, this is quite unusual, I have come not to praise Motion 201 but to bury it. It is actually factually incorrect and therefore I cannot commend it to you today. Actually, I am taking the unusual step of withdrawing a resolution at Congress from the rostrum.

The reason why I have come up here to withdraw rather than, you know, just withdrawing as most regions do without making these comments is to register a concern I have in some of the remarks that have been made around the resolution, particularly around an apparent hostility there seems to be from some sections of the union to the Unite Against Fascism campaign.

I have a couple of points here, really, Congress. I believe that we have to support each and every genuine campaign against the racists and the fascists, and the Nazis, and clearly in my view United Against Fascism is a genuine campaign in that respect and deserves our support as well as our support for other initiatives we take. Secondly, I am very concerned about dangers of splits in the movement against the Nazis. History tell us that we have at all times to build unity between unions, between black and white, between different communities, in the fight against the Nazis and I think that has to be a cornerstone of our policy in regards to fighting the BNP.

Therefore, between now and next Congress I am urging the leadership of our union to reconsider its position with regard to UAF and, frankly, having made those remarks and thank you for listening to them, I will now withdraw Motion 201.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. Do you have a seconder, Danny?

*Formally seconded to withdraw.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Will Congress agree to withdrawal? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much. Another made redundant, Rachelle, even after getting the fire brigade in over your speech you cannot come up; sorry.

*(Motion 201 was withdrawn.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I call the mover of 202, The BNP, London Region to move.

## **MOTION 202**

### **THE BNP**

Congress agrees that we must campaign within all levels of the Union to rid our communities of the BNP and their lies and hatred.

Congress further agrees to set up a specific fund to support the Union's work in driving the BNP out.

BARKING BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. T. BAILLIE (London): Congress, we see a constant move north, south, east, and west, by the BNP. These fascists spread their hate and lies. They spout their hate by hateful, despicable, liars and bully boys all in the hope of confusing good, hard-working people in all areas into believing they are worse off than they really are. Yes, there are problems in these areas but not insurmountable ones, the ones that we can eradicate at a stroke by building more council housing, not affordable housing but council housing, run by councils, rented by councils, for council tenants who will never be able to afford to buy a home of their own. There is a shortage of this type of property all over the country. This is a legacy left to us by a Tory "right to buy" scheme and one used by the BNP to fuel the fire of ethnic hatred.

We from Barking and Dagenham can testify to how effective these tactics have been by the BNP: 12 BNP councillors. On the other side of the same coin GMB sponsored 12 candidates, Labour candidates, in that area and 11 of those candidates were elected; not bad for what a little bit of hard work can do. We are told how the BNP's ranks are swelling daily. This is their biggest lie and one the national press has helped to give credence to, but when they called upon the support of a rally in Dagenham they only managed to muster between 50 and 70 punters. That is true, I was there, and most of them were bussed in. On the other hand, we did not bus anyone into our counter-rally and on that day we had 500-plus demonstrators.

We are only able to do these things in Barking and Dagenham with a lot of help from our friends, friends like Searchlight, Unite Against Fascism (not the other Unite), Love Music Hate Racism, and of course all the other trade unions. The local Labour MP, Jon Cruddas, is always there, always prepared to stand shoulder to shoulder with us in our fight, unlike his counterpart from Barking; the least said the better. If I have missed anyone out, forgive me. There are a lot of us out there fighting the good fight.

London Region does give us all the support and resources available as I am sure all other regions do in their own regions and surrounding areas. This is not a regional fight, this is a national fight. This is a nation fighting for its life. We need our National Office to do more. We need more resources made available; whether this is in funding or materials it is all going to cost money. Look at the May elections, look at the result. We can see it is possible to beat

the BNP. They can con some of the people some of the time but they will not con us all, all of the time. Eight wins, eight losses, no overall gain. We can beat the BNP. I ask you all, please support this motion. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

BRO. T. WALL (London): President, Congress, the BNP are like a horrible disease, like canker in a horse – I said “canker”. We all know if a horse suffers the law says we can put a horse down. These people are like canker, they should be put down humanely like horses. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Trevor. Does any delegate wish to come in on the debate? Yes? Come forward, James. Anyone else? Come on, then.

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): The BNP is not just a society problem, they are starting to get organised in the workplaces. Everyone has a duty to stop this. In society and workplaces there is no place for any BNP member. In one Remploy factory somebody has got organised and we are stopping them at the moment. If anyone wants to know about a course that is against the BNP, Mick Rix runs a good one. Thank you. I support this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Dick?

BRO. R. POLE (London): I am coming to the rostrum to support Motion 202. Firstly, I must repeat the congratulations already admirably expressed in recognition of the great work GMB has carried out in the fight against the BNP nationwide, and living in East London close to Barking and Dagenham I am fully appreciative, like many of you, of the work that has been carried out in that area to fight the Nazi threat particularly around there. Like many of you I also have been fully engaged actively in opposing the Far Right, most recently trying to drive the BNP off the terraces of my local football club, Leyton Orient FC, in conjunction with Kick Racism Out of Football. I am pleased to say we have met some considerable success in that area and they have been driven back to the sewers where they come from.

We need to fight on all fronts and I have to say I am disappointed we are not affiliated to Unite Against Fascism as my branch has supported their activities as well as Searchlight, Love Music Hate Racism, the TUC, and as I say on all active fronts. I would urge support for Motion 202 against the BNP, urge everyone to get actively involved in all campaigns against the fascists, and let’s drive the scumbags back to the sewers where they belong.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Anyone else? (*No response*) I now put 202 to the vote all those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

(*Motion 202 was carried.*)

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to Congress our guest this morning, Mark Thomas. Mark is on the platform. Mark is a comedian – we have plenty of them here today, Mark, I’m telling you – presenter, political activist – we had them yesterday – to address Congress. Mark has been a performer since 1985 – I am not saying a word - and has toured the UK and abroad. He has made seven series of his Channel 4 show, “The Mark Thomas Project.” He supported the miners during the strike by fundraising and

performing shows in soup kitchens. He still does an annual benefit shown for the NUM in Wakefield. Mark, it gives me great pleasure to ask you to address Congress.

## **ADDRESS TO CONGRESS BY MARK THOMAS**

MARK THOMAS: Congress, President, thank you very much for asking me to speak, first of all, for inviting me down here. Also, it is great to be here for a number of reasons but I also wanted to congratulate the GMB on its fantastic work that it has done against private equity. The work that you have done has set a benchmark and what it has done has proved that research, imagination, and actually getting out there and campaigning can actually lead the debate, lead the agenda, and bring about change. The work you have done has been astounding. I wanted to congratulate you on that, first of all. (*Applause*)

What I wanted to talk about this morning, though, relates to that. I wanted to talk about the moves that have been made by the Government since the attacks on the Twin Towers and the restrictions that have been placed on civil liberties, and the implications it has for all of us. Many of you will have been involved in the anti-apartheid movement and fought against racism and fought against the pernicious evil regime in South Africa, and in all sorts of different ways.

A mate of mine was involved in the City of London Anti-Apartheid Movement and they had a 24-hour picket outside the South African Embassy. You might remember it. They had election time during the South African apartheid era and obviously only the whites could vote and my mate thought, "Well, this is unfair because all the people who are embassy staff are going to be allowed in to the embassy where they can vote." He thought, "If they can vote but black people can't, this is completely out of order." So he took the rather imaginative/alcohol-fuelled decision that he would superglue the locks of the South African Embassy to prevent the staff getting in and the white workers, white staff, being able to vote. Of course, he was arrested. God bless him, he was put up on trial and in court the judge said, "How do you plead?" He said, "Your honour, I have to say that actually, technically, this offence happened on the portico of the South African Embassy, therefore it is foreign soil. I am quite happy to be extradited to South Africa...." (*Laughter/Applause*) And the judge said, "Nice try."

The point is this. If apartheid was still in existence now and Nelson Mandela was still in gaol, and apartheid and what we face now in terms of laws coming in against civil liberties came together, then if you supported Nelson Mandela now you would be breaking the law. Nelson Mandela believed in the armed struggle to help liberate South Africa. If you supported Nelson Mandela you would be guilty of glorifying terror. Nelson Mandela would be a terrorist. If you look at the anti-terror law the definition of a terrorist is incredible. It is someone who commits an act of violence or damage to property, or threatens an act of violence or damage to property, and it is done for religious, political, or ideological purposes.

Look at the broad range of people that covers. That covers Green Peace, getting a ship in front of a whaling boat, that is a threat to property, that could be a threat of damage to a person, and it is done for ideological reasons. It would be GM crop protestors getting on to crops, they are now terrorists. Ramblers – ramblers – are now legally on a par with al Qaeda. (*Laughter*) This is nuts. If you go to the Bible, if you have faith, you can find in St. Mark's Gospel they actually say Jesus threw the moneylenders out of the temple. Jesus overturned the tables; that is damage to property. He chucked them out of the temple; that is a threat to a human being and he probably did it for religious reasons. (*Laughter/Applause*) Technically,

Jesus would be a terrorist. Now, under the Glorification of Terrorism Act that means if you support Jesus – (*Laughter*) - technically the next time you see a fish on the back of someone's car you should dob them in. (*Laughter*)

This has meant that the laws that have come in have been incredible. It means now that if you go and support the case of Burmese democracy, if you believe that we should oppose the military regime in Burma, then you could actually be supporting terrorism because the Shan and the Koran believe in an arms struggle. That could mean that you are guilty of an offence.

What these laws do is limit and restrict our campaigning, they limit and restrict our right to effect change. Actually, if you look at some of the stuff that the GMB has done in actually putting camps outside the private equity fellas' houses, with the new laws that have come in that could get you nicked. Technically, that could be harassment; in fact, bizarrely enough, if people go and campaign on your doorstep that could be harassment. It is absolutely nuts that we have got to this stage. It is absolutely nuts that we have got to the stage now where the threat of terrorism – and there is a threat – has suddenly dictated the way in which civil liberties pan out.

If you remember, go back to the bombings that happened in London, which were tragic and we all know that, and we know that the terrorist threat is real, 50-odd people died there, and look at the amount of money, time, resources, and effort that goes into fighting terrorism, the war on terror, introducing ID cards. By the way, if they do bring in ID cards I have this great idea. I think we should all change our name by deed poll to David Blunkett just to see how it works out. (*Applause*) The ID cards will be hugely expensive and it will not work. Charles Clarke when he was Home Secretary actually admitted, he said two-thirds of the terrorists do not use false identities, they use their own identity; so one-third use false identities. Of that one-third half of them are actually coming into Britain from the EU so actually it does not matter if they are using a false identity because you would not know because they have their false identity in the EU. So what you are looking at is 87% of terrorist activity - and I do not know how the Government got this figure, I really do not know, maybe they focus-grouped known terrorists; I do not know (*Laughter*) but these are the figures - 87% it will not apply to so you have 13% of potential terrorists who it does apply to.

Now, how is it going to work? So the police go up to a terrorist suspect who they do not know is a terrorist suspect, and they say, "Can I see your ID card?" The terrorist suspect or the terrorist says, "Oh, I haven't got it with me." The police say, "Under the law you must turn up at a police station within three days or face a fine." (*Laughter*) Now, I am not sure that is going to deter a terrorist. Anyway, even if it does upset them a bit, what do they do, they run home to their mates and go, "I've gotta go to the police station in three days' time." They go, "Great, put this on, off you go, press that when you get there." (*Laughter/Applause*)

The laws actually have a chilling effect on campaigning and activism and I think there is no better example of this than the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act that was brought in to get Brian Haw, the peace campaigner. Brian Haw has been in Parliament Square now for nearly six years and that law was specifically brought in to get him. David Blunkett admitted it, all the Home Secretaries subsequently have said, yes. Six clauses of a government's act have been brought in to get one man; some might call that petty: six clauses. The law says, basically, once this Act is passed and gets royal assent anyone who wishes to demonstrate in Parliament Square and its environs will need to get prior permission from the police.

Brian Haw's lawyers go along to the judge and they say, "Excuse me, your honour, this doesn't apply to our client because the law says once it becomes law you have to get permission. Our client has been demonstrating prior to the law coming into existence," and some batty old judge went, "No, you're absolutely right, it doesn't apply to him." (*Laughter*) So the bloke they brought it in to get it won't work for but the rest of us, if we want to go and campaign and demonstrate in Parliament Square and its environs we have to get permission from the police six days in advance.

So ask yourself: what exactly counts as a demonstration these days under our war on terror, what counts as a demonstration? According to the police, one person with a banner is a demonstration. One person with a badge, a CND badge, a trade union badge, a Tory Party badge should ever any be in existence (*Laughter*) that counts as a demonstration. There is a woman who walked up near Downing Street and she had a T-shirt and on her T-shirt were pictures of Brian Haw's placards that he used to have out on Parliament Square; so, the T-shirt had the placards on it. The cops outside Downing Street said, "Right, you're nicked." She went, "What?" They said, "You're nicked. This is an illegal demonstration." She said, "What, for the T-shirt?" They said, "Yea, that's an unauthorised demonstration. You're nicked." She said, "No, I'm not demonstrating, I'm actually advertising an art exhibit at the Tate Britain of Mark Wallinger's work." The cops went, "Sorry to disturb you, carry on." (*Laughter/Applause*)

A friend of mine called Sharn had a picnic on Parliament Square and the cops came along and said, "You've got to move or we'll arrest you." She said, "Why?" They said, "It's an illegal demonstration." She said, "No, it's a picnic." They said, "No." She said, "Doily, cucumber sandwich." (*Laughter*) I think you'll find that's a picnic." They pointed to her fairy cakes and said, "Cake." (*Laughter*) On her cakes were iced one word and that word was "Peace", and the police deemed her cake to be a political cake and that she therefore needed prior permission six days in advance before getting it out of the Tupperware box. (*Laughter*)

Now, I immediately thought, well, any law that actually requires us to get permission for a cake we can play with that. I think we can. The law is this ridiculous. I actually had to get permission to wear a red nose on Red Nose Day in Parliament Square lest it be counted as a political demonstration. So what we have done, me and some friends, we have started to organise demos. We thought, "OK, if you want to do this we will play with you."

We went down to the police station, I handed in my form requesting a demonstration, and I got a letter back from the Metropolitan Police, "Dear Mr. Thomas, I, Superintendent Terry, do hereby authorise your demonstration calling for the abolition of the need to get permission for demonstrations." (*Laughter*)

The next one we went down there, there is a nice chap who is a guy called PC Paul McNally who works out of Charing Cross, he is from Dundee. He is an interesting guy as a cop, actually, because his dad was a shop steward during the Timex dispute up in Dundee so he is not your normal cop. I went down there, handed in my form, he is a Scottish guy, he looks at the form and goes, "Right, Mr. Thomas, you want a demonstration to defend surrealism." (*Laughter*) I said, "Yea, I can have a demonstration on anything I like." He said, "You can indeed. I just didn't know surrealism was under threat." (*Laughter*) I said, "It is." He said, "How so?" I said, "Because we have a government of paradox, we have a government that seeks peace through war, and seeks to protect civil liberties by eroding them. This is a paradox. This is an absurdism and absurdism is the enemy of surrealism ergo surrealism is under attack." He said, "I wish I had never asked." (*Laughter*)

Three days later I get a phone call from him and he said, "We're just letting you know we're giving you permission to go ahead with your defence of surrealism." I said, "Fantastic. Are there any conditions attached to the demonstration," because the police can attach conditions. They can limit the number of people on your demo. They can limit the number of banners on your demo. They can limit how big the banners are. So they could say, two of you, one of them two inches. Bigger banners now! I said, "Are there any conditions?" He said, "No. Were you expecting any?" I said, "No, no, no. I was just asking." He said, "Police on the day can impose conditions if during your defence of surrealism you do anything silly." *(Laughter)*

Now, the area that this applies to, and I will just be two minutes if that is all right, is not just Parliament Square, it is a lot bigger. If you go from London on the north side of London, the Thames, across Hungerford Bridge, and go down the Embankment, go past Jubilee Gardens with the memorial for those who fought the fascists in Spain, that is in the zone, you need permission. If you go past the ferris wheel and the London Aquarium, that is in the zone, you need permission. Go past the Florence Nightingale Museum, go past St. Thomas's Hospital, that is in the zone. You want to demonstrate, you need permission. Go all the way down to Lambeth Palace on the Embankment, that is in the zone; across the bridge, the MI5 building, in the zone. Up Horseferry Road, you go past the magistrates' courts, past the Channel 4 building, you go up Broadway, past New Scotland Yard, past St. James's tube, you hit St. James's Park, you nip up Royal Horse Guards Road, you turn right at the top of The Mall, go under Admiralty Arch, link up with Northumberland Avenue, and go right the way down to Hungerford Bridge, quite a large area to be caught unaware with a badge or a cake! *(Laughter/Applause)*

So what me and some friends started to do was we started to demonstrate and we started to put in requests and we organised a thing called "The Mass Lone Demo". We thought if one person with one banner needs permission, what happens if a lot of one people go down with one banner and we all ask to demonstrate at the same time. Would the police be prepared for this, would they have procedures in place to deal with this frankly Daily Mail reader type behaviour? *(Laughter)* No, they didn't. We get down there, and there are 150 of us, and we go into the police station. The cops are in total disarray. They say, "What are you doing?" We say, "We are all here to demonstrate." They said, "If you demonstrate individually, why are you doing it all together?" We said, "We get lonely." *(Laughter)*

My friend Sharn arrived with her application iced upon a large sponge cake. *(Laughter)* She walked in and the cops went, "No." She went, "Yea." "Nooo." She said, "Where in the law does it say I have to write it on paper?" The cops just went, "Cor blimey." They had a big legal huddle, "Shall we drop it?" "No, that's criminal damage, we can't do that." "What shall we do? She hasn't brought a spare piper, we can't countersign the document." *(Laughter)*

We have these mass lone demonstrations every month and we gave the police recently 2,500 applications. At the time that this legislation was introduced it was August 2005 and to the time they last counted, which was December 2006, the police had received 1,300 applications. We gave them 2,500. We gave them three years' work in one week. They don't like us. *(Laughter)* The weird thing is I went in there to see PC Paul McNally, I wouldn't say we were mates but we might play football Christmas Day. *(Laughter)* I went in there with one application, he said, "You want to demonstrate on Hungerford Bridge?" I said, "Yes, I do." He said, "Why on Hungerford Bridge?" I said, "I can demonstrate anywhere." He said, "You can indeed. What are you going to demonstrate?" I said, "I want to abolish

footbridges.” He said, “What?” (*Laughter*) “Why do you want to abolish footbridges?” I said, “I want to encourage swimming.” (*Laughter/Applause*) He said, “What are you going to do by way of your demonstration?” I said, “I will stand in the middle of Hungerford Bridge and I’ll hand out one leaflet. One leaflet technically counts as a demonstration therefore I require permission.” He goes, “It does indeed but do you realise I’m going to be generating more paperwork than you’re going to be handing out?” (*Laughter*) “Are you aware of that?” I said, “Yea, yea, yea.” (*Laughter*) So we hit them with 2,500 applications which is a considerable amount of paperwork.

The fact is people think they do not have the right to demonstrate. The effect of these laws is not only curtailing our rights but actually stopping people exercising the ones we have. It chills out people and they think, “Have we got the right to do this? Can we do it? Will we get into trouble?” So by doing this stuff what we do is we hope people will become engaged. It is a myth that people actually do not want to be involved in politics. They do. People are political. They are just fed up with any kind of lack of reception within the parliamentary democracy. They are fed up with just being ignored. How can you say people don’t want to be involved in politics? Nearly two million people marched against a war. How can you say that is not being involved?

So, when we went there with our 2,500 I made a mistake, I was helping people with some of their forms and I put some stuff online saying, “These are the places you might wish to demonstrate at in the area. Maybe you’ll want to go and demonstrate at Tescos or Pret a Manger, or maybe you want to go to the MoD or Downing Street.” Normally if you want to demonstrate at Downing Street you put, “Downing Street, Whitehall, the pen,” which is that little barrier opposite the gates. I just put, “Downing Street” and so everyone else, 350 people, copied “Downing Street”. The police phoned me up and go, “Right, Mr. Thomas, if you want to demonstrate in Downing Street you need two forms of ID, one form which will be photo’d, the other form which will be a utility bill or bank statement, and you will be subjected to a security search.”

I suddenly realised they were letting us through the gates. So I went back and looked at the legislation and it says, if it is within the area they’ve got to let you demonstrate, and they’ve rushed this legislation through so fast they just forgot, they’ve made the monumental error of not excluding the most security sensitive area of Downing Street. So for the first time since 1989 we are in front of Downing Street! (*Laughter*)

Me and my mates are there. I have got a little blue plaque which we made, on a stick, “Tony Blair lived here 1997” (*Laughter/Applause*) “Prime Minister and war criminal lest we forget.” It was great. It was just fantastic. Another mate of mine had, “Help, my Prime Minister’s been kidnapped by a cult.” (*Laughter*) Someone else had, “My Prime Minister is a cult.” (*Laughter*)

We’ve got to the stage now where actually the police are starting an internal debate and saying, “This law isn’t worth it because it makes us look stupid.” We’ve got to a stage now where actually there is a Private Members Bill coming through the House of Lords and, God knows, you know, I am 44 and suddenly I am working with someone from the House of Lords. They are putting through a Private Members Bill to try and repeal this stuff.

I think actually this stuff is all there to be fought for. The issue of civil liberties is quite simple, it is about activism and it is about campaigning. As trade unionists, and I am a member of BECTU, we know more than anyone else that if you want governments to do

something you have to make 'em do it. They won't naturally do it. If people can read and write in this country, it is because they should thank trade unionists and activists who fought for that. (*Applause*)

If you go to the NHS you need to say thank you to a trade unionist and you need to say thank you to activists who campaigned and worked and worked for that. If you go and vote, you need to thank all the people who chained themselves to railings, the women who actually got outside Downing Street. You need to thank all the people who literally fought on occasion to get the vote. You need to thank activists and campaigners. We know more than anyone else that it is campaigners and activists, and trade unionists, that bring about change more than anyone else.

The whole point of these laws is a very simple thing. When you add them all up, you have the SOPRA law and you have the ID cards and you have detention without trial, and you have 90 days, and you have all of this stuff, the stop and search measures, and then you have the ID cards, and then the Government turning round and politicians saying, "Look, the Freedom of Information thing shouldn't really apply to us, we're special." No. The emphasis is on us, the citizen, to explain ourselves to the state when in a democracy it works the other way round, the state has to be accountable to us. (*Applause*)

Thank you very much for listening. I hope your Congress goes well. Once again, congratulations on the outstanding work you have done on private equity. Hope to see you out there. Thanks a lot. (*Standing ovation*)

A SPEAKER FROM THE FLOOR: Is he opening the Millennium Bridge? (*Laughter*)

THE PRESIDENT: He is going to be the next London cabbie! Mark, on behalf of this Congress we would like to say thank you to you for the work that you do on trade unionists' behalf and on everyone's behalf. *These* were made by our members and we hope you accept that with our regards and comradeship.

MARK THOMAS: Thank you very much indeed. (*Presentation amid applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: And I also hope you do not get nicked when you take the lid off this box walking down Whitehall because they are glasses with the GMB insignia on them! (*Laughter*) I trust in faith. Thank you. You can get nicked twice because there is another bottle to be filled up made by our members.

MARK THOMAS: Thank you. Thank you very much indeed. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Oh, dear, that was well worthwhile.

Colleagues, can we now move on to the next part of the agenda, and that is Commercial Services Section Report and the resolutions that follow. I am handing over to my right-hand man, Malcolm. Malcolm would you like to take the chair for a little while, please? Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we are now moving to item 6, Commercial Services Section Report on Energy and Utilities. I will ask Gary Smith to give his report. Gary?

**COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION REPORT: ENERGY & UTILITIES SECTION  
(pages 55-58)**

**ENERGY & UTILITIES SECTION**

**Introduction**

The GMB has continued to support a balanced energy policy, using all indigenous fuels and UK technology including clean coal, renewables and nuclear as a way maintaining a safe and secure energy supply with a reduction in CO2 emissions.

We have responded to a number of government consultations on energy expressing these views. In particular we have supported the use of clean coal and carbon capture, a new build of nuclear plant on existing sites and increased use of renewable technology including micro generation.

Through the TUC we have pressed for the government to provide aid and support for the manufacture of renewable energy and microgeneration in the UK.

**NUCLEAR INDUSTRY**

The last year has been particularly difficult for our members in the nuclear industry. The GMB had campaigned against the sell off and break up of British Nuclear Group. Regrettably the Government did opt to sell off and break up BNG. Our position was not helped when one of the unions in the industry apparently changed their position and advised the government that they would support the break up. Likewise the board of BNFL who originally opposed the break up of BNG reversed their position so further undermining our arguments.

The break up and sell off of BNG has profound implications for our members in the industry. The collective bargaining machinery is changing which will mean more negotiations will be devolved from a national level.

In November the Prime Minister accepted an invite from the GMB and visited Sellafield. The event received wide spread publicity and further enhanced the unions profile in the industry. The Prime Minister met with shop stewards to hear first hand about the unions concerns for the future of the site. The General Secretary has also visited Sellafield to demonstrate the unions ongoing support for our members in what is a very difficult time.

**i. Pensions**

Negotiations over a new industry wide pension scheme are now complete. Whilst not all our aspirations have been met the new scheme does safeguard the interests of our existing members in the industry. The new Defined Benefits Scheme will have an employee contribution of 5% with the employer's contribution being 18.9%. There will be a defined contribution scheme for new starters and the contributions are detailed below.

**DC Pension Contributions**

Employee Rate	Employer Rate
3% (Minimum)	8%
4%	9.5%
5%	11%
6%	12.5%
7% or more	13.5%

Total Employer contributions once risk benefits and contracting in NI costs are added to the figures

above:

Employee Rate	Employer Rate
3% (Minimum)	13%
4%	14.5%
5%	16%
6%	17.5%
7% or more	18.5%

### **i. Decommissioning**

The GMB has also been heavily involved in the strategic discussions over the decommissioning and the legacy issues around the industry. The Nuclear Decommissioning Agency is the responsible body. Whilst initially critical of the NDA we continue to interact with them. Following sustained political pressure from ourselves there seems to have been a change in the language being used by the NDA. The NDA has now publicly endorsed a position broadly in line with ours in relation to investing in skills and local communities around the industry.

The GMB has played a leading role in the argument over NDA funding. The government was set to cut the NDA budget. The budget remains tight but our intervention was critical in reversing some of the proposed cuts. This Government has promised to deal with the legacy issues and properly fund decommissioning. Our union intends to ensure they make good on these commitments and that there is adequate investment in the industry.

The GMB has met with all the major contractors who are looking to have a stake in the industry going forward. The leading lay representatives have played a major role in this process.

### **iii. Settlements**

The CJIC settled on a 3.5% increase to base rates with flow-through to qualifying allowances. The TAS scheme will be increased from £1,200 to £1,250 for the financial year 2006 / 2007. A sum of £250 from the TAS scheme will be paid from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006 and will flow through to qualifying allowances. The £250 payment will then be fully consolidated into base rates in the next pay round beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

At the time of writing we are waiting on the RSJC ballot results

### **BRITISH ENERGY**

The pay claim for 2006 was settled at 3.9% increase on basic salaries with flow through. At the time of writing negotiations over a new company wide agreement are nearing conclusion. These negotiations have been on going for a number of years. Great credit goes to our lay reps who have played a leading role in these negotiations particularly Adrian Cirket from Southern Region and Frank Newman from Scotland.

### **GAS DISTRIBUTION**

Post the sell off of four networks by National Grid the industry has entered a new era. The industry is under greater scrutiny than ever from the Regulator. The one year regulatory review has seen tough settlements for the industry with National Grid as the largest network arguably being hit the hardest. A further regulatory review is now underway this will determine the funding formula for the next five years. The GMB will be engaged in this process.

The union continues to campaign against the current system of regulation and liberalisation. The agenda around liberalisation has seen the industry fracture with potential implications for safety whilst gas prices have soared.

## **NATIONAL GRID STAFF SIDE**

Protracted negotiations over a new pay and conditions package for staff were concluded. Our members voted in favour of the package. The combined votes of all the unions who voted was to support the package. However two unions, whose members rejected the deal, did not feel they were in a position to pool the vote and at the time of writing they are re-balloting.

## **NATIONAL GRID INDUSTRIALS**

We have gone through a very difficult set of negotiations over a new pay and conditions package for the National Grid Industrial Workforce. In a ballot of members the package was narrowly accepted. The backdrop to the negotiations are a potential threat to workloads from changes in the climate, the massive gas mains renewal programme and the strong possibility that National Grid will lose meter work as a result of a competition enquiry being overseen by Ofgem. The deal commits to reducing hours of work and unsocial hours, consolidation of average overtime payments into a defined uplift as well as the protection of pensionable earnings. Earnings and pensionable earnings tend to be variable and highly dependant on overtime.

Significantly the deal also commits to a direct labour force. The Company will build two new training centres under the deal and a significant number of existing contractors should be given direct employment opportunities, in addition to an increase in apprentice recruitment. Other companies in the industry are apparently pursuing strategies that have a greater reliance on contractors.

The deal also allows for a 3.5% pay increase Year 1; RPI plus 0.3% Year 2 and RPI plus 0.2% Year 3.

We have agreed to a process of incremental role out of the new national framework

## **UNITED UTILITIES**

United Utilities have the contract to maintain the infrastructure for the Gas Distribution Network owned by Northern Gas Networks. I have been involved in supporting colleagues at the final stage of the pay negotiations involving ACAS. The company had sought to impose an RPI settlement for the 10 year duration of the contract. We were successful in moving the company's position. The members settled on a two year deal: 3.7% Year 1 with flow through plus a £200 one off payment and 2 half days holiday, Year 2 RPI plus 0.2% with flow through and £50 one off payment.

However the Company have signed up to a partnership agreement with a number of contractors which will apparently extend their role. This is a potentially significant attack on union organisation in the industry. I will be supporting colleagues in the regions as required.

## **BRITISH GAS STAFF**

At the time of writing this report a new bargaining structure is being put in place for the Staff Side of British Gas. In future staff working on the energy side of the business will bargain separately from those in services. The staff in services will all under the same bargaining umbrella as our industrial membership. These proposals should enhance our position.

The staff settled on a 3.3% pay deal.

## **BRITISH GAS INDUSTRIALS**

The British Gas Industrials settled on a 3.18% pay increase, with more significant percentage increases to a number of allowances. A fundamental review of one group of industrials, SFL, has been undertaken. This should see improvement to this groups pay and conditions as well as bringing them into the core business.

## **WATER**

The GMB led a very high profile campaign about the state of the water industry over the spring and summer months. There is no doubt that the research we commissioned and our intervention shaped the debate. The argument moved from one simply of about a drought in particular areas of the country to how we manage our water resources and the structure of the industry.

Our calls for the industry to be returned to public ownership received widespread media coverage. We will continue to fight privatisation and the failed system of regulation.

## **CLEAN COAL**

As part of our support for a balanced energy policy, Pamela Ross from our Yorkshire Region has been ably representing the union on the Clean Coal Task Group

## **ACTION TAKEN ON MOTIONS TO CONGRESS 2006**

### **Composite 19 and Composite 20**

The GMB put in a submission to the Governments energy review. We continue to support a balanced energy policy to ensure security of supply and to tackle climate change. We have argued for the scrapping of the regulator and continue to argue that our liberalised energy markets are failing to deliver in terms of price for either consumers or industry. We have stated that there should be greater parliamentary scrutiny of energy prices.

### **Motion 147**

The union has worked closely with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority over all the issues relating to skills and training around the nuclear industry.

### **Motion 183**

I have made representations to government and been involved in initiatives about the involvement of "venture capitalists" or private equity firms in the energy and utilities sector. Large sections of our water and gas distribution networks are now owned by foreign capital.

### **EM3**

The GMB has led a high profile campaign over the water industry and we have raised the issue of metering but the main focus has been on returning the industry to public sector control and attacking the failed system of regulation.

### **C32**

We continue to promote apprentice recruitment, last year British Gas took on 839 apprentices. Under the new deal for National Grid Industrials the company will build two new training centres which will focus on apprentice training.

*(Adopted)*

**BRO. G. SMITH (National Secretary):** Congress, over the past year the GMB has been fully engaged in the debate about Britain's future energy needs. I am delighted that the Labour Government has finally caught up with the GMB in advocating and supporting the need for a balanced energy policy with a role for removals, clean coal, (and I do not forget the small but important membership we have in the coal industry), gas, and nuclear.

Let me say to you, Congress, that I know that nuclear is always an emotive issue and that we will have a very legitimate debate later on this morning about the nuclear issue. I have to tell you this, we made strong representations to government about not breaking up and selling off the nuclear industry and our arguments did not prevail. That means our membership in the nuclear industry are facing a very difficult future and I hope that this Congress will send positive messages to the thousands of members that we do have in the industry.

Last year Congress mandated me to engage with the nuclear decommissioning authority, which we have done as a trade union. We are working with all the parties who have an interest in the future of the industry. Both myself and the General Secretary visited Sellafield and Tony Blair on the back of last year's Congress also came to the site at a GMB invitation. In terms of British Gas, this week we will be rolling out the pay deal for the gas engineers. We have successfully brought the SFL engineers into the core business and we are about to undertake a radical overhaul of collective bargaining structures for staff, which will, I believe, strengthen greatly our position within British Gas services. I am sure that Congress will want to send out solidarity greetings to our members in the electrical services division of British Gas who will start balloting for industrial action today.

Colleagues, in terms of gas distribution, we have said to you before that we now have a very fractured gas distribution industry. If you would just bear with me for one second, let me explain to you what that actually means. In the North of England the gas distribution network is now actually owned by a Hong Kong based bank. They have established a company to run the network. The company in Northern Gas Networks has subcontracted all the maintenance and installation work to a company called United Utilities. They in turn have engaged four further sets of subcontractors to help them run the infrastructure.

Congress, if you like me think this looks and smells like RailTrack you are absolutely correct and I have made it absolutely clear to the minister and to Ofgem, if there is an accident or a problem with gas supply, we will put the onus firmly on Ofgem and upon the Government.

I was delighted to say to Congress that United Utilities tried to impose a 10-year RPI-only settlement on our members in United Utilities but because of the hard work of the shop stewards and officers we smashed that proposal from the company and got our members a better settlement.

National Grid, we put forward a comprehensive new package for staff that was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> June and our members voted for that in some numbers. We have introduced a very controversial deal for the industrial workforce and National Grid but I tell you, Congress, I believe, given what I am about to say about the regulator, that this was the right way forward and, very importantly, we have a commitment to direct labour in National Grid for the first time in many years.

Congress, the regulator, Ofgem, is currently in a consultation process about the financial settlement for gas distribution. They are looking to slash the amount of money that is spent on the gas distribution industry. We are facing the prospect of losing jobs and we are most definitely going to see the undermining of safety standards if Ofgem get away with this. Ofgem have also raised questions about our members' pensions.

We will fight tooth and nail this year to ensure we have proper levels of investment in the gas industry. We are already pushing Ofgem back on the pensions issue. There will be an emergency motion later on today on that issue and I hope that you give me the mandate to

fight tooth and nail on behalf of our members in protecting pensions in the gas industry. We know, Congress, why the regulator is talking tough in gas distribution. It is because the regulator has failed, and failed miserably, to deal with the rising energy prices which are crippling British industry and impacting upon the poorest in our society. We say to the Government very clearly, the time has come to plan for our future energy needs in a proper way and sack the regulator for the sake of safety and security. Let's at the very least take the gas infrastructure back into public sector control.

I will finish on water, Congress. In the water industry last year, like Congress we had started a campaign, the first campaign in many years, on the issue of water. The campaign went all summer and indeed has been picked up by the press already early this year. It was a terrific campaign and thanks to the Press Department for all their support with it. As ever we appreciate the support from comrades at the Morning Start who tend to back our initiatives. We were perhaps slightly surprised when the Daily Express apparently backed the GMB's calls that the water industry should also be returned back to public ownership. The Labour candidates who spoke the other night I think should understand very clearly, if you want a sound majority going forward and you want to win votes in the South East of England, then make a commitment to renationalise the water industry. *(Applause)*

In conclusion, Congress, thanks to all the officers and staff who supported the work of the sections and particularly the terrific work that is done in energy and utilities by our shop stewards and activists. I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gary. Page 55, 56, 57, and 58. Congress accept that report? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*(Commercial Services Section Report: Energy & Utilities Section (pages 55-58) was adopted.)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now go on to item 7, which is the Industrial & Economic Policy: Commercial Services (Energy & Utilities), Composite 10, Balanced Energy Policy, the CEC support this and it is Southern Region to move and second.

## **INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: COMMERCIAL SERVICES (ENERGY & UTILITIES)**

### **COMPOSITE MOTION 10**

**113 – Energy Policy – (Southern Region)**

**114 – Energy Policy – (Southern Region)**

### **BALANCED ENERGY POLICY**

Congress supports a continued balanced energy policy of coal, gas, renewables and nuclear electricity generation and the proposed new build of nuclear power stations at existing sites.

GMB is the largest union in the nuclear industry and should continue this role.

*(Carried)*

BRO. A. CIRKET (Southern): I also have the privilege of being the Branch President at Dungeness A and B Nuclear Power Stations.

As you heard this morning from Gary Smith, the Government has now accepted this union's argument for a balanced energy policy. Now, I could speak to you this morning about the role nuclear energy has to play in that but we have had these debates before. I want to speak to you about the balanced energy policy and why it is the right one.

We cannot have our eggs all in one basket. That has been said many times but we do need to support all the other issues within energy, clean coal, renewables, and the main one which I see is actually reducing the amount of energy that we use, reducing the amount of electricity that we use. Every organisation that we interact with we should have a policy of trying to get them to become carbon neutral in the way they use their energy. We cannot carry on just using energy as if it is unlimited, as if it is free, as if it is cheap. That is the wrong approach.

As pleased as I am to see that we have this policy now, I do recognise it is going to be a most contentious area for a few years to come. If you think about renewables, everyone says they are in favour of renewables, the majority of people, all political parties, but yet when it comes to building a windmill, or a barrage, or whatever else it happens to be, the local councillors are opposed to it. We have Liberal Democrats in our area. Their leadership will tell you how they are in favour of renewables but when it comes to locally every single one of them votes against it; absolutely no accountability at all. They are the issues we are going to have to deal with so I would like you to support this. I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Seconder? Formally? Thank you.

*Composite 10 was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 115, Northern Region.

## **MOTION 115**

### **ENERGY POLICY**

Congress notes with concern the instability of international energy supplies and the consequent massive increases in global energy costs.

Congress recognises that a stable, affordable and environmentally safe UK energy supply is dependent upon the development of an Energy Policy based upon energy produced in Britain.

Congress calls on the Government to pursue an Energy Policy based upon secure energy produced in the UK.

Congress recognises that such a policy cannot be realised without a sizeable dependence upon nuclear energy.

SELLAFIELD BRANCH  
*Northern Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. T. BARKER (Northern): Congress, the UK is facing an energy crisis. As we all know global warming from the burning of fossil fuels is the single most important challenge facing the planet. In the UK the British Government has set ambitious targets to reduce emissions by

20.0% by 2020. Many consider those targets to be grossly inadequate. These targets are never going to be met without a major change to our energy policy. Congress, currently 23% of electricity generated in the UK is produced by nuclear power. Many of our nuclear power stations are reaching the end of their lifespan and by 2024 all of the current nuclear power stations will be out of commission.

In addition to the loss of our current nuclear capacity the UK also faces the closure of many of its coal-powered power stations under the new European standards. Put bluntly, colleagues, the UK must replace over 50% of its current generating capacity over the next 15 years. President, against this background the options are limited. As recent events in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East have clearly demonstrated, the UK cannot depend on supplies of oil and gas from abroad; to do so would make future generations hostage to fortune. In reality the only reliable options are coal and nuclear. Clearly, Congress, the future of Britain's electricity is totally dependent upon coal, coal is still cheap and plentiful across the world. Who knows, we might even reopen some of the old mines that were closed by the Tories. Nuclear coal burning technologies have been developed and should help to reduce the damage to the planet but, Congress, even with the cleanest coal burning technology nuclear power stations cannot be replaced with coal burning power stations without enormous damage to the environment.

President, the fact remains that of all the options available nuclear power remains the cleanest option. Remember, Congress, to produce electricity in a nuclear power station not one molecule of CO<sub>2</sub> is produced. Congress, Motion 115 calls for a balanced energy policy, a policy that ensures that the UK has a clean, safe, and reliable supply of fuels, a policy that recognises that nuclear power stations will form the bedrock of the UK's future electricity supply. Congress, I urge you to support Motion 115. I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. M. WATERS (Northern): Congress, as we all know the UK is facing a major energy supply crisis and many of our oldest and dirtiest coal-fired power stations are coming to the end of their working lives at exactly the same time as the nuclear stations are due to close. The world supplies of alternative fuels are, to say the least, volatile and unstable. Just imagine, colleagues, the reaction of commentators if some 10 years ago we had predicted that the gas supply from Russia to the West would be cut off because bandits in Central Europe were tapping into the pipeline and stealing the gas. Congress, the commentators would have said that it was madness and that such predictions were scaremongering but, colleagues, that is exactly what happened last year, Russia overnight cut the supply to the West without consultation, without warning. There is a consequence. As we all know, gas and electricity costs in the UK doubled.

Congress, the UK economy cannot depend upon imported energy. To do so would be economic madness and as the mover of the motion has just outlined, if the UK is to meet its targets to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 20% by 2020, and if we are to maintain a stable and safe energy supply, the future has to be clean coal technology and nuclear.

President, the UK cannot afford any longer to duck the difficult decisions. I urge Congress to support a balanced energy policy. Support Motion 115. I second.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Motion 116.

**MOTION 116**

## 116. ENERGY POLICY

This Congress is opposed to the Government's Nuclear Energy Policy.

The legacy it will leave for future generations will be an environmental tragedy for future generations.

NORTH KENT ENGINEERING Z39 BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Referred)*

BRO. B. BURTON (Southern): Worthy President, colleagues, I come to this rostrum without the support of my region but I come with the support of my branch, North Kent Engineering, a branch that was at the forefront of nuclear energy, building power stations still maintaining today, and the nuclear submarines. Let me make it clear, I have no problem with a balanced energy policy using existing power stations. We also support the Executive's stance on cleaning up nuclear waste but wish to point out this problem is worldwide. More nuclear stations means more nuclear waste. Colleagues, the answer is clean coal, renewables, and each and every one of us taking a stance to preserve energy and save it. Colleagues, I am going to refer this motion back to the Executive but I urge the Executive to take note of the comments of a branch that lost members through radiation. I refer back.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, colleague. Congress agree on that referral?  
*(Agreed)* Thank you.

*(Motion 116 was referred.)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 117, London Region.

## MOTION 117

### DOMESTIC FUEL PRICES

We ask Congress to lobby government to bring pressure upon the energy companies to reduce the unreasonably high domestic fuel prices in the U.K.

BRAINTREE AND BOCKING BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): Congress, domestic fuel prices in the UK, i.e. petrol, diesel, gas, electricity, and so on, have rocketed in the last couple of years. When we ask for a pay rise we get told we must negotiate with our employer as a level has been set for us i.e. 2%, and yet the fuel prices go up by 5% and much, much more. As a so-called key player in Europe, and the rest of the world, it amazes me and our members as subjects – yes, I did say subjects as we are not citizens like our neighbours in France – we were told in the 1970s we would reap the rewards of North Sea oil and gas. Well, it is now 30 years on, approximately, and the only gas we benefit from is the hot air our government vent when talking. The Government must do something to curb the stranglehold of the monopolies of the big conglomerates that have a noose around the UK's neck.

Congress, before I move, on Monday our General Secretary, Paul Kenny, said he would like us to start with the As and the Bs. Well, Mr. Brown, you are a B. Oh, yes, you are, coming to our Congress and telling our brothers and sisters in Remploy that you would guarantee them

all jobs. Well, the only thing he can guarantee is that one day we will all die. Mr. Brown, two Fs – frigging fairy tales. Congress, I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

BRO. J. WHISTLECRAFT (London): I would like to second Motion 117, domestic fuel prices. As my colleague has already said, they are always increasing and not in line with what the customers themselves can always afford. In these cases it is due to them either being on a low income or low wages, neither of which helps to meet these costs. Especially with the elderly this has a knock-on effect, particularly in the winter months with them having to choose between food or heat and which is more important. The Government has a duty to help these groups of people by putting pressure on the regulator to ensure that companies keep their prices to a minimum to help achieve this objective. I ask Congress to give this motion their support. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder? Sorry, that was the seconder. Sorry, about that. Could I now call Motion 118, North West & Irish Region.

## **MOTION 118**

### **WATER CHARGES NON-PAYMENT**

286 Branch calls on Congress to fully support the non-payment of water charges being introduced by Direct Rule Ministers from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. We have already been paying for water and sewerage services through the regional rates. Imposing charges makes us pay twice.

In Britain, even with treasury millions pumped in to smooth the path to privatisation, consumers have seen charges rocket, with massive profits going to the private shareholders. Here where they have no electoral mandate whatsoever, the Government plans to privatise water and leave ordinary people to pick up the bill.

The opposition to water charges has created unprecedented unity in every community. The legal position is clear. Non-payment is not a criminal offence. The water company cannot turn off your domestic supply.

In the early nineties the GMB and the Water group of Trade Unions successfully defeated the Tories, who tried to privatise the Water Industry. With help and support of Congress we can win this campaign.

286 BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. DONLEY (North West & Irish): In the early 1990s the GMB and the water group of trade unions successfully defeated the Tories who tried to privatise the water industry in Northern Ireland. In March 2003, we had John Spellar and his plans for major public consultation into the introduction of water charges for all domestic users. The consultation paper argued that Northern Ireland domestic users did not pay a direct charge for water services and says that the widespread perception that people pay for water through the rates is no longer the case, but it is not possible to conclude from this that people do not pay for water services. The same points apply equally to all public services funded by local or central taxation. Tax revenues are not earmarked for the health service, for example. That does not mean that people do not pay for it.

The paper itself acknowledges this when it says that water services in Northern Ireland are treated as a public expenditure and are simply part of a wider cost of the local public services that the regional rates help to finance. People do pay for water through their rates. This payment was quantified in 1999 and the ministers in the consultation paper of that year acknowledged that. The contribution this year by the average domestic ratepayer in Northern Ireland for water and sewage services is £127. The Trades Union Movement and the people of Northern Ireland were not to be fooled by this blatant lie. Forced to acknowledge that was part of our regional rates they said it was not enough and was taking much needed money away from health and education.

In August 2004 John Spellar announced the creation of a GOCO, a government owned company which would take water service outside the Northern Ireland Civil Service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 and become self-financing. This matter will be responsible for 900 water worker jobs to go and parts of the water service to be hived off under public private partnership. Government rules state that GOCOs are created only for those companies which are on a path to privatisation. In October 2003 the Government confirmed its intentions to introduce water charges. Charges would be based on the value of your property. A house at the bottom of the market valued at £60,000 will pay a charge of £235 per year, a property costing £100,000 will be liable for £315, and one worth £150,000 will have to pay £415.

At the upper end of the price range, a £250,000 house will have a charge of £615, but a million pound mansion will be charged the same as a house one-third of the price, and there will be a cap of £750 per year on houses worth £340,000 or more.

If the UK Government belatedly gave Northern Ireland its share of the green dye, which private companies in England and Wales enjoyed 14 years ago, this was an injection of £6.6 billion by the UK Government in 1989, achieved by writing off all the debts of the water companies before privatisation, which was worth over £5 billion. Plus a further donation of £1.6 billion to meet the environmental standards required by the EU. This was paid for from general taxation and so Northern Ireland taxpayers made a contribution to it without so far receiving any benefit. The equivalent for Northern Ireland today would mean £350 million.

On 20<sup>th</sup> March a delegation from the GMB met Peter Hain at Stormont Castle to voice our strong opposition to the impending water charges. He confirmed that, as the local parties agreed to form an executive by 26<sup>th</sup> March, water charges would be deferred for one year.

As Congress is aware the 8<sup>th</sup> May was an historic day for Northern Ireland. As trade unionists we welcomed this new political era. We welcome the opportunity now to seek to advance the interests of working people in Northern Ireland who make up the majority of the electorate, with ministers and an executive who are directly accountable to the electorate.

In recent months trade unionists have addressed dozens of public meetings and distributed thousands of leaflets as well as the direct lobbying of political parties and candidates in the recent Assembly elections. As a consequence, water charges were a primary doorstep issue on the campaign trail. The public has made clear the fact that if water charges are ever threatened again, tens of thousands of ordinary, decent and law abiding people will stand up and say they are not paying.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Please wind-up, colleagues.

BRO. DONLEY: We will not be fooled again by the honeyed words by the mandarins, consultants and investment bankers. Water must remain a public asset and a basic human right -----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. Wind it up now, colleague.

BRO. DONLEY: Say “No” to privatisation. I move.

BRO. W. GOULDING (North West & Irish): I speak in support of Motion 118.

President and Congress, this motion asks for your support to stop the proposed introduction of a water tax based on the value of your home in Northern Ireland. We believe that this tax would cause misery and hardship on people who are already struggling to meet their mortgage repayments and rate charges on their homes. Since 2003 the number of home owners who have lost their homes has doubled since both the old and young have been unable to repay their mortgages. This proposed tax would only add to their misery. Please support.

## **MOTION 119**

### **COAL AND NEW TECHNOLOGY**

Congress urges the Government to invest in Clean Coal Technology and the development of our huge coal reserves throughout Britain.

YORKSHIRE COAL STAFFS BRANCH  
*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, visitors and guests, a picture paints a thousand words, so I have brought a map to show you the coal reserves in the UK. It is all the orange and green stuff on this map. This is to keep you informed that we do have plenty of coal, just not a lot of coalmines. Everyone is getting on the green bandwagon at the moment. Even the CEC has a green agenda, but up to now coal has been thought of as nasty, dirty stuff.

However, coal is still providing one-third of our electricity. If we are burning it, we should be burning it in a cleaner and more efficient way. I will not bore you with all the different systems – super critical boilers, gasification, carbon capture and so on – but if you really want to know, see me after class.

We already have the technology. We just need the political will to make it happen. It also needs to happen fairly quickly or we will face an energy gap in about five years time as old Magnox and opted-out coal fired power stations are phased out with nothing to take their place. The last figures I had were that we imported 50 million tonnes of coal last year and that 58 million tonnes were burnt to produce electricity. Of this only about 18 million tonnes were produced in the UK.

Come on, now! If we are going to be burning coal shouldn't it be British? It shouldn't just be the case of the cheapest coal, but look at the environmental impact of importing it from across the world and, at the same time, exporting British jobs and profits? With ever fewer open cast sites and with the major deep-mining companies lacking the kind of money needed for

sinking new mines, despite Richard Budge getting Russian money to re-open Hatfield, how are we ever going to increase our indigenous coal production?

We are faced with a situation where the coalmining industry will come to a grinding halt all on its own, partly because the remaining deep mines will eventually run out of reserves, and the work force, whose current age is age 49, will all retire and there won't be any miners left to dig the coal in five or six years time.

So what is the Government doing about all of this? As the result of the last Energy Review they set up a Coal Forum. I was privileged to represent the interests of GMB coalmining members on the Planning Sub-Group and put forward our views. But, in the end, that will not get us any new mines. No one is going to sink a new mine unless there are economic grounds to do so, unless your name is Alex Salmond from Scotland.

A demand for coal already exists. After all, remember the millions of tonnes that were consumed last year. I think our coal members would agree that the only way forward is for the deep mines to be re-nationalised and for the Government, perhaps through the Coal Authority, to invest in new mines and training. We need to make sure that we do not sideline our indigenous mining industry in the renewed interest in clean coal.

Last year Yorkshire Forward's Vision for Coal did not include one single action which would secure a future for UK coalmines. Are we really prepared to give up so easily on our huge reserves. Please support this motion.

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Is there a seconder?

**BRO. S. HATTON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire):** I second Motion 119. President and Congress, this motion urges the Government to invest in clean coal technology and the development of our huge coal reserves throughout Britain. Fossil fuels have an important role in our future power generation with an estimated 70% of all our power generation in 2020. Carbon capture and storage minimises the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> released into the atmosphere. Initially, this will be quite costly and full roll out of carbon capture and storage will significantly reduce the cost.

The main advantages of coal-fired power generation is that it is a flexible electricity source that can respond effectively to changing levels of demand. It helps to maintain a diverse energy mix and will bring wealth and prosperity to areas that declined in the '80s, such as south Yorkshire. It is for developed countries such as Great Britain to show leadership and to prove validity of the technology, thermal cost and reduce technical risks. Developing countries such as India and China should be looking at Great Britain as the world leader in this field. Thank you.

## **MOTION 120**

### **PROFITS FROM PROPERTY SALES**

Congress condemns the profits made by UK Coal in selling land inherited through the privatisation process whilst not investing in access to coal reserves.

**YORKSHIRE COAL STAFFS BRANCH**  
*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, visitors and guests, once upon a time not so very long ago there was a wicked government determined to sell off the family silver. Along with gas, electricity and water, it sold off our coal industry. As Frank Dobson said in 1992: “With coal privatisation the robbery of the taxpayer is already underway. Coal is following the three classic stages of privatisation – write-off, sell-off and rip-off.

As usual with Tory privatisation, the taxpayer picks up the bill for the liability while the new owners make off with the assets, and those assets were substantial. Despite the Tory assertion that a privatised coal industry would not shut any mines, all but seven deep mines are now shut, but UK Coal still owns over 47,000 acres of land. So: shut the mine – keep the land! They have identified nearly three thousand areas as offering “prospects for development”, regardless of any planning conditions attached to the original applications for coaling.

According to the UK Coal glossy shareholder brochure – it is a pity it is so far down the alphabet – a property interests are valued at £344 million, and they have appointed a new managing director of property to look after them. They envisage a growth in value to £800 million in the next five years and, during the past week, they have made the managing director of property their new chief executive. Now, what does that tell you?

You, like me, probably thought that UK Coal is a mining company, but it also states in their brochure that they will invest in existing and future reserves “only where it is economical and will progressively de-risk the mining business”. “de-risk”? We have been wondering what that is. Is it a new word for “shutting” or “selling” because that seems to be what UK Coal is best at?

When coal was privatised the new owner had to set up a mirror-image pension scheme, a final salary pension scheme, which has been a matter of great pain for UK Coal. Whenever possible, if anyone is to be made redundant, make sure they are members of that scheme, anything to try and save a bit of money as the deficit on the defined benefits pension scheme is £120 million. But why should that be a problem if they have got £344 million worth of land assets?

One of the lads said to me that he was worried that they would hive off the property and set up a different company so that that would not be liable for the pension debts and the deferred pensioners would be left high and dry. Mind you, UK Coal has now started to sell a few pockets of land. They have waited this long as, apparently, the privatisation deal was set up. If they sold the land within a certain period of time, they would have to pay back a percentage to the Government, and as time goes by they have to pay back less and less.

You would think it would be logical that UK Coal could sell off that land and invest in its deep mines. I do not think that that thought has ever cross their minds. We need to watch UK Coal’s property dealings closely to ensure that its workforce does not lose out.

Unfortunately, this is not a story where they lived happily ever after. We need to make sure that it does not turn into a horror story for our members who are still working in the mines or who hope to retire with a decent pension. Please support this motion.

SIS. S. WALKER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am seconding Motion 120 – Profits from Property Sales. President and Congress, a recent valuation of property and land owned by UK Coal is around £345 million, yet this is a company which claims to be in a bad financial situation and unable to invest money in its mines. I bit we wish we were all in the same financial situation.

Our members working in the last four remaining deep mines owned by UK Coal are continually under threat of having these last mines closed due to lack of investment. Much of the land in question is used for agriculture but a lot of it is ripe for development, but UK Coal have held on to it because if they had sold it sooner they would have had to pay a percentage back to the government. This is no longer the case.

UK Coal is supposedly a mining company so we are calling on them to sell some of their assets and invest any profits back into the business it is supposed to be in. We need to safeguard the jobs of our members and keep the last four deep mines in operation whilst they are still producing coal. Please support this motion. Thank you.

## **EMERGENCY MOTION 5**

### **GAS DISTRIBUTION PENSION**

This Congress notes that there is an ongoing Gas Distribution Price Review which is run by the Regulator Ofgem. Following a meeting with Ofgem at the end of May 2007, Congress is now concerned to note that as part of this review the Regulator is raising questions about future pension provision for thousands of our members in this Sector.

Congress condemns any attempt to reduce the pension benefits for our members in Gas Distribution. In the event that Ofgen attack our members' pensions, Congress calls upon the Union nationally to:

1. Robustly engage with the Regulator Ofgen;
2. Make strong representation to central Government in particular the Department of Trade and Industry;
3. Lobby GMB MPs over the issue;
4. Where appropriate organise demonstrative and industrial action.

*(Carried)*

BRO. G. HARVEY (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move Emergency Motion 5 on the current pension problems facing our members in the gas sector.

At the moment Ofgem, the Energy Regulator, is consulting on the Price Review for the gas sector. This means that Ofgem will set out how much money they will award to gas distribution companies for the next five years. Companies like National Grid, Scottish & Southern, Northern Gas Network and Wales & West are all affected companies which have many GMB members.

What does this mean for pensions? In the case of Ofgem and the agreement made when the gas companies were sold, Ofgem agreed to fully fund the pension schemes including any deficits. Only five years later Ofgem is looking to undermine their commitment. Let us be clear. Ofgem's role here is crucially important, crucial in terms of funding the pension schemes and crucial in terms of member security.

So when Ofgem published a consultation document that proposed limiting the funding available for pensions we are not happy and we are lying down. Our member security is at risk and we must take action. Ofgem is still reviewing on how they are planning on resolving this issue and will meet GMB reps in the coming months.

However, we are calling on Congress to pass Emergency Motion 5 to empower the National Secretary to take every available route to defend our members in the gas sector. If we fail to deliver security here, what energy sector will be next. Is this the precedent for limiting the money available to the ex public service pension schemes? I think not. We will make Ofgem honour the promises made and fully fund our members' pension benefits. Congress please support Emergency Motion 5.

Malcolm, I would like Congress to support Gary Smith and myself in thanking Heidi Benzine for all the work she has done behind the scenes on this Report and on getting this emergency motion up to the rostrum. Thank you.

BRO. K. JENKINS (South Western): I speak in support of Emergency Motion 5. I would in an electricity distribution company and any attack on our pension scheme would guarantee to unite our members. I would like to offer support from our company, and I am sure on behalf of every other energy and utility company, of any attack on this scheme. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Would any other delegate like to come in on any other debates that we have just had?

BRO. D. FAITH (London): I am speaking against Composite Motion 10 and Motion 115. I do so really on the grounds that I do not think it is right for us to be placing our support full square behind the nuclear industry. Firstly, I do not think we can, really, in all conscience, guarantee the safe disposal of radio-active waste that comes out of the nuclear industry. This issue, frankly is not one that relates to ourselves but to the legacy that we leave to our children and grandchildren. I have never heard anything that comes from the nuclear industry that does, frankly, satisfy me that radio-active waste can be disposed of in a safe fashion. Secondly, I believe that there are realistic alternatives if sufficient investment were put into renewable energy sources such as solar power, tidal power and the rest of it. I think if half the effort, political will and money that is put into the other industries, other than the fossil fuel and the nuclear industries, by now we would have solved many of these problems. What is lacking here is political will rather than a lack of the potential technology.

I recognise, and I think we have to take seriously, the concerns that our brothers and sisters in the nuclear industry have about their jobs. Quite frankly, they would not be doing their own jobs as trade unionists if they did not fight for their own jobs. Frankly, at certain times more general considerations have to prevail. I think back to the debates which we have had over the tobacco industry in the past where we fought for our members in casinos. For example, in a debate two or three years ago, I remember somebody from a tobacco factory saying "Thank you, but what is going to happen to our jobs?" At that point, we did stick more with the harm that that industry caused and supported, obviously, the retraining and redeployment in safe alternative jobs for our colleagues in those industries. So I have to say that I will not be supporting, and I encourage you not to support, those motions which commit us to the nuclear industry.

BRO. F. ALEXANDER (GMB Scotland): I speak in support of Composite Motion 10. Just before I start, I would like to refer to a couple of comments that have been made by previous speakers. Firstly, the technology does exist for the disposal and the safe disposal of nuclear waste. Secondly, if it was not for the fact that we lost out in Cunningham North by a miserable 38 votes, I would not be up here today because we would have had a Scottish Labour Government supporting a balance nuclear policy of which nuclear was a part.

Moving back to the main theme, colleagues, I support nuclear power generation in Scotland with two power stations currently existing. They are Hunterstone on the west coast which has been operating as a nuclear licensed site since 1965, and where I have the privilege to work along with a large number of GMB members and other union members. The industry is very highly unionised throughout the UK.

The company, British Energy, takes its responsibilities with regard to the safe operation, health and safety and good industrial relations in a highly responsible manner. Therefore, the pronouncements coming from the new First Minister – he does not like being called “Alex Salmond”, by the way. It is “First Minister” – regarding the opposition to a new nuclear build and planning agreement are narrow-minded and short-termist.

The issue of safe and reliable generation requires a mix of fuels and, therefore, all options should be considered. In a modern society electricity is a vital component for the health, welfare and prosperity of all its citizens. Electric power is what I want, not candle power, in 20 years time. I ask you to support Composite 10.

BRO. S. COUGHLIN (North West & Irish): Vice President and Congress, I would like to back-up everything that the GMB Scotland member said and there is no doubt that this is difficult time for the nuclear industry.

The nuclear industry conjures up high emotion particularly about safety. Let us deal with the reality and the hype. I work at Urenco which deals with uranium for nuclear power stations. We currently supply 20% of the world market.

We also talk about spent fuel and where it is going to be. We have the technical capability – we are world leaders – to reprocess all of this fuel. So there is no waste. There are very very small amounts which can be deconverted and left safely. Contrary to common belief, I do not go home and eat uranium.

The GMB has many thousand members in the industry securing some of the most comprehensive policies and procedures of any industry. Hundreds of GMB safety reps work actively every day to ensure that the industry is run in a very, very safe manner. Nuclear has a role in ensuring that we have a secure energy supply and that the lights stay on. We do not have all the answers but there is a potential energy gap. Not only does the industry support many communities, but it recognises trade unions, the GMB being the foremost.

We, in turn, support our members in the coal, gas and renewables industries, but if we do not continue to back a balanced energy policy we will lose the opportunity to recruit new members around newly built power stations of all types. Our position will be exploited by other trade unions. This cannot happen.

I ask Congress to support this industry and its many thousand GMB members. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, Motion 116 has already been referred by the mover and also by Congress.

Composite 10, Motions 115, 117, 118, 119, 120 and Emergency Motion 5 are all being supported by the CEC. I will now put them to the vote en bloc.

*(Composite Motion 10 was carried)*

*(Motion 115 was carried)*

*(Motion 116 was referred)*

*(Motion 117 was carried)*

*(Motion 118 was carried)*

*(Motion 119 was carried)*

*(Motion 120 was carried)*

*(Emergency Motion 5 was carried)*

***(The President took the Chair)***

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I would like to make a comment having listened to the previous debate. For people who are looking in, if you ever want a reason not to vote Tory remember what they did to the mining community, not just the miners but to whole communities, and we should never let this country forget them. *(Applause)*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL**

### **MOTION 8**

#### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Congress asks the CEC to look at ways to improve communications with members.

YORKSHIRE COAL STAFFS BRANCH  
*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I move Motion 8 – Communications.

Congress, visitors and guests, there is a definite advantage in keeping motions short and snappy. We had an interesting debate at pre-Congress about a particularly long and wordy motion. It included criticism of the CEC so, obviously, we were told to oppose it, but it also calls for the union to involve members in decisions which affected them.

We often complain about mushroom management in the companies we work for. In our branch we used to go into meetings with Richard Budge and he said, “Nothing we discuss here goes outside of these four walls”. “We can’t agree to that”, we said. “Our members are

entitled to know what is going on. They do not need to know all of the details, perhaps, but they do need to know the gist.”

Sometimes I sit in a branch meeting and members ask me, “What is going on in the union.? What is going on in the region?” They have read articles in the newspapers or seen things on the internet. There seem to be several layers within the union, like an onion, and those on the outside layer seem to know nothing of what is going on in the middle.

I have a great belief in this union. I tell people, “I don’t trust politicians as they tend to be in politics for their own good, but trade unionists are in it for the good of their members.” I am always happy to quote the principles set out in the diary: “The GMB’s purpose is to improve the quality of life for our members and their families” and so on, but sometimes I find out about activities going on elsewhere in the union which make it hard for me to sell the GMB as I would like to.

I do not want to re-visit what has happened during the past year or so but I feel that the ordinary members are entitled at least to be given the gist of what is going on in their union and into which they pay their hard earned cash. It is better to have the truth from the union than rumour and innuendo from the gutter press. I do not know how you will achieve this, CEC, but you have all sorts of expertise at your disposal to find the means. You need to communicate with the members better and let them know what is happening within the union. After all, they choose to be its members. It is often too late for members to take any kind of action. By the time they find out, drastic decisions have been taken which will affect them; big changes at national and regional level and no chance for input into the final solution. Please support.

SIS. L. BROOK (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I second Motion 8 – Communications.

President and Congress, it is without doubt that the GMB has increasing success in many areas. However, this cannot be achieved without continued communication. It is ineffective organising and recruiting if we then ignore communicating with members. A recurring comment amongst members is that once recruited members then hear very little about what is affecting their workplace and on a national level.

To successfully recruit and retain our membership it is essential that we find ways to include communication. This could include email, contact databases and individual workplaces or departments which would allow quick access for members to hot off-the-press information, regular local newsletters highlighting issues in specific areas and success stories and encouraging increasing attendance at branch and other meetings to share information.

I read with interest the progress up-date for the CEC’s Special Report which referred to communication. I sincerely hope that this is actioned at the earliest opportunity. As a result, we will continue to grow and improve our services to our members and achieve even greater success. I second.

## **MOTION 9**

### **BUYING TO SUPPORT GMB MEMBERS**

Congress calls on the CEC to produce an information pack giving details of all GMB recognised companies, along with a means of identifying their specific goods and services, in order for GMB

members to make informed choices and support their GMB colleagues when purchasing said goods and services.

ANWICK & MID Lincs COMMUNITY BRANCH  
*Midland & East Coast Region*

*(Referred)*

**BRO. V. RABBETTS (Midland & East Coast):** I move Motion 9 – Buying to Support GMB Members.

President, this Congress calls upon the CEC to produce a directory of companies which recognise the GMB along with a means of recognising the products of those companies. There are many examples of well-known companies which employ GMB members, but what about the other hundreds or even thousands of companies which recognise the GMB and are fellow members, many of whom will be with us in this hall today.

It is this union's proud boast that whatever the industry we have members in that industry. Should we not also be supporting them? It is my contention that we should enable all members of this union to make informed choices when buying goods and services rather than purchasing blindly based upon whatever comes to hand first. The only way that they can do this is if they are provided with sufficient information so as to be able to identify products and services which originate out of GMB recognised sites. A simple means of identifying these products and services might be through publication of a unique EC logo by giving addresses of said sites.

To give an example, when you buy a chicken from Asda, by using this information, you could purchase a chicken from a GMB recognised company as opposed to one from a non-GMB recognised site. This would have a twofold result. Firstly, it would benefit members employed by recognised companies by increasing sales and therefore increasing job security, improving productivity and perhaps even increasing wage levels.

Secondly, it would reward those companies which recognise the GMB and encourage other companies to become GMB recognised sites in order to benefit from this scheme. Obviously, to produce a directory and to maintain the information therein incurs a cost consideration, especially since consideration will have to be given to companies being added to the scheme or de-listed.

Colleagues, my response to this is, again, twofold. Firstly, the directory could be downloaded from the GMB National website and, therefore, any change would not require the cost of reprinting. Secondly, this union has declared itself to be a campaigning union, and one of the best campaigns is the mutual support by all its members.

In conclusion, therefore, colleagues, this motion is about mutual support. It is about me buying your goods and services and you purchasing my goods and services. It is about raising the profile of the union in the marketplace and about encouraging employers to recognise this union. I move.

**BRO. C. GUNTER (Midland & East Coast):** I second Motion 9 – Buying to Support GMB Members.

President and Congress, this motion seeks to provide our members with information about products and services provided by fellow GMB members. It is not about preventing choice. The exhibitors in the hall and Congress sponsors are prime examples, from Thompsons to Pellacraft and Banana Link and from Liverpool Victoria to the Thorne Credit Union. Questions for members and non-members are: “What does the union do for me?” and “Why should I join the union?” Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 10?

## **MOTION 10**

### **FAIR TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE SOURCING**

Congress agrees that all consumables purchased by GMB should be, wherever possible, from fairly-traded and sustainable sources.

LEICESTERSHIRE 2000 BRANCH  
*Midland & East Coast Region*

*(Referred)*

BRO. A. WHITE (Midland & East Coast): I move Motion 10 – Fair Trade and Sustainable Sourcing.

President and Congress, this motion asks that the GMB should purchase consumables, wherever possible, from fairly-traded and sustainable sources.

The motion asks Congress to accept a principle, leaving it open to the CEC as to how they would interpret it or act on it. The term “fairly-traded and sustainable sources” could be interpreted broadly as suppliers with business practices that promote more socially and environmentally responsible trade. This example is the definition used by the Fair Trade Scheme dealing in foodstuffs.

There is a narrower definition for this ethical sourcing or ethical trading. For example, the campaigning group, the Ethical Trade Initiative or ETI, defines “ethical trade” as where a business takes responsibility for the labour and human rights practices within its supply chain. The ETI has a code drawn from the International Labour Organisation’s eight fundamental conventions, which cover freedom of association, equality, the abolition of forced labour and the elimination of child labour.

The ETI code has nine principles; that labour is freely chosen, not forced; that freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected; that working conditions are safe and hygienic; that child labour shall not be used, and that a living wage is paid; that no discrimination is practised, that regular employment is offered and that no harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed.

This motion asks that we work in solidarity with the workers who supply us with goods and services. It asks that we aim to ensure that their employers give them the same decent treatment that we would expect for our own members. Thank you.

SIS. M. CARTWRIGHT (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 10 – Fair Trade and Sustainable Sourcing.

President and Congress, for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century union that practises and promotes equality, surely, it makes sense to purchase through Fair Trade and sustainable sourcing. Let us just think about this for a moment. Some things may be a little bit dearer, but what price could the cheaper option be? It could be child labour, it could be cheaper because it is unsafe, unhygienic conditions and dangerous conditions. Someone could have to work for next to nothing or with threats and fear for terms and conditions.

In the past I have lost my job more than once so that the machining job I did could be done for slave wages in another country. I would not want this and neither would you. So, please, support this motion. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) In that case, I call Evelyn Martin. Congress, while Evelyn is coming to the platform on behalf of the CEC, I ask you to agree the agenda. As you can see Composite 16 is on Global Warming and Motion 176 is on recycling, plus the CEC Special Report: The Green Agenda. This is such an important debate that it would be wrong if we tried to rush it in this morning's business. So with Congress's agreement, would you agree that I take it first thing afternoon? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Evelyn.

SIS. E. MARTIN (CEC, Public Services): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC.

President and Conference, the CEC is asking Congress to refer both Motions 9 and 10. Firstly, on Motion 9, the policy already meets with recommendation 1 of the CEC's Special Report 2005: A Framework for the Future of the GMB. However, printed matters would be expensive and quickly become out of date so would not be efficient in method of providing this information. The most efficient and cost-effective medium for this proposal would be as part of the GMB National website. Provision via the GMB National website would enable GMB regions to keep their own regional company information up-to-date. Members would then be able to access it easily.

It could also allow the union to investigate the use of internet advertising income which is a growing sector as television and press advertising is increasingly abundant by companies because more and more people and more and more time on the internet. So the CEC believes that the idea contained in this motion would benefit from some investigation into the possibility that it could open up several fronts for GMB members.

Turning to Motion 10, the CEC accepts completely the principle of the motion as we understand it. However, the GMB has to take into consideration other issues, such as trade union membership and the needs for GMB members. The resolution is not clear on what exactly the mover means by "consumable". An audit of all GMB material and supplies would enable a confident response as to what the CEC believes the mover means by this motion. So let us investigate all possible aspects and opportunities.

Therefore, Congress, we are asking for a referral of Motion 9 and Motion 10.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Evelyn. Does the Midland & East Coast Region accept reference?

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Congress agree?

*(Motion 9 was referred)*

THE PRESIDENT: Does the Midland & East Coast Region accept reference on Motion 10?

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Congress agree?

*(Motion 10 was referred)*

*(Motion 8 was carried)*

## **INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY: ENGINEERING**

### **MOTION 132**

#### **CAMMELL LAIRD 1984**

This Congress calls upon the GMB to start proceedings immediately through the European Court of Human Rights for compensation from the Government for all members involved in the 1984 strike at Cammell Laird Shipyard.

287B BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Referred)*

BRO. E. MARNELL (North West & Irish): I move Motion 132. You will notice by the wording of this resolution that I am asking for compensation from the Government for all members involved in the 1984 strike. Many of you know about the 37, but there were a lot of other people who did not go to jail, including two apprentices who were robbed of their jobs, redundancy and pension payments.

Gordon Brown said yesterday that I should contact my local MPs. Those of you who know me will know that I have contacted just about every bleeding one. I did actually contact Frank Field, the MP for Birkenhead, for support on this matter. Frank Field wrote back to me saying "I don't know of any criminals getting compensation". I wrote back to him, and I said "First and foremost, we were not criminals. We were done for contempt of court. Secondly, were you not involved in the vote that was taken in 1984 at the Labour Party Conference that fully endorsed and supported our action?" He wrote back saying, "I have nothing further to comment on this situation."

I also wrote to Peter Kilfoyle, the MP for Walton in Liverpool. He said: "The Labour Party will not make any retrospective payments", but it did with GCHQ. If you remember, under the Thatcher Government GCHQ was banned from participating in and joining trade unions. Those who did not comply were sacked immediately. There was no redundancy, no nothing. As soon as the Labour Party got into Government, one of the first things they did was to offer GCHQ workers who had been sacked either reinstatement or a full compensation/redundancy package.

In finishing, the 37 men are now 34. I do not want to go on any longer or see the number reduced any further before we get a settlement. Let me say something about the three sacked

workers who are deceased. Many of you will have known Jimmy McCarthy. He was prominent on the CEC for many years. Jimmy Albertina was one of the best British boxing coaches that we have ever had, and Tommy Webb was the oldest in our group. He was born in Dublin in 1925. He lied about his age to join the Royal Navy in the Second World War and spent the whole of the Second World War on Atlantic convoys.

That man died five years ago and he died in abject poverty. They wanted to put him in a pauper's grave, and but for his friends and colleagues we made sure that never happened. What an indictment on a British government that that man should go that way. I move. *(Applause)*

*(The motion was formally seconded)*

BRO. P. McCARTHY (CEC, Commercial Services): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is asking the mover from the North West & Irish Region to refer Motion 132 on Cammell Laird. I would be grateful if Congress would take the time to watch a DVD trailer which seeks to show the work being done by a writers' workshop and the initiative of the group under the project management of Mark Yates.

This involves the members and the families of Cammell Laird's and local activists writing a play which seeks to show the injustice of their situation. The play is now two months old, two hours long and will go into production shortly.

Paul Kenny said to us that he would commitment in the region, which previous general secretaries never did. He is to be applauded for that. *(Applause)* I have to say that Paul also said that when some avenues close on us, we seek other avenues until we gain justice.

I hope that when watch this DVD you will see the initiative is and this campaign will continue.

*(A DVD was shown)*

*(Bro. Eddie Marnell: "My name is Eddie Marnell, and I am proud lifelong trade unionist. I am a man of principle and I am on a mission to right a wrong inflicted upon me and 37 of my fellow shipyard workers in 1984. For the last 23 years I have represented the survivors of the 1984 Cammell Laird dispute. Our sense of injustice is heightened by the fact that we were never convicted of any criminal offences. We were civil political prisoners who have lived with a terrible miscarriage of justice hanging over our heads. The stigma never goes away. A prison sentence haunts you until your dying day, and we should know because three of our colleagues have gone to their graves haunted by this injustice.*

*"The GMB trade union originally supported our strike and today they support our campaign for justice. They have sponsored the writer, Mark Yates, to form a writers' initiative group made up of the original strikers and their wives. Our first project is writing the screenplay script for a dramatic feature film about the story. My goal in life is to ensure that the British Government pardons the Cammell Laird 37. As a loyal lifelong trade union member, I am asking you for your support."*

*(Applause, whistles and cheers)*

BRO. McCARTHY: Colleagues, this injustice has been endured by these loyal trade unionists for over 25 years. The GMB is campaigning to see the truth established for justice for the Cammell Laird workers after all this time. A great deal of campaigning work has been carried out by the region and the local branch has been very diligent in its efforts to establish the truth. It has been provided with helpful assistance from the Region's solicitors. The CEC will, naturally, wish to support any efforts which may lead to justice for the Cammell Laird workers. However, our present legal advice indicates that starting proceedings immediately through the European Court of Human Rights is not a route that the union is able to pursue.

We can assure you that we will continue to monitor and review the situation. The CEC is seeking referral.

Let me add, Mary, that Mark Thomas spoke this morning and you heard him. I have to take the liberty to say that these men were arrested under an ancient trespass law that was so ancient that it had not been used since the 1700s. They were imprisoned for contempt of court. They were imprisoned next to terrorists. The irony is that you and them have now become terrorists under the new law. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I call Mark Yates.

MARK YATES: President and Congress, my name is Mark Yates, and I am a writer and a film-maker. I would like to take you on a very short journey back to 1984 to the height of the Thatcher revolution and to the middle of the coal miners' strike. Thirty-seven decent, hard working young men took a stand and fought for their jobs at the Cammell Laird Shipyard on Merseyside. The fight was non-violent and fully backed by their trade union. Congress, I ask every one of you to reflect for a moment and ask yourselves how far you would go to protect your jobs and the jobs of future generations?

The Cammell Laird 37 never appeared in a court of law. They were tried in their absence, convicted and sent to a maximum security jail which housed mass murderers, paedophiles and rapists. Three of their colleagues have since passed away.

I believe that this was a terrible miscarriage of justice. Not only did they suffer the indignity of losing their jobs, but they also lost their redundancy payments and pensions and none of the 37 have ever worked in a shipyard since.

Eddie Marnell and his colleagues have never given up hope. At Congress last year, Tony Blair promised Eddie that he would look into the case and personally respond to him. Tony Blair has never fulfilled this promise. This miscarriage of justice requires massive publicity. A feature film will give us that publicity. The GMB has provided outstanding support for our writers' initiative group. Paul Kenny, Paul McCarthy, Dave, Margaret, Carol, Liz and Alfie at GMB North West & Irish Region have bent over backwards to facilitate getting this story of the Cammell Laird 37 out to a mass audience.

This film is important for every trade unionist worldwide because people hear what they see. Our film project is gaining momentum. I ask you to support the project because, as a writer, I have been very, very proud of the Writers' Group members as well as their friends and partners who have contributed. They are a credit both to themselves and to the GMB. The personal development along this latest part of their extremely traumatic journey has been very encouraging. I have witnessed the highs and lows and I have seen the exorcism of some demons. I have interviewed everybody involved on both sides and I have personally

identified slippery politicians and a Tory dirty tricks campaign fuelled by skulduggery and subterfuge.

Many thanks for you giving me the opportunity to address you. If anybody would like to speak to me further, I can be contacted via Paul McCarthy. Just before I go, everybody, four of the men who were jailed at the Cammell Laird dispute in 1984 are across the other side of the hall. Thank you. *(A standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, Danny Albertina, Chris Thompson, George Whittaker and James Morley.

Congress, I was a member of the National Executive, our CEC, at that particular time. I think it was the first time in history that a trade union picketed Walton Prison to try and get these colleagues out of prison. The CEC lobbied and we had a mass demonstration in Liverpool, as you remember, when our then general secretary was David Bassnett. We organised our members continually to write daily. They wrote hundreds and thousands of letters because that was the only time, as we understood and were told, that those lads would be allowed out of their cells. We have continued that fight and today I am proud to say that this union will do everything to get justice for our members in the Cammell Laird 37. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Congress, I thank you for your time and patience.

BRO. MARNELL: Congress, in response to the CEC's request, ever since 1984 I have fought a running battle with every general secretary and a lot of regional secretaries and officers, and I have been treated with scorn and distain, but I have gone on. I will tell you this. This is the second shock of the day. I also am going to agree to refer because I will tell you what. There is one thing I want you to know about my regional secretary, Paul McCarthy and the General Secretary, Paul Kenny. Not only do I have respect for them but I trust them. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Congress agree to referral?

*(Motion 132 was referred)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I have to make an announcement. There is to be a fringe meeting on *Difficult Companies and how to deal with derecognition: Stop the Remploy closures* in the East Wing, Hall B, Section 1 on the right. Colleagues, we will return sharp at 2.15.

*(Lunch break)*

## **AFTERNOON SESSION**

*(Congress reassembled at 2.15 p.m.)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Congress to order. I would like to make a couple of announcements first.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Tuesday's raffle draws. The GMB Financial Services Legal & General Stand 2. The bottle of champagne has been won by Maria Davey of Midland & East Coast Region.

Mrs. S. Khan from Wembley is the winner of a 32 inch flat screen colour television.

The Liverpool Victoria Stand 6. Umbrellas have been won by Charlotte Hammonds from Dudley and Mrs. S. Khan of London Region. Would the winners collect their prizes from the stands.

Delegates, I remind you once again. There are two rostrums with chairs on either side of the platform for the next speakers. You have been good up to now, but could you be a little better even still and come down to the front. That way we might be able to get away a little bit earlier on Thursday.

We will now finish off this morning's business.

## **COMPOSITE MOTION 16**

**174 – GMB Environmental Policy – (Midland & East Coast Region)**

**175 – Global Warming – (Midland & East Coast Region)**

### **GLOBAL WARMING & GMB ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

Congress is concerned that GMB does not have an up-to-date Environmental Policy, As Trade Unionists we should be looking after our fellow man and also other countries. Congress urges the CEC to review this situation as a matter of urgency.

Congress calls upon the CEC to adopt a policy over global warming that encourages all of its members and those of all other sister Trade Unions worldwide, especially in America, to campaign against the short sightedness of major Governments around the world in not adopting the Kyoto Agreement and ignoring the increasing guidance that is being built up by scientists that the glaciers and ice shelves in the southern and northern hemispheres are receding at alarming rates.

*(Carried)*

SIS. D. MILLS (Midland & East Coast): I move Composite 16 on global warming.

Congress, President and delegates, Congress calls upon the CEC to adopt a policy on global warming that encourages all of its members and those of all other sister Trade Unions worldwide, especially in the developing and major industrialised countries, to campaign against the short sightedness of major Governments around the world in not adopting the Kyoto Agreement and also in ignoring the increasing guidance that is being built up by scientists that the glaciers and ice shelves in the southern and northern hemispheres are receding at alarming rates. Ultimately, this will have a massive impact on global warming.

I will cite one example that occurred 50,000 years ago under natural conditions where mainland Britain became an island and the sea rose 300 feet to create the English Channel. As a consequence of man's contribution of pumping thousands of millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide into the air every year the planet, literally, is heading towards a meltdown. Some high profile people are in support of this issue of global warming, like Al Gore, the ex Vice-President of the USA, stand out as an example that we should all be following.

I am proud to move this composite motion. Please support.

**BRO. A. WHITE (Midland & East Coast):** I am speaking on behalf of Midland & East Coast Region, seconding Composite 16, Global Warming & GMB Environmental Policy.

President and Congress, an environmental policy for the GMB is a necessity as a practical matter and as a matter of principle. We are bound to work for the health, safety and welfare of our members in our workplaces. We have to deal with managements and problems like the control of substances which are hazardous to health and bio-hazards. At the same time, by living in an industrial society, we cannot ignore the impact on the national environment of the businesses that provide us with work. We are bound to promote the social and economic welfare as well as the environmental protection of our members. Even before global warming emerged as a great threat, the need to conserve energy and valuable resources was clear. Many practical and ethical problems are involved, as the debate over the future of nuclear power, for instance, makes this clear.

The GMB needs an environmental policy to guide the internal organisation of the union and we need to reinforce our bargaining position at work. We cannot demand environmental policies by industrial management without adopting one for ourselves.

Finally, we need an environmental policy to guide our campaigns for new laws here in the UK and in the European Union. I second.

## **MOTION 176**

### **RECYCLING**

Congress calls on Government to formulate a policy on recycling which is both practical and sustainable. Big brother tactics are not the way forward if we all want to be part of helping to save our planet.

R35 – ROCESTER JCB BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

**BRO. G. RICHARDSON (Birmingham & West Midlands):** President and Congress, there are many of us out *there* who are responsible human beings who want to save the planet from its impending demise. Why? Because it's ours. We live on it. Unfortunately, the vast majority of people have little control over major pollutants, such as air conditioning units, because one school of thought says that they are the worst source of gas emissions.

However, we do have a significant say as individuals in the shape of recycling. I am talking about our little bit, but these little bits add up to a lot. So what can we do to make these bits more efficient? We separate our bottles, tins and vegetable matter. If, like me, you accumulate a larger number of bottles you visit the local council's container or the tip, as it is known. For the uninitiated, the process is a bit more strict than airport control. "Sorry, no more than one load, mate." "But I've only got a mini." "That's not my fault, mate. Get yourself a van." "Oh, by the way, I've got an old computer in the back and here's a tenner for your trouble." "Oh, you shouldh've told me that in the first place. Thanks very much."

Perhaps that is being a bit unfair but that is the system that seems to work. Or does it? Yes, the computer is recycled, so is the scrap bicycle and the washing machine. "A fridge? Sign

for it, mate, and don't come back within a year or else we will deem it to be commercial.”  
“Garden Rubbish?” “Oh, that's commercial, mate.” “Asbestos?” “No chance.”

So you separate the glasses and the bottles religiously into separate compartments. Then a huge great skip comes along and dumps them all in the same one.

Then there is the pollutants that come from the vehicles that cart them off and the waste that the plants burn, supposedly for the provision of energy. So recycling waste is not as simple as it seems. But without being too down in the mouth, I really would like us to be greener and like the Government to be active in formulating a proper practical and sustainable policy like they have in mainland Europe or even more efficiently in Japan.

What we do not want is spy wheelie bins. For a normal family perhaps a system of collection that is different than we have now could prevail. I am not suggesting that everyone should go over to fortnightly collections, because that is a bit impractical for somewhere which has a lot of people. What we do not want is illegal fly-tipping and what we do not want is to have to pay a lot more money for it. What we also do not want is to be treated like buffoons by the Government, the council, the skipmen, the refuse collectors and anybody else who wants to baffle us.

So, come on, Congress, let's get the Government to formulate this policy nationwide and help to save the planet.

*(The motion was formally seconded)*

## **CEC SPECIAL REPORT: THE GREEN AGENDA AND GMB: CLIMATE CHANGE, GLOBAL WARMING, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Introduction**

Climate Change, Global Warming and the Green Agenda is affecting us all. It affects the way we work, how we travel, the equipment we buy and the energy we use at home and in the workplace.

The issue is now at the forefront of the national and international agenda. So far in 2007 there have already been two intergovernmental conferences on Climate Change which have created important policy developments: the European Union has agreed to generate 20% of electricity by low carbon sources by 2020 and the UK government published the Climate Change Bill in March.

Climate Change and Global warming are now covered daily in the media and by politicians across the political spectrum - from the far right to the far left.

GMB has an important role to play in developing the Green Agenda: to understand what is happening and to inform and protect our members during the transition. We also have responsibilities to our fellow workers in the UK and globally, especially in the developing world where they will be hardest hit by climate change.

This CEC Special Report **The Green Agenda and GMB** is a first step in informing GMB members, officers and staff of the challenge ahead and sets out recommendations on how we can meet that challenge.

The Green Agenda is a complex issue; it has implications for every one of us in every aspect of our working and private lives. This report is in two parts; Part 1 explains the Green Agenda and Part 2 looks at the role GMB should play in meeting the challenges it presents. In conclusion, it puts forward recommendations for the establishment of a GMB Environmental Working Party to develop a **GMB Green Agenda Policy and report back to Congress 2008**.

## Part 1: The Green Agenda

### What is The Green Agenda? Why is it important? What are Global Warming, Climate Change, Carbon Footprints and Sustainable Development?

Global warming, climate change, greenhouse gases, carbon footprint and sustainable development: why are these terms becoming so important? What do they mean to us generally and how do they affect our working lives? Why is climate change on the news and in the papers almost every day? Why is every political party leader competing to express more concern than the next over climate change?

### To start we need some explanations of what is happening to our planet.

A layer of gas called the ozone layer protects the earth from the sun's excess heat and energy and has generally kept the Earth's climate in balance since the Ice Age. But the ozone layer is being damaged by the greenhouse gases which result from burning fossil fuels in industrial processes, transport farming and domestic energy and these are now taking their toll.

### What are the Greenhouse Gases? Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) Sulphur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and Nitrous Oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O)

According to many experts damage to the ozone layer and global warming is leading to a change in our climate. The ice caps are melting, summers and winters are getting warmer; this winter was the warmest winter on record – overall rainfall is reduced but much heavier and leads to more frequent flooding. The industrialisation of large parts of the developing world means that the problems of global warming are approaching the point of no return.

### What will a change in temperature mean to the UK and Globally?

In 2006, the Treasury commissioned a report by Nicholas Stern<sup>1</sup> to look at the economic implications of climate change for the UK. It concluded that Climate Change was a global issue, which would not only have effects on the climate, but would also create a serious risk of major disruption to the economy and social activity, on a similar scale to that of the two World Wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Stern states on current trends global temperature will rise by 2-3°C during the next fifty years. The main impacts will be:

- Melting glaciers will increase the risk of flooding in China, the Indian Sub continent and South America.
- Declining crop yields especially in Africa
- In higher latitudes there will be more cold related deaths, while the rest of the world will suffer more deaths from malnutrition, heat stress and diseases such as malaria.

This will also have effects on the climate and water resources across Europe. For example Southern Italy will become more like North Africa, suffer water shortages and no longer support much of its existing agriculture, while Southern England's climate will become more like Italy and suffer from severe water shortages.

If temperatures rise between 3° and 4°C there will be increased flooding and coastal erosion affecting South East Asia and Britain. Major cities such as London, New York and Tokyo will be subject to flooding from their adjacent rivers, while many small islands in the Caribbean and Pacific would disappear all together. Stern estimates that 200 million people would become displaced and up to 40% of world species would become extinct.

Our **Carbon Footprint** is best described as the invisible footprint that we leave when we use energy and resources.

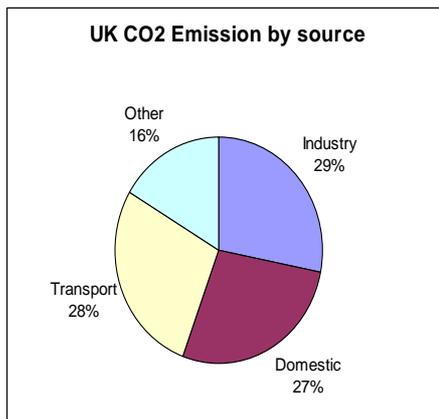
Emissions Country	Total CO <sub>2</sub> (MTns)	CO <sub>2</sub> Capita (Tns/person)
USA	5,773	20
UK	541	9.2
China	3,783	3.2
India	1,106	1.1
Uganda	1.4	0.7

The average Briton produces 9.2tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year and we need to reduce this by 20%. The European Commission "You Control Climate Change" website<sup>1</sup> *explains how to calculate your personal carbon footprint*. The average American emits ten times more than the average Briton and between 100 and 250 times that of the poorer African countries.

**Sustainable Development** is a way of trying to deal with climate change and global warming while continuing to maintain and improve living standards of the population. It requires reducing energy use, conserving natural resources such as water and minerals and recycling or reusing waste materials.

### Where do the emissions come from?

The main greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) which comes from the burning of fossil fuels in homes, at the workplace, in power stations and in transport.



### What are Governments doing to meet the Challenge?

Today nearly everybody accepts the scientific evidence for Global warming and the Green Agenda is now taken seriously. Governments have tried to agree on ways of reducing greenhouse gases globally.

**The 1997 Kyoto Summit** is the most well known where most governments including the UK agreed to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to 1990 levels by 2012 - the exceptions were the USA, India and China.

In March 2007 the Government published its **Draft Climate Change Bill**<sup>2</sup> which aims to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 60% by 2050 through a legally binding target. It will set targets over 5-year periods and provides new Government powers to control emissions.

### What are the key areas where we need to make changes to how we conduct our lives?

- The use of resources and waste
- The use of Energy
- Transport

These affect all of us at work, at home and socially and will be the one of the main drivers of changes to jobs and in employment in the next decade.

The Trade Unions Sustainable Development Advisory Committee (TUSDAC) **Greening the Workplace**<sup>3</sup> identified the same three key areas as affecting jobs in the workplace. It also identified changes would take place in construction and manufacturing. **The GMB has large membership in all these areas.**

### Resources, Waste and Landfill

We dump too much waste in landfill sites and are running out of sites. As the waste rots it turns into Methane -another greenhouse gas. The UK and EU governments have introduced measures to reduce the use of natural resources and the amount of waste dumped in landfill sites.

To combat this the Government has introduced:

- UK Landfill Tax
- Higher Local Authorities Targets for recycling household waste
- The EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive
- The Aggregate levy

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.climatechange.eu.com/>

<sup>2</sup> [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Greening the workplace 2005 : [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)

## Jobs in Recycling

Experience with a number of local authorities has been that the introduction of recycling reduced jobs in waste collection, but resulted in more jobs overall. A report for London ReMade<sup>4</sup> suggests that 9 new jobs per 1000 tonnes recycled are created by a kerbside collection and sorting scheme that recycle materials such as glass, paper, cans, plastics and textiles.

**Ship Recycling:** At the other end of the spectrum ship recycling and scrapping is a large international problem. For too long redundant shipping has been dumped on the beaches of South East Asia to rust and be stripped of valuable recyclable materials.

This uncontrolled environment allows dangerous and poisonous materials including asbestos, mercury, lead, and cadmium to be dumped into the sea and enter the food chain causing local and global health problems.

In 2006 Defra consulted on Ship Recycling and the GMB<sup>5</sup> argued strongly that specialist facilities for the recycling of ships should be set up in the UK as we have the ability and the skills to deal with ship recycling safely

## Energy

One of the main sources of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is burning fossil fuels such as coal and gas to produce electricity.

The Conservative administration had a free market approach to energy and the chart illustrates the results of this policy; coal diminished from 64% of electricity generation in 1990 to 38% in 2006, this includes imported coal as well as indigenous UK coal, while gas has risen from 1% to 32%, resulting in a much earlier run down of UK North Sea gas reserves causing the UK become a net importer of natural gas from 2006.

Nuclear rose from 21% to 28% in 1997 but since then has slowly declined due to the closure of the old Magnox generators. Electricity from Renewables including hydro, wind, marine and biofuel has managed to rise from 2% to 4%. However, it is still behind schedule for the 10% Kyoto target by 2010. Yet countries such as Denmark produce 16% of the electricity by wind power

Trends in UK Electricity Generation by mix

Fuel	1990	1997	2006	2010 Est
Coal **	64%	37%	38%	25%
Nuclear	21%	28%	21%	22%
Natural Gas	1%	28%	32%	37%
Renewables	2%	2%	4%	10%
Oil	11%	3%	2%	2%
Other	1%	2%	2%	4%

[www.dti.gov.uk/energy](http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy)

The Labour government introduced a number of measures that affect energy generation and usage:

In 2003 the UK Energy White Paper set even higher targets for the UK that included reducing UK emissions by 20% below 1990 levels and for 10% (18% in Scotland) of energy production from renewable resources by 2010 .

**Renewables Obligation Requirement** requires all UK electricity suppliers to obtain 10% of electricity from renewable sources such as wind or marine power.

**Energy Review** the government is expected to announce this Review during 2007. It is predicted that this will include a new build of nuclear power stations, investment in clean coal with carbon capture and more renewables.

**At the 2007 European Summit** the EU agreed that all Member States must generate 20% electricity from low carbon renewable or nuclear sources by 2020. Ordinary light bulbs will be withdrawn from sale by 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Estimating job creation: Anne Gray, Sue Percy and Irene Bruegel [www.londonremade.com](http://www.londonremade.com)

<sup>5</sup> [www.gmb.org.uk](http://www.gmb.org.uk)

**Other Taxes:** A number of other taxes, levies and directives aimed at reducing energy use have been introduced to encourage companies to reduce the use of energy and resources.

These include: **UK Climate Change Levy:** a tax on the use of energy in industry, commerce and the public sector. **UK Emissions Trading Scheme:** the world's first economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme. **UK Energy Performance Commitment** for companies in non-energy intensive business in the private and public sector using more than 3000MWatts of electricity.

**UK Building Regulations:** from 2006 all new buildings must comply with improved standards of insulation, energy efficiency with reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and all new central heating boilers must be energy saving condensing boilers.

**Planning:** A number of planning authorities require new buildings to be energy efficient, low emission buildings using renewable or microgeneration.

### Jobs in the Energy sector

This transformation of the Energy Sector resulted in over 220,000 job losses in the UK mining sector. There were 171 deep coalmines in 1981 and only 6 today. If the go ahead for new nuclear stations is delayed employment in this sector will fall dramatically after 2012 when the closure programme for Advanced Gas Cooled Reactors (AGR) begins.

**On the positive side there are many new jobs being created in renewables wind, marine and in microgeneration. However, these are in design, installation, and maintenance rather than in manufacture.**

**The Government estimates that around 400,000 people are now working in environmental technology industries.**

**The DTI published predictions<sup>6</sup> on jobs in the renewable wind sector concluded that with the right level of investment the number of jobs will rise to 17,000 between 2003 and 2020 and could even be as high as 30,000.**

Defra and the devolved agencies operate schemes such as Warm Front and Affordable Warmth aimed at improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock; installing central heating and insulation in thousands of homes across the UK and providing jobs and training for many people.

### Transport

Transport is a major source of greenhouse gases in the UK which continue to rise, despite improved efficiencies in fuel consumption and design in road vehicle, rail and aeroplane design.

In the modern world the concentration of services and out of town shopping as well as work opportunities abroad and global business require more travel. Reduced motoring, plane travel costs and tourism growth offers more opportunities to travel for leisure and pleasure

**Congestion and traffic pollution** are an increasing problem. Vehicle population in the UK has increased 10 fold since 1945, from 3m vehicles to 30m today and still rising. In 1950 annual road usage was 51.bn kilometres per year, reaching 410bn in 2000 and an amazing 502bn kilometres in 2005.

**National Rail:** Despite the huge problems created by Privatisation and fragmentation Rail usage in the UK has risen considerably. Over 1.1bn rail journeys were made in 2006; the highest number of passengers travelling since 1946. Capacity is being reached on many lines and the Treasury and Network Rail will spend £2.4bn over the next two years to tackle overcrowding by investment in additional rolling stock.

	CO <sub>2</sub> Emission per passenger km
Air	231g/km
Rail	61g/km
Road	100g/km – 200g/km

Source DfT

The EU target for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from transport is 148g/km by 2008 and the UK is not on target to meet this; CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the UK are about 3% above the EU average – partly caused by UK motorists choosing to drive larger cars.

<sup>6</sup> Renewable Supply Chain Gap Analysis Mott MacDonald and the Bourton Group Nov 2003

The Eddington Report: the Government-commissioned Eddington Report<sup>7</sup> was released in Autumn 2006.

The main findings were:

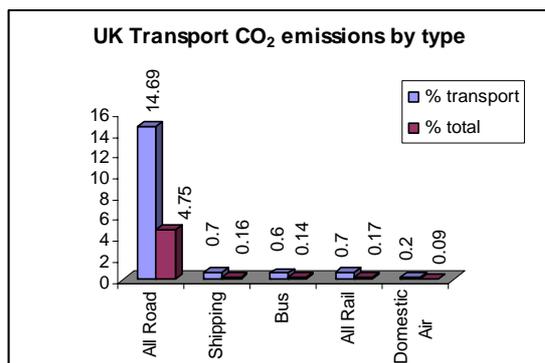
- A staggering 61bn journeys are made per year and increasing.
- The transport network is becoming overloaded.
- A 5% reduction in travel time could generate around £2.5bn cost saving to the nation the equivalent to 0.2% of GDP.
- Transport delays and unreliability have direct cost to individuals and business. Elimination of existing congestion could be worth £7-£8bn per annum.

The main conclusions were:

- The Government should adopt a sophisticated transport mix to meet both economic and environmental gains
- It recommends investment in all modes of transport, in towns and key corridors, favouring public transport in towns and national road pricing.
- Small schemes often have a better pay back than large schemes.
- To do nothing would mean that by 2025 in most large towns and cities traffic would be at "stop go" all day.

While aviation looks like one of the lowest producers of CO<sub>2</sub> today, it is forecast to increase by 20% over the next decade. It is two and a half times more polluting because it creates damage higher in the atmosphere. Trains and buses are more efficient but a car with 3 or 4 passengers may also be very efficient.

The chart shows road transport is the biggest source of emissions. Yet a quarter of all car journeys are only 3.2 kilometres (2 miles) in length



A number of measures have been introduced to reduce road transport use and the effects on congestion and the environment.

These include:

- London Congestion Charging
- Vehicle Excise Duty (Road Tax) based on emissions and vehicle size
- Biofuel Obligation requirement
- National Road Pricing Scheme proposals

**Aviation:** The Chancellor doubled Air Departure Tax (ADT) from February 2007 from £5.00 to £10 on short-haul flights to £20 on long-haul flights, which is expected to reduce UK flights by 4%.

### Jobs in Transport

As the numbers of journeys increase a number of new jobs in aviation, bus, rail, and light rail and congestion schemes will be created.

<sup>7</sup> The Eddington Transport Study 2006 : The case for action [www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/eddingtonstudy/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/eddingtonstudy/)

**Examples of the new jobs are at regional airports.** *Greening the Workplace* estimate that the UK light rail & tram systems such as Nottingham produced 2,538 new jobs along with regeneration to cities and outlying estates.

**In addition to the environmental benefits the London Congestion charging scheme** created about 500 new jobs in administration installation and maintenance and enforcement. Approximately 100 additional buses were introduced within and around the congestion charge zone creating a further 300 driving jobs.

## Other work related issues

**Homeworking and Teleconferencing:** Modern technology enables work to be undertaken from home. Employees can work more flexibly; travel less frequently and outside peak times.

**Manufacturing:** With the right investment in the Green Agenda UK manufacturing can benefit from new and technologies such as renewables, clean coal and carbon capture, fuel cell transfer. Without the investment technology will be manufactured outside the UK.

**Skills:** The Green Agenda in itself will generally have a neutral effect on the number of jobs in the UK, but will create new jobs, and change or make the old ones redundant. This means the UK workforce needs to be equipped with new and revised skills.

The Sector Council for energy, waste and recycling has undertaken a number of projects mapping out job profiles, skills, training needs and qualifications for each the sectors. New NVQ/SVQ level 1-4 qualifications will provide employees and companies with recognised training paths to make them "*Green Ambassadors*" for the sectors.

The London Energy Partnership<sup>8</sup> found that there is a skills gap in all job categories associated with renewable energy skills, including town planners, designers, surveyors, trainers, installers and maintenance engineers.

*It is important that the UK invests in Green Agenda Skills or the jobs will go to other countries willing to invest in the technology - as was the case of onshore wind power in Denmark.*

**What happens if the measures are too stringent or not coordinated?** Some measures can be counter-productive. For instance, if the Climate change levy is set at too high a level or the emission-trading cap is too low the effect on large industrial users might be to close plants in the UK and transfer production to low wage countries that don't have climate change measures.

This would not reduce emissions but transfer the pollution overseas at the expense of UK jobs. The same applies to aviation. Setting environmental taxes or restrictions at too high a level; means the same number of flights will continue, but they will just land at other European airports such as Amsterdam or Paris, losing UK jobs while failing to reduce global emissions.

The Tories' proposal to limit flights to one tax free flight per person per year and tax all other flights could well have the same effect on UK jobs and socially exclude people on low incomes as well as creating a huge administrative bureaucracy.

**Biofuel** - without a coordinated approach the UK will not be able to supply sufficient biofuel which will be supplied from countries that destroy forests.

**"Food air miles"- boycotting fruit and vegetables from Africa** may not reduce CO<sub>2</sub> but result in poor African people losing their livelihoods. Growing vegetables in greenhouses in Europe can produce more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than growing them in Africa and flying them to the UK.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.lep.org.uk](http://www.lep.org.uk)

**Therefore it is important to have a fair and balanced policy:** Sustainable Development that balances the needs to reduce emissions while maintaining growth in the economy both in the UK and worldwide.

## Part 2: How can the GMB address the Green Agenda?

The Green Agenda will have a wide and varied effect on jobs and the workplace which are as important and significant as take-overs, mergers, outsourcing and offshoring have been over the last decade.

### What is the role of a trade union in the Green Agenda?

The main role for Trade Unions will be their traditional one: to assist with the change, to ensure the transmission is as smooth as possible and the protection of our members in difficult times.

As a union that represents workers in all sectors of the UK economy, the GMB has an important part to play in the Green Agenda.

### What has the GMB been doing?

- GMB Bargaining Brief on the Green Agenda
- Research Department made presentations at all 2006 Section Conferences
- Labour Party Conference Fringe Meeting emphasising the need to involve the workforce in the sustainable development
- Involvement in the Energy and Utility Skills and the London Energy Partnership to help identify skills needed to tackle the new areas of work in energy and recycling.
- In the Regions: GMB Stewards are involved in environmental issues at their workplace such as:

At BAE Systems plant at Brough in the Midlands and East Coast Region the GMB Health and Safety Committee has added environmental issues to their responsibilities.

Pilkington Glass agreed to implement a charter for Sustainable Development into their production and working practices after discussion with GMB Liverpool Region

### Trade Unions for Sustainable Development Advisory Committee (TUSDAC):

The GMB was one of the founding members of TUSDAC. Through this organisation and its regular meetings with Government Ministers and advisers the GMB has been able to press for action on a number of issues including:

A balanced energy policy including nuclear, clean coal and renewables, an integrated Transport policy including aviation and the need to link energy and environment policies to UK Manufacturing and skills needs.

TUSDAC conducted an online survey of union members which demonstrate a high level of interest in environmental issues by union members: a majority of respondents (95%) felt that the Government should be doing more to combat global warming while 82% of respondents felt trade unions should be doing more to protect the environment.

**Worker Involvement:** The survey results show that trade union members are concerned about the environment.

Experience tells us that involving the workforce is the key to change. It is the employees who will have to change their way of working, the job they do and their whole approach to the workplace. The workforce is good source of ideas and inspiration.

Where changes take place in the workplace; to jobs, introduction of new policies and procedures, such as green transport plans, home working policies or a complete change of job it is important that they are explained, understood and negotiated properly and seen to be fair.

TUSDAC supports Workplace Environmental Representatives having statutory rights and suggests the following should be included in their duties:

- Undertake environmental audits
- Access to information about environmental impacts, complaints etc.
- To be consulted on environmental matters, as part of an Environmental management system
- Paid time off for training – for 2 to 5 day nationally accredited courses
- Communicate with members and other local stakeholders
- Develop trade union approach to environmental matters – i.e. collective responsibility rather than individual fault
- Carry out Environmental Risk Assessments.
- The right to paid release for sustainable development and environmental training.

Trade unions can play a key role in promoting sustainable development at work. This must include well-designed trade union education programmes; accompanied by sufficient time off to undertake training.

Changing the culture in the workplace will encourage and help make changes at home and in their lifestyle outside. Very often the best and simplest but most effective ideas come from the workforce. A Workplace

## Environmental Committee is a good method of involving the workforce in the Green Agenda.

Trade Union education plays a key part in this process and the GMB must look at ways of improving information and training provided to workplace representatives.

**What you can do** At home you can reduce your carbon footprint. The best way to reduce your carbon footprint

and save money is to insulate your house properly. Loft insulation and cavity wall insulation will do more to reduce your energy use and lower your carbon footprint than anything else.

**At the back of this document you will find a table showing simple but effective ways of reducing your carbon footprint.**

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

### Developing Sustainable Workplaces

The Green Agenda is a vast subject which will have dramatic effects on the work place. The trade union movement must train and equip its officers and workplace representatives with the knowledge and understanding to deal with the Green Agenda

The GMB has 240 full time officers and over 20,000 branch officers and workplace representatives including stewards, safety reps and learning reps. They must be given the tools to deal with the issues and changes that Green Agenda will bring, enabling unions to play an effective role in developing sustainable workplaces.

### The Green Training Agenda

GMB Officers and representatives must be able to respond both to employer led changes and to be able to raise their own issues and concerns. This involves:

- Extending the role of the trade union representative to include environmental protection.
- Promoting environmentally friendly measures, such as energy saving, waste strategies and travel plans.
- Involvement in environmental monitoring and management systems.

**Environmental courses** run for Trade Unions are one of the best ways of learning more by attending specially designed courses and sharing experiences with people from other companies and areas of work.

The GMB should encourage officers and workplace representatives to attend one of the TUC courses. We should also consider running some GMB courses.

This will ensure that the sustainability agenda is a genuine two-way dialogue, not one just led by the employers or changes to legislation.

**Paid Time off for Training:** One of the biggest problems is that employers are reluctant to provide paid time off for stewards to attend environmental courses. Too frequently employers still do not see these issues as important until they are faced with change or new legislation.

### What can GMB members do?

**At work** GMB members can become Health and Safety and Environment reps.

- Form an Environmental Committee.
- Include environmental issues on the agenda of the safety committee.
- Ask to attend a Trade Union Environmental course. Ensure that GMB members' voice is heard in the workplace.
- Look at Green Travel Plans and other ways of making the workplace more sustainable.

### The GMB as an organisation

The GMB is the fourth largest Trade Union in the UK with around 600,000 members plus their families across every sector of the UK economy. GMB is:

- A medium sized employer with just over 600 officers and staff
- A nationwide organisation operating from over 70 offices across the UK owning over 50 properties
- It operates car fleet over 350 vehicles.
- It has a turnover of over £52m per year and procures goods and services worth £2m per year.
- It has investments of £12m

### So what could the GMB be doing as an Estate Owner, Property Manager and Employer?

A number of measures can be introduced into the workplace to improve sustainability. These include how items are used, recycled, reused or disposed of.

**How can we control the heating and lighting better?** Introducing measures such as turning down the thermostat overnight, using energy saving bulbs and switching lighting, equipment and machinery off when not in use will reduce emissions and can also save money.

**Procurement and purchasing:** The GMB purchases a wide range of products and services from pens to computers. As a trade union we also have a global responsibility to workers in developing countries so need to consider issues such as International Labour Organisation (ILO) Standards and Fair Trade.

**Office refurbishment:** consideration should be given to larger projects and improving office sustainability.

- Can the windows be replaced with double glazed ones?
- Does the heating need replacing?
- Can better controls be fitted?
- Could microgeneration be viable?
- Can water saving toilets and taps be fitted?

**Office locations:** When looking to open new offices or to relocate offices it is much better for staff when offices are located near good public transport and with the ability to cycle or walk to work.

**Green Travel Plans:** The GMB organises hundreds of meetings and conferences per year. Travel by public transport can often be cheaper, safer, and more environmentally friendly than using the car and just as quick and convenient as flying and work can often be undertaken while travelling by train.

**Car Fleets:** The GMB has a car fleet of around 350 vehicles. When replacing the car fleet consideration could be given to the emission levels and tax bands. By moving down a band and leasing cars with a lower range of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions it may be possible to save between £20 and £40 per vehicle per year dependent on size and fuel type. Changing the model of car can result in a car fleet saving of anything from £7,000 to £16,000 per year.

### Promote the Green Agenda within our own organisation

This does not mean that we have to turn all the car parks in Regional offices into vegetable patches or that Regional Secretaries should exchange their GMB cars for new bikes.

However, it does mean examining what we do as an organisation and seeing what changes we can make to the way we act and manage the GMB.

### CEC RECOMMENDATION TO CONGRESS 2007:

Establish a CEC Environmental Task Group to develop a GMB Green Agenda Policy and report back to Congress 2008 on progress on the following:

- Place Energy and Environment on the Agenda for every workplace claim irrespective of the industry or sector
- Promote the use of energy saving in Local Government, Schools and Hospitals
- Conduct an Environmental Audit of all GMB offices and workplaces
- Investigate the energy savings that could be provided by taking advantage of new communications technology for meetings and conference calls
- Investigate feasibility of introducing microgeneration such as solar power or wind generation into suitable GMB offices

## Carbon Footprint

The aim of the government is for all of us to reduce our carbon footprint by 20% to achieve our Kyoto targets. *DEFRA will be issuing a new Carbon Footprint guide in May 2007.*

*A full list of what people can do is available from the "You Control Climate Change" website<sup>9</sup>, but here are some simple steps everyone can all take:*

Action	Potential CO <sub>2</sub> saving per year
<i>Install loft and cavity wall insulation</i>	<i>up to 630kg</i>
<i>Replacing a car with a fuel efficient model</i>	<i>up to 660kg</i>
<i>Change to train travel for 1000km</i>	<i>up to 110kg</i>
<i>Walk or cycle for short journeys</i>	<i>up to 240kg</i>
<i>Turn down thermostat by 1°</i>	<i>up to 300kg</i>
<i>Turndown the thermostat while out or at night</i>	<i>up to 400kg</i>
<i>Install double glazing</i>	<i>up to 350kg</i>
<i>Switch off five 60watt bulbs when not needed</i>	<i>up to 270kg</i>
<i>Put energy saving bulbs in the 5 most used lights</i>	<i>up to 250kg</i>
<i>Boil only the amount of water you need for drinks</i>	<i>up to 25kg</i>
<i>Install a low-flow showerhead</i>	<i>up to 250kg/person</i>
<i>Fix or turn off dripping taps</i>	<i>up to 20kg</i>
<i>Reduce vehicle speed from 70mph to 60mph</i>	<i>up to 35kg</i>
<i>Buy larger bottles of water</i>	<i>up to 9kg</i>

*(Adopted)*

SIS. L. CLARKE (CEC, Public Services): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC, moving the Special Report: The Green Agenda and GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development.

The CEC commends this report. The report is in two sections. The first part gives an overview explaining climate change and the response to it, often called *The Green Agenda*. The second part addresses what the GMB response should be both as a trade union representing members in the workplace and as an employer and property manager.

<sup>9</sup> [www.mycarbonfootprint.eu](http://www.mycarbonfootprint.eu) and <http://www.climatechange.eu.com/>

Finally, there are some actions which we can take as individuals to reduce our carbon footprint. A number of experts believe that climate change will have as much influence on jobs and outsourcing, offshoring and takeovers have had during the past two decades. If the GMB fails to respond to the green agenda it is our members' jobs which will be on the line. The report sets out some of the key areas where there will be job changes; in transport and energy waste recycling. However, it is much wider and affects us all in each section of our union. Taxes, levies, shortages and even just a change of temperature will require changes in the workplace. If the GMB is to respond to this, then we will need to understand it and to protect our members.

Climate change is here. It is a matter of accepting the reality of climate change by us all. But the most arrogant, and of course this includes one George W. Bush, still refuses to join the Kyoto Protocol. Climate change is firmly on the national and international agenda. There is clearly a role for the GMB to ensure that outlandish claims are rejected. If we do not, then GMB members could lose their jobs based on half truths. The environmentalists have strong views and have undertaken some work that we must respect them for getting it on the political agenda, but the solutions are much more complex than they sometimes suggest.

The report shows that transport is one of the three major causes of greenhouse gases yet people travel more often and travel further. That is the way of the world in a global economy. We need to ensure that measures are taken to reduce unnecessary travel and to make travelling more energy efficient and less polluting. It is about having a proper integrated transport policy, offering people sensible and real alternatives to flying or taking the car while accepting that on some occasions these may still be the best and most energy efficient way to travel.

It is about improving fuel economy and reducing emissions from exhausts. It is about public expenditure and providing good and efficient public transport, affordable by all. It is not about one form of energy being better than another. It is no longer about cheapest being best. It is about having a balanced energy policy, using the right mix of all fuels and resources, gas and nuclear. It is about investing in new energy sources, such as renewable and micro-generation. It is about balancing the security of supply, emissions, pollution control and energy saving measures against costs. No longer can we just plump for the cheapest.

It is also about ensuring that energy policy is linked to transport and manufacturing policy, ensuring that the changes in the energy mix and the new technologies are seen as an opportunity to produce jobs in the UK manufacturing. Reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill sites must be the agenda for every household, public buildings and every workplace including the GMB.

We must ensure that the GMB members who collect and recycle waste are seen as important to our society. They need to be recognised as green ambassadors. They need adequate health and safety measures, proper training with recognised qualifications.

Trade union education plays an important role in the green agenda and we need to encourage members and officers to attend courses. The green agenda needs to be

discussed by health and safety committees. The idea would be to form an environmental committee in every workplace. The green agenda needs to be integrated into negotiating agendas. Energy and environment need to go on the agenda of every workplace.

Finally, it is not about getting the regional secretaries out of their cars and onto bikes or grassing over the regional office car park. No. It is about the GMB equipping its members and officers to deal with environmental change. Experience shows that some of the best suggestions come from the workforce. It is important that we equip our officers and members to enable them to take the debate to the employers, not just react to employers' agenda.

The Special Report recommends that the CEC establish an environmental task group to develop a green agenda policy and report back to Congress 2008 on: (1) placing energy and the environment on the agenda for every workplace claim; (2) promoting the use of energy saving in local government, schools and hospitals; (3) conducting an environmental audit of all GMB offices and workplaces; (4) examine the feasibility of introducing micro-generation into suitable GMB offices, and (5) investigating energy saving that could be gained by using communication technology for meetings and conference calls.

I move the Special Report to Congress. Please support.

SIS. K. SLATER (CEC, Commercial Services): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and seconding the Special Report on The Green Agenda and GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development.

President and Congress, I seconding this report I want to discuss some of the wider issues of climate change and the green agenda. Firstly, I would like to remind Congress that, as a trade union, we also need to recognise our international obligations as well. The report states that if we do nothing in a few years' time the climate here in the south of England will be similar to that in southern Italy today. This might sound very nice if you are down here on holiday but it will bring all sorts of other problems. There will be more water shortages and the old, young and those with vulnerable health problems will suffer from any related problems. How will Africa and the Third World fair? Not very well.

The climate in central Africa will no longer be able to sustain the existing population with food or water. Heat related diseases will increase, and remember these people are not responsible for climate change. We are.

Their carbon footprint is only one-tenth of ours in Europe and a mere one-hundredth of the average American. Today's problems stem from the industrialisation of the western world, not from the Third World.

The Stern Report estimated that a 3° to 4° rise in annual average temperatures will cause flooding and water problems in the UK. However, in Africa and the Third World it will cause the displacement of up to 200 million people. Yes, 200 million people! This will cause migration on a scale never seen before. We must remember our obligations to the poor of the world as well as ourselves.

I would also like to touch on a few issues which could create problems nearer home if we get them wrong. As the mover said, it is a matter of balance. Ken Livingstone said it is pulling off the trick of doing the right thing by changing while not stopping economic growth. If we do not change by adopting the green agenda and tackle climate change, we will leave a devastating legacy for future generations. However, if we go too far and we slow economic growth that would have a devastating effect on future generations and the poor of the world. Some examples are taking stringent environmental practices on UK businesses, which may result in companies moving production to countries with no environmental taxes. This would only lose jobs in the UK but may continue to increase CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Placing too many restrictions on aviation in the UK will only move aircraft movements to other places in Europe, again losing jobs in the UK and having little or no effect on emissions. Stopping imports of fresh produce and flowers from Africa will only result in job losses in Africa and may even result in more emissions if they are grown out of season in European greenhouses.

Congress, there are many important issues raised at Congress but tackling climate change is vitally important for everyone of us. We must remember our obligations to future generations in the UK and also globally. I second. Please support.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, if any region would like to put a speaker into the debate, can they come to the front, please.

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): Congress, I am speaking to the CEC Special Report: The Green Agenda and GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development.

Why is this subject so important? Because our world is important. From a child I always thought that people who had no regard for our world by not looking after it are very disrespectful. After all, it is the only one we have. The other week I was in Tesco talking to the manager at the store about the carbon footprint. He seemed confused as to how it affected his store; that is the effect of waste that comes from Tesco. After I left he was in no doubt, but the Government continues to talk. They have conference after conference wasting public money on what to do, which in itself is an abuse of our world. Don't talk. Act!

I could stand here all day and talk statistics, like the Government and local councils, but I will not as *this* report says it all. I live in the Essex council area of Castle Point who, by Essex County Council's words, are a failing council in the area, but they continue to pat themselves on the back by saying they are doing what is required. In fact, it is the local householders around me who are doing the work above and beyond what is required. I have to say that it feels without the support of our council.

Landfill. It is constantly being talked about at every meeting I attend at Essex County Council: "What will happen if we don't change?"; "Don't talk – act!" There are many ways to reduce the carbon footprint on this earth. It does not take a brain surgeon to work it out. Each individual can help. Think about it. Do you need that or do you want it, do you have to go or do you want to go? When you go to the

supermarket, challenge their packaging system, asking them where they buy their products from or even given them their packaging back on the next trip.

Also at Congress we can think about the use of paper and how we reduce the amount we generate. The time for talking is over. Be it in our workplaces, local authorities or the Government, let us act now. Think about our beautiful earth. Look after it. I support.

SIS. S. TANNER (Birmingham & West Midlands): I am speaking in support of the CEC's Special Report on the Green Agenda.

This report and the recommendations contained within it is most welcome and fully supported by our region. If any delegates doubt the importance and need for the GMB to place the protection of the environment high on our bargaining agenda, then I would ask them to think again. Think about the difference one family can make. Think about the changes that our developed country has gone through. Think now of the life and environment you want your children and your children's children to inherit from you.

When our union was forged my grandparents and great-grandparents earned wages, ran a household, reared a family and lived their entire lives without travelling outside of the Northamptonshire county in which they were born. They ate seasonal and locally produced foods, which were not packaged in polythene trays and plastic packages. The clothes they wore were locally made creating regional jobs. Their children did not wear disposable nappies, neither did they have televisions, telephones, computers, cars, washing machines or tumble dryers.

From the time it has taken our union to develop into the organisation it is today, my family's lifestyle has changed beyond recognition. My grown-up children enjoy holidays in far away exotic lands, they work long hours and their working day includes lengthy journeys. They live hi-tech lifestyles which include labour-saving devices and the means to communicate to their friends and family whenever and however they wish, wherever they are in the world. Their lifestyles are neither exceptional, unusual or unreasonable. They would not want to live their lives in the ways their relatives did and neither should they, but the changes to our family's life has had a detrimental effect on the environment.

I am a branch secretary. There are 1,700 members in my branch. The lives of all their families have changed in the same way, resulting in the same effect to the environment. Consider all of the 600,000 members of our union whose lifestyle changes cause effects on the environment. The size of the problem is now something you can start to contemplate and I have not even started to speak about industry. This problem can and should be addressed. My family and many of our branch members practise responsible consumerism. They consider and evaluate the most effective mode of transport, they recycle whenever possible and they have ideas which they want to see implemented in their community and workplaces.

I am sure that with the creation of forums and the election of post-holders, as recommended in the Special Report, we can and will make a difference. We owe it to all our children and our children's children. Birmingham & West Midlands supports.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: North West & Irish.

BRO. J. McDERMOTT (North West & Irish): This is my first time at Congress and my first time in Brighton. (*Applause*)

The green agenda seems to have been around for a long time but now, more than ever, the GMB needs to be at the forefront. World leaders are agreeing far-reaching steps in relation to climate change and this, in turn, will affect how employers plan for the future, and that is where the GMB delegates in this room come into play.

We need to make sure that we are at the table when it comes to health, safety and environmental issues, putting our thoughts forward and helping to shape a better tomorrow for our children and our children's children.

But, Comrades, it is not just influence which is on offer here. There is recruitment, too. In our region, like all other regions, local authorities have very strict recycling targets imposed on them. Thirty-five per cent of all waste must be recycled by 2010 and 50% by 2020. Within Greater Manchester Waste the shop stewards have been involved in the environmental changes that are going to happen, like the use of composting silos. They have also been involved in proposals to invest £350 million into its present sites to assist achieving its recycling targets. As a result, the company has stated that these changes will result in a hundred new jobs over seven years.

By the shop stewards being involved the GMB is in a position to recruit new members, not just in the future but now. We increased our membership by 20% between February and April of this year. That is 60 new members from the existing workforce. That came from being actively involved in keeping the membership involved.

Congress, support the report because, whether we like it or not, if you want the future to be bright, the future has to be green. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. I call Midland & East Coast.

BRO. D. HOCKING (Midland & East Coast): I speak in support of the CEC's Special Report: The Green Agenda and GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development.

President and Congress, I fully support the sentiments and propositions of this document. However, I am alarmed when I look at the carbon footprints of other nations, in particular, the USA, who you would think would know better. It is annoying to know that for all the good that we are doing, someone else is neglecting it. So before we start congratulating ourselves, we have one more job to do. We need to convince those nations not doing their bit to follow our lead. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Derek. Northern.

BRO. M. NICHOLS (Northern): I am speaking in support of the CEC's Special Report on the Green Agenda and the GMB.

Congress, as we all know, the Green Agenda and climate change have, in the last few months, risen to the top of the political agenda. Although the information has been available for many years, it is only recently, with the spate of natural disasters, like the tsunami, Hurricane Katrina and the changes to the weather and the floods at home that people have sat up and begun to take notice of what is happening. Clearly, the way we live, work and produce energy have to change if we are to have a future for our children, our grandchildren and generations beyond.

It is important for the GMB to get involved in the debate and get involved in developing sustainable workplaces. We need to educate our officers and lay reps on the issues and on how we can move the Green Agenda forward in the workplace. This report provides practical suggestions for moving this agenda forward which we totally support. Not only does it suggest ways forward for the organisation to look at the workplaces in which our members work, but also about how we operate as a medium sized employer.

Congress, Northern Region supports this report.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. GMB Scotland.

SIS. A. DEAN (GMB Scotland): Congress and President, I am speaking in support of the CEC's Special Report: The Green Agenda.

There can be no doubt in anyone's mind that climate change, global warming and the Green Agenda does not affect and impact upon us all. GMB Scotland welcomes the Special Report as the first step of informing our members, stewards, officers and staff of the challenge ahead. The UK Government's target is to reduce our carbon footprint by 20% in order that we meet our Kyoto target by 2020. We all need to play our part in tackling climate change and in securing our energy supplies.

The next ten years will be vital, and the inevitable shift to a low carbon economy will have far-reaching implications for the operation of the UK's liberalised energy market and our future industrial employment and economic opportunities.

Congress, this Special Report sets out a serious attempt to address and inform about climate change and how we can all play our part in actively promoting sustainable policies at work and in our homes. Workplaces burn energy, consume resources and generate waste. This is the most obvious place for us all to start tackling climate change. Greening the workplace is a practical role for the GMB to take and by in being involved in environmental audits within our workplaces, we can make a difference.

GMB Scotland supports the recommendation set out in the report by establishing a CEC Environmental Task Group to develop policy and to report back to Congress in 2008.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. Southern.

SIS. J. HALE (Southern): I am speaking on behalf of Southern Region in response to the CEC's Special Report: The Green Agenda and GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development.

President and Congress, the Southern Region is happy to support this timely initiative on the part of our Union. As we all know, climate change represents an enormous challenge but, as this report also argues, it is also an opportunity. It is an opportunity for our union to shape the Government's agenda and exploit new opportunities for our members in key industries, such as recycling and renewables, particularly wind and microgeneration. It is an opportunity for the union to lead action in the workplace by, rightly, incorporating the environmental agenda into the work of the Health & Safety Committee and our reps and by negotiating changes with employers to produce more sustainable working practices.

It is also an opportunity to empower our members most importantly in every aspect of their lives to take action improve the efficient use of energy and in the spirit of solidarity and social responsibility which is our individual impact on the environment.

Congress, the proposal to review our union's own practices as an organisation and to conduct an environmental audit on all GMB offices and workplaces, including exploring micro-generation and solar power, is to be welcomed. This report reveals the disproportionate way in which climate change hits the poorest whilst the richer nations produce the most per capital carbon emissions. This means that climate change is more than an environmental problem; it is a global social crisis and, therefore, as a trade union we have a duty to take a lead in fighting and preventing its effects. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. South Western.

BRO. K. JENKINS (South Western): I am speaking on the CEC's Special Report: The Green Agenda.

President and Congress, we are now well into the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and are at last waking up to the challenges that we face on the issues of resources and waste, energy consumption and transport. If governments, industry, organisations and individuals fail to respond to these challenges, then the consequences could be grim for us all. Everyone must play their part. It will not be an easy task to ask families to change their lifestyles or asking organisations and industry to change the way they operate.

Sometimes it will involve offering more attractive alternatives; sometimes financial reward, and sometimes effective enforced legislation from a government wholeheartedly committed to the Green Agenda and preserving the delicate ecosystem in which we live.

A strategic plan is an absolute necessity to cushion what will be a major shock to our current way of life. More importantly, the actions the UK take must be viewed in a global context. It is essential that the Green Agenda be adopted internationally, otherwise the voracious appetites of industrialised countries for dwindling oil, gas and

coal reserves could explode into a world war of such destructive power that the planet may never recover.

Part 1 of the document refers to the ultimate consequence if we do nothing now, and that is why the South Western Region fully supports the CEC recommendation to Congress. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Yorkshire.

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, visitors and guests, I was delighted to be asked to speak in support of the CEC's Green Agenda. As a geosciences student, I am aware that the climate of our planet has experienced extremes of heat and cold in its 4.6 billion year existence. On studying whole earth systems, such extremes are almost blips in geological time. However, seeing at close hand the environmental impact of human activity over the past 150 years, that blip becomes a potential disaster for many of the life forms on this planet.

As geologists we have a phrase to remember geological mass extinctions: "Oh, dear, poor tiny creatures; Ordovician, Devonian, etc." We do not want to add our own era to that list. We need to take action as a society and as individuals, but we need to be aware that we will need complex solutions to deal with what is a complex situation. For instance, the recent rush to produce biofuels is in danger of destroying rain forests, which actually contribute more to climate stability. Hydrogen for, apparently, cleaner engines is produced using a lot of fossil fuel and the exhaust -- which is only water vapour, so we are told -- is, of course, a greenhouse gas.

Any attempt to introduce a green agenda in order for it to be achievable and sustainable must also be attractive to consumers. People are more likely to recycle if offered incentives such as a reduction in council tax. If we want more use of public transport, it needs to be affordable and to meet people's needs.

On a personal level, I would fix solar panels and wind turbines on my roof tomorrow if only it were affordable, but we would still need large scale energy output for industrial users.

As a coal delegate, I would want to ensure that any solutions take into account our members working in the energy industries, whether it is coal -- remember, we can burn it cleaner -- gas or nuclear. The Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region has members not just working in the mines but also at the coal-fired power stations. Just hammering fossil fuels is not the answer; just hammering transport is not the answer. We need a much more sophisticated approach and the CEC agenda, quite rightly, identifies the need to balance green initiatives with careful planning to ensure that any impact on members' jobs is minimal but, at the same time, enabling us to take an active part in reducing our carbon footprint. Yorkshire & North Derbyshire supports the agenda.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pam.

Colleagues, would anyone like to speak to Composite Motion 16 or Motion 176?

BRO. C. WHITMORE (London): President, I am happy to say that I am speaking with the wholehearted support of my region in support of Motion 176, but also we are wishing to express our support for and appreciation of our thousands of members who do a first-class job in refuse collection and municipal recycling centres. To use this rostrum to say that our members are taking bribes or back-handers, as suggested by my comrade from Birmingham, is simply offensive. I would respectfully ask him to withdraw that allegation. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. The CEC are supporting Composite 16 and Motion 176 and the Special Report on the Green Agenda.

*(Composite Motion 16 was carried)*

*(Motion 176 was carried)*

*(The CEC Special Report: The Green Agenda and GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development was adopted)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, just to remind the London delegate and others, although what the delegate says at the rostrum may seem offensive, it is what is in the motion that you carry.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT

THE PRESIDENT: I want to say that the RMA “Name the Bear” competition has been won by John Whistlecraft from London Region. The bear’s name was “BORIS” and he was made by our own Monica Smith. We only know one BORIS, don’t we? *(Applause)*

The RMA Raffle will be drawn first thing Thursday morning and the winners list will be displayed on Stand 27 where the prizes can be collected.

#### **ADDRESS BY SIS. MONICA SMITH, NATIONAL SECRETARY, GMB RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION**

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, it gives me great pleasure to ask Monica Smith from the RMA to address Congress. Delegates, this lady works tirelessly for the union and for our retired members. Monica, please address Congress.

SIS. M. SMITH (GMB RMA): President and Congress, I am delighted to have been given the honour of addressing Congress again in sunny Brighton on behalf of the Retired Members. The RMA was born in the 1980s. We are approximately 20 years old -- oh, how I wish! – and growing. When you retire, colleagues, please bring your expertise and join us in your regions. Remember, what improvements we gain for pensioners today and tomorrow is a deferred benefit to all of you.

Despite Britain’s wealth, millions of women and men struggle to make ends meet on pensions well below the poverty line. They face council tax and rising utility bills, which bear no relation to their income. Thousands die every winter due to poor housing and cold and an increasing number are means tested and forced to sell their

homes in order to pay for the care they were promised would be free from the cradle to the grave. Often living alone many are excluded from community, friends and relatives due to lack of local amenities and adequate public transport.

Looking on the brighter side, we are still receiving the winter fuel allowance and a free television licence if you are over 75, and in April of next year free countryside travel. Watch this space.

The GMB RMA National Committee meets four times a year. This year we have been very warmly welcomed in the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region and we have met at Hamilton House in London. We are looking forward to our next meeting in the Midland & East Coast Region later this month. In October we will be holding our national committee meeting in the Birmingham & West Midlands Region, followed by the GMB RMA Conference the day after. We look forward to visiting other regions next year.

Let me give a big thank you to the Deputy General Secretary, Debbie Coulter, for being our mentor. You can't pull the wool over Debbie's eyes. The GMB RMA elect delegates to attend the National Pensions Convention with one delegate sitting on the Executive. We do receive a lot of information from the NPC.

Last month the National Pensioners' Parliament took place in a cold and windy Blackpool. The weather did not stop hundreds of pensioners marching from the North Pier to the Wintergardens. It was a good feeling to see how many GMB RMA members braved the elements to gather under the GMB Retired Members Banner. It was disappointing that we could not raise our banner high due to the high winds, but we did carry it with pride.

Colleagues, the RMA would not be able to function without your continuing support from the branches. We do appreciate your generosity. Thank you.

If you remember, last year I finished with a song. I am sure you will have been looking forward to my singing to you again. Colleagues, sorry, but I have to disappoint you, but I will finish with a poem which not only reflects retired GMB members but the population of the United Kingdom. I cannot take the credit for writing the poem because it was written by Robert J. Ponting from Chorley. If you want to know where Chorley is, it is in the North West & Irish Region. So I will read my little poem. Having said that, I will sing a song after because somebody has requested it, so I will do so.

The poem is called *Pensioner's lament*.

*A shilling on the shelf for the doctor,  
That's what it used to be,  
A shilling on the shelf for the doctor  
But sometimes it bought tea.*

*A shilling on the shelf for the doctor,  
To keep our dad at work,  
A shilling on the shelf for the doctor,*

*(in) case illnesses should lurk.*

*A shilling on the shelf for the doctor,  
And pence for the Union Fund,  
To pay for convalescence,  
If things were bad at home.*

*We put our shillings in one pot,  
And bosses, them as well,  
To build a doctor's centre,  
For all folk taken ill.*

*But then we all went fighting,  
It was a bloody war,  
And when it all was finished,  
We said enough, no more.*

*We'll form a National Service,  
For health in every way,  
And all in work would contribute,  
Some money from their pay.*

*It was a scheme to take one's breath,  
A healthcare plan from birth to death,  
And none should lose in any way,  
A safety net for every day.*

*But then it all went formal,  
And bureaucrats stepped in,  
They said it was a business  
And brought accountants in.*

*You have to show a profit,  
For healthcare to survive,  
You cannot make much money,  
Just keeping folk alive.*

*The doctors did not like it,  
The nurses, them as well,  
The volunteers went barmy,  
As down the system fell.*

*So now it looks like we must lose,  
And once more we will say,  
'A shilling for the doctor',  
That is the private way,  
'A shilling for the doctor',  
I hope that you can pay." (Applause)*

It is appropriate to say this today. It is one I prepared earlier. It is called *Mary's Bash*.

*You're all invited and the band's engaged,  
You're going to have some fun,  
Miss Mary Turner gives a bash for all who care to come.  
Will you come? Will you come?  
'Cause you never will forget it if you come.  
For the bells are ringing and the girls are singing  
And the fiddle and the harp go 'rum, tum, tum';  
There's teasing and squeezing and kissing free for all,  
And the courting's in the corner at Miss Mary Turner's ball.*

*(Cheers and applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Oh dear. What can we do with her? Oh, dear, dear, dear. Isn't Monica wonderful? Monica, thank you very much. It is a highlight of the week when you come to the rostrum because we never know what you are going to do so we all get a surprise. But you are all welcome to Mary's Bash, you know that. Thank you.

### **Annual Accounts and Auditor's Report**

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I would like you to welcome Nigel Gooch and Michelle Townsend from Hard Dowdy, the external Auditors who are sitting with Jim Clarke, the General Member Auditor, and Graham Dow from the National Administration Unit.

I welcome them to Congress. *(Applause)*

Congress, I would like you to welcome the General Secretary to deal with the Annual Accounts and then to move a series of Financial Rule Amendments.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Congress, I move the Annual Accounts, which you should all have readily to hand in your Congress wallets, and also the CEC proposals on contributions, benefits and finances and the rule changes associated with them. Forgive me for going through the numbers, but these are Rule Amendments 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310 and 311.

### **CEC RULE AMENDMENTS – CONTRIBUTIONS AND BENEFITS**

CECRA304

Rule 47 Clause 1,           Line 3: Delete "£2.30", insert "£2.40"  
  Line 6: Delete "£1.23", insert "£1.28"

Clause will now read:

1           Upon entering as members of the Union, members shall pay a contribution in accordance with this rule.

Members of the Union shall pay £2.40 per week, and be termed Grade 1 members **UNLESS** they are part-time members employed for 20 hours or less, or juveniles under 18 years, or recruited as unemployed and not subsequently employed, when they shall pay £1.28 per week and be termed Grade 2 members **PROVIDED that** any Grade 2 member may elect to pay the contribution rate for, and be termed a Grade 1 member.

The above Grades are for the sole purpose of determining contributions to be paid and benefits which may be received and for no other purpose.

*(Carried)*

**CECRA305**

Rule 47 Clause 3,           Line 2: Delete "£2.30", insert "£2.40"  
  Line 3: Delete "£1.23", insert "£1.28"

**Clause will now read:**

3           Branch Committees shall have power to fix the amount to be paid by lapsed members as reentrance fees. The amount to be not less than £2.40 and not more than £10.00 for Grade 1 members, and not less than £1.28 and not more than £5.50 for Grade 2 members, except in particular circumstances, when the amount may be increased, subject to the approval of the Regional Committee.

*(Carried)*

**CECRA306**

Rule 67 Clause 8,           Line 11: Delete "£6.90", insert "£7.20"  
  Line 11: Delete "£3.69", insert "£3.84"  
  Line 17: Delete "£6.90, £3.69", insert "£7.20, £3.84"

**Clause will now read:**

8 The Central Executive Council shall give effect to the exemption of members to contribute to the Political Fund of the Union by relieving any members who are exempt from the payment of part of any periodical contributions required from the members of the Union towards the expenses of the Union as hereinafter provided and such relief shall be given as far as possible to all members who are exempt on the occasion of the same periodical payment.

For the purpose of enabling each member of the Union to know as respects any such periodical contribution what portion, if any, of the sum payable by him/her, is a contribution to the Political Fund, it is hereby provided that the annual contribution to the Political Fund of the Union shall, for Grade 1 members be the sum of £7.20, for Grade 2 members the sum of £3.84, and for members paying the reduced rate under Rule 49 the sum of 15p. The contribution to the Political Fund shall be payable in three equal instalments on the first contribution nights of the quarters ending March, September and December.

Any member who is exempt as aforesaid shall be relieved from payment of the said sum of £7.20, £3.84 and 15p respectively. The Central Executive Council shall have power to suspend at any time payment to the Political Fund for any quarter or quarters, in which event, that portion of the member's contribution allocated to political purposes shall be credited to the Central Fund.

*(Carried)*

**CECRA307**

Rule 67A , Clause 5,       Line 5: Delete "£6.90", insert "£7.20"

Line 6: Delete "£3.69", insert "£3.84"

Clause will now read:

- 5 The Central Executive Council shall give effect to the statutory exemption of Northern Ireland members to contribute to the political fund of the Union by making a separate levy of contributions to that fund from those Northern Ireland members who have provided written consent of their willingness to contribute, namely, for Grade 1 members the sum of £7.20, for Grade 2 members the sum of £3.84, and for members paying the reduced rate under Rule 49 the sum of 15p payable in three equal instalments on the first contribution nights of the quarters ending March, September and December. No moneys of the Union other than the amount raised by such separate levy shall be carried to the political fund.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*(Carried)*

#### **CECRA308**

**Rule 55 Add new Clause 4:**

- 4 Where a member has been granted legal assistance under Rule 27, in respect of an incident arising from which there is an entitlement to Total Disablement Benefit under this rule, and as a result of legal action the member is awarded at least ten times the level of the Total Disablement Grant, then the Total Disablement Benefit will not be paid to the member, and will be recoverable from the member if previously paid.

Renumber old Clause 4 as Clause 5.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*(Carried)*

#### **CECRA309**

**Rule 59 Add new Clause 5:**

- 5 Where legal assistance under Rule 27 has been granted, in respect of an incident arising from which there is an entitlement to Fatal Accident Benefit under this rule, and as a result of legal action there is an award of at least ten times the level of the Fatal Accident Grant, then the Fatal Accident Benefit will not be paid, and will be recoverable if previously paid.

Renumber old Clause 5 as Clause 6.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*(Carried)*

### **CEC RULE AMENDMENTS – FINANCE**

#### **CECRA310**

Rule 36 Clause 1, Line 1: Add "With effect from the March Quarter of 2011, this rule will apply to all branches, in place of Rule 35 and Rule 34(2)"

Clause will now read:

- 1 Where Congress so specifies, this rule will apply to branches, in place of Rule 35. With effect from the March Quarter of 2011, this rule will apply to all branches, in place of Rule 35 and Rule 34(2).

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*(Carried)*

#### **CECRA311**

## Rule 28

### Heading to Rule

Delete "Central Fund", insert "Union Funds"

### Insert new Clause 2:

"The Funds of the Union shall be deposited with one or more banks as specified by the Central Executive Council, or may be in part invested in any manner and in any part of the world at the discretion of the Central Executive Council."

Delete Clause 7.

Re-number clauses as appropriate.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

*(Carried)*

Colleagues, I am incredibly pleased to be able to present the Accounts to you today which show a year of fairly solid financial progress. The Accounts show an operating surplus for the third year in a row of £450,000 this year with another £3.5 million when you take into account the financial income from the gains on sales of surplus assets. What that means is that a large chunk of the money that we obtained for the sale of the College fell into the accounts for this particular year. The surplus in both areas is after we put a very hefty boost into organising resources and extra cash to support the pension fund which, as with many, is in actuarial deficit.

I want to report to you that the figures for the first five months of this year show our income is slightly ahead of budget. What all this means is financial stability and growth. We are able to begin to address some long-standing structural problems and we can begin to plan some investment.

Last year I was able to say that we were working a very tight ship and able to restrict contributions to just 5 pence across the board. So it is prudent for the CEC to recommend to you this year that we increase our grade 1 contributions by 10 pence, 5 pence for our grade 2 and any special rates. That will take the subscriptions to £2.40 and £1.20, which works out, colleagues, at about 20 minutes pay to a minimum wage worker. The suggested increase is actually short of RPI, and there is a Congress policy saying that we should come to you each year with a rise in contribution rates which is no greater than last year. We have certainly managed to do that. I am pleased to say that we are able to do it for grade 1 again this year.

If we get this contribution increase through, it will allow us to keep up with our investments and the demands over the coming year. I am talking about investments like GMB Scotland, who need, badly, investment in infrastructure for their regional office, which frankly, colleagues, is likely to cost us at least £1 million in the first year and probably between £1.5 million to £2 million over the next three financial years. That is a pretty hefty investment that we are preparing to put into GMB Scotland.

It also means investment into back-up for servicing officers. We are seeking to jump into a new arena for a large number of our servicing officers, to give them back-up in

the field by providing laptops. We have applied for hundreds of special licences for access to our officers in the field for something called *Expert HR*. The cost of this package, colleagues, will be about £200,000 plus some training costs, but it will enable, in the first two tranches of fifty and fifty officers, those who are IT ready to have at their fingertips support for the stewards and the branches in the workplaces, to give them back-up, access to employment law, to specialist areas of advice, for Social Security advice and every other issue you can imagine that an officer in the field would need and would assist them in the workplaces. This is a different way of doing it, perhaps, than we have done it before, but moving with the times and the union investing in the officers, the servicing side of the union. You hear me talk a lot about organising, but servicing is organising. Someone else said this week that they are not two different parts of the same coin. They are the same coin. This is a very significant investment in new technology, in training and in workplace organisation.

A shift in resources is inevitable during the next two, three or four years. The union will not employ less people unless something very dramatic happens, but there will be a shift of resources from administrative roles because of the changes in technology into servicing and frontline support.

We need a new investment in our website. We have done quite a lot with it, but we are going to have to spend some more money on it. We want it to be interactive with members. We want people to be able to talk to us instantly. We want to be able to have an email directory. We want to be able to get information from the national officers and from others direct out to members in key industries not in weeks, colleagues, not in days but literally in seconds, and we can do that as we build up that email directory. We can use that technology. We are putting an investment into doing that. That is back-up support servicing work.

Frankly, we need to invest in some specialist staff to deal with issues about equal pay, equalities, race and diversities and health and safety. We are woefully – woefully – under-resourced to deal not just with our existing position but the very campaigns and demands that Congress will make upon us. We started off in the first year in investing in some additional resources in pensions in the union, because that was the right place to start, and that has been a fantastic success. I pay great tribute to our Pensions Department. They work they have done has forced the issue of pensions (it forced this union, by the way) onto the agenda at the TUC and the Labour Party, and guess what? Things that people said could not be done like getting the restoration of the link between earnings and pensions restored is back on the agenda, and you heard the Prime Minister talking about it yesterday.

We have got to invest in better communications. We all know that. We talk about it but we know we have got to do it. We have already been working on how we can get much better systems of newsletters and information direct to members on the issues which they need to know about.

I want to pay a tribute to Steve Pryle, Rosie Conroy and Charlotte Gregory in our Communications and Campaigns Department. (*Applause*) They have earned, I can tell you. Do you know what, it did not take me long to take the roll-call of the people in the department, because there are three of them. Do you know how many people UNISON have in their communications and campaigns department? They

have 17 people. Unite has got 20 plus. So we are not exactly over-burdened with resources in that particular area, but it does not mean that you need an awful lot more but the reality is that with the campaigning tools that we need we have to invest in the infrastructure of the union.

We have to have investment, which is why we have called for the contributions increase to support our members in Remploy. That is going to be a big campaign. I don't know about you, but I am not yet convinced that Gordon Brown solved the problem for me or for the Remploy workers yesterday. No. (*Applause*) So that problem is not solved. After we had the niceties yesterday, and then we went upstairs and we started to plan the campaign: a new change of direction, a new emphasis and a very clear commitment from the union that we are going to fight for our members in Remploy. (*Applause*) We are not interested in someone, anyone actually, coming and telling us that they are going to guarantee our members in Remploy factories, in manufacturing and production, a job stacking shelves in Tesco's. That is not an advancement for our members in Remploy. It is a bloody insult!

We are also going to need to campaign on public sector pay. We need the investment to tackle that equality and diversity which is central, really, to what we do when we talk about justice. I am talking about training and wider democracy. This week, as you have already told us, you want a different type of Congress next year, and it will be like *this* but it will be bigger in parts. There will be more people involved with the industrial conferences taking place during that Congress week.

We need better housekeeping. We have started quite a lot in the past year, but even as recently as last Sunday the CEC approved a report that is earmarked at taking £266,000 out of our spending costs by getting better value for money from our energy suppliers, by the union acting together through the Senior Management Team and by unifying our phone account. We actually have the ridiculous situation that we sometimes pay to talk to each other in the union because we are not even on the same mobile phone account. We are going to eradicate that situation. Of course we are. The Senior Management Team is not going to stand for that nonsense any more. We have done the sums. We think that if we get the contract right we can come back in the first full financial year and say, "This looks like we have saved somewhere between £250-£260. So we are not resting on our laurels. We are not suggesting that we are just coming to you for money. We are looking at investment and at better housekeeping all the time.

We have already started and achieved much in terms of a reduction of costs in terms of photocopying, paper and printing. Let me say that we have been using Remploy for a lot of our printing use. I suggest that many of you, when you go back to your companies and workplaces, actually take a Remploy card, stick it under the nose of whoever is responsible for procurement in the company and say, "Give them a call. Try them for business". Let's not give the Government any excuse that there is no demand for the services and products of Remploy. They are bloody good and they ain't bad value, I can tell you. (*Applause*) That takes me through the contributions.

In now come to rule changes 308 and 309. We ask Congress to amend the procedures for paying benefits. The union has an excellent record for fighting for members through the legal service provided by regions. It is closely monitored and very

highly scrutinised for performance. Regions obtain, sometimes, very substantial damages for our members, all of whom are victims. The changes proposed are that the benefits in Rules 308 and 309 would only be triggered if the union failed to obtain in compensation for the member a cash sum which is less than ten times the GMB benefit value. The Benefits Committee will continue to exercise compassion and support for any our members or dependants if there are any difficulties with this rule. This rule change is meant to put more pressure on the union lawyers and, subsequently, the employers to deliver improved compensation for our members rather than have the starting point *GMB Benefit Plus*.

I come to the amendment to Rule 310. This really follows on from a decision you made last year. You told us to go away and do it, just as a number of people have told me to go away and do it again this year. The Midlands & East Coast Region has sent in a resolution, and the text of the resolution requires the union to end the old GMWU system of branch funding. Congress, some of you may remember that we changed the rule many years ago – actually, it was in the early ‘90s – so that new branch secretaries in branches moved to what we call the APEX system of 10% branch funding. It was always envisaged that time would deal with the situation rather than cut the branch secretary’s allocation immediately at that time. Fifteen years has gone by, the ratio of old GMWU branch payments to the Rule Book, the 10% allocation rule, is vastly different now. The decision you took last year asked the CEC to sort this out with a compulsory move from the next branch secretary election.

The Task Group examined this issue and gave the Finance Committee a little rebuke for being a little slow in dealing with it, and requested the Finance Committee take action to ensure that we brought forward proposals to this Congress to introduce a single system. We thought about it long and hard especially as it will affect people, but after very careful consideration the Finance Committee recommended a longer phasing in of the change – not an immediate change as was proposed but a longer change – from the March quarter of 2011. From that point all branches in the union will be funded the same. However, regions and regional committees will still have the power – in fact, it is a better power – to grant branches additional funding on the basis of submitting to their regional secretaries and regional committees proper branch recruitment and organisation plans. The money will be available providing branches can show that they have a structured plan to which they wish to put the funds.

The longer period that was originally envisaged, by moving it to the March quarter 2011, we think is a bit fairer and allows the branches which might be affected to plan and apply for additional funds before 2011.

I can come to Rule Amendment 311, which involves the union’s bankers, Unity Bank. To be fair, most people will have discovered that we have had a few problems with Unity Bank. We have had problems with their products in the past not being as good as those for which our members would have obtained if they had walked into the High Street, quite frankly. We also had trouble as an organisation with the fact that despite the millions which flowed from the GMB into Unity Bank they were actually charging the union interest on the money they were looking after for us.

The concept originally of the Unity Bank was that it would be set up and run by trade unions to operate effectively for the interest of trade union members. When you get to a point where your own bank is charging you for the privilege of looking after your money, you have got to wonder whether or not they are acting in your own interests. The Senior Management Team laid out a very clear and unequivocal ultimatum, which was that we would not pay that interest. In fact, as a result of the work done by Alan Wylie, the National Finance Director, we have now removed the £250,000 that that bank was charging us for the benefit of looking after our money. That charge has disappeared, and not before time.

That is not all that we are unhappy about with Unity Bank. Seventy-five per cent of the shares in Unity Bank are actually owned by trade unions. Twenty-five per cent are owned by the Co-op. Those are not the exact figures but they are almost the correct figures. In fact, the Co-op control the board. They have actually got a golden veto. Although they have a minority shareholding, they actually can pick the chairman. The Bank has a trade union chairman, as a figurehead, who happens to be Dave Prentice at the moment of UNISON. But the real power is in the Co-op directors and they get the right to choose who they want to run the bank. So we have a minority shareholder running our bank! Okay, people have not really kicked up a stink about it before but like other people who come along and ruffle our feathers we then go and find out what they are up to. This is the same Co-op, believe it or not, which has just derecognised the GMB in our Funeral Care. We have had members in that company delivering funeral services for nearly a hundred years and they have derecognised us! I am talking about the Co-op movement!! The Co-op movement derecognising a trade union.

So if they want to treat us like that, I think it is about time that we treated them with a little bit of the new style GMB reaction. So I am talking with other trade unions. I have had discussions with a number of general secretaries about the unions retaking and reclaiming our bank and returning it to its founding values. I will tell you this. We will either put a boot up the Co-op or we will boot them out. *(Applause)* The point is that we are not having an employer who attacks and derecognises the GMB in charge of our money. We are not going to have it! To get people hiding behind the cloak of the Co-operative movement is something they swept that away the moment they took the decision to derecognise GMB members in Funeral Care. So be clear. If we are not able to re-take the bank, then the union is looking very seriously about moving our money away from Unity and into other areas where we can get a better rate of return and where we will not be disrespected. Be clear, if the Co-op hurts us, we will hurt them back, not just here but elsewhere. For the Co-op movement to derecognise a trade union is a shameful betrayal of the principles of the Co-op movement.

I want to thank those Co-op members who have helped us. I am talking about Vaughan West in London, who resigned in disgust because he could not make any headway after protesting for us. Thank you, Vaughan. I want to thank Micky Laws on the Executive. Micky is a proud and conscientious Socialist and Micky has not been as embarrassed, I should image, by any organisation he has ever belonged to compared to what the Co-op has done. Thank you very much, Micky, for what you have done. Carry on doing it. You are a credit to us. *(Applause)*

So this change, colleagues, is a change in rule which removes Unity Trust Bank from the rule and gives the Executive and the Senior Management Team the ability to make some very clear statements. If we are not able to secure proper control of the bank, and if we are not able to get our members properly recognised again at Funeral Care, then we will go into a much more aggressive mode with both the Co-op and the bank.

So 2006 has been better. We had merger with the General Union of Loom Overlookers. It was not a very big union but they merged and came in with us.

I have been asked to mention the position with the ASU. In 2007 we have been having discussion with the ASU, the Ambulance Service Union, and with the CDNA, and we have had first contact with two other associations. The first contact has been a preliminary contact. In terms of the ASU we have not progressed to a position by which we are able to recommend the transfer of engagements. There are one or two fundamental issues upon which we are still stuck. At the moment that the situation. We have reached a form of agreement which will entail the North West & Irish Region, but beyond that, frankly, we are not in a position to progress.

As far as the CDNA is concerned, Southern Region has been doing the work. I think in the next two to three months we will know whether it is on or not. We are very clear that if the planned merger is not on, then we are out of there and we will go somewhere else.

We are seeking the contributions to invest and most certainly not to cover up losses, as has been the case in the past. We want you to invest in the structure of the union, in our members, officers, staff, the campaigns that you want us to run and in servicing and workplace organisation. We pledge to continue to provide better housekeeping. We want to restructure and campaign.

I move the Accounts. I am pleased to move the Accounts in surplus, and I move Rule Amendments 304-309, 310 and 311. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does any delegate wish to come in on Rule Amendments 304 and 305? (*No response*) 306 and 307? (*No response*) 308, 309, 310 and 311? (*No response*) Thank you, colleagues. I see I have missed somebody. Come to the rostrum.

Colleagues, it was remiss of me, for those who do not know him, and that is not many, let me introduce Allan Wylie, who is our Finance Director.

BRO. A. GOODFELLOW (Southern): Conference and President, this is linking the green agenda with our investments. I just want to make Congress aware that we invest in eco-friendly companies and I identify that we invest in B Sky B, which although is economically sound, I do not know whether it is ethically sound.

BRO. S. GLEN (GMB Scotland): I am opposing CEC Rule Amendments 304 and 305 on Contributions.

President and Congress, I represent many, many part-time workers and they are on the minimum wage. I also represent workers who are also feeling the rough edge of

single status and seeing the erosion of their already low wage. I am the guy who has to go back to these people and try and justify an increase in their contributions.

I feel that on a good day I could go back to them and maybe sell them an increase of 5 pence, but nothing bigger than that. At the moment, the full-time contributions are just under the £10 mark. Most of my members will look at that and say, "That's not too bad. It's less than a tenner". But the minute the pound sign hits double figures my members will rebel and start making rumbling noises about joining other unions. This must not happen. We have to keep our members with us.

Congress, I, on behalf of my members, oppose the increase in contributions. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. Does anyone else wish to contribute?

SIS. J. MARR (South Western): Congress, the South Western Region fully supports the proposed increase. Colleagues, many of my members are low paid but they welcome the campaigning activities taking place throughout the region. Campaigns don't come cheap, but they are necessary in order to fight our members' corner. If we do not accept the proposal, then the CEC will no doubt be proposing higher increases next year in order to keep up with higher costs. This increase is not to help cut debts as in the past, but to help increase and support extra resources in order to provide a better service for our members. I support.

THE PRESIDENT: I call Paul Kenny.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Alan, like father like son, or like son like father. The answer, Alan, is that I am not sure. I am happy to try and have a look at it. I know the old historical issue about B Sky B for most of us is Murdoch. As an explanation, I have been along to meetings with our investment portfolio holders, and we have spelt it out in words of one syllable as to how critical it is that any investments they make are in line with the union's policies. The only changes from that are that we do, occasionally, as you will see in the accounts, actually make an investment or keep an investment for a specific campaign reason. We did that with Burberry. We took a choice of should we pull our money out or should we stay in their and take advantage of attending shareholders' meetings and so on. We also, of course, have a lot of members at Burberry in the Yorkshire Region. We did not want to send the message that we were abandoning them, even though we are having a go at Burberry over their moving jobs abroad. Similarly, with 3i, we were looking at getting in there because we have members in the London Region being pushed out for non-recognition who were connected to 3i. It is a tactical approach. We don't say "No". We might put an investment in in order to get access, but the B Sky B investment has been around for a while. We will have a look at it for you and we will come back to you on it. I promise you.

Jane, you are absolutely right. If you want things done it costs, but you want to see it spent wisely. I do not come to Congress in any way, shape or form and seek to get contributions. I know that many members in many industries are hard pressed to pay. Even where we have well paid members, rises in contribution rates are never exactly treated with cheers, the letting off of balloons and the rest of it. It is always, it seems

to me, whether members feel they are getting something from the union. If they are getting something from the union, if they feel the union is doing something, that we are active, campaigning, trying to get them better wage rises and better conditions, and better health and safety in the workplace, members do not begrudge their contributions.

Steve, you said you thought you could get away with 5 pence. You started off by saying that you represent many part-time workers on part-time wages. For your part-time members, we are only recommending 5 pence, so I presume you are not voting against that bit.

In terms of the 10 pence, 10 pence is still below the RPI. It is still below the guidelines we set ourselves as a Congress. I did, Steve, give it really serious hard thought about whether we could get through with just a 5 pence rise. We really, honestly, did, mate. Then I looked at the demands and some of the developments which are laid out before you and I realised that what we have done for years was to prop up losses by contribution rates when we should have been putting those contribution rates into growing the infrastructure of the union, growing the support services in the union, growing the servicing side of the union and then growing the union which brings you in more money so you can actually do more. That is the cycle. We have been in the old cycle of downward spiral every year coming to Congress, and getting a contribution rise to try and plug the gap in our losses because we failed to perform and fight, and then selling off some of our assets in order to plug the other gap. So the union was impacting bit by bit over a fairly long period of time. So I do understand the position and I do not dismiss what you are saying, mate. I really do not. I know at times the situation is difficult.

We have to make the people in GMB Scotland proud of the fact that they are in the GMB. As for the other union, actually Tony Woodley says that British trade unionism is got on the cheap, and if he could get his way through he would put another pound a week on members' contribution rates. So I do not think we have too much to worry about the T&G side of Unite.

However, I am not worried about what other unions do. Some unions may pay more, some unions may pay less. In fact, not many pay less than us. I am worried about what we do, Steve. I am worried about how we perform. I am worried about how we get across to our members that belonging to the GMB is a bloody good idea and that they do not begrudge the fact that they know they have to pay money in order to keep the organisation operating. I am not dismissing what you are saying. I am just saying that we want a proper campaigning organisation. We all know that as long as we do our best to build the organisation, we will be able to come back to Congress year after year and keep contribution rates below the rate of inflation and that we are able to go back to our members, justify the increases to our members whose trust we are earning and that we are growing the union. So I ask you to support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Congress, I am going to take the Rule Amendments in stages.

First, Rule Amendments 304, 305, 306 and 307. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

*(Carried)*

Rule Amendments 308 and 309. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

*(Carried)*

Rule Amendments 310 and 311. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

*(Carried)*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: FINANCE & CONTRIBUTIONS**

### **MOTION 21**

#### **BRANCH RECRUITMENT PLAN**

Congress accepts that the vast majority of Branches have commission funds, in accordance with Rule.

These funds are members' money and rather than sit in bank accounts growing by the quarter, they should be used in campaigning, strengthening, growing, and supporting the members.

Congress therefore calls on all Branches to adopt a Branch Recruitment Plan annually, in line with Rule 37 and the initiatives contained therein. Once the plan has been approved by the Regional Committee, these should be jointly funded from the Regional recruitment fund and the Branch Commission Fund.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH  
*Midland & East Coast Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. L. DOBBS (Midland & East Coast): I move Motion 21 – Branch Recruitment Plan.

President and Congress, this motion does exactly what it says on the tin, but to avoid any doubt I will spell it out. Branch commission funds are as per rule. That is fine. What is not fine is the money that is sitting doing nothing. Rule 37 states that all branches shall adopt a branch recruitment plan annually and then register it with the Regional Committee. If branches followed the rule, we all would have plans. This could be funded from the branch fund and the regions could match the fund. These funds should be spent on promoting GMB in the workplace, raising our profile, recruiting new members and organising our members. The plan could be to purchase pens, key rings and lanyards. We have seen it work in branches which have released their funds, which shows that the money has not been wasted on jollies, but when properly targeted from the branch annual plan, the membership has been sustained and increased. The plan may be to organise events, to campaign, to socialise and to build community links and to grow our union.

However, whatever the plan is, it is up to you. But remember these funds belong to our members, so spend it wisely. I move.

BRO. N. FREEAR (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 21 – Branch Recruitment Plan.

President and Congress, I call on Congress to support this motion. The Agenda for Growth is one of campaign and organising. A Branch Recruitment Plan is one way to do this. It is in the rule book so we should already be doing it. Let us use our funds to support the plans which I know you are all going to produce. I second.

## **MOTION 22**

### **LAY MEMBER EXPENSES**

Congress takes note of the large increase in fuel and associated running costs for motor vehicles. Congress also notes lack of public transport in some rural and semi-rural areas and also the constant on going reduction in provision of this service. This gives rise to our activists having no alternative but to travel on union business by car. Congress therefore instructs the CEC to increase the mileage rate to an Inland Revenue rate of 40p per mile.

W50 - WELLINGTON BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands*

*(Carried)*

BRO. C. MURRAY (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move Motion 22 – Lay Member Expenses.

I hope that Paul Kenny is not going to come to the rostrum and say that this is not in the budget this year because he has been aware since Blackpool last year ----

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: No, I am not.

BRO. MURRAY: ---- that this is a lay member aspiration. The present rate for motor mileage expenses do not cover the full costs with fuel at around a pound per litre and all other running costs rising rapidly. These rates have not been increased since they were introduced by John Edmonds when motor transport was relatively cheap, and that is well in excess of ten years ago. I would also like to add that trade union contributions were a lot less than they are now.

All motor costs have risen, not to mention the increasing depreciation which this has caused for excess mileage. There are no company cars here.

Public transport in many areas, and especially in the rural areas of this country, is not an option. It either does not exist or runs at times which are not appropriate to get to events and to catch connecting services. Even in urban areas of some parts of Telford where I come from, which is a town of some 137,000 people, buses start after 9 and stop at around 4. It is not unusual for members living in rural areas to be without a bus service and live in excess of 20 miles from the nearest railway station. Therefore, the only option, if you are running a relatively new car, means that you are subsidising the union each time you travel on union business.

Depending on which figures you look at, and I was looking at some AA figures last year – I can believe those because many AA employees are our members – they show

that you are losing upwards of 25 pence a mile. No wonder we are having difficulties in getting shop stewards and activists, especially the young, to become active in the GMB. The Inland Revenue allow expenses of 40 pence a mile without argument for the first ten thousand miles. I would suggest that if any of our lay members are driving more than ten thousand miles a year for this union we should be offering them a job.

Congress, the Birmingham Region supports the motion. I urge you to support the motion and to give our lay members a fair deal. I move.

BRO. W. JUSS (Birmingham & West Midlands): President and Congress, I speak to second Motion 22 – Lay Member Expenses.

I think I speak for all the lay members in this Conference hall when I say that any union activist does not engage in union activity just because of the expenses they may get. They are union activists because they are dedicated to their union, they are committed to the trade union movement and they want to be involved.

This region asks the CEC that we should not discourage them and we should not make it difficult for them to be union activists. I think that 25 pence per mile when you are using your own car is inadequate in this day and age. Those of you who use your own cars when travelling on business for your employers or for voluntary bodies, how much do they pay you per mile?

Congress, it is not just about using the car in rural or semi-rural areas. Unless there are very good reasons for using the car, I hope that everyone who travelled to Congress this week did use public transport, but for many of us travelling on union business means that we have to juggle various responsibilities at the same time. We have demanding jobs and families to look after and time is of the essence. Very often travelling on union business and using public transport is simply not a realistic option because it is so inconvenient and so time-consuming. The phrase “time is money” comes to mind.

Please do not misunderstand me, Congress. We have had the debate on global warming this afternoon and I am very conscious that we need to campaign to deal with global warming and we need to reduce carbon emissions. For this reason, like any other union, this union must encourage its members to use public transport wherever it is realistically possible. Like any other union, this union exists because of its members and activists.

Congress, all we ask is that where members need to use their cars, we should pay the member a reasonable rate. Please support this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Do any delegates want to contribute to the discussion?

BRO.T. FLANAGAN (London Region): On a point of order, Chair. I am from the Professional Drivers Branch. Madam President, London Region has not discussed this issue. I am looking to see what the CEC recommendation is on it before we have a debate. I think it is reasonable for us to be given an indication of what the CEC think of it.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Terry, that was discussed at the pre-Congress meeting. I raised the issue particularly with Ed in relation to the contribution increase that it was wrong that somebody would withdraw a motion unless we heard what was to be proposed. I will take the debate and then I will call the CEC speaker to tell you the position, as we have done all week in the same way. Then you make your mind up. These were certainly discussed at the pre-Congress because I was there myself, as you know.

Does anyone else wish to speak? *(No response)* I call Mick Laws.

BRO. M. LAWS (CEC, Manufacturing): The CEC is supporting Motion 21 but with a qualification, which I shall give when asking Congress to oppose Motion 22.

Motion 21 calls for the establishment of Branch Recruitment Plans, funded by branches with the support from regions. The CEC welcomes this. Branch funds should be used for properly monitored organising initiatives. The rule allows regional committees to top-up branch funds where necessary, but the qualification is that many branches have significant funds, so part funding from regions may not be appropriate in all cases.

Motion 22 challenges the level of mileage allowance. The CEC opposes this because we believe the existing arrangement represents fair compensation for mileage incurred on union business and fuel costs fluctuate up to 10 pence a litre. The use of private vehicles is less desirable on environment grounds and public transport, where available, should be used.

Please support Motion 21 with the qualification I have given, and we ask you to oppose Motion 22.

THE PRESIDENT: Terry, just to clarify, when we were at pre-Congress, Ed gave you the CEC's position on resolutions when we arrived, if you remember rightly, and you would not discuss the resolutions of other regions unless they clashed with ours. So you had a free vote.

BRO. T. FLANAGAN (London): Yes. I made a mistake.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 21 – Branch Recruitment Plan. Does the region accept the qualification? Yes. Fine. All those in favour of Motion 21, please show? Those against?

*(Motion 21 was carried)*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 22 -----

BRO. W. JUSS (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am deeply saddened that my union – my union – which I have worked for for well over 40 years now can ask members to take money out of their own pockets to do work for it. I do not mind giving up the time. A lady at the back of this hall allows me to do work for this union, but it is not fair that every time I go out I have to say, “Give me 30 pence a

mile to support my union.” Never mind what the CEC says, members. Vote with your hearts. Vote for this motion. Vote for fairness. Please.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, the CEC is asking you to oppose Motion 22. All those in favour of the resolution, please show? Against?

Tellers on.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Congress, the CEC is asking you to oppose 22. All those in favour of the resolution please show? Against? Can I have the tellers on? I did not have my glasses on, did you notice? Can I ask delegates, please, to remain in your seats while the card vote is taking place? Shut the doors. Excuse me, tellers, can you wait just until we have put you into operation?

Colleagues, will no one but no one tear off their voting slips because the procedure is going to be laid out to you now that I have it. OK? For Birmingham Region the teller is Sandra Tanner – Birmingham is going to count Scotland. London - Barbara Benham, is going to count Southern. Midland – Carol Clarkson, is going to count South Western. Northern – George Murray, is going to count Yorkshire. North West & Irish Region – Derek Sutcliffe, will count Birmingham. GMB Scotland – Phil Brannan, will count London. Southern – Jack Cheeseman, to count Midland. South Western – Pauline Phillips, to count Northern. Yorkshire – Eric Batty, to count North West.

Are all tellers in their place? Speak to me. (*Confirmed*) OK, now, it is a hands vote and the tellers count the hands, and you have to be in your seat to vote. Oh, yes, I am certain. Yes, and it is one hand each and one leg. All right?

OK, all those in favour of the resolution please show? Hands up until the tellers have counted you and then you can put them down and I will release you all.

Believe me, more people have voted now than did before. We would not have had this if you had done that then. OK, tellers? Will you acknowledge me when you have counted? (*Confirmed*) OK. (*Call from the floor*) The CEC members do not vote. (*Call from the floor*) No, no, come on. Do you think I am falling for that old ruddy chestnut! Just take 20 off, then! (*Laughter*) CEC members do not vote in any vote in this Congress. This is a lay members' Congress and they decide the business, not the CEC. (*Applause*) Does that clarify, Mr. Regional Secretary? OK now? That is fine.

Right, so all tellers complete. Would you go and give your numbers in? No, stay there. I know, Joe. (*Call from the floor*) OK, do it again. All those in favour of the resolution - and CEC members please keep your hands down - please show? Will tellers tell me when you are ready? (*Confirmed*)

Now all those against please show? (*Applause*)

Colleagues, I have to carry out the procedure under the rules. I can see what the result is going to be right now but carry on please, keep your hands up. You naughty boys! Will the tellers tell me when they have completed? (*Confirmed*) Ready? Will the

tellers please proceed to the back, count your money and then come back and tell me, but I think I have the count myself.

Colleagues, I am going to move on until we get the result of the vote. Item 6, Union Organisation: Union Benefits, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire to move 28; I will then be calling 30 and 32.

## **UNION ORGANISATION: UNION BENEFITS**

### **MOTION 28**

#### **UNION BENEFITS**

Congress asks the CEC to look at ways of supporting members who refuse to cross picket lines.

YORKSHIRE COAL STAFFS BRANCH  
*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*

*(Referred)*

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, visitors, guests, picture the scene, it is just before 6 in the morning, it is cold and it is dark, it is still early in the year. As you come round the corner there are cars parked as far as the eye can see both sides of the road, on the grass verges, some in the pitch black, others further away in the light where the street lamps start. At the entrance barrier there are half a dozen men. Nearby on a grassy patch near the gate at least another 30 men loitering just hanging around after they finished their night shift; one has a dog with him, some are smoking, some are chatting in groups, all looking towards the gate. It is a bit intimidating. I suppose I could have taken a photo as evidence but as a safety rep I had done a risk assessment and there was a real risk that I could have got my features rearranged and I am fairly happy with them in their current layout, thank you. Oh, and I forgot to say, this is at a coalmine and the NUM are on strike.

Anyone who has lived through the miners strike in 1984 will understand the implications of that. So, if you were a GMB member and you work at the pit and you do not want to be dismissed for not turning up for work, what do you do? You get in your car and you drive the hour or so to work as normal, go into the gatehouse, sign the book in front of the manager to prove that you have shown up for work, express to him that you find the picket line intimidating but you will not cross the picket line, and drive home again. Another day with no pay and on top of that having to fork out for your petrol to drive there, but at least they will not dismiss you for not turning up for work. How many days can you stand the financial losses? That particular action went on for several months, usually one day a fortnight, sometimes one a week. It is a lot of money to lose out of your pay packet. Some men left their jobs and found work elsewhere.

We need to ensure that there is support for members to help them cope with the financial hardship caused by such situations. I do hope there will not be a next time but if there is I hope we will be able to provide more than just moral support. Please support this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pam. Secunder?

SIS. M. TAYLOR (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire) seconding the motion said: Congress, we heard yesterday in Composite 5 restoration of trade union rights, the Thatcher government has made it a legal minefield to strike. Once we have gone through the bureaucratic balloting and have a legal right to strike, we then have the members who feel let down by the union. If we have GMB members like Pam's who do not wish to cross a picket line the union should look at some way of supporting these members.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Number 30, Funeral Benefit.

### **MOTION 30**

#### **FUNERAL BENEFIT**

Congress asks the CEC to review the current levels of Funeral Benefit and report back to Congress 2008 with proposals to use Funeral Benefit as a retention tool.

LONDON BOROUGH HAVERING BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. C. KERR (London): Congress, I ask the CEC to review the current levels of funeral benefit and report back to Congress 2008 with proposals to use the funeral benefit perhaps as a possible retention tool. Currently the £100 maximum premium needs to be substantially increased. Recently I had a member who passed away, a GMB member since 1943. To send his family £130 after 64 years loyal service seemed totally inadequate. Financial restraints over the few years now seem to have turned the corner, which our General Secretary and the CEC should take great credit for, so now is the time to modernise this benefit for the existing members and future members of this union. Please support this motion. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Secunder?

BRO. J. ISAACS (London) seconding the motion said: I expect some of you are thinking, yes, we see this motion in some form or other every Congress. It is the same old chestnut, delegates asking for more and the CEC saying, "We can't afford it." Over the years we have heard all the reasons why they cannot afford it, from, "The union has financial problems," to "It's only a token gesture", and so on. I cannot remember the last time there was an increase, if ever. I wonder what the value would be today if funeral benefit had been index linked from day one. Sadly, it was not.

I expect there are other branch secretaries who, like me, dread receiving a phone call from the next of kin of a deceased member. They tell you their partner has passed away and they understand funeral benefit is due and could you please advise them what they have to do. You in turn offer them sincere condolences of both the branch and yourself and then advise the next step. After you have explained the procedure comes the question that you are dreading, "How much is the funeral benefit?" You tell them in a polite way and then comes the silence. After a short while they say, "But my partner has been a fully paid up member for 40 years." It is at that point you begin to feel a bit embarrassed and you make the best attempt to reply.

I suppose I should be used to it by now but I am not. Some activists tend to use the funeral benefit as a tool for recruitment but, surprisingly, no reference appears on our application form or recruitment literature; maybe we are just too embarrassed to put it on. At the end of the day funeral benefit is just a token but let's make it a decent token. Please support the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can we now move to 32, Convalescent Homes?

## **MOTION 32**

### **CONVALESCENT HOMES – AGE DISCRIMINATION**

Congress believes that demanding that members over the age of 65 need 20 years membership of the union, to be entitled to attend the unions convalescent homes free of charge, is discriminatory under age discrimination legislation. Therefore congress demands the removal of the 20 year qualification. This will not involve a rule change as at present there is no rule to cover convalescent home attendance.

SOUTHEND BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Referred)*

BRO. T. WALL (London): Thank you, Mary.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought you were raising the dead!

BRO. T. WALL (London): I am good but not that good. Congress, President, must we all stay well for 20 years before we can use this great facility? Statistics say one in three people will get cancer, amongst other illnesses, or injuries, but we in the GMB must not get ill for 20 years before we can use the convalescent homes. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Trevor. Anyone wish to come in? Sorry, Ed, seconder.

BRO. E. HAMILTON (London): Madam President, fellow delegates, we are glad to see that the CEC considers the risk of discrimination sufficient enough to suspend the 20-year membership rule until Congress 2008 for a further review at that time. I must, however, point out that especially with regard to our retired members this will only be successful if the CEC instructs all regional secretaries to inform all branches of this change. I am sure this will result in more retired members availing themselves of the facilities available to them as a result of this decision. With this in mind, we willingly accept reference to Congress 2008. I second the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ed. Does Congress accept reference? *(Agreed)*  
Thank you.

*(Motion 32 was referred.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I call Mick Ryan?

BRO. M. RYAN (CEC, Commercial Services): The CEC is supporting Motion 30 but with a qualification that I am about to give and asking Congress to refer Motions 28 and 32, one of which has just been done.

Motion 30 calls for a review of funeral benefit. The CEC accepts this as we are already midway through a review of all benefits. We will report to you next year. Our only qualification is that we suspect the retention value of the benefit is doubtful.

Motion 28 seeks support for members who cross picket lines. The CEC already has discretionary powers under Rule 53 to offer support but we think it is worth reviewing what happens in practice and seeing if we need to provide legal protection for members unable to attend work during an official dispute. We were asking for reference to complete this work.

Motion 32 seeks to remove the qualification of 20 years' membership for those who are over 65 who wish to take advantage of convalescent benefits. We need to take advice on whether this is discriminatory but we consider there is a risk that we are discriminating so we propose to drop the 20-year qualification. We ask that the motion is referred so that we can monitor the benefit and if dropping the qualification leads to a significant increase in the number of retired members attending the homes to the exclusion of working members, we will report back to you next year with further proposals.

Colleagues, we ask for reference for Motion 28, we seek support for Motion 30, and with the qualification I have given we ask for reference to Motion 32. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mick. Congress has already accepted reference back on 32. Does Yorkshire accept reference on 28? (*Agreed*) Congress agree to accept? (*Agreed*) Does London Region support the qualification? Yes? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour of 30 please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*(Motion 28 was referred.)*

*(Motion 30 was carried.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I have the result of the ballot on Motion 22: Votes for 147; votes against 69. It was carried by 78 votes. (Applause) Thank you.

*(Motion 22 was carried)*

Can I now move to the Social Policy: General, 219, Animal Welfare Bill, North West & Irish Region – do you know, I thought it was you, Toomey, that is why I did not move. Can I have a seconder? Then I will be calling 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, and 226. Two-two!

BRO. J. TOOMEY (North West & Irish): Oh, Jesus! (*Laughter*) That's good, ain't it!

THE PRESIDENT: No, you did not have a pint in your hand!

**SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL**

## MOTION 219

### ANIMAL WELFARE BILL

This legislation is so urgently needed and how it will help animals in the future.

242 SALFORD NO 1 BOILERMAKERS BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. TOOMEY: I forget the region – oh, it is North West! Now, the Animal Welfare Bill was passed on 6<sup>th</sup> April in the House of Commons. The last one was 1911. I was not around then.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure?

BRO. J. TOOMEY: It took 97 years for the welfare of animals. Now, I listen to your global warming and about you do this, you do that, not a mention about Serengeti, the Rainforest, the Antarctic, not a mention, and we know the old polar bear is nearly extinct, but let's get on to the animal welfare.

I wrote to the RSPCA - I am a member of it, I subscribe - to send me what the bill represented. Basically, I did not receive one, by the way, but it is dealing with rabbits, cats, dogs, you name it. The RSPCA now has more powers; you could call them animal cops. You used to have to call the police in to prosecute, now they can do it themselves, so that is great. The tragedy is the Belsen butchers in Oxford where they slaughter animals for experiment, and my mate here supports that. It does not cover them and it is a bloody pity because this year 3,000 monkeys have to be slaughtered to find out what pesticides on food are doing to me and you. Now, if you go for organic growing you do not need pesticides, do you, so do not slaughter monkeys.

Another thing I would like to see spread across the world, if you go abroad and you ever see a dancing bear, kick the bloke in the goolies and he will dance better than the bear. *(Applause)* And if you see a fella with a doped-up monkey, which they do in Spain to take your photograph, smash him in the nose. *(Laughter)* But seriously, animal welfare, they share the planet with us, we are not the only ones on it, and they do a wonderful job. So, they have every right to be ---- I haven't spoken two minutes yet!! Anyway, somebody has to think of the care for them.

The Sunday People, if you ever get it, on one of the back pages always has animals' welfare. It can deal with what is happening abroad in Africa, what is happening in Britain, about cruelty to animals. Did you see the Chinese in the Mirror the other day, you give them £10, they let this cow out and it is torn to pieces by four Siberian tigers. It is bloody disgusting that human beings use and abuse animals like that.

What I will say to you is this, I tell you ----

THE PRESIDENT: Don't make yourself ruddy comfortable because you ain't there for the night! *(Laughter)*

BRO. J. TOOMEY: This fella went into a pub – are you listening, Mary?

THE PRESIDENT: You told me that one last night!

BRO. J. TOOMEY: I did not. And he orders two whiskeys, one for him and he pours one in his top pocket, and he does this six times. The barman said, “Excuse me,” he said, “but you are putting whiskey in your top pocket.” So the fella said to him, “Why don’t you mind your own bloody business,” and a mouse popped up and said, “And that goes for the bloody cat in the pub as well.” *(Laughter)*

THE PRESIDENT: Enough of that monkey business! Do you have a seconder? Is it the cat or the rat? Formally? That’s a shame! I was expecting the mouse’s head to come out of his pocket! Oh, dear.

*(Motion 219 was formally seconded.)*

THE PRESIDENT: This should go all right for you, Toomey, Criminal Records Bureau. *(Laughter)* London Region to move. Follow that, Barbara.

SIS. B. BENHAM (London): I can’t!

## **MOTION 221**

### **CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU**

Congress was disgusted at the privatisation of the CRB to now find the company CAPITA has now outsourced it to India (sub contracted it in other words)

This congress believes this is a breach of our member’s confidentiality & human rights and calls on the Home Office to remove this contract from CAPITA and keep it in house.

HENDON BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. B. BENHAM (London): President, Congress, it is accepted that there are certain jobs which are required to be carried out by people who are of the utmost good character. I refer, of course, to those involved in working with all children and the most vulnerable adults in society. The requirement that those employed in these fields be subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check is essential and welcome. However, in the year 2000 the Home Office entered into a public private partnership with Capita who would administer the CRB checks. It was felt then that the privatisation of that was such a sensitive service it was not desirable but when in 2004 Capita decided to outsource much of this work to India alarm bells really started to ring especially when it was revealed how easy it was to obtain confidential bank details from Indian call centres and subsequent events and allegations in relation to the CRB checks have proved the alarm to be well founded.

Last year, 1,500 people were wrongly branded criminals because of the errors made by Capita. Some were threatened with the sack, some lost jobs, and others were

refused university courses. Victims had to go to police stations to be finger-print checked to clear their names; some are still trying to clear their names. It is not hard to understand why this happened if the allegations of an ex-policeman working in Exeter on CRB checks are to be believed. Apparently, applications for checks are sent to Capita's office in Liverpool. These are scanned and sent electronically to India where these details are put on a special template and then sent back to the relevant police stations in the UK for checks to be carried out. It is alleged that errors made on these templates were many and wondrous: names transposed, joined together, or just wrong all together, dates of birth with wrong dates, months or year. A mistake on just any one of these would put in doubt the veracity of any CRB checks.

Colleagues, if these errors can brand innocent people as criminals, it stands to reason they can just as easily make criminals seem innocent. To be wrongly branded a criminal is a breach of someone's human rights but for a criminal, say a convicted paedophile, to be deemed innocent and allowed to work in a school just does not bear thinking about. We do not want another Salem. But Capita would not think about it anyway, they are too busy collecting millions for messing everything up.

Congress, the confidentiality and sensitivity of criminal record checks necessitate they be taken away from India, taken away from Capita, and returned to public control. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Barbara. Secunder? I will then be calling 222, Child Support Agency, and 223, will the movers and seconders please come down the front? Terry?

BRO. T. FLANAGAN (London): My members, of course, have to go through this procedure. Take it from me, there are mistakes and it is an extremely rigorous procedure. In fact, an enhanced criminal record check can have merely allegations from a police officer entered without your knowledge, it is on there, you will never know it is there, it is pulled up by some authority, and you will find that you have a problem. This is outrageous, of course, but Barbara points out that besides stopping people from working it could of course allow the dangerous thing to the community, and she says it does not bear thinking about letting a paedophile loose. I would advise you to think about it. This is one of the most disgusting things anybody can do. With that knowledge, to allow this procedure to continue is abhorrent. I would like to know who is responsible for it.

We have seen in the last few weeks a child kidnapped in Portugal, a British child. Whoever did that we know what his mentality was and what the purpose was, and I dread to think what has happened to that child subsequently. But this procedure is going on today and it could happen to morrow, and there is a member of a Labour government allowing it to happen. Can anyone think of anything more disgusting or anything that needs dealing with more quickly? I urge Congress to support this motion as much as you can.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Terry. Motion 222, Child Support Agency.

## **MOTION 222**

## CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY

With the replacement of the CSA with another quango, there is a proposal that the new body will have powers to deduct monies from bank accounts without need of a court order.

We call on Congress to use all its powers to prevent this. The GMB has always supported individual rights and freedoms and will ensure that bureaucracy does not interfere with this.

THAMES VALLEY R12 BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

**BRO. M. FLAMBARD (Southern):** As of next year this agency will change to Child Maintenance and Enforcement Agency. I have a personal interest in this one and I will explain as I go along. The Child Support Agency, as you know, was started in 1992/93. It was to collect money from absent parents regardless of whether they are male or female. Unfortunately, gentlemen, they are mostly male. It was to get money to support the family from the one who had left. We all have a view on this, and rightly so. Can I say in the paper today Mr. Hatton admitted £3.5bn is still to be collected. What a shame! Children suffer from the parents split. In the Sun today a girl of 11 is suing the Child Support Agency for £100,000. Whatever next!

Can I say, my children suffered. I was a lone father for 11 and-a-half years and I am proud to say that. I only had £5 a week via the Child Support Agency from my ex-wife. Now my children are grown up they have long since left home but it is a shame that the Child Support Agency when it was put into practice did not work. It still does not work. As you know, Mr. Hatton today in the House of Commons has revealed the changes. He is also going to make people have their passports confiscated and impose curfews on parents who do not pay. The Labour Government wants to get tough after the CSA. That bothers me personally. They will use bailiffs and credit reference agencies to tax evaders. Congress, please support this motion. It goes a long way from the comments made by the Labour Deputy Leader candidates re poverty, and can I stress, yes, poverty.

Congress, I move Motion 222. Thank you for your support and also thanking Southern Region for letting me stand here and speak to you today.

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

**SIS. L. PARKER (Southern):** For those of you who have had dealings with the CSA your confidence is probably already shaken. Imagine, the CSA is now being reinvented as CMEC calling itself the Child Maintenance Enforcement Agency, which will run from next year. This new organisation is proposed to have the power to remove monies without any court order from bank accounts. This work will be outsourced to companies such as Capita. How safe is your money then?

Congress, there is now a working party of MPs to discuss this issue. We cannot even find a list of these MPs involved. Congress, the whole idea is to support the children involved. We call on the CEC to ensure this is what happens. Please support this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. 223, Bank Charges, North West & Irish Region.

### **MOTION 223**

#### **BANK CHARGES**

This Congress condemns the excessive charges made by the main high street banks for minor infringements such as unauthorised overdrafts and bounced cheques. These charges hit the poorest in our society the hardest and provide the banks with billions of pounds in profit. We call on the CEC to campaign for banks to be forced to reduce charges to amounts that reflect the true administrative cost.

128 BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. W. GOULDING (North West & Irish): Congress, brothers and sisters, President, charges made by banks are little short of scandalous. We keep hearing reports of record profits so why do they need to charge exorbitant amounts when a cheque bounces or we go a few pounds over our overdraft limit? The answer is they do not and what is more the law says they should not. There is no way they can justify making us pay between £20 and £30 for dipping into the red, or £25 to £30 for direct debits when they are over the overdraft limit. In April this year a former Yorkshire bank employee revealed that it cost only £2 to deal with current account defaults rather than £25 charged by the bank. The anonymous former employee whose job was to calculate the precise times and costings of a series of tests said that any single process would never cost more than £2, and that included dealing with defaults on current accounts.

Following publicity last years thousands of people have challenged excessive charges by their banks and in most cases banks have paid up without going to court. If banks are not prepared to stand up and defend themselves, they must know they are on sticky ground. They say it makes sense financially to settle out of court but maybe they just do not like the idea of having to explain cost over £30 for sending a standard letter. They could of course reduce their charges and avoid the claims but it looks as though they are going to rake in as much money as they can as long as they can. The law says that banks are not allowed to make a profit from default charges, they are allowed to recoup the cost of dealing with the problem.

To quote Mark Gander from the Consumer Action Group, the banks hold a position of trust which they have abused over a long period of time. They have deceived their customers into accepting an unlawful regime of penalties. In September 2006 the Office of Fair Trading announced that it would be formally investigating the penalty charges being imposed on current accounts. It was expected to report in March/April 2007 but has now admitted it will need more time to carry out a wider study. We will now have to wait until at least the end of this year.

The OFT investigation has resulted in some scaremongering by banks saying that the so-called free banking will disappear if they are forced to reduce charges for minor infringements. They talk about charging everyone a monthly fee for having a current

account. What they do not say is they already make money by investing the cash in our current accounts. At the very least they can get the Bank of England base rate of 5.1/4%, but do they pass it on to any of us? No.

An MP, a Tory by the way, has suggested that banks should be forced to declare these hidden charges by printing them on the monthly account statements. This would at least allow us to compare banks and look out for the best deal. But what we really want, what we really, really want, is to stop banks making millions of pounds every year from penalty charges that are unacceptable, unfair, and illegal. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Seconder?

BRO. S. CARBERRY (North West & Irish): President, Congress, in 2006 bank customers took it upon themselves to challenge their banks and claim back what they believe were excessive charges. The money paid back by banks to their customers was peanuts compared to the millions they rake from their customers' accounts every day. Yet despite all that media attention about the banks scandalous and unlawful charges, they still continue to implement them to this day. Please support. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. 224, Birmingham & West Midlands to move, then 225, London, and then 226, Birmingham & West Midlands. Movers and seconders please come to the front.

## **MOTION 224**

### **PUBLIC PROTECTION IN BANKRUPTCY**

Congress recognises that some rogue traders especially in the building trade are still going bankrupt on a Friday and starting up again on a Monday morning under a slightly different name. This action is causing severe financial distress to some of our members who then have no legal redress to obtain correction to the work or financial payments to correct bad workmanship.

Congress instructs the CEC to use all its powers to persuade Government to tighten up legislation on this matter in order to stop businesses using bankruptcy as a method of wiping out its debts and obligations to the general public whilst carrying on business as usual.

W50 - WELLINGTON BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

THE PRESIDENT: Formally moved 224. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*Motion 224 was formally moved and seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 225 and 226?

## **MOTION 225**

### **NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS**

We ask that Congress enquires, and makes public to members, exactly what our National Insurance Contributions go towards.

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): Congress, all too often I am being asked by our members why we pay National Insurance contributions. In 1908 David Lloyd George the then Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed the 1911 National Insurance Act. This was an insurance against illness and unemployment. All wage earners between 16 and 17 had to pay the scheme, each worker paid 4d a week, the employer added 3d, and the state paid 2d. In return for these payments free medical attention, including medicines, was given. Those workers who also contributed were also guaranteed 7s.0d a week for 15 weeks in one year when they were unemployed. National Insurance contributions for the average worker in 1948 were 5% of their income. James Griffiths, the then new Minister of National Insurance, claimed that it was the best and cheapest insurance policy offered to the British or any other people anywhere.

Everyone who now pays this wonders what they pay for. We pay, allegedly, some for the state pension and some, allegedly, for treatment if we get ill. Well, I keep getting asked, why do we pay for the service that when we get ill or go along to our GP and get told there is one hell of a queue and we possibly wait 12 months, or more, to see a specialist, then another long wait for the possible operation, and again then being told, if you have some spare cash you can go private, only to be seen by the same frigging GP, or get talked into paying a private company to do the work. We pay enough National Insurance; we should not have to pay twice. I ask you, why in God's name are we paying from cradle to grave only to be put into a post code lottery to see if we qualify for treatment? Every week we see old people or people on low incomes on TV or in the paper not being able to get treatment yet have paid contributions all their working lives into the National Insurance service. The Government must sort this travesty out and sort it out now. Congress, I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

BRO. K. ROBERTS (London): This is a simple motion. Basically, all we are asking for is to see where the money is being spent from our National Insurance contributions. I think some of the answers we have heard this week, basically, where we have heard how they have wasted all the money on outsourcing contracts and the fat cat payouts. Let us put a stop to this continual bleeding of the public money and get this Government and Gordon Brown to do what he says and build a brilliant National Health Service that we can be proud of and make sure the money that is going in, which is public money, can be spent on keeping public services public. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. 226, Disability Access.

## **MOTION 226**

### **DISABILITY ACCESS**

Congress calls on the CEC to hold talks with the Government about the ongoing and sustainability of the work set out by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, in order to allow our members who are disabled access to more public buildings, transport and amenities.

R35 – ROCESTER JCB BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. G. RICHARDSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, congress, firstly, I apologise for my comment earlier on about refuse collectors. *(Applause)* I was one myself for seven years and the guys at our tip are in the union because I recruited them.

THE PRESIDENT: You were proud enough to come up and say sorry, and I think that should be accepted. *(Applause)*

BRO. G. RICHARDSON: This motion is dedicated to my friend Alan, a positively upbeat guy who tragically broke his neck when he smashed out of a rear window of a car into a tree. It is a miracle he survived and, luckily, he was the only one out of five who had any injury whatsoever. After initially following his survival, rehabilitation takes its toll and he is now wheelchair-bound. The 2005 Access Act proved very beneficial with TV ads and newspaper coverage informing public amenities and building authorities of their need to provide disability access. Unfortunately, now a few years on no one seems to care. Some public buildings are still inaccessible as is some public transport. For Alan this means a man who enjoys a pint is limited to choice. He has had to change his bank, his hairdresser, and his newsagent. If you multiply Alan by thousands and thousands, that is a lot of income lost. So the excuse that small businesses could go out of business because of this legislation is actually the most uneconomic logic. It has lost trade, lost income, but most of all it is against the law.

So let's follow the legal route - who enforces it? If your car was illegally parked I am sure somebody would tell you in no time whereas local councils are saying, "We need to draw plans, have another meeting, wait for the next quarter, the next budget," etc. etc. What in the main does not bother Alan sometimes sticks in his craw but he is so positive and great with children, and he is a bit sarky at times, he gets invited and called up for lots of duties like the best man, or the godfather, or the usher, and his mates lift him up the steps like some papal eminency which takes the shine off the wedding couple or the kid getting in the centre of the action. So what he wants is not a stairway to heaven but just a ramp. Yes, the Act did start the ball rolling but the momentum has slowed down so we call on the CEC to hold talks with the Government about the ongoing and sustainability of the work set out and the Discrimination Act of 2005 to allow all members like Alan access to buildings, transport, and amenities. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder? Formally? Thank you.

*Motion 226 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like to come up on 223? Yes. Anyone else wish to take part in the debate? *(No response)* No. Thank you.

SIS. Y. CARTEY (North West & Irish): Thank you, President. The profits now enjoyed by the cartel of banks in this country are obscene; we know that and most of it is made from our hard-earned cash. We all sit in here this afternoon and raise a collective “tut” and feel bad about it but what we can do is take some positive action here. We can take some action against these merchant bankers, and that means two things where I come from.

Now, what you do is what Lancashire Region did a few years ago, we set up Thorne Credit Union, which is a financial cooperative owned by its members and run by its members. Our loss in losing the Lancashire Region is your gain. What happened is, we had already joined with the Midland & East Coast Region but now, as I say, Lancashire has been dispersed so we are in a position now to say to you, as it accesses in your areas you can join and it is about time you did. It is an important thing for us because we can do something about fighting back against the banks, and credit unions are a great way to save money. Some of the credit unions are larger than the smallest building societies and they want to be doing things like providing mortgages, and cash cards, and all that, and that will come if big credit unions keep pushing the boundaries of what we can do.

The great thing about the credit union is the money goes back to its members, like it should do. It does not go to any fat cat shareholders. If you go to other parts of the world credit unions are the norm but the financial people in this country have made sure that credit unions stay small; but we keep pressing against that. I will give you an example. We are not into getting people into debt in credit unions, that is not what we are into doing, we are into that old thing of thrift and if you save with a credit union you will get a good return and a dividend on your savings. If you do want to have a loan, a £1,000 from your credit union for a year will only cost you less than £65 in interest. If you can get it cheaper than that except from your Mum I would like to know, really. That is the best for you to be loaning money from, not from these banks that are making millions out of you.

Credit unions are properly regulated, we are regulated as much as the banks, and don't we know it. Our own one, Thorne Credit Union: Andy Worth is our assistant treasurer, he is the regional secretary for that area, and Kevin there is on the internal audit committee of Thorne Credit Union. We have £2.5m in assets and 2,000 members. Get out there to the Exhibition Hall and join, join today and save with your credit union, and it will help you and it will help us to help your members as well.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Anyone else? *(No response)* I call June Minnery on Motions 221 and 226. Sorry, I did not see you. *(Further speaker)* All right.

BRO. J. WHISTLECRAFT (London): Congress, I wish to address you on the disability issue as amongst other people in a wheelchair I am one of those people. Now, my employer, one of the local London boroughs, rents a building from a private sector place. It took me six months of complaining and I even got a mention to the manager of the building through my management who supported me. My local

authority fully backed me to get facilities in the toilet in the gent's floor where I work because I need handles to get myself up and down as quite a few people in my position would do with any back problems. Now, it was not until I got to the stage where I approached my management that I wanted to complain about this management, the manager of the company who managed our building. I said to them, "I want to make a personal complaint, either he is ignoring me or he does not care." After that, I got a meeting with this person and his excuse for not responding to me was that he had had technical problems with his computer. I feel that we should make companies of this nature put in these facilities for the disabled so that we do not have to go through the humiliating process of waiting for them to put these facilities in. I thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Someone else? (*No response*) No. Come on, June.

SIS. J. MINNERY (CEC, Public Services): The CEC is supporting Motions 221 and 226 but both with qualifications. Turning first to Motion 221, this motion is consistent with existing GMB policy that rejects privatisation and calls for an end to the contracting out, including off-shoring of public services. However, the CEC must qualify its support. The CEC must make clear that whilst it does not support outsourcing of public services when a service is outsourced it is not automatically a breach of human rights or confidentiality, but the CEC does believe that the possibility of breaches occurring exists and is more likely to increase as a result of outsourcing to the private sector rather than if the service was performed in-house.

Turning secondly to Motion 226, Congress, the qualification concerns the public sector disability equality duty which came into force in December 2006. This new duty requires some 45,000 public bodies to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons and to eliminate unlawful discrimination. Public bodies now need to proactively look at ways to ensure that disabled people are treated equally. These bodies must consider the operation and design of the services they provide in order to meet this duty. They will be expected to involve disabled workers and disabled service users.

The CEC ask that Congress support Motion 221 with the qualification that when a service is outsourced it is not automatically a breach of human rights or confidentiality. The CEC asks congress to support Motion 226 subject to the qualification that the public sector disability duty requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons and to eliminate the unlawful discrimination. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, June. Do the movers of 221 and 226 accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I now call the votes on 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, and 226? All those in favour please show? Thank you. Congress, you will notice that I did not call 219. Unless John Toomey agrees not to come to Congress next year and baby-sit my two cats while my husband comes here, I say we will oppose. What do you say, John?

Motion 219, the CEC is supporting. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried. Thank you.

*(Motion 221 was carried.)*  
*(Motion 222 was carried.)*  
*(Motion 223 was carried.)*  
*(Motion 224 was carried.)*  
*(Motion 225 was carried.)*  
*(Motion 226 was carried.)*  
*(Motion 219 was carried.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can we now go to item 8, Employment Policy: Rights at Work, Composite 6, Agency Workers, Birmingham & West Midlands to move, London Region to second, then we will take 86, Holidays, South Western Region to move, 87, 88, 89, and 90.

Before I call the movers up could I announce to Congress that Joanna Lucyssyn, a new GMB shop steward from Road Chef, will briefly address Congress about the potential dispute at Road Chef. Where is Joanna? I am sure that was not how to pronounce her poor name.

SIS. J. LUCYSSYN: Your pronunciation was very good.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I will be a talented international speaker before long.

SIS. J. LUCYSSYN: Hello, my name is Joanna Lucyssyn. I represent workers of Road Chef Winchester Motorway Services. Road Chef Winchester, North and South, employ mainly Portuguese and Polish workers who have been recruited to the GMB and about 80 GMB new members were also recruited from Road Chef Motorway Services Winchester. *(Applause)* Road Chef Winchester is situated on the M3 away from the public transport services. For the six years the free transport was provided by the company for its employees. It was always part of the agreement between Road Chef and the employees. At the moment, 90% of Road Chef workers, mainly migrant workers, use the transport provided by the employer. About six months ago the company decided to cut its expenses by cancelling the transport. The company gave us the choice, buy our own cars or be dismissed. I have to indicate that the Road Chef employees are on low wages and some of them do not have even a driving licence. Road Chef also started to replace its regular fulltime works with cheaper agency labour.

I am asking Congress for the support of the migrant workers of Road Chef Winchester, North and South, to fight against the oppressive employer until the battle is won. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Joanna, thank you, and we fully support you. Now the movers, thank you.

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK**

### **COMPOSITE MOTION 6**

(Covering Motions 84 and 85)

**84 – Agency Labour – (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)**

**85 – Agency Staff – Local Government – (London Region)**

**AGENCY WORKERS**

Congress deplores the use of agency labour as a direct alternative to temporary or permanent employment within the workplace and the continued use of agency staff to cover long term vacancies in local government. This is a widespread use of labour by a majority of employers since the implementation of the temporary worker regulations.

Therefore we ask for the CEC to campaign for agency workers to become permanent staff after 6 months in the post as an agency worker.

*(Carried)*

**BRO. G. RICHARDSON** (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, agency workers are in the main being exploited. Employers up and down the country are moving more and more towards the use of agency workers as a way of reducing costs and eroding our pay structures.

Colleagues, we cannot let this abuse of people continue. Our union only recently has promised to continue the fight for agency workers' rights, despite the draft recently of the proposed legislation being defeated. More than 100 MPs, mostly Labour, backed a private members bill that would have protected 1.4 million agency and temps by giving them the same rights to pay and conditions as directly employed staff. This bill was brought by Labour MP, Paul Farrelly, Newcastle-under-Lyne and Stoke-on-Trent, but was talked out and denied a vote.

Congress, the GMB along with other unions welcome the support for the bill and this only demonstrates the need and urgency for legislation. This is a number one priority. The temporary worker regulations gave many of our members the opportunity to share in the same benefits as a permanent employ but companies are going down to great lengths to set up their own agencies as an alternative to taking on workers on temporary contracts or directly employed, enabling them to reduce costs and exploit workers knowing that the law is weak in this area.

We as a union should continue to campaign vigorously for legislation to be put into place otherwise exploitation will continue by unscrupulous employers and this scourge on society will continue. I move.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Secunder?

**BRO. E. HAMILTON** (London): I am seconding Composite 6, agency staff, particularly in local government. This is an appalling situation that cannot be allowed to continue. In my own branch we have many agency workers, some of these members have been continuously employed by an agency in local council work for periods of up to five and six years in the same council. It is time the GMB took a stand against these borough councils and lobbied our sponsored MPs to press for a change in the law to protect these vulnerable members. It is our feeling that once an agency worker has six months continuous employment for any council, they should qualify for fulltime employment with that council. Let's put an end to them worrying

from one week to the next whether they have a job and ensure that by providing them with permanent employment in that borough council. Please give your full support. I second this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ed. Carry on.

## **MOTION 86**

### **HOLIDAYS**

This Congress is pleased that the Government has committed themselves to legislate that all workers should be entitled to four weeks paid holiday excluding Public Holidays, but we are very disappointed with regards to the timetable of this. We believe that this entitlement should not be phased in, but adopted fully and not in a piecemeal fashion.

MID GLAMORGAN C&T BRANCH  
*South Western Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. K. SCOURFIELD (South Western): Congress, Motion 86 is totally uncomplicated and it is fair to say that we are pleased that our Government has committed themselves to legislate that all workers should be entitled to four weeks paid holiday excluding public holidays but we are very disappointed with regards to the timetable of this implementation. I was at Congress last year when again Tony Blair stood in front of us all and promised us that under his leadership he would implement this at the earliest possible date. These promises seem to mean nothing, they keep getting broken every time. They keep referring back to Warwick. Is it Warwick or is it comic because they do not seem to be delivering on this agreement. Rumours are rife going from a suggested four days as an extra at the end of 2007 and the other four days at the end of 2008. There is a suggestion that the eight days would not be due or phased through until 2011.

Colleagues, I put it to you straight that if these days are not due and implemented before the next General Election then this Government, a Labour government, is again in breach of the Warwick Agreement. Congress, I believe the entitlement should be phased in, adopted fully, and not in a piecemeal fashion.

Lastly, Congress, I refer to page 15 of the Daily Star. It says Community Secretary Ruth Kelly and Immigration Minister Liam Byrne are backing a Great Britain Day bank holiday. This apparently is on St. David's Day. I tell you what, when I go back to Wales and tell them that they will be bloody pleased, I can assure you. Colleagues, I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Congress, we are running a bit behind as we have had a very heavy agenda. Is it possible, and I am only asking you if it is possible, to ask you not to second the resolutions if you move them, formally? I accept it if you feel there is a burning passion to come up here. We will see how far we can get. I am trying to juggle the agenda so that certain items come forward before tomorrow but I certainly do not think we will finish this agenda today. OK. Mover of 87. Sorry, formally seconded?

*Motion 86 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 87.

## **MOTION 87**

### **HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT**

Congress calls upon the CEC to instigate a major campaign to improve holiday entitlements.

As a campaign theme the GMB should promote 30 days (pro rata) holiday entitlement for all workers from day one of employment.

SUNDERLAND 1 CATS BRANCH  
*Northern Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. S. APPLEBY (Northern): I am a first time delegate. Congress, in the late 1880s tens of thousands of working people flocked to join new trade unions. For the first time unskilled people formed trade unions and organised to improve the quality of their working lives. They managed this enormous achievement around one simple campaign, the campaign for the eight-hour day.

Congress, today we face a similar challenge, the challenge to once again encourage thousands, millions, of unorganised workers to join trade unions to fight for the improvements in the workplace. Congress, Will Thorne, the leader of the gas workers who formed the GMB, won the battle to secure the eight-hour day and today we must win the battle for decent holidays.

Congress, the statutory minimum holiday entitlement is a disgrace, the low standards set by the bosses in their powers in government. Congress, we do not want a rise in the statutory entitlement, we want a good old-fashioned trade union campaign in the workplace. The message needs to be, trade union organised workplaces get better holidays. If you want better holidays join a union.

President, the lessons of history are clear, if we fight for the workers' rights in the place where it really matters, in the workplace, then workers will flock to join us. Congress, let's start the campaign for better holidays now. I urge you to support Motion 87. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is it seconded?

*Motion 87 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 88.

## **MOTION 88**

### **STATUTORY HOLIDAYS**

Congress calls on the CEC to pressure the Government for more statutory Holidays. St George's day should become a public holidays.

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, we could all do with more public holidays so why not make St. George's Day a public holiday and give it us back, not just for political reasons. These days are used as holidays such as in Ireland St. Patrick's Day. Look at the statistics the media come out with. Many people ring in sick for St. George's Day. Why not make it official. We have more chance of getting proper holidays off, more holidays off, through the law rather than negotiated agreements. We call on the CEC to put pressure on the Government to make St. George's Day a public holiday. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, James. Is that formally seconded? *(Agreed)*

*Motion 88 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 89, South Western Region.

## **MOTION 89**

### **REDUNDANCY ACT**

Congress requests that the CEC continues to lobby the case for the limitation of 20 years maximum service for redundancy calculation is removed and that it be replaced with a more just and fair calculation based on actual full years service of unbroken service. This would be a fairer and equitable calculation for those unfortunate workers who have been served with redundancy notices after many years of loyal service to one company.

MAESTEG 2 BRANCH  
*South Western*

*(Carried)*

BRO. K. SCOURFIELD (South Western): Colleagues, this motion calls on the CEC to lobby the case for the limitation for 20 years maximum service for a redundancy calculation to be removed. It is an antiquated, far out of date, rule. If we look at what is on the table at the moment for somebody who has had a maximum service the level of payout he has to receive is £9,300. Is that a laugh after some people have spent 40 years, 50 years, in service for that company? I myself worked for a company that is being closed in October this year for the final time. Again that company is going to cheaper places on the Continent, Poland for instance.

I spoke to Janice Gregory, the Assembly Minister for my area, when she came to my factory and I said we have to look at how we can stop these people just taking up and going, she said to me, "We have to allow that because potential investors will not invest if we do not keep it the way we are." They said that about the minimum wage; they say that about everything. It is never too good when they have to spend money but when they have to they do spend that money. In the case of Burberrys, 300 people made redundant. If every one of them was paid an extra 20 years service they would have been given £1.5m in total for an extra 20 years, not bad; that would have made a dent in their £500m profit.

It is time this law was looked at. Twenty years stopped, what about the poor bugger who has been there for 50 years? Surely, these people should be rewarded for their loyal and valuable service. Congress, I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Seconded? Speak to me. Thank you.

*Motion 89 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 90.

## **MOTION 90**

### **48 HOUR WEEK**

Congress believes that the UK Government should adopt fully the EU Directive on working time, and ensure that workers do not have to work more than a 48 hours week to earn a reasonable wage.

YORKSHIRE COAL STAFFS BRANCH  
*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire*

*(Carried)*

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, visitors, and guests, I was amazed when I realised that the Working Time Regulations were put on the statute books in 1998, that is almost 10 years ago, and still we are signed up to the opt-out. Why? It must surely be to keep the employers happy. Why would any worker want to work more than 48 hours? In fact, I am with the French on this one. There are very few things I do agree with them about but I think a 35-hour working week is plenty.

If you do more than 48 hours it must presumably be either because you love your job and love being at work, we have them in the coal industry sometimes, we call them “pit daft” - that is *daft* to you southerners - they virtually live at the pit, or else it is because your pay is so bad you need to put in the extra hours to take home a decent wage. I am not sure there is a lot you can do with the first category but as for the second nobody should have to work more than 48 hours a week to earn a decent living wage. It is not just the 48 hours that are covered in the working time regs, it is also that you should not work 12-hour nights. There is supposed to be a limit of an average of eight hours work in 24 that night workers can be required to work. I am not sure how UK Coal get round that one with the shift pattern with two 12-hour and one 10-hour nights. Perhaps the four days off is supposed to be compensation but I reckon it still breaks the law.

The wording of this motion was quite specific, the use of the word “reasonable wage”. The CBI jumps up and down every time the minimum wage goes up. I would love to see any of them try to live on it. In a supposed civil society working people should not have to work all hours God sends in order to keep body and soul together. Let’s have an end to the opt-out and an end to the need for any employee to work that many hours in order to afford an acceptable level of quality of life.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pam. Is that seconded? Thank you very much.

*Motion 90 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now call the movers of 91, 92, 93, and 94.

## **MOTION 91**

### **AGE DISCRIMINATION & LAW OF UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES**

Congress welcomes the new Age Discrimination legislation in its underlying principle's, but is very concerned at the unintended consequences which have arisen in the drafting of the law.

Congress requests GMB leadership to seek to remedy this situation with government.

Congress recognises that many employers are using or 'hiding behind' this poorly drafted legislation to the detriment of working class people and trade union members.

Congress does not believe it is the intention of the legislation to deprive employees of time served benefits, but many employers are now directly linking service to age, to avoid giving service benefits, on the basis that it is age discriminatory.

Government have exempt the statutory redundancy provisions from the age legislation, but employers are now using the age and service criteria within redundancy legislation to avoid creating or improving enhancements to the state scheme on the grounds of age discrimination.

Many employers are arguing that it is only a matter of time before European Case Law, rules that age based redundancy legislation is unlawful and they are acting in advance of that scenario. Congress urges a UK government and European lobby to rectify this situation.

DOVER FERRIES X23 BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. BARR (Southern): Congress, we have yet again another piece of legislation that employers can drive a bus through, and that they do, and they use this to reach the destination that they want, not the destination that this was intended for, or that we need to reach. This poorly drafted legislation must be re-drafted so that everyone's conditions can be protected. We must remove the uncertainty from this legislation so that discrimination will not and cannot be used against those who have worked all their working lives. We are to put insurances in place to safeguard their benefits and conditions. Age should never be used against them. They have helped to build our companies and our country to the strong position we are today. They do not want arguments, they do not want confrontation. They do want dignity. All of us want our rates protected and what we are saying today is quite simply, we ask you to support this motion so that you today and those who come tomorrow have that protection. I so move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Seconded? Thank you.

*Motion 91 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 92, Age Discrimination, London Region.

## **MOTION 92**

### **AGE DISCRIMINATION**

Congress believes that the age discrimination laws do not go far enough. Employees should have the unequivocal right to work beyond the age of 65 if they so wish, and that the GMB should do all it can to bring this about.

ESSEX PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

**BRO. R. BLACK (London):** This is the first time at Congress, first time delegate, and problems with the mikes!

President, Congress, the Age Discrimination Act came into force last October and one of its aims was to give workers the right to carry on working after the age of 65 if they so choose. The emphasis here is that it is the worker that makes the choice, so with the new legislation in force for some eight months we are entitled to ask, is it working. Some employers have embraced the spirit of the legislation and have recognised the value that older workers bring to the workforce, an awful lot, however, and particularly in the public sector, have seen the legislation as a threat and have taken a very risk-averse approach to its implementation to the detriment of workers. Many have latched on to a flaw in the drafting of the legislation which allows the employer to retain control and to force workers to retire at a date proscribed by them. These employers will tell us that they are following the letter of the law. The truth is that they are deliberately frustrating the spirit and the intent of the legislation.

I work for a Labour council. I will not say which one but they are building an Olympic Stadium employing some 8,000 workers. Their response to the new legislation is to impose a rigid and inflexible retirement policy across the board. Everybody must go at 65 they tell us. Prior to the legislation we used to be able to secure agreements for our members to work after 65. Since the legislation has come in we have not been able to secure a single agreement with our employer. Unwittingly the legislation has had the net effect of making it harder for workers to stay on after 65.

Congress, the spirit and intention of the legislation is being flouted by employers up and down the country. Workers, our members, now have even less chance of being allowed to choose to work after 65. This is not the time for us to be complacent. We must bring pressure to bear on legislators and employers to honour the spirit of the legislation to give the rights that were promised to workers. Congress, please support this motion. I move.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Thank you, Ray. Seconded? Formally?

**BRO. S. ELLIS (London):** Yes, formally. Sorry.

*Motion 92 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: You do not come up here then.

BRO. S. ELLIS: Sorry....

THE PRESIDENT: Are you coming up for 93?

BRO. S. ELLIS: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Right. It will not take a lot to confuse me at this time of night.

### **MOTION 93**

#### **NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE**

Congress calls for an increase of the minimum wage to £7 for all workers regardless of age.

SOLO BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. S. ELLIS (London): President, Congress, the minimum wage being introduced was a huge step forward despite the ridiculously low level that it was set at and the age discrimination inherent within it offering different rates for different ages of workers. Today the minimum rate that an employer has to pay a worker is £5.35 per hour with the ludicrous living expenses as a result deliberate housing shortage and the general culture of exploitation that prevails, it starts to become clear why desperate working people are working 70 or 80 hours a week, sometimes in two or three jobs just to keep their heads above water.

To work a 40-hour week would give you the grand total of £214 which would not be enough to allow you to save up the deposit for an upholstered dustbin in London, never mind a flat or a luxury item like a house. Even if this resolution were passed calling for a minimum wage of £7 an hour it would still only give that 40-hour week worker £280 a week. At the end of the day it is only effective trade union organisation, strong workplace membership, active and trained stewards, safety reps, and ULRs, and above all active and well-financed branches, that will enable us to raise wages and conditions. Having a legally binding rate of £7 an hour is not going over the top but it is something to organise around. I hope that everyone can see their way to supporting this motion which, after all, is a very modest demand. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Formally seconded? Thank you.

*Motion 93 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 94, Employment Laws, moved by Southern Region.

### **MOTION 94**

#### **94. EMPLOYMENT LAWS**

Congress supports the aim of increasing the minimum wage to above £7 per hour.

*(Carried)*

BRO. A. CIRKET (Southern): I think the previous speaker said what I would have wanted to say about this motion on the minimum wage. It was 2005 we agreed the figure of £7 and we would like to see by the time we get to, say, 2009, which will have been four years by then, that we would be a lot closer to £7 than we are at the moment. I think there are very few people in this room, in fact very few people at work, who could possibly think of a good reason why the minimum wage is not £7. I really struggled with this to see if I could come up with one and, no, I still cannot think of one.

We might be told that of course it will drive up inflation or something like that but even then when you look into that one I do not think it is true considering the amount of money that is paid in bonuses and rewards to the other end of the pay scale. It does not seem to drive up inflation then when we pay them a lot of money. I feel that if we were to make this £7 commitment right up there at the front, that the workforce in this country knew that that was an expectation of this union, it would do an awful lot. Let's raise those people's expectations and get them to support this. Get people out there demanding that the minimum wage is increased to £7; it will have a positive effect in this country. With all the things you have heard this afternoon about people on low wages, it will help the economy. It will be overall an extremely good thing for us to do, if we can get the minimum wage up to £7. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Formally seconded? Thank you.

*Motion 94 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Has anyone got a burning desire to come in on any of this debate? Is it really burning? Come on, then. I bet he was the seconder!

A SPEAKER FROM THE FLOOR: Thanks, Mary. Just a quick point on redundancy calculations on Motion 89, if we really want to do something about people's entitlements we need to take out the continuous service qualification and the full years of service qualification because we will have a significant number of women members who have a lot of total service with an employer but have a break in service for family commitments. Take out those two qualifications and you will double most people's entitlements.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Can I call Sue Lee on Motions 87, 88, 89 and 91?

SIS. S. LEE (CEC, Public Services): The CEC is supporting Motions 87, 88, 89 and 91 with the following qualifications which I will now outline. Motion 87 reflects the need for further campaigning on holiday entitlements. The CEC supports this but without restricting the amount to a specific figure such as 30 days. The issue which would need to be addressed in any such campaign is how members working a 6-day week should be treated. GMB believes that their holiday entitlement must reflect

their longer working week and should be greater than the holiday entitlement of those on a 5-day week.

Motion 88 specifies that St. George's Day should become a public holiday. While GMB supports an increased number of statutory holidays and the TUC campaign for three extra days, members from the various constituent parts of the United Kingdom may have a differing view on specifying St. George's Day in particular as a public holiday.

Motion 89 relates to the interaction between statutory redundancy provisions and the discrimination law. GMB seeks to ensure that redundancy rules are faire and free form discrimination. Service related provisions can be deemed discriminatory in terms of age, sex, and disability, and the GMB will be mindful of this when seeking reforms to statutory redundancy payments.

On Motion 91 the qualification is that the intention of the motion should not seek the GMB to organise a specific lobby of the EU to rectify this particular situation. The GMB continues to lobby the UK government and the EU legislature to ensure that anti-discrimination law results in the improved treatment of members who are unjustly discriminated against not the worsening of workers' employment provisions overall. GMB does not believe that fighting discrimination means reducing workers terms and conditions to the lowest common denominator.

Congress, the CEC asks you to support Motions 87, 88, 89, and 91 subject to the qualifications I have outlined.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sue. Do those regions accept the qualifications? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I now call you to vote on 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, and 94? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*(Motion 87 was carried.)*

*(Motion 88 was carried.)*

*(Motion 89 was carried.)*

*(Motion 90 was carried.)*

*(Motion 91 was carried.)*

*(Motion 92 was carried.)*

*(Motion 93 was carried.)*

*(Motion 94 was carried.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, with your permission could I call the next part of the agenda, 9. Regional Secretary's Report: Northern Region, and then will you allow me to move to 12, Industrial & Economic Policy: Trident, and we debate that and move on. Thank you. Is that agreed? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

I call Tommy Brannan to move his Regional Secretary's Report. Tom? Thank you. formally seconded? Thank you.

**REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: NORTHERN REGION (pages 128-135)**

# NORTHERN REGION

## 1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

<b>Financial Membership</b>	<b>73,167</b>
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	21,722
MANUFACTURING SECTION	26,598
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	24,847
Grade 1 members	45,916
Grade 2 members	10,706
Retired, Reduced Rate and others	16,545
Male Membership	46,943
Female Membership	26,244
Total number recruited 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	6,921
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	-736
Membership on Check-off	41,299
Membership on Direct Debit	12,604

### Economic and Employment Situation

The disease to transfer manufacturing industry offshore has spread to the service sector and reached epidemic proportions with banks, building societies and other financial institutions stampeding towards India and China in search of the cheapest labour available and without due regard to customer service let alone the regional and UK economy.

Redundancies in the Pensions Department of the Office of Works and Pensions whilst the employers are seeking volunteers to travel to India in order to train up those who will be taking on the responsibility of managing UK citizens' state pensions. Is nothing sacrosanct?

These jobs, like manufacturing, are good quality and relatively well paid.

Yes it could be argued that there are more jobs in the regional economy, but what value? The North appears to be heading towards a culture of hand to mouth existence without continuity and security. At the same time and when certain employers can't physically move the work offshore then they are resorting to their next best option ie to utilise migrant labour and in some cases at the expense of the indigenous workforce. In this process undermining long standing, well established, pay and conditions of employment. We see engagement, accommodation and representation as the means of ending the abuse of migrant workers.

### Recruitment and Organisation

The formation of the National Organising Team has provided an added boost to recruitment activity and success with our results improving month on month. The sharing of information, best practice and a coordinated approach is providing the focus and producing the results.

Gone are the days when recruitment was organised on an ad-hoc basis. The systematic approach is well under way in the Northern Region with growth as the main objective.

## 2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	2
Regional Organisers	15
Organising Officers (Recruitment Officers)	4
No. of Branches	136
New Branches	6
Branch Equality Officers	
Branch Youth Officers	

### 3 BENEFITS

Dispute	5,222.40
Total Disablement	NIL
Working Accident	4,806.85
Occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Funeral	36,073.50

### 4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

The media presence of GMB Northern Region continues to be very high. There have been a number of industrial issues that have had a lot of coverage in the press this year. Firstly the ongoing equal pay claims, as well as tribunal hearings that have been widely reported. There has been substantial press interest in the issues surrounding equal pay. Secondly there was a lot of publicity on the sad departure of an unfinished ship leaving Swan Hunter. Although this was not the type of story we ever want to see in the North, our members came out of the publicity very well, with all concerned, including Government ministers, praising the skills of our members.

We have also had a considerable amount of publicity around cases we have pursued and won on behalf of our members. ASDA was one case in particular.

The Northern Star magazine goes out to all our members across the Region. The last edition covered the ASDA Wal-Mart case and the compensation we won for our members which gained media coverage both regionally and nationally; an update on the age discrimination legislation; articles on young members; the AA pensions, and recruitment to name just a few.

The Reps Report continues to go out to all of our reps in the Region (around 1,700) on a regular basis. It has covered topics such as new TUPE regulations; EOC women's pension campaign; legislation changes; ASDA case; health and safety updates, amongst many other issues. It is important that we keep our members informed of updates and changes to the law.

### 5 LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
1,030	1,030

**Cases in which Outcome became known**

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
1,445	476	0	£5,860,020.33		£5,860,020.33
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006			3,100		

**(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)**

Claims supported by Union	160 + Equal Pay (2,785)
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**Cases in which Outcome became known**

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
350 + ASDA (332)	120	50	£1,177,383.12 plus £827,500.00 ASDA	80	£1,177,383.12 plus £827,500.00 ASDA
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006			662		

**(c) Other Employment Law Cases**

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

**(d) Social Security Cases**

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.
126	17	45

During 2006 we prepared and circulated several newsletters and fact sheets dealing with personal injury claims and health and safety issues in order to highlight the successes of the GMB legal service and the range of legal services available to GMB members. We actively promoted the reporting of successful GMB cases both personal injury and employment law in various newspapers throughout the Northern Region.

GMB played a crucial role in the campaign to overturn the effect of the House of Lords decision in the mesothelioma apportionment cases. The House of Lords decision which was given on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2006 involved claims brought by the families of three workers who had died from mesothelioma. One of the widows in the case was GMB Northern Region member Mrs Murray, 84, from Sunderland. Her compensation payment was slashed by more than 50% by the Lords ruling.

At the GMB Congress in Blackpool the Prime Minister responded to a question from the GMB Northern delegate Michael Blench, GMB Convenor at Swan Hunter, who called upon the Government to change the Law to give mesothelioma sufferers and their families full compensation. The Prime Minister responded "I regret that [House of Lords] judgement. I'm looking at the moment to see the best opportunity for us to change it. If we can change it, we will. I hope to announce something on this in a couple of weeks". On 27<sup>th</sup> July 2006 the Compensation Act 2006 received the Royal Assent. Section 3 of the Act restored the right to full compensation for mesothelioma victims and their families, including Mrs Murray.

## **6 EQUAL RIGHTS**

The Equal Rights Committee and the Race Committee met jointly last year. They discussed plans and priorities for the forthcoming year. The numbers attending these committees continues to decline, so I am looking at other ways to engage with our members on these issues to try to reach people who do not wish to attend committee meetings.

GMB Northern Region had a stall at the Middlesbrough Mela in July; once again this was a very successful event with many thousands of people attending.

In November we sent a delegate to the National Equal Rights event in Manchester. The motion that Northern Region put forward on discrimination and IVF treatment was passed and was chosen to go forward from NERAC as its motion to the TUC Women's Conference in the spring. Our delegate attended many sessions on a wide range of issues from LGBT issues, empowering and confidence building, domestic violence and progressing the equalities agenda.

We also had a delegate attend the National Race Conference in the autumn.

As a union we have had training in the past year on equality and diversity which was very good, and has broadened our understanding of the current issues.

A member of the Race Committee in the Northern Region has agreed to take the lead role in organising a joint race and equal rights event in the near future, tackling the growing equality and diversity agenda.

## **7 YOUTH**

We have tried to strategically direct the Northern Region's young members group to build a secure solid base to ensure a long lasting engaged section of our Union by using the organising agenda. We have aimed to give young members ownership of the section so it is not Officer led by the Young Members' Officer.

### **Development of a Young Members Newsletter**

We developed a Young Members Newsletter; this is in addition to our annual magazine. The first newsletter introduced young members to the Youth Officer, Regional Young Members Committee, National Seminar and our initiative with the Workers Beer Company. A questionnaire was also included to get feedback from our members on why/how they joined, and an opportunity to express

interest to be on a postal/email/text database for future information.

### **Development of Young Members Postal/Email/Text Distribution Lists**

To communicate and engage with our young members; preferably via email and text message service to ensure a modern first rate cost efficient service.

### **Speakers in Schools**

We made contacts with Connexions Officers to organise presentations and workshops to sixth formers (16-18 years old) in Northumberland High Schools. We have raised awareness of what a trade union is/does and their rights at work. We believe by educating young people at this stage will generate future members and representatives.

### **Northumbria University Students Labour Club**

We are working in partnership with Northumbria University Labour Club to engage, educate and recruit students through various methods; literature, Q&A sessions, workshops, jobs fair. Members of the Labour Club are actively promoting the GMB as the trade union to join.

### **Northumbria/Newcastle University Jobs Fair**

Through our relationship with Northumbria University Labour Clubs we have been able to guarantee a stall (charge discounted by 50%) at both the summer and autumn joint Northumbria/Newcastle jobs fairs. Each job fair is attended by approximately 2,000, on average we speak to 500 students advising them on the benefits of being a GMB member. When possible a GMB member from Northumbria University Labour Club has attended to assist our recruitment.

### **Gateshead Industry Days**

Gateshead Education Business Link Services organise industry days for pupils in their final year at high school. We have engaged pupils through educational workshops on the benefits of GMB membership, again generating future members and representatives. This has been a fantastic opportunity for us as previously only businesses and personnel departments were involved.

### **Working with Labour Youth Officers**

Contacts were made with Labour Youth Officers to promote the GMB through literature, Q&A sessions, and sponsored events. We have written articles for newsletters, and have literature included in all mail outs within certain constituencies.

### **Engage existing Shop Stewards**

We have raised awareness of the young members' activities to Shop Stewards to enable them to actively engage members at their workplaces. Young member Shop Stewards are also becoming active in our committee. From the activity in 2006 we anticipate growth of our young membership and activism in 2007.

## **8 TRAINING**

<b>(a) GMB Courses Basic Training</b>					
	<b>No. of Courses</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total Student Days</b>
<b>Introduction to GMB (3 days)</b>	10	146	28	174	522
<b>GMB 5 Day Follow</b>					

on Course	11	129	33	162	810
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(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB 5 Day Follow on County Hall, Durham	1	11	2	13	65

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB 5 Day Health & Safety	9	106	21	127	635

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3 Day Grievance & Disciplinary	10	112	45	157	471

3 Day Communication Skills	10	103	25	128	384
2 Day Bargaining Skills	7	77	18	59	118
2 Day Inspection Course	6	62	14	76	152

(e) Northern College Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Employment Law	1	8	0	8	40
5 Day Advanced Health & Safety	1	1	0	1	5
5 Day Industrial Relations	1	2	0	2	10
3 Day Advanced Health & Safety	1	3	1	4	12
3 Day Workforce Development	1	1	0	1	3
3 Day Understanding Pensions	1	3	1	4	12

## **Shop Steward & Safety Representative Training**

2006 saw a continued improvement in the development and provision of training in Northern Region. New courses included Bargaining Skills; Communication Skills and Workplace Inspection courses.

The number of Reps attending courses increased in every area although uptake by our female Reps is still far too low running at around 25%. Participation in the residential courses at Northern College has started to improve towards the end of 2006 and there are more Reps signing up to the 2007 programme there.

2007 will see more courses being developed. A three day refresher course is being developed for experienced Reps, many of whom have not had training for over ten years. A pilot will be run out at BNFL in West Cumbria in the Spring. This will lead to the course being offered in the rest of the Region.

Currently courses are run at Regional Office in Newcastle upon Tyne, Middlesbrough, Sunderland, Carlisle, West Cumbria and Durham. Almost all of the courses are run at the GMB offices. By bringing courses in-house we have saved around £7,000 per annum on room hire. All courses (except those being trialled) meet OCN accreditation standards and an accreditation programme is being considered.

Other courses planned for the second half of 2007 are: Employment Law; Risk Assessment; and Equality and Diversity. This means that in addition to the core course programme for new Reps eight further courses are now available in-house in the Region. In addition to this the Regional TUC and GFTU enhance the training opportunities to our Reps in the Region.

The Regional Education Officer is working with the Regional TUC and WEA to further expand and enhance training opportunities for our Reps.

## **Regional Union Learning Fund Project**

We are now over half way into the three year funded project. Over 30 workplaces are involved and it is intended to at least double this number by March 2008. There are now four Project Workers, two full time and two seconded by their employers.

This project not only provides real learning opportunities for our members and their families, it is complementing our recruitment efforts in the Region. We have made inroads where there are migrant workers such as Polish, Portuguese, Chinese and Hungarian. Our ESOL (English Spoken as an Other Language) Project has helped recruitment in this area and we now have Polish and Portuguese Reps in a few areas.

## **9 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Health and safety training has been covered in the Education Report. The main issues of concern in 2006 has been the continuing controversy relating to asbestos. A new Tyne and Wear Asbestos Support Group was formed in 2005 and the GMB Regional Health and Safety Officer chairs it. This group has already been successful in a very important campaign.

Mesothelioma, probably the worst type of asbestos cancer has been at the forefront again. A drug was developed in the North East at Northumbria University that can prolong the life of mesothelioma victims. This drug is called Alimta. It is not prescribed universally in the UK. Individual NHS Trusts decide whether it will be allowed on the NHS in their areas. The NHS Trust in the North East refused to allow the drug to be used on the NHS and the GMB along with the Tyne and Wear Asbestos Support Group launched a campaign that the local media latched on to. A petition with over 10,000 signatures was presented to the NHS Trust and within three weeks the Trust backed down and allowed the drug on the NHS.

This victory, however, was short lived as soon afterwards NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) announced that the drug would be withdrawn because it is not cost effective. We, along with the National Health and Safety Officer and other groups are continuing to campaign for this decision to be overturned and hopefully by the time Congress takes place we will have been successful.

The Regional Health and Safety Officer has been involved in many workplace interventions and the GMB approach to health and safety in the Region is looked up to and followed by the other unions.

*(Adopted)*

*(Regional Secretary's Report: Northern Region (pages 128-135) was formally moved and seconded)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, and 135. Agree that report, colleagues? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*(The Regional Secretary's Report: Northern Region (pages 128-135) was adopted.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now move down to agenda item 12, Industrial & Economic Policy: Trident. Can I ask the movers of 166, 167, 168 and 169 to please come forward and move their resolutions.

## **INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: TRIDENT**

### **MOTION 166**

#### **NEW GENERATION OF TRIDENT NUCLEAR MISSILES**

Congress opposes the Governments' decision to order a new generation of Trident Nuclear Missiles.

The decision has been taken without adequate debate in the Cabinet, Parliament and the Nation a whole. It commits us to an estimated initial expenditure of £25 billion, which, on top of the debacle in Iraq, puts even greater strains on our equipping of conventional military forces. It draws precious resources away from the social expenditure that is needed to tackle the shortcomings in our educational, transport, health and environmental infrastructures. It condemns us as hypocrites of the first order as we neglect our duties as a signatory of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty while condemning such nations as Iran and North Korea for their nuclear technology and weapons ambitions. It is not supported by any clear definition of who our potential enemies are and under which circumstances we would use such weapons. It relies on the delusion that the United States has no influence on our use of such weapons and that our military independence is defined by their possession.

Congress therefore calls on the Union to oppose this decision and devote energies to the support of such movements and organisations that call for the resolution of conflict through diplomacy and good example. Environmental disaster looms and adding potential clouds of nuclear fall-out to that nightmare vision makes no sense at all. Our children will ultimately condemn us if we support this

decision merely for the sake of defending jobs, with vision and determination we can develop alternatives to nuclear based employment and rebuild the respect our nation has lost in recent years.

NORWICH GENERAL BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Lost)*

BRO. D. FAITH (London): President, Congress, Gordon Brown yesterday gave two reasons essentially why we should replace Trident and have a new generation of nuclear weapons. The first was an argument saying that unilateralism, the idea that Britain alone should get rid of its nuclear weapons had had its day and that what we were in was an era of multilateralism. I think two points here: first of which we do have to understand what multilateralism – if you can say it – actually means. It essentially means that our nuclear policy is tied up hand and foot with that of the United States of America; that Britain is not capable of making its own decisions about whether these should be deployed or whether they should be developed. I think it is extremely important that that is understood in the context of this debate.

I think there is a second flaw in what he was arguing there. I think Britain taking a stand over the issue of nuclear weapons would have a massive impact in the politics of international law. Britain has a reputation, an unfortunate reputation but one that it has nonetheless around the world, of being an aggressive state, of having participated in five wars over the last 10 years in three continents. For us to take a clear step towards peace and away from war I think would have a massive impact around the world.

Gordon Brown's second argument was that really in order to be an effective negotiator for the reduction of nuclear weapons you had to have some to get rid of in the first place. Now, this strikes me as a completely bizarre argument but it is nonetheless one that he used from this rostrum yesterday. For me the analogy is like somebody going along to Weight Watchers and saying, "Well, I need to have this cake and eat it so that I can not eat it and then it will encourage other people not to eat it." It is as crazy as that to say that in order to encourage other nations to get rid of nuclear weapons in the first place that we should get new ones so that we have something to trade with. This is the kind of crazy argument being used to justify the expansion of the nuclear arms race.

I think there is another fallacy which always goes with this kind of stuff which is the idea that somehow nuclear weapons are never going to be used. I think that is completely false thinking. The fact is that in order to be credible in those terms there has to be an acceptance that if you are going to develop these weapons they are going to be used. Frankly, if they are going to be used there is not going to be a debate about it like there was over the Iraq war where MPs sit around and debate whether there should be a war or not. Nuclear weapons, Trident nuclear weapons, will be deployed, will be used without a debate in Parliament. It will be on the basis of presumably some kind of military intelligence, and we know what that looks like these days, and there will not be any debate on it. Nor do we know whose finger will be on the nuclear button when we do get this nuclear arsenal. You may be – I am not but you may be – happy if it is Gordon Brown with his finger on the nuclear button but I wonder how you feel about maybe David Cameron or William Hague having

their finger on this button, and yet that is what we are giving to our politicians if we go ahead with the development of Trident.

Over the issue of nuclear weapons there are two peddles in the car, there is the accelerator and there is the brake. I am arguing that we apply the brake not the accelerator. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. Formally seconded? Thank you.

*Motion 166 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 167, London Region to move.

## **MOTION 167**

### **ACTIVELY OPPOSING TRIDENT RENEWAL/REPLACEMENT**

This conference notes:

Mr Blair took our country to war under the (false) pretence of destroying weapons of mass destruction at a cost of over 650,000 lives.

This Government now proposes to renew the UK's own weapons of mass destruction at an estimated cost to the UK taxpayer of up to £50 billion – the equivalent of 120,000 newly qualified nurses every year for the next 10 years.

Just one of the potential 192 missiles in the Trident replacement programme could destroy a city, killing hundreds of thousand of innocent civilians.

The 1996 ruling from the International Court of Justice that "there is an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects"

This conference believes:

Weapons of Mass Destruction make the world a more dangerous place.  
Limited public funds should be spent on improved welfare, health, education and transport services.  
This current Labour Government has an historic opportunity to lead the world by example on the issue of nuclear disarmament.

This conference resolves:

To instruct the GMB leadership to make every possible representation to the Government and Labour Party to demand that the existing Trident system is not renewed or replaced.

To instruct the GMB leadership to initiate / continue full support to national campaign groups which actively oppose Trident renewal / replacement including CND and Stop the War Coalition.

To instruct the GMB leadership to encourage and support GMB local branches and groups to actively campaign against Trident renewal / replacement by:

Organising workplace/branch meetings to discuss the issues

Contacting local MP's to express GMB's strong opposition to Trident renewal /replacement

Organising local protest to target MP's who indicate that they support Trident renewal /replacement

Affiliating and providing active organisational support to anti-nuclear campaign groups and protests.

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Lost)*

BRO. R. POLE (London): Congress, I will start with a couple of questions. One, are nuclear weapons a deterrent to acts of terrorism? Two, are nuclear weapons likely to stop global warming? These are the two biggest threats to the world today and the answer to both these questions, as accepted by the overwhelming majority of the public, is a resounding no. Is replacing Trident likely to start a new global arms race and increase the prospect of nuclear conflict and all-out war and the horror that would bring? I believe the answer clearly is yes.

Nuclear weapons are irrelevant to national security and I believe Trident has no role to play in tackling the biggest threats to our society. Even Tony Blair has admitted it will be no use as a deterrent to a terrorist threat and renewing the nuclear arsenal is a clear breach of international law and of our Government's commitment to disarm under the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the 1996 ruling from the International Court of Justice.

Another question: what sort of signal does this renewal of Trident send to other countries, Iran, North Korea, etc.? That we can have weapons capable of mass destruction and wiping you out but you cannot? Surely that is double standards. Public opposition to Trident replacement is growing. In a poll in February 2007 72% of those polled expressed opposition.

This resolution urges the GMB to be part of that opposition and help make the world a safer place. Now, the CEC has expressed concern about proposals to replace Trident without a public debate, and they are right to do so. They also rightly refer to GMB members employed in the industry. Our branch understands those fears and I must apologise to Congress that in this resolution there is no reference to workers employed in the industry. It is clear, however, that the phenomenal cost of replacing Trident, now over £80bn, not the £50bn referred to in the resolution, would be money better spent on improved welfare, health, education, and transport services, and this money should be used to re-employ and retrain our members for employment in such worthwhile industries without – repeat, without – them losing any employment status or terms and conditions. My branch, North West London, would want and expect nothing less.

Therefore, with that rider to the resolution for our sake, our union's sake, and for the safety and wellbeing of future generations to entitle them to grow up without the threat of a nuclear holocaust, I seek overwhelming support for resolution 167. Congress, be brave, show our support for peace and international solidarity.

One last point, Gordon Brown referred to on Tuesday that there is evidence of other countries becoming nuclear active. Congress, I hope that evidence is more reliable

than the evidence of Iraq's supposed weapons of mass destruction capable of being deployed in 45 minutes: that supposed evidence led us to the hell-hole in Iraq where we are today and the death of countless thousands, hundreds of thousands of people, many of them innocent, all of them innocent. I move resolution 167.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 168. Sorry, formally seconded? Thank you.

*Motion 167 was formally seconded.*

## **MOTION 168**

### **NO REPLACEMENT FOR TRIDENT NUCLEAR SUBMARINES**

This Congress opposes the expenditure on Trident nuclear submarines. The life cycle costs are likely to exceed £70 billion. This money should be used to support jobs and manufacturing skills to develop a sustainable society, rather than threaten its annihilation. These weapons do not make Britain safer but encourages other countries to develop their own nuclear weapons. Britain should be aiming for a world free of nuclear weapons rather than spending billions more on them.

We will affiliate to Trade Union CND and donate £500

HOLBORN APEX BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Lost)*

BRO. T. BAILLIE (London): Congress, look at the world around us and the amount of warring nations and ask yourself, do we wish this to continue, the world at war for generations to come, conflict after conflict? I for one would not ask this government or any other government of this country to leave our country undefended. I like most of you today would willingly give my last drop of blood to defend this precious nation of ours but we cannot arm ourselves at the cost of other nations. We should be putting forward the helping hand and not a hand filled with the Sword of Damocles. Yes, we do need to defend ourselves but we also need to strike a balance, a very delicate balance, with other nations and everybody's aim of world peace.

The £70bn to be spent on the building and maintaining of the Trident fleet would be a drop in the ocean with regards to putting the world to right but maybe it could be a little to put our own house in order, new housing for the homeless or more schools, more hospitals, or other ills that befall us. Congress, I understand we also need the jobs the building of this fleet would bring, if built in Britain, but I would say when you go to the forges let's turn them into plowshares. We can create jobs, we have the technology, we have the scope, the scope is here, we just need the commitment to do it.

Congress, I ask, what have we gained from our last status of war in Iran, Iraq, billions spent, tens of thousands dead, a great legacy to go forward with into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What is next, with Iran and North Korea developing their own nuclear deterrents, and as a signatory of a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty it is OK for us to build bigger and more destructive missiles but we are telling others they are not allowed to defend their own nations? Stop the Trident fleet being built in your name. Support this motion. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tom. Formally seconded? Thank you very much.

*Motion 168 formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 169, Trident Missile System, North West & Irish Region to move.

## **MOTION 169**

### **TRIDENT MISSILE SYSTEM**

This Congress totally rejects New Labour's proposal to replace the present Trident Nuclear Missile System with a newer, more expensive and destructive system.

We believe a redirecting of finances towards the NHS and Public Services would be of greater benefit to the people of the UK

This Congress believes it to be hypocritical to ask other countries to stop developing the hydrogen bomb when we intend to expand and increase our destructive capability.

We believe the GMB should act now and campaign against this madness.

8 ASHTON BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Referred)*

THE PRESIDENT: North West? Sorry, we did not hear you down here. Thank you. Formally seconded? Thank you.

*Motion 169 was formally moved and seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, does anyone have a burning desire? Are you really burning?

BRO. B. MODLOCK (Southern): Yes, I am on fire! President, Congress, having listened carefully to the views and the arguments set out by colleagues regarding this highly emotive subject, let me make it quite clear the arguments and beliefs that in an ideal world as much money as possible should be directed towards education and health are good and totally justifiable causes. However, I do not believe this debate is about Trident, it is about Britain's nuclear deterrent. Many in this country believe that security and the continuance of the things that we have come to expect, education, and health, possibly could be placed in the most terrible jeopardy if the very structure of defence is breached and that without the deterrent the very structure of our nation and all it stands for are at risk.

There is another facet to this issue, which, in my opinion, is equally important to those assembled here: why we are at Congress? It is the representation of our members and safeguarding our future employment and stability. Thousands of our members will be affected if Trident were abolished. I am employed at Devonport Naval Base where thousands of skilled workers depend on Trident, not only engineering jobs but logistic support, transport, and those that make the pasties for the rest of us. This is not only an issue that has a potential to affect us in the South West but our colleagues in

Barrow in Scotland who are in jeopardy and indeed in other areas that rely on the work that the systems bring, the supply, the storage, the maintenance, the logistics, and the general through life support. Many of those jobs are in areas of high unemployment and our members' futures are significantly threatened. These jobs and GMB membership must be preserved. This vote is not something that this Congress should take lightly. Our members, those I represent, who work in defence are watching us here today. I ask for reference back for further consideration from the CEC.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. T. COPELAND (GMB Scotland): And what is left of Sleepy Hollow Branch after the price increase in the contributions! I would just say that I concur with my colleague on defence. The defence industry that I represent has a sort of broad membership of 2,000 people that would be impacted by this. The strategy of GMB Scotland believes that until sufficient suitable alternative employment opportunities are put in place for the GMB membership, then the nuclear deterrent should remain. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Billy?

BRO. W. HUGHES (Northern): Worthy President, Congress, I was quite happy just to sit there and put the time of the day by my side and say nothing but I feel, and it is with great respect to the movers of the motions that have been put on nuclear weapons, I respect their views and I hope they will respect mine. Colleagues, I thought it was only the British government forgot we lived on an island. The days of defending this island with bows and arrows and broadswords is long gone. Later on before the end of Congress we will be coming to Congress and asking for support on warship building. What are we going to give those Navy lads as an armament? Are we going to fire rubber bullets and laughing gas shells? I will tell you what, we may as well do away with the early warning systems if the proposals go through because we will not need them. Please do not forget we live on an island, we are more vulnerable than anybody else and we should have the right to defend this nation of ours. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bill. Last one.

BRO. D. WILSON (North West & Irish): Basically, I did about 10 minutes research on the internet looking at these resolutions and the facts again show, just look at the numbers. I think what was voted on was to extend the submarine platform, not the missile which was voted on in Parliament in May, and they did not have to have that vote. Blair might have been pressured into it but it was the first time in, I do not know, 50 years they actually did have a free vote on it in Parliament and it was voted on with Tory votes. Why, because they know it is supposed to have been the national defence and all through previous years, I do not know, call it what you want, the centre left or whatever, the Labour Party, if they are seen to be weak on it they do not get voted in.

Just look at France, Segolene Royal, she seemed to be safe but dropped a clanger when she did not know enough about France's nuclear weapons; it obviously counted against her and she did not get in. Then you get the Mrs. Thatchers, the Nicolas

Sarkozys, it is people like that; you can even get Le Penn voted in. Just do the numbers. Russia, unfortunately, might have been provoked into new missile deployment. The argument should be about at least no first use of nuclear weapons. That is what people are concerned about. Reduce the number of them. That is all you can do gradually. If you put it in too stark a terms people just will not vote for it in the street. I do not think the sentiment is there despite obviously the admirable sentiments behind it from the movers of the resolution. Thanks.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I call Richard Ascough on Motions 166 to 170?

BRO. R. ASCOUGH (Regional Secretary, Southern Region): President, Congress, some years ago when I was an organiser I remember going for the first time to Dungeness Power Station and I wondered why I, a supporter of CND, was actually there and I feel a bit like that now. I think I must have upset somebody.

The serious point, the reason why I went to Dungeness and the reason why I am here today is I am a collectivist, individual opinions are not so important as the collective opinion. On behalf of the CEC I am asking the movers of Motions 166, 167, 168, and 169, all on Trident, to accept referral. The GMB does share the concerns about the proposal to spend £25bn on the replacement of Trident without a full public debate but the horse has bolted on that. The decision has already been made without such a public debate. It is clear that even though the vote for renewal was won in Parliament by a majority of 161, the spending of £25bn on Trident's renewal is a controversial one, both in parliament and in the labour Movement. In the House of Commons debate 95 Labour MPs supported postponing the decision and 88 actually voted against.

It is also difficult for the GMB. As you have already heard, the GMB represents employees in both the public and private sector who are employed on building, maintaining, and dismantling Britain's nuclear submarine fleet. These workers are highly skilled people who live and work in the more remote parts of Britain. We must take into consideration the needs of these members. We remind Congress that in these remote parts of Britain there is little other alternative employment, let alone skilled employment. We must also consider the lack of alternative employment prospects and the effects that these job losses would also have on their local communities.

It is our view that the issue of diversification to protect the jobs and skills of those engaged in work must be fully explored along with alternative defence initiatives. The GMB is already affiliated to trade union CND and has been for many years. It is the view of the CEC that now the decision has been made that the GMB should focus our resources on the recruitment of new members and servicing our existing members, we therefore ask the movers of Motions 166, 167, 168 and 169 on Trident to accept referral. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Richard. Do the movers of 166 accept reference? (*Refused*) Do you wish the right to reply? Dick?

BRO. R. POLE (London) expressing right of reply to Motion 167 said: Congress, the money that is being spent on Trident replacement, £80bn-plus, rising all the time, is public money. There is, in my view, London Region's view, government

responsibility to create more jobs to replace those that may be lost or would be lost in the cancellation of the Trident replacement project. This money can be better spent on more beneficial things to the country and the community as a whole.

Because no one is going to come back at me on this, I am old enough and ugly enough to remember the debates years ago in the 1980s from APEX days when we used to come up year in, year out, to support CND. The same arguments were used against that, from very small beginnings we eventually got APEX to support CND and the Congress that took that decision was extremely brave. I would ask you again to follow the four steps that were set by APEX in those days. I made it perfectly clear that there should not be any loss of employment rights to our members, employment status and jobs to be replaced with better more beneficial jobs. I stick by that, London Regions sticks by that. I ask you again to be brave in the name of international solidarity, peace and justice, and support these resolutions.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dick. Does the region accept reference on 168? (*Refused*) On 169, the North West & Irish Region? Reference? Thank you.

*(Motion 169 was referred.)*

THE PRESIDENT: OK, colleagues. As Congress heard, the movers of those resolutions have decided to decline reference back. In that case I am asking Congress to oppose the resolutions. Can I take the votes separately? 166, all those in favour please show? All those against? That is lost.

*(Motion 166 was lost.)*

THE PRESIDENT: 167, all those in favour please show? All those against? That is lost.

*(Motion 167 was lost.)*

THE PRESIDENT: 168, all those in favour please show? All those against? That is lost.

*(Motion 168 was lost.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, 169 to be referred. Thank you very much. No one spotted the deliberate mistake except for one delegate, you got the prize! Colleagues, in the previous debates I did not take the vote on Composite 6 and Motion 86. Can I now move to the vote on those two? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*(Composite Motion 6 was carried.)*

*(Motion 86 was carried.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I just read a couple of announcements? Birmingham Region raffle, the first prize a SatNav, went to Jackie Watts of Birmingham Region, a television went to Mike Middleton, GMB Scotland, and the third prize, Dave Kempson, Birmingham, which is a camera, the fourth prize, a bottle

of brandy, to Anne Dean from GMB Scotland, a fifth prize, a bottle of GMB whiskey to Alan Roberts, London Region.

Colleagues, tonight do not forget it is the President's do, and it is at the Holiday Inn, at 7.30. All welcome. You just need your credentials. Thank you. I hope to see you all later.

Hang on, colleagues. If anyone is checking out of their hotels tomorrow morning there are free cloakroom facilities in the main foyer here at the Brighton Centre to leave your bags and cases. OK, colleagues. Thank you. Congress is closed till 9.30 tomorrow.

*Congress adjourned.*

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