

GMB

CONGRESS

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SIS. MARY TURNER MBE
(President)
(In the Chair)

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Held in:

The Brighton Centre,
Brighton

on:

Sunday, 10th June 2012
(Congress)

Monday, 11th June 2012
(Morning: Congress / Afternoon: Section Conferences)

Tuesday, 12th June 2012
(Section Conferences)

Wednesday, 13th June 2012
(Congress)

Thursday, 14th June 2012
(Congress)

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PROCEEDINGS
DAY TWO
(Monday, 11th June 2012)

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SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

MONDAY 11TH JUNE 2012

MORNING SESSION

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, please come to order. Has somebody kidnapped Southern Region? They will have to pay a penalty, won't they, if they are not here? I think the Regional Secretary will have to pay it. He will have to learn the hard way, won't he? *(Laughter)* We'll wait till he comes in. Any other Regional Secretaries missing? Tim is missing, I wonder why. *(Applause)* You just made it, Tim! *(Laughter)* You paid the penalty last year so you remembered.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Nice of you to turn up! *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: That has just cost you £1,000, Mr. Maloney! *(Cheers)* You've got to learn the hard way. If you're not here before the President you're in trouble. Good morning, colleagues. Will all those congregating over the back of London please take your seats? I hope you all had a nice evening last night.

I have a couple of announcements, or one in particular. Would delegates please take all your belongings with you at lunchtime? If you left anything in the hall last night and it is not here now, it is in Paul Kenny's room. Please ask at the Information Desk: false teeth, glasses, they have all been handed in. Yesterday, ladies, we missed out because if we had organised it right we could have suspended Congress for the women, and gone out and seen the bike race! *(Laughter)* We'll make sure next time we know the time and date.

This is a reminder, if you have a question on the balance sheet and auditor's report you need to put this in writing to the Congress office no later than 5.30 today.

I now welcome Helen Johnson to move Standing Orders Committee Report No.4.
Helen.

STANDING ORDERS REPORT NO.4

(Adopted)

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Good morning, colleagues. Withdrawn motions: the SOC has been informed that the following motion has been withdrawn, that is Motion 137, GMB Relationship with the Labour Party following Miliband's Comments on Spending Cuts, from Southern Region.

Emergency Motions: the SOC has accepted a further Emergency Motion as being in order for debate. This is Emergency Motion No.3 — Oppose New Surveillance Plans, standing in the name of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region.

On the subject of DVDs, videos, slide shows, etc., just a reminder to everyone that requests to play DVDs, videos, slide shows, etc., should be submitted to the SOC for approval prior to being shown at Congress. President, Congress, I move SOC Report No.4. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Helen. Anyone wish to make any comments? Does Congress agree the Standing Orders Report? (*Agreed*) Thank you, Helen. Thank you, Barry.

Standing Orders Report No.4 was ADOPTED.

**IAIN McNICOL, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE LABOUR PARTY,
ADDRESS TO CONGRESS**

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, there is not a lot I need to say about our next visitor and speaker, we all know him extremely well. He made a few cock-ups now and then when he was with us and will probably make a few more in his new job, but we will forgive him. It is my great pleasure to welcome Iain McNicol, the General Secretary of the Labour Party. First time speaker at Congress!

IAIN McNICOL: You have just taken my first line. (*Laughter*) Friends, Worthy President, Paul, thanks for the opportunity to come and address you today. I bring warm greetings on behalf of the Labour Party and wish you a successful week ahead here in Brighton.

As many of you know, before becoming General Secretary of the Labour Party I worked for this union, GMB, not just at Head Office but as an organiser across the South of England. It is a tradition of the Labour Party to come to GMB and say thanks for all that you do and I am pleased and privileged to do that here today.

I want to offer a personal word of thanks to the GMB and to Paul. My work for the union has shaped my outlook, it has taught me so much, and through the highs and lows of union organising brought great fulfilment, and it is great to be here with the best of the Trade Union movement.

In the few minutes I have this morning I want to set out the political challenges for the Labour Party in the coming months. There is a growing sense amongst people that this is a Government with something rotten at its heart. With every passing day it is clear that Ministers' enthusiasm for austerity is merely a mask for a much older desire. They are cutting our services not because they have to but because they want to. It is a classic Tory Liberal position, a small state and a free market. It makes no economic sense in a world recession. As Ed Balls has said loud and clear, you cannot make cuts on this scale and expect the economy to grow. Austerity is a façade. Thatcherism is the reality. For millions that means a slide into poverty, unemployment, and misery, just like the 1980s and just like the 1930s.

The Nobel Prize winning economist, Paul Krugman, argued last week in *The New York Times*, "This doctrine has an undeniable emotional appeal to people who are themselves comfortable." It is also completely crazy forgetting everything we have learned about economics these past 80 years but these are the times of madness

dressed in good suits. We are starting to see the real impact of this madness. Crime is rising, homelessness is rising, unemployment is rising, and NHS waiting lists are rising, and the Tories' answer, cut the taxes of the millionaires.

If you want to see a vision of the future under a Tory-led government look under London Bridge where unpaid Jubilee stewards bussed from Bristol had to change and sleep or lose their benefits. That is why Labour will be with you in your campaigning and on the streets of London for the TUC demonstration.

What should the political response be? Ed Miliband has led the Labour Party through these difficult times with great nerve and skill. He has shown courage in the face of News International. He was one of the very first to talk about the squeezed middle, the kind of hard-pressed workers represented by all of you. With Ed at the helm Labour has steered away from the doldrums of the worst defeat in decades only two years ago but it has not all been plain sailing. We lost the Bradford by-election. It was a tragedy Ken did not win in London. No one could have worked harder or done better. I am truly sorry that Boris Johnson is back in charge of a great city like London.

On that same election we gained seats in the London Assembly and on councils across the country. We won the mayoralities in Salford and Liverpool and significantly we did well in areas Labour needs to win parliamentary seats, places like Harlow and Hastings.

You know because you are connected to the communities that you serve; because you know the minds of the people, share their values, that the Labour Party will not win the next election by default. It will not drop into our laps. We need a compelling platform of policies and we need good solid working class candidates to go into parliament to represent us.

Jon Cruddas has been charged with the next stage of Labour policy review and I know that the GMB will play its part in developing those policies in a manifesto we can be proud of and put to the people, but ideas need to be matched by organisation. The lesson I took from the defeat in the Bradford by-election last month was simple, we are running an analogue campaign in a digital age. Our campaign was straight out of the 1990s playbook, it was off the shelf, by numbers. It may have worked in the 1990s but it was not good enough in Bradford. Why, because we failed to listen, to connect, to understand, to empathise, or to reflect the realities of people's lives. Labour had ceased to be properly anchored in the communities. It was seen as the establishment, not an insurgent urgent force for change. We had forgotten our purpose.

The truth is our electoral success last month revealed both how much we need to change and the risks of staying the same. We did well but we did well in circumstances we would not want to repeat at a General Election when more than 70% of people in Harlow did not vote at all. That does not show a solid base for greater change in the future. This is not the way that we will deliver change in the communities, earn permission to be heard, and gain support for the ideas we got involved in politics for in the first place.

Our super professional media orientated machine that helped drive the victories in 1997 and 2001 needs some serious re-engineering. It was based on an electoral model that focused solely on switchers and swing voters at the expense of understanding people's relationships with politics in their communities. This has to change. Labour had nearly two million conversations with people between January and May this year. Imagine how much more effective those would have been on the doorstep if they were more than just about voting intentions. This is a shift in campaigning and community organising that we need to achieve and that I will drive forward. It is what Ed Miliband has been championing. It was well understood to the founders of Labour with their roots in the unions and in community campaigning. It is what the trade unions, it is what GMB, have been doing for years.

The vote is a precious thing won by centuries of struggle and sacrifice. No one has the right to your vote; it must be earned, so that is our task. That is my task, to earn the votes of millions of people, to listen to their changing concerns, their hopes, their aspirations, to understand the realities of life at the sharp end. I am committed as General Secretary of the Labour Party to reform and re-find Labour so that once again it is a vibrant voice in every community, in every neighbourhood, and an agent for change in every street. So, as the saying goes, don't get angry, get organised. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Thanks to Iain and I have to say in the few short months Iain has been the General Secretary, Andy and I know through sitting on the NEC that democracy has opened up with information and consultation, and also with the staff. It is very important that Iain in his first task does raise the hopes and aspirations of our members because he is quite aware of what they are. Most of all, he needs help and that help is the small donations campaign that Iain is running. He is more interested in our working people and non-working people to have their say in the Party. Iain, we wish you well and you know the GMB will always support you when you are right and we will be very vocal when you are wrong. Take that whichever way you want and you are aware of that. Good luck, Iain, and thank you. *(Applause)*

I now move to item 2, 190, Media Ownership, London Region to move, 191, Murdoch, Northern Region to move, I will take speakers from the floor, and then call Margaret Gregg on Motion 191.

**SOCIAL POLICY – GENERAL
MEDIA OWNERSHIP
MOTION 190**

190. MEDIA OWNERSHIP

Congress notes the great work of Tom Watson MP who has doggedly worked to expose the appalling and shabby level of "phone hacking" by sections of the Murdoch press. This has led the accountability for these actions right to the door of the Murdoch family.

Congress further believes that the British press and media should be more accountable and reflect the views and opinions of the working class of Britain.

One way of restricting the power of these media moguls is to insist that all owners of both newspapers and television stations should be resident taxpayers in the country.

Further such ownership should be restricted so that we have a greater and more diverse press and media ownership, thus greatly restricting the power of these media moguls, and raising the quality of our press and media.

WHITTINGTON SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. K. HENDRY (London Region): This week the Leveson Inquiry hears testimony from some of the most powerful politicians, now or in the previous Labour government. Leveson's Inquiry into phone hacking has gone to the heart of Rupert Murdoch's media empire and exposing its rotten and corrupt workings. I know Tom will be talking about this in a minute. One of the most important aspects of Tom's new book looks at the colossal concentration of power in the hands of a tiny handful of very powerful men, and they are all men.

In the UK Murdoch controls 40% of the national newspaper circulation and clearly before Jeremy Hunt stepped in to stop it he was planning to take over a sizeable chunk of the TV media as well. Through all these outlets he exerts huge political power. I think he was referred to under the previous Labour government as being the 48th member of the Cabinet. Although the single most shocking aspect of the phone hacking was the hacking of Milly Dowler's phone and that is obviously the one that blew out the whole phone hacking scandal and resulted in the demise of *The News of the World*, I think what this motion tries to do is look at the broader impact and rather than the horrific impact on a single individual actually the much more insidious impact on British political economical and social life as a whole and the way in which working class and other voices are systematically excluded from how that world is reflected back to us and how we understand the complex political and economic forces shaping our lives.

It is not just Murdoch, it is all mainstream media which largely or solely purveys a view of the world which holds the current politicians' views and which does not allow other views to be expressed outside that narrow viewpoint. We do not get any kind of coherent challenge to austerity or any coherent systematic challenge to the need to cut the public deficit or the alternatives that are available to that. We just have those voices excluded.

What this motion does is starts by noting the work of Tom Watson and the way he has doggedly work to expose the appalling and shabby level of phone hacking by sections of the Murdoch press. This has led to accountability for these actions right to the door of the Murdoch family. Even in the last week or two we have heard of further arrests and further investigations being mounted as the circles widen ever further.

Congress further believes that the British press and media should be more accountable and reflect the views and opinions of the working class of Britain. One way of restricting the power of these media moguls is to insist that all owners of both newspapers and television stations should be resident taxpayers in this country. Further, such ownership should be restricted so that we have a greater and more diverse press and media ownership thus greatly restricting the power of these media moguls and raising the standard of our press and media.

I am just going to finish by reading from a recent magazine article which reviews Tom's book and ends by saying: "Only by taking the printing press facilities and the media in general out of the hands of millionaires and billionaires and putting them in the hands of the public, the working class supported by the labour Movement, will it be possible to establish a really liberated press and media." It is not about state controlled media, it is not about legal regulation, it is about proper working class control so that our voices are heard. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kim. Secunder.

SIS. D. PETERSON (London Region): President, Congress, for months now hardly a day goes by without reference to the Leveson Inquiry. This week we start with the political big guns. Today there is Osborne and Brown, and "Call me Dave" is up on Thursday. Osborne was busy building relations between the Tory leadership and the Murdochs before and after the 2010 election. Rupert Murdoch has already told the inquiry of the warm personal relationship he had with the Browns and of Murdoch's wife, Wendy, and Rebekah Brooks attending a pyjama party hosted by Sarah Brown at Chequers. This all went pear-shaped of course when *The Sun* broke the news about Brown's son and his illness and apparently that came about due to hacking the boy's medical records. I do not know where the Monopoly Commission is in all this but we have to break this monopoly with the Murdochs and the press moguls. As my colleague just said, we need it to go back to the people and have a proper diverse and better quality of press. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks Dott, with two Ts. I ask the mover of 191, Northern Region, to move.

MURDOCH MOTION 191

191. MURDOCH

This Conference believes that the scandal that has evolved within the media industry and, especially, but not exclusively, in News International, demonstrates that the Murdoch family are simply incapable of being fit and proper persons to run any media outlet in the UK.

Conference is appalled that politicians have, in effect, cosied up to the Murdochs over the last 30 years.

This conference believes that the Government should legislate so that moving forward non-UK nationals are barred from owning, or having, a majority stake in any UK media organisation outlet.

Conference further calls on the Labour Party to say unequivocally that it favours GMB policy and that this position will form part of its next General Election manifesto commitments.

HARTLEPOOL 4 BRANCH
Northern Region

(Referred)

SIS. J. JEPSON (Northern Region): Congress, for too long politicians have been running scared of the Murdoch empire. News International has hacked into phones and emails. They have hacked the phones of crime victims, they have hacked the phones of our brave armed services, they have given parents the heartache of deleting voicemails. For what, I ask? All for selling newspapers. They have sunk lower than the gutter. Congress, Murdoch has sacrificed every ounce of respect in the business empire. Politicians from left, right, and centre have sucked up to this family and let's be blunt, Congress, the last Labour government was as bad as anyone else for bowing down to them.

The Leveson Inquiry came about because Cameron saw the writing on the wall and is coming to its conclusion. The evidence to Leveson so far has been shocking. Self-serving former editors, like Kevin Mackenzie who is in denial, have been shown up for what they are, uncaring, unfeeling, and only interested in themselves. So it is with Murdoch. The Murdochs have taken to making money out of preying on others to a new low. A couple of MPs, Tom Watson and Chris Bryant, have stood out against Murdoch and to be perfectly honest these two MPs have taken the flack when many others with far less spine in them have ran for the hills.

The scandal of the last couple of decades of paying for private detectives to phone hack, of wining and dining top politicians, and police, have to stop. Quite honestly, what has been uncovered has shown us all the dangers of UK citizens being able to outlet across the media industry. Murdoch and others should be banned from cross-media ownership. Murdoch, in particular, has been shown as a rogue, employing people who will stop at nothing for a sale. We need Murdoch to go, we need Labour to signal that it is a policy of the media to ban cross-media ownership and to outlaw foreign ownership of the UK media, and like the going down of the sun I hope they go down too. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Secunder. Thank you, Worthy President.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, worthy president. Anyone wish to come in on the debate? No? Thank you. I call Margaret Gregg.

SIS. M. GREGG (CEC, Commercial Services): I am asking Congress to refer Motion 191 on Murdoch. We strongly agree with the motion. The Murdoch family are not fit or proper to run any media outlet in this country and we endorse the criticism of politicians, including those from the Labour Party who cosied up to Murdoch over the years. The motion calls for legislation to ensure that non-UK nationals are barred from ownership of UK media. This is the case in the USA. We can see how Murdoch found a way round that one easily. He became a US citizen. No doubt one of his delightful family will become a UK citizen if it was necessary.

The real problem is the lack of effective regulation and standards in the UK press which has allowed Murdoch to spread his tentacles across the British media and influence the politicians. We are assuming that the call on the Labour Party to favour GMB policy is asking them to favour GMB policy on regulation and accountability of the press and we would indeed support a call for Labour to deal with this issue in its

next manifesto. No doubt this will be taken up by Tom Watson, who will be addressing Congress this morning. As you know, Tom came to Congress last year and told us a chilling story of the power and cruelty wielded by News International and we look forward to hearing what he has to say today.

As we know the Murdoch story is unfolding day by day at the Leveson Inquiry. Stages one and two of the inquiry have been completed, examining phone hacking, the relationship between the press and the police, and potentially illegal behaviour. Currently, the inquiry has been looking at the relationships between the press and politicians. The CEC is asking you to agree to refer the motion until the outcome of the inquiry is complete. The final stage will be Leveson's recommendations for a more effective policy and regulation that supports the integrity and freedom of the press while encouraging the highest ethical standards. The outcome will influence future GMB policy towards the media and the CEC will make a statement to the 2013 GMB Congress. Therefore, we ask Congress, please, to refer Motion 191.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret. Is Northern Region prepared to refer? Thank you, Worthy President. (Agreed) Tommy, sit down. Oh, you are! (Laughter) Congress agree? (Agreed) Thank you. I now ask you to vote on 190, the CEC is supporting. Please show, all those in favour. Anyone against? That is carried. You know I love you, Tommy.

Motion 190 was CARRIED.
Motion 191 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: It now gives me great pleasure to move to the next business on the agenda and to welcome Tom Watson back to Congress. Tom is a Labour MP and a good friend of GMB. He has bravely campaigned for years to expose phone hacking and he has come to update us on this unfolding story. Tom, a few weeks after you spoke to us last year *The News of the World* was forced to close. Well, we will see what happens this time. Thank you.

TOM WATSON, MP, ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

TOM WATSON MP: Mary, it has been a remarkable year since that speech and I do not think any of us knew what would happen, but not a single media outlet reported our debate on News International and the scandal of the Dowlers. Since then we have had those resignations, we have had 40 arrests, we have had parliamentary reports, we have had the launch of a judge-led public inquiry in media ethics. I do not want to prejudice any trials but I can tell you there is a lot, lot more to come.

It is also strange since I last addressed you, Mary, that I was asked to join the Shadow Cabinet as Labour's Campaign Coordinator by Ed Miliband. I have to tell you no one was more shocked than me to be offered a job by Ed. I said to him, "Ed, are you offering me this job because of my forensic cross-examination of Rupert Murdoch?" He said, "No, Tom, I just need someone who is more detested by *The Sun* newspaper than me." (Applause/Laughter)

There is a serious point, though. “Detest” is a strong word but that is what *The Sun* is about. That is what the Murdoch empire is about. It is not just about the company’s dislike of people with differing views, but as Kim from London Region eloquently said, it is about power but their spluttering, snarling, spitting hatred is never far from the surface the way that Murdoch’s people do their business. I have to tell you a lot of times it is no fun to be at the end of it. I am not ashamed to say that at times they made me cry with their bile and their spite and when my 2-year old hid behind that sofa because he was scared of “that nasty man at the door”, I felt I had let him down, failed to protect him as a father should.

There have been some very dark and very lonely nights in the six years since News International first came for me personally. It is only through the support of my friends and family have I managed to keep going. The reason I say that to you now is that when I say family that includes you. I spent my whole life in this movement. Trade Unionism was always at the heart of our family and however bad things got these last few years there were always people in this movement, whole institutions in this movement, that I knew I could always rely on, that I could always turn to, that would never in any circumstances let me down, that whatever the cost would be on the side of righteousness against the most powerful media empire in the world. That, brothers and sisters, is what we mean by solidarity. It is as powerful as it is beautiful. *(Applause)* Without it I would never have got through and I thank you for it and I thank your General Secretary for it. I thank the GMB for your solidarity.

While we are on that subject, I need to tell you about the opposite of solidarity. The opposite of solidarity is contempt, indifference, oblivion. The opposite of solidarity is having teenagers sleeping under bridges in royal pageants and then paying them £2.20 an hour to sweep up the crumbs of political elite. While ministers danced in front of Gary Barlow the people at the bottom, the little people, other people, the kids who get rounded up like sheep, bussed in like cattle, then tipped out like vermin to sleep under bridges, those people do not get to go to the party. They were not in this case even other people; they were other people’s children.

That is still the difference between us and these Tories. They are still the same as they always have been. They do not live where we live. Their children do not go to our children’s schools. They do not compete in the same market for jobs with our kids any more than they did for education. It is all fixed up and effortless. The privilege never touches the sides and they never even see our children and our neighbours’ children sleeping under bridges for £2.20 an hour.

For them the market works perfectly. There is supposed to be a recession. It has just got worse; in fact, it double-dipped because they decimated the public sector, cutting too far and too fast like we said they were, but the millionaires in the Cabinet just got richer. So where is their problem? Their kids are not stuck on the dole. Their houses are not being repossessed. Their elderly parents have not gone back to turning off the heating. Everything in their world is unchanged and it is wonderful. So, the market works, they know that from their own experience, and in the world of George Osborne it must be the kids under the bridges that are to blame, other people’s kids who did not get right values from their parents, who are not the workers like the Cabinet’s Etonian elites. That is why they think they can dismantle and privatise the

NHS as they are doing. They do not use it, not like we do. The NHS is for other people's children, other people's parents.

That is why it does not matter to the Tories because what they are doing is not just about economics, it is about values. Both those things are what we are going to have to rebuild. They lied when they talked about broken Britain. It was not. We built schools and hospitals, and gave people work and rights, and hope, and a stake in our society. What the Tories meant by broken Britain was other people's children sleeping under bridges on the state because they are too lazy or stupid to go to Eton. That is when you know it is broken, when the values have reverted 30 years and we find ourselves back in that selfishness and greed of Thatcher's 1980s. When Ed Miliband becomes prime minister, and he will, we are going to have to rebuild this country. By the time the Tories have finished their project a future Labour government will have to rebuild Britain brick by brick, school by school, community by community. We are also going to have to rebuild the case for a fairer society, reconstructing the rights in the workplace that the Tories have taken away, rebuilding the consensus that the NHS should function on the basis that puts patients before profits, re-founding the link between working people and the Labour Party.

Murdoch and his relationship with politics exposed the shadow state, the secret informal links between elites and the leaders of all those institutions that were supposed to be there to protect families like the Dowlers, but does anyone really think the relationship just existed between the Murdochs? This scandal should teach us that despite the rhetoric we have one of the most closed systems of Government in the Western world. I want to see a Labour government crack it open, greater transparency of course, but better representation. That means more black and minority ethnic representation, more women and, yes, more working class voices in parliament. Why do we need those voices in parliament? Do you think those millionaires in the Cabinet remotely care about other people's children sleeping under bridges for £2.20 an hour, of course not, and that is why we need more working class representation in parliament, but let's also be honest with ourselves. We still have to convince parents that Labour ministers care more and we have to persuade them that our plan for the economy is better. That is why Ed Balls' plan for jobs and growth is so important. It shows people that they do have choices, there is a different plan to the one made in Downing Street by George Osborne, and when consumers are not spending there is no investment and exports are falling, Osborne's plan has failed. In his plan it is the children of other people that will pay the price.

Comrades, that is why we need solidarity. It is why our single unifying purpose should be to defeat the Tories by 2015. Thank you. (*Applause/Standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: May I say on behalf of Congress, Tom, thank you very, very much. I think some of us were aware of how you did suffer and it makes me very proud that the solidarity of the trade union Movement has always stood by you, and will. As you well know, the press is not just Murdoch; we also had it for many years with Maxwell and others, right the way through, as some of us can remember. Tom has to go back to London but he is coming back later. Iain, being the good soldier he is, is going to sit and listen to the political debate. Thank you very much, Tom, safe journey and safe journey back. Thank you.

(*Presentation amid applause*)

Congress, I believe Tom has gone now. There was a lot more Tom could say but because of police action he cannot do so. Believe you me, you are going to hear an awful lot more because he is going to continue right to the bitter end until it is cleared out. There are more arrests imminent. What he said at the beginning of his speech brought a lump to all our throats. We do a job and we do not expect our families to suffer because of what we do and care about as they are so important to us. We all understand where he is coming from. Congress, with that, we will move on and Tom will be back later, with his guitar I hope, and not the bagpipes, Billy!

We now move on and I call Motion 127, London Region to move, Composite 12, to be moved by Northern Region, South Western Region to second, priority in debate to Midland Region, 131 Cuts, Northern Region to move, Composite 13, Labour Party and the Public Sector Pay Freeze, London to move, Yorkshire to second, and priority in debate to Birmingham. After these have moved I will then be moving to 136, 142, 144, 146, 147, 149, and 152. Bingo! Could you start coming to the front, please? Have I gone over a page? Oh, dear. I have. We will start with these and I will go back. I did not do that deliberately, Barbara. I promise I didn't!

**POLITICAL: LABOUR PARTY
BOGUS COALITION CLAIMS
MOTION 127**

127. BOGUS COALITION CLAIMS

Congress is deeply concerned at the unremitting claims by the Coalition that the last Labour Government is to blame for every unpopular policy they introduce, not just economic but their whole spectrum of punitive and negative policy initiatives they propose including the NHS, Education, Housing, VAT increases, travel costs, etc.

Seeking to ignore the fact that the banking and finance failure was international and that many of their policy decisions are not economically dependant, and that their dishonest claims are used to offset their own responsibilities and failures.

Congress agrees that if these claims go ahead unchallenged the damage to the Labour Movement will be immense and therefore urges the General Secretary and the CEC to impress upon the Labour Party their need to constantly and vigorously denounce all and every false claim by the Coalition Ministers. They owe this to their loyal supporters suffering at the hands of this dishonest and inept Government.

HENDON BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

SIS. B. BENHAM (London Region): President, Congress, few of us can remember a government which has introduced so many savage, punitive, negative, and discriminatory measures as this Coalition has done, and let us not forget, colleagues, most of these measures were not in the Conservative or Liberal Democrats manifesto. The excuse for any disparaging policy is always the same, it is always the fault of the last government because of the burden of national debt it left.

The GMB was no lover of the last government and we let them know this on many occasions. We fundamentally disagreed with many of the policies but we gave credit where it was due. The worldwide financial crash in 2008 was not caused by the last government, it was caused by the greedy bankers who made too many sublime loans and gambled the world's wealth just to pay themselves telephone number bonuses. In short, colleagues, the financial crisis was caused by the very people who today donate heavily to the Conservative Party and in doing so avoid redress for the destruction they initiated. Such destruction needed swift remedial action and the last government took that action a lot faster than most. The £500bn bank rescue package opposed by the Conservatives ensured no bank would fail and so avoided millions of mortgages being pulled in. The temporary 2.5% cut in VAT and the car scrapping scheme ensured economic stimulation. That left a lot of debt which has to be repaid and even had Labour won the last election they would have had to address this and they would have done it but in a so much better way than the Coalition.

The measures this Government are putting through are not wholly the fault of the last government and it is pulling a fast one for the Coalition to make such a claim for every measure it introduces. The measures they are taking are not economically viable. They do not stimulate growth and are creating a bigger divide between rich and poor. Congress, we must be proactive and vigorously denounce each and every bogus claim. Let us heighten the profile of the Labour Party and its supporters by showing how dishonest and inept the claims of Cameron, Clegg, and Osborne, are. Colleagues, please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Barbara. Can I have the seconder, please?

BRO. J. RICHMOND (London Region): President, Congress, as the mover of this motion said, the GMB disagreed with a lot of the policies of the last Labour Government, the cosyng up with the Murdochs, the love affair with the markets, the deregulation of the financial markets, the introduction of academies, the continued privatisation in local government and the NHS, and the shameful decision not to repeal all the Thatcher anti-trade union legislation. At Congress after Congress from 1997 we put across our message but sadly, colleagues, that message was ignored. There was some good policy, for example, the Minimum Wage, although even here we disagreed with discrimination against younger workers. What is not in doubt, however, was the bold action needed to save this country and indeed the rest of the economy, from the fiscal collapse following the disgraceful actions of banks and bankers. The last Labour government took that action opposed by those who seek to govern us today. The then prime minister was berated by the opposition politicians and was slated by the very right-wing media in this country but received an international state award from the UN. Funny old world, isn't it, colleagues? The action of the last Labour government left the country in debt without good governance and management debt and because the Coalition has mismanaged every budget, every decision, and every policy, the debt is now unmanageable. They diverted attention away from the incompetence of everyone in the last government; that, Congress, is simply not true.

We should publicise every bit of misinformation from this government so that we can build or rebuild the trust in our party and enable us to be the next party of government. Is it not true, colleagues, that if the last Labour government was so

inept, and so bad, and so blameworthy, Cameron should have won the 2010 election? Of course, it is and he did not. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jim. Congress, I apologise for that and with your permission I will go back and start where I should have started. Sorry, Barbara, I did not mean that. I will call Composite 11 to be moved by London, 118 MPs Internships, to be moved by London, Yorkshire to second, 119 to be moved by Northern, 120 to be moved by Northern, 123 to be moved by Northern, 124 to be moved by Northern, 125 to be moved by London, and 126 to be moved by Yorkshire Region. Thank you.

**POLITICAL: GENERAL
WORKING CLASS MPs
COMPOSITE 11**

C11. Covering Motions:

- 114. PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION (*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*)
- 115. MORE WORKING CLASS MPS (*London Region*)

WORKING CLASS MPs

This Conference is alarmed at the lack of working class MP's currently sitting in the House of Commons and coming forward as Parliamentary candidates.

We should consider implementing a reserved place for working class candidates fitting the appropriate criteria. This would help to address the imbalance between candidates with the advantage of personal financial resources for marketing and literature (i.e. Bankers and Barristers) as opposed to our working class members, who lack the financial means to promote themselves. They are currently at an unfair disadvantage, unable to avail themselves of the opportunity for PPC.

In the selection process for Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPC's) qualifying conditions for supporting statements should be weighted in favour of GMB members with a substantial and established history of activism and member representation, as opposed to candidates who have joined the GMB prior to the selection process.

We note the inclusion of working class history in our education programmes, but believe that a greater knowledge of our movement's political and social history would encourage more participation in the selection process by members.

This Congress is asked to direct the union to take positive steps to address the under representation of working class MPs, in the same way the Labour Party addresses the under representation of women with all women lists, and reserved places for Black and Minority candidates.

We call on the CEC to bring forward a report to next year's Congress on preparing activists and members for Parliament and public office and on the role of working class political and social history in our education programmes.

(Carried)

SIS. H. PURCELL (London Region): Congress, we are experiencing a crisis in political representation for ordinary working people. When the Labour Representation Committee was formed in 1900 its founding principles were to ensure the representation of working class opinion in the House of Commons and to coordinate attempts to support MPs sponsored by trade unions. Its formation was the culmination of years of struggle and hard work by working people, trade unions, and socialists. But let's face it, in the aftermath of Blair and New Labour we as working people no longer believe that our opinion has been listened to, let alone represented. Many of us have turned away from the Labour Party in disillusionment and despair. Between 1997 and 2010 nearly five million people stopped voting for the Labour Party. The number of motions on this year's preliminary agenda calling for disaffiliation or withdrawal of funding demonstrates the strength of feeling amongst disenchanted Labour Party supporters and members. Most of these motions have no doubt been fuelled by the Party leader's recent stances on public spending cuts. Nothing seems to have changed, even when in opposition. Would you not feel that our voice or our opinions are being listened to and represented? The reality is that the social composition of the representatives is not representative of the UK. Politics has become professionalised and the Labour Party has become dominated by the professional middle and political classes. The falling amount of Labour votes has matched the decline in representation of people from manual and clerical working backgrounds. According to recent analysis Labour share of the lower income earners' votes at the last election was down by one-third to just under 40%. Today there are fewer and fewer working class MPs sitting in our parliament. Our candidates no longer come through the grassroots and many do not grasp or understand the issues that ordinary working people face on a day-to-day basis. They have no history in the labour Movement and little experience of the workplace. Many of today's Labour MPs are career politicians who have probably taken a degree in philosophy, politics, and economics and then gone on to be unpaid interns, policy officers, or special advisers for other MPs. They may know a lot but they understand nothing. A recent survey of the occupational background of MPs revealed that nearly a third of Labour MPs have a background in politics, which is hardly representative of the occupations at large. Today's politicians are people who have access to resources, education, peer groups, the party's elite, and by no means least finances. They are out of touch with the lives of real people and do not understand what it is to struggle in the true sense of the word; maybe some of them do but, let's face it, it sure does not come across. The complex and expensive selection procedures for prospective parliamentary candidates do not help or encourage lower income working people with the average cost of selection being around £5,000, not to mention the cost in time.

Congress, this motion asks for your support to restore working class opinion and influence in our Labour Party. We need to support candidates who have come through the grassroots and have an established record of activism and member representation in trade unions and our communities. We need to give our members and activists the education and confidence to stand for parliament and public office. Most of all, we need actively to identify who will be our voice and do everything we can to ensure that they stand. Congress, let's take control and harness this crisis in representation and make sure we support and stand candidates who will represent the interests of us as ordinary working people and who will fight for social justice and equality. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Secunder.

BRO. D. SIM (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region): First time to Congress, first time speaker. *(Applause)* President, Congress, the composite calls for a campaign to re-establish the ethos of working class representation in parliament. If one looks at the current make-up of MPs it is self-evident that there is a huge imbalance. Out of the 29 Cabinet members, 23 are millionaires, 34% of MPs went to fee-paying schools, including Oxbridge and Eton. We have to elect more working class MPs. The way forward for this is to follow the proposals of the composite. Political education for activists in both our history and our aims for the future is a must. Such knowledge and understanding would instil confidence for members to stand for office within all areas of the political arena and realise their aspirations. Such a programme has to have a support system that aids candidates every step of the way from selection to election and beyond.

Comrades, the trade union Movement is facing massive savage attacks on all that our forebears fought for. We can and must fight back. A fight-back must come from the whole trade union Movement but we, in the GMB, can be the vanguard of the battles to come. We have the expertise within our ranks to do this drawn from years of experience whether it be as an activist or fulltime officer. The knowledge and skills gained from the likes of people sat in this room today must be harnessed to start the fight back. Comrades, we need more working class MPs. We can fight back and we must fight back if we are to maintain a just and fair society for all our class. Comrades, I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 118.

MPs INTERNSHIPS MOTION 118

118. MPS INTERNSHIPS

Congress understands that with the lack of employment for young people.

Many employers will exploit the situation and employ some of these young people under the term "internship" which are unpaid, and in many cases pay only expenses.

Congress is therefore totally opposed to Labour MPs employing young people under such conditions.

We firmly believe that any MP who wishes to employ a member to his or her staff, should at the very least pay the minimum wage.

Further if we are aware of our sponsored MPs exploiting young people in this manner, Congress instructs the CEC to withdraw our support for these Labour MPs.

EDMONTON/ENFIELD BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. OSBORNE (London Region): First time at Congress, first time speaker. *(Applause)* I must say I am very privileged to be here. Internships have for far too

long been used by MPs and others for cheap unpaid labour. This is totally unacceptable. The GMB has always campaigned for a fair day's pay for a fair day's work and we should expect Labour and GMB sponsored MPs to put this into practice when they employ young people to work in their office. We are not against young people getting valuable work experience but we are against them being exploited, but internships are not just about pay, it is also about social engineering. The lack of proper wage rates means that only those young people with rich enough parents will ever be able to take these positions. The sons and daughters of low and middle income families will never become an unpaid intern however much they would like to get this sort of experience. I say enough is enough. Our MPs should stop this practice and pay the interns at least the minimum wage or, better, the living wage. Stop exploiting young people and allow all young people irrespective of background the chance to be an intern. If you aspire to be a Labour and GMB sponsored MP, then pay your interns. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Jamie, well done. You can sleep now tonight. He has been awake half the night worrying about getting up here. *(Applause)* He made a mistake by telling me this morning. Well done. Secunder.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 119 to be moved by the Northern Region.

INTERVENTION MOTION 119

119. INTERVENTION

This Conference condemns the Tory-led Coalition Government for its failure to directly intervene to support British companies.

This is the most difficult trading situation since before the Second World War and this Conference believes that leaving matters to globalisation simply misses the point.

This Conference urges the Government to act proactively with economic support to help British companies in the domestic and foreign markets.

In addition, this Conference demands that the Labour Party reflects this motion in its policy-making process; that process on this is reported back to the Central Executive Council.

NEWCASTLE GENERAL APEX BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. G. MANUEL (Northern Region): Congress, the failure of the Coalition Government to promote British companies in domestic and foreign markets shows the respective political parties within the Coalition for what they are. The Tories are no friends of workers. The Millionaires Row, that is the Tory part of the Cabinet, know absolutely nothing about struggling to make ends meet. The LibDems, who are the Tories in orange clothing, believe in a free market and individuals making their own decisions. They regard the notion of collective worker communities as a threat. Congress, supporting British companies ensuring they get preferred bidder status at

home and abroad is the right thing to do. If they can do it in those countries that are our competitors, so can we.

I remember 20 years ago the DTI that is going to be replaced by something called the Department for British Industry, we should be seeing what can be done to support British companies in bidding for work. Whenever the Tories are in power they only want to know what is the cheapest cost. Well, we all know that cheapness costs more in the end. It is a scandal that in manufacturing, commercial services, or public services, we buy from abroad, we give no support but other countries support their companies to win work here. Congress, it really is the economics of the madhouse. It must stop. It has to end. We need Labour in opposition to commit to change in its policymaking. We need to call them to account and we need this process to be reported back through our policymaking machinery. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Secunder.

BRO. D. NELSON (Northern Region): Congress, this is the worst economic conditions since the 1920s. Since the 1920s we have had protection and then free trade. We have had fixed exchange rates. We have had floating exchange rates. We have had nationalisation and then privatisation. Now we have free markets and globalisation. No doubt we will go round again on this merry-go-round. One thing is constant, though, the spivs at the top are making a mint and the vast majority of us are paying for it. Congress, we need much more focus on supporting British companies to get work. We need our economy to turn around and grow. That will not happen on its own. The free market has been shown to be weak at delivering growth in a crisis. Intervention must be a cornerstone of government economic policy. It needs to be a central part of the Labour's policy. Congress, Labour should not be afraid to promote British industry, to invest in it and to get work. I urge your support. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Motion 120, Nationalisation, to be moved by Northern Region.

NATIONALISATION MOTION 120

120. NATIONALISATION

This Conference notes the changing economic and political landscape, which is increasingly calling into question the direction that the UK economy is travelling in.

The last thirty years has seen the increasing tide of the free market and globalisation, which has eroded the British manufacturing base, seen privatised UK services and increased foreign ownership of key parts of the UK economic infrastructure.

This Conference views, with increasing concern, the reliance that the UK economy has on foreign ownership of British industry.

Furthermore, Conference believes that in a globalised marketplace, there is nothing to stop foreign-owned companies deciding to migrate out of the UK economy if there is a slump in World Trade.

This Conference, therefore, calls on nationalisation of key parts of British industry to be a serious economic alternative to failed free-market policies that have become discredited over the last three decades, and a resurgence of a mixed UK economy.

Conference calls on the Labour Party to place nationalisation as a key part of its economic policy agenda as part of a sustainable, economic policy in writing its next General Election manifesto

SOUTH EAST NORTHUMBERLAND GENERAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. MALE (Northern Region): Congress, successive governments seem to be happy just to let things rumble along lacking the political will to make things happen. As this motion lays out on key issues you can either leave well alone and let the market work itself out or have a policy of getting stuck in and making things happen. It is the latter approach that I am pushing for. Congress, look at the key parts of British industry and compare it with our competitors. We play by the rules. Our competitors take advantage of us. We in the UK have companies owned abroad with their profits exported into tax havens. Our competitors regulate in such a way that companies have to operate and have a stake in local communities. Congress, whether it be energy, transport, utility, or defence, successive governments have used privatisation to create competition. However, workers, communities, and consumers do not benefit because cartels are formed through rigged markets. That is a reality of many key parts of the economy today and to cap it all we have taxpayers' money being used to prop up nationalised companies, like the Four Seasons in the care sector. Congress, we are taken for a ride and we are being fleeced before our very eyes. Nationalisation long seen by Labour as a swear word should be back on the agenda as a real policy option. If the free market is not delivering for British people and we are left to foreign ownership that could up sticks tomorrow nationalisation should be back on the agenda. If it is already in the banking sector, why not elsewhere? Let's see what our Labour makes of this. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Maureen. Secunder.

BRO. P. PIERCE (Northern Region): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)* Congress, we have a campaign in Northern Region that has nationwide implications and that is being led by Bridget Phillipson, a GMB member and Labour MP for Houghton and Sunderland South constituency. Bridget's campaign is to focus on the amount of public money going into bus companies in the former nationalised industry but where there is a cartel with a coordinated pricing structure and with bus services being cut for the passenger prices are going up. So, the passenger is losing out, the taxpayer is getting poor value for money, the competition is rigged by a few players in the market. In effect, Congress, the taxpayer is rewarding a cosy little arrangement between a few bigwigs in these companies. They are just picking up the fat cat packages for rigging the market. To be honest, Congress, it is no better for you and me in the bus industry than when the state had a role in it. This example of the bus industry is typical where things have gone wrong. The taxpayer should not be rewarding those who get rich by rigging the markets and because we are consumers we pay twice for the pleasure. Support the motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Well done. The mover of Motion 123, Public Works, Northern Region to move?

PUBLIC WORKS

MOTION 123

123. PUBLIC WORKS

This Conference notes that the effect of the Coalition Government's public expenditure cuts have been to decimate the very public works' projects that could help the economy grow at an effective rate

At the time, when UK citizens are living through the worst economic crisis since the 1920s, this conference believes it is inconceivable that any self-respecting government would not do all it can to initiate public works' programmes to build UK infrastructure and put people back to work.

This conference calls for a massive and expedition roll-out of UK public works' programmes, for the Labour Party to commit to such a policy agenda and for progress to be monitored and reported back through the Central Executive Council.

NEWCASTLE CITY LA BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. W. DONOGHUE (Northern Region): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)* Congress, the loss of thousands of public sector and construction related jobs is a betrayal of the communities across the country. The fabric of our communities desperately needs rebuilt and in many areas there is land to be built on where regeneration is needed. Half of all projects have been scrapped by the Coalition government. More spending cuts will follow. Less than 20% of the Coalition's planned spending cuts have had an effect. Congress, the multiplier effect of public works reduces unemployment, increases consumer spending, and boosts investment. With youth unemployment at its worst for decades the country needs a boost for jobs. In many of our communities there are schools and hospitals that need repair and rebuilt. Land that has become derelict by receiverships and bankruptcy needs to be built on. The transport infrastructure needs to be redeveloped yet the Coalition believe that their priority is to cut spending and put public money into banks that do not lend and yet still pay themselves massive bonuses. The massive reduction in public spending and the ending of capital projects increases unemployment, increases the cost of unemployment, and reduces the tax revenue. It is the Coalition government's recipe that the cold hard face of Tory/LibDem Britain is laid bare before us all to see.

We need a big rollout of vital public service works projects, we need Labour to set their policy agenda in favour of projects across the UK that are going to rebuild our communities, boost employment, reduce welfare costs, and increase the tax revenue. It is called growth. Congress, Labour must not follow the current Treasury's view that nothing can be done. Labour must set the economic agenda. No more sucking up to the City. No more saying, "We can't make promises." Labour must embrace a public works programme that will last. We must lobby and use our energies to persuade Labour of the merits of the public works programme and we should monitor this area of policy and report back to the CEC. If Labour cannot stand up for our

communities then we should not stand up for them. Please support. I move.
(*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Wayne. Secunder.

BRO. P. RAMSAY (Northern Region): First time delegate, first time speaker.
(*Applause*) Thank you. Congress, as the mover of this says, public works programmes are essential for the economy's recovery. In the Northern Region as in other regions there are people who want to invest. If the banks can be forced to lend, there are people wanting to invest. We have businesses and owners who are waiting to regenerate areas along the banks of the River Tyne but the political will is not there, mainly from a Tory mayor. Congress, we do not need PFI or Private Equity, we do not need spivs using taxpayers' money to borrow money and then put their profits offshore with nothing put back into the way of paid taxes. We want a big rollout of publicly funded capital projects that will last and that will employ workers. Congress, we need to build up economic growth. We must not let things happen naturally and leave matters to the market. That is what they did in the 1920s and it took a generation to recover. We need the current generation of Labour's front bench to set the agenda and to stand up for employment and to give hope to our people. Please support this motion. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. I now move to 124, Foreign Policy.

FOREIGN POLICY MOTION 124

124. FOREIGN POLICY

This Conference calls on the Labour Party to adopt a policy on foreign intervention that is similar to that of Harold Wilson's government in its decision not to intervene in Vietnam.

The lessons from UK military policy intervention in recent conflicts are for such intervention to become confused and lead to overstretch in UK armed forces.

Conference calls for greater rigour in how policy on use of UK military personnel in foreign conflicts is developed, so that UK military personnel and families are not subjected to the closed ranks of the Ministry of Defence and UK citizens are protected against politicians whose personal views may be swayed by outside influence such as right wing US Neo-Conservatives.

This Conference calls on our representatives to lobby within Labour Party structures for this to become Labour Party Policy.

REMPLOY NORTH BRANCH
Northern Region

(*Carried*)

BRO. R. SPEAKMAN (Northern Region): Can I be cheeky and ask for the right to be read first? Middlesbrough support. I want to Show Racism the Red Card. Never mind. I want to be cheeky. Thanks.

Congress, in the last 30 years, or so, this country has been involved in seven major wars or conflicts around the world. Many brave service personnel have given their lives and many families have lost loved ones. Some of these conflicts have been with the United Nations or NATO mandates. At least two major conflicts, Afghanistan

and Iraq, have led to the missions being different as our involvement devoured the so-called mission creep. Congress, I believe it is important to learn the lessons of our history. Part of that history is about tackling aggression when it threatens us most. It also means not getting involved when the reasons for intervention are not proven. The doctrine of intervention in conflicts around the world has become UK government policy over the last decade. I think that in learning the lessons of recent history those in Westminster would do well to learn from another former Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson. He chose not to join in with the American military machine when the Vietnam War started. Many attacked Wilson as a peacemaker. However, Congress, in my view he showed great foresight and determination not to be dragged into what became a war that would cost the lives of many thousands and leave many more injured and maimed; and by the way he saved countless British service personnel in the process. Congress, as talk rages about what to do about Iran, we should be very careful about getting involved in a long and bloody Middle East conflict. Sometimes diplomacy and tackling the real problems like poverty are more important than shock and awe. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Richard. Secunder.

BRO. R. SCURR (Northern Region): First time delegate, first time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, for too long the UK has been the poodle of the American defence establishment and when Liam Fox and his personal adviser were cosyng up to the neo-Cons in the USA the cat was firmly let out of the bag. Right-wingers in America talking to right-wingers in this country is a recipe for disaster. Congress, we know that we have thousands of members and families, as well as countless local communities, dependent on defence and we should never forget that. The issue in this motion is the view that we as a nation are continually getting dragged into conflicts by the right-wing military establishment, mainly in the States, and at least one major war in the last ten years has been based on very poor intelligence, settling old scores, or media headlines, not on the basis that it was the right thing to do. Currently, the UK government is exporting defence jobs abroad because of the way they hand out the contracts. Our members are getting a raw deal and whether it be fighting wars or supporting them, we get little from cosyng up to neo-Conservatives in America or Britain. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Raymond. Well done. Motion 125, Political, London Region.

POLITICAL MOTION 125

125. POLITICAL

This Congress calls for the GMB Union to help get a vote of no confidence in the present Government as it is bringing the country to the brink of a Dictatorship.

DAGENHAM MOTOR INDUSTRIES BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. PRESHAW (London Region) moving the Motion, said: This motion is talking about bullies and dictatorships with the MPs that represent this country. Being

British as a nation we have always fought against tyrants, despots, and dictators. When we went to the polls in 2010 we created an enemy within. The last Labour government became complacent and what we succeeded in doing was bringing in a new Fuhrer as in *David Work With*, sorry, *Work For Me Cameron* and his, *I want to be a real boy*, *Pinocchio Clegg*. Together they are ripping the soul out of the ordinary working class person with their dictatorial passing of rape and pillage. Dictators destroy sources of learning, what with student fees going up to nine grand, our kids cannot afford that, the lack of investment in our young people, and the rape of our pensions and the NHS, for their friends the bankers.

When they talk about privatisation and work in the private sector, it is a return to mediaeval times when the surfs worked for feudal landlords. With the removal of social housing now they are looking at social cleansing. We have no social housing in some boroughs. This is for people that are less equipped to find a decent liveable paying wage being moved to what I would term a ghetto. There is the bullying and disregard of our Remploy people, disabled people, where is their dignity? I see these people as no different now to that nasty little Austrian painter and decorator. I would call for Congress to press for an early election, let the people of this country decide now that they have had enough of this pair of dick — dictators, sorry — and restore some pride and decent conditions for the working class and those less fortunate in our society, and stop the rape and pillage of our greatest asset, the people that make the wealth of this country. I ask you to support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder.

BRO. J. OSBORNE (London Region): This Tory-led Coalition government is a disaster, leading us into a double-dip recession with their austerity programme, creating mass unemployment, slashing public services, and raiding our pension schemes and making us work longer. I could go on. You all know what effect their policies are having on our members' day-to-day lives. What we need is to campaign to wipe the public school smirks off their faces and out of office. They have said the Coalition will stay in power until 2015 but we cannot wait another three years. We know that there are tensions between the Tories and their lapdogs in the Liberal Democrats. We need to exploit those tensions. We need to leave Brighton campaigning to bring this Government down as soon as possible. This country deserves better governance and we must play our part in achieving that aim. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jamie. Well done. You can have two nights' sleep now. Can I ask the movers to move 126?

CALL FOR A GENERAL ELECTION MOTION 126

126. CALL FOR A GENERAL ELECTION

This Conference, when the ConDems were elected to run the country they had to form a government just to sort out the economic situation in the UK. Where they do not have the mandate to run the country in the way they are doing, we call on the GMB to start calling for a new general election.

(Carried)

BRO. A. GLEDHILL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region): As I said yesterday, at the last General Election people were upset with Labour and they split the vote or they abstained from voting Labour. No one would ever have that this split would lead to the LibDems and the Constupatives forming their ConDem Party but they did, and we are condemned, by their way of thinking. The disgraceful decisions that they make on spending cuts, the changes to employment laws, changes to trade union legislation and changes to employment tribunals, are all designed to attack the working classes.

There is an old saying, *Birds of a feather flock together*. That is what the millionaires do, unfortunately. They tell us that the millionaires are just poor people with money and we are all in this together. We have formed a government to sort out the economic situation by making the masses pay for it. If you are not in work we will steal your benefits from you. If you are disabled, we will throw you on the scrapheap. We will destroy Remploy and the NHS, and the Armed Forces, and the public services, but it is all for your own good because we can then reduce the country's deficit and people do not have to live in poverty.

It is strange thinking unless of course none of the decisions that are made affect you, in fact rich people are benefiting by getting richer from these decisions. This so-called government do not have a mandate to run the country in the way they are doing. The manifestos are just papers and Clegg is Cameron's puppy. So, Congress, we the GMB members have to call loud and clear for a new General Election as early as possible so we can reverse the rot and help the Labour Party to become credible again, listen to the voters, not carry on with diluted cuts agendas, but to rebuild the economy with job creation and stability, good public services with fairness and equality for all. Congress, we can do this. Thank you. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tony. Secunder.

BRO. D. McLEAN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region): Congress, following the last General Election no political party won a mandate to form a government. The Tories used the LibDems to help them get in power, an offer Nick Clegg gladly accepted. Since then we have seen both parties abandon their voters and push through rightwing policies attacking the poorest and needy in our society the most. We are seeing the backdoor privatisation of our schools through the Government's academy programme and despite David Cameron's pre-election promise that he would not touch the NHS they are pushing through policies that will eventually break up and privatise large sections of the NHS. We have a government of incompetence who have had to do so many U-turns that I do not have the time or the will to list them here today. Recent revelations show backroom political dealings, personal gain for MPs, and dwindling support for both parties in the opinion polls. Colleagues, this Government does not have the support of the people it represents, the GMB should shout from the rooftops for a General Election to remove this unpopular and incompetent government. Please support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Okay, colleagues, I now ask is there anyone who wishes to come in on the debate?

BRO. T. PLUMB (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region): I came down here with a clear vision of what I wanted to say from the branch members and from the branch meeting that I had, and because my motion was ruled out of order because it is not a rules change year, I still wanted to get up and say what I thought. After yesterday watching me wave my hands around I am going to try and keep them stuck on this podium today. I spoke to Paul Kenny last night and what Paul said to me I was impressed with. I think the message that Paul gave me has not got out to the wider labour and union movement. I am frustrated, as Paul said, and I am angry. I have been a trade unionist for 25 years, I have been in various unions, and I have always virtually been a rep. I did believe after 1997, when I was like everybody else in this room jumping about thinking we have a Labour government in, the first Labour government I had had since I started working, that things were going to change and things were going to get a lot better. For me they ain't got a lot better and there ain't been a right lot of change, and from being an ardent Labour supporter I am now disillusioned and I do not know where we go from here. I would just like from my branch, and from I like to think a lot of people across the country, to send a message to the Labour Party that things need to change or they are not going to get back in at the next General Election and we are going to get stuck with Tories again like we did through all the '80s when I was there. We are going to get stuck with them again and I will blame the Labour Party. Things need to change. That is all I want to say. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Terry, I can give you my assurance, and Andy's, that what you have conveyed we have conveyed personally, and Iain will vouch for that. Yes, I was very angry and so were a lot of people round that table. We understand your frustration but, believe you me, the message will be conveyed again. Okay. I give you that promise. I now call John McDonnell on Motion 124.

BRO. J. McDONNELL (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, the CEC is asking Congress to support Motion 124 but with a qualification. The reason why the CEC is asking for a qualification is that the British military forces have been deployed in the last decade, most notably in Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Much criticism has been made of Labour's role, quite rightly so, in these conflicts and their lack of internal policy coordination leading up to the conflicts. The motion calls for the Labour Party's policymaking structures to be strengthened so that the Party have a greater say in the processes that deploy British military personnel. As we know, Congress, when the fog of war cleared from the battlefields of Iraq the clouds of doubt descended on Downing Street and Tony Blair, who misled parliament and the British people and as a result of that decision to go to war thousands of men, women, and children killed and maimed. From my point of view, 56 years ago I was called up by a Tory government, a Tory government in conspiracy with the French government and the Israel government decided to attack Egypt and all the Egyptians wanted to do was to run their own affairs. That was their canal, after all.

Congress, decisions taken by any democratic government in relation to foreign wars must be never again taken lightly and should be based on sound information and intelligence and when brave men and women are sent into these conflicts this is the

very least that we as a country owe to them. As we have seen too many times on TV coffin after coffin bringing our service personnel home, some of them just turned 18, teenagers, just left school, could not get a job. They did not go fight a war, they went because they could not get a job. Many have suffered appalling injuries, legs blown off, arms blown off, blinded, which will change their lives and their family's lives for ever.

Now down to business. The qualification is that it is sensible to have greater rigour in our policy on involvement in foreign conflicts but should be viewed in conjunction with Britain's role in the United Nations and other international organisations. Congress, with this in mind, the CEC asks you to support Motion 124 but with that qualification. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, John. I come now to the vote. Does Northern Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I will now move to the vote. Congress, listen carefully. On Composite 11, 118, 119, 120, 123, 124, 125, 126, they are all being supported and Northern Region supports the qualification. All in favour please show. Anyone against? They are carried. Thank you very much.

Composite 11 was CARRIED.

Motion 118 was CARRIED.

Motion 119 was CARRIED.

Motion 120 was CARRIED.

Motion 123 was CARRIED.

Motion 124 was CARRIED.

Motion 125 was CARRIED.

Motion 126 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, can I move to where I started. As we have had Motion 127 moved by the London Region, I call back the movers of Composite Motion 12, Northern Region, the seconders and those with priority in debate. I apologise for earlier. I also call Motions 131, Composite Motion 13 and then to Motion 136. Then I will try to get out of it, worthy President, but I did not manage it.

BRO. W. HUGHES (Northern): Can I say how pleased I am that my good friend, Iain, has stayed for the debate. Let me point out that each and every delegate has access to Labour supporters or potential Labour supporters. That is the grass roots. That is what you have heard this morning, and if you don't want to hear any more, I don't mind if you put your hands over your ears, but listen to the truth. Take the message back from the grass roots because it is about time that they did listen to us. (*Applause*)

LABOUR PARTY COMPOSITION MOTION 12

C12. Covering Motions:

128. THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE NEEDS OF OUR MEMBERS (*Midland & East Coast Region*)

129. LABOUR OPPOSITION (*Northern Region*)

130. THE LABOUR PARTY (*South Western Region*)

LABOUR PARTY

This Conference recognises that whilst the living standards of our members are under attack, our Union must strengthen its political voice and must, in particular, take steps to ensure that the Labour Party is properly responsive to the needs of our members.

GMB members are increasingly frustrated that the myriad of issues that are causing pain and misery across communities are not being effectively tackled in Parliament against the Coalition Government.

Conference is concerned that in Parliament the Labour front bench is failing to punch above its weight. Labour in opposition does not seem to have protected any of the advantages that were gained and introduced during their 13 years of tenure in power.

Conference calls on the Labour Party not to just back what could be seen as high profile easily gained support subjects such as the Murdoch issue, but to put their energy into fighting for basic Labour and Socialist policies to protect the ordinary citizens of the United Kingdom.

Conference calls for engagement with the GMB at all levels to assess the practical impact and effect of the Coalition decisions and policies, and calls on the Labour Party to fully engage with the GMB at all levels so that the Party's responses in Parliament carry more weight in the fight against the Coalition Government and improve the fortunes for those who genuinely seek an alternative for lower and middle income households.

(Carried)

BRO. W. HUGHES (Northern): Congress, I move Composite 12 on the Labour Party. Colleagues, it is with great sadness that I speak in proposing this motion. Sad, because never, ever did I think I would come to any rostrum to criticise my Labour Party, but the truth has got to come out. We've got to get the message across, because for years myself and the GMB have defended the policies of the Labour Party, time and time again. So this morning I have no bouquets, no smiles and no gimmicks, just sadness and disappointment, because I would have expected more from the Labour Opposition. My sadness is tempered by anger and frustration that Labour is not doing enough in Opposition.

The announcement by Ed Miliband and Ed Balls about a public sector pay freeze just shows you how out of touch they are with the key issues. A pay freeze! Where do they get the audacity to even think about it? *(Applause)* Don't they realise that our employers will jump on the bandwagon and low pay and bad conditions will be the norm for a working person? That is exactly the recipe that was built up in the '20s, '30s and onwards. I know, because I speak from experience. I have been there and I've bought the T-shirt! *(Applause)*

I've lost count of GMB members complaining to me about the failure of Labour to speak up for our members. I've lost count of Labour MPs who just simply fail to consult us and seek our views. Congress, let's be blunt. Many of those MPs are only there because we helped them get into Parliament. Sometimes I get the feeling that some of our MPs, the Front Bench included, are ashamed of being linked with the trade union movement. They huff, they puff, they run but they cannot hide for ever.

Now Cameron gets away with it. When he cosies up with his banker friends and his industrial backers, not a word is said. There is not a challenge. How does he do it? Let's take No. 10, for instance. It's the most expensive restaurant on this planet. *(Applause)* A quarter-of-a-million pounds for a three-course meal! Then when he is found out, he denies it and he just sacks the head waiter for booking the table. *(Laughter and Applause)* It is called "Survival at any price".

Now Labour must rediscover its mission. It must rediscover the trade union movement. Labour needs to stand up for its historic mission, not New Labour or Blue Labour, but it's got to re-engage itself with our people and our communities, because between 1997 and 2010 we lost five million votes! We need those votes to get Labour back. But, first and foremost, we've got to get the confidence of the people back. If I was comparing football with politics, I would think we would need two or three new strikers on the Front Bench; not the subs' bench but the Front Bench.

I joined the trade union movement as a 16-year old boilermaker apprentice, and for the last 68 years I have been proud of my membership. I am proud to represent the Northern Region, and to me it's still a privilege to speak on behalf of the people who elect me year after year.

THE PRESIDENT: The Front Bench striker is saying "Yellow card". Now it's a red card.

BRO. HUGHES: I will wind up now. I'll cut *that* out and I'll cut *that* out. *(Laughter)* I will have to leave *this* bit in, though. When I vote for an MP or a councillor, I expect nothing more and nothing less, and I send this message loud and clear ----

THE PRESIDENT: I'm loud and clear. Off! *(Calls of "Oh, no", "Keep him on" and "Stay on")*.

BRO. HUGHES: Worthy President, the people have spoken. *(Cheers and applause)* Colleagues, let me just finish by saying to our learned MPs: if you want to hear the advice from an old trade union dinosaur, let the people see you nail your colours firmly to the mast. Be proud to speak for the people who elected you. Remember, the Labour Party is our Party, and if it is not our way you will be left stranded on the highway. For goodness sake, get a bit of fire in your bellies. *These* people are getting away with murder. I move. *(Cheers and a standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Worthy Northern Region President, I'm going to make sure that next year you are on that bicycle ride. Your name's going first on the list. You'll get some fire in your belly then. Well done, Billy. Follow that.

SIS. J. SMITH (South Western): Congress, I second Composite Motion 12 – the Labour Party. President and Congress, this composite calls on the Labour Party to invigorate themselves and stand up and fight against the cuts being made to the many policies and benefits they put in place during their 13 years of government.

It seems that the Labour leadership and many of the Shadow Ministers have lost their way whilst in Opposition. It was always said that the Labour Party seemed to be

more comfortable in Opposition, probably because the party got used to it in the decades whilst it was in Opposition. But after being in power for those 13 years, they seem to have lost the gumption to fight for what should be basic Labour Party and socialist values and policies. The party seems to be more content in hanging their hats on what are high-profile, media-friendly subjects, such as the Murdoch issue. All right, the Murdoch affair is a very serious issue, but if we look at it rationally it had very little effect on the ordinary person in the street. Yes, it made good press, but yesterday's news is today's chip paper. Throughout the case the Labour Party was very good with the sound bites and very carefully managed to make their comments known in the media, but did it have any relevance to the ordinary voters' lives?

We need the Labour Party to get their act together, to step out into the real world and fight for real issues which affect the ordinary people of this country and forget pandering to the chattering and the media classes. Don't forget that there are plenty of George Galloways sitting in the wings to spoil the show. If the Labour Party is to be considered a serious contender for electoral office, they need to do some thinking and get their policies in order and doing a little less navel gazing.

We need them to have the backbone to stand up for all the issues that affect the ordinary people of the United Kingdom, not just the newsworthy issues. We call on the CEC to get this message across to the Labour Party. When the begging bowl comes round, as it will, we want to see that our members' money will be spent on promoting the Labour Party as a true party for the people. We also want them to make a commitment to undo much of the legislation that the present incumbents have introduced ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Wind-up, please.

SIS. SMITH: ---- which have removed the benefits and improvements put in place by the previous Labour government introduced for the ordinary people of this country. I ask you: why should we trust a Tory Prime Minister who can't even be trusted to look after his daughter? Thank you. (*Applause*)

SIS. N. NEWBY (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am first-time delegate and speaker. (*Applause*)

Congress, we have already heard and know from our own experiences in the regions that our members' living standards are being eroded fast by this Government. I urge the union to strengthen its political voice and remind the Labour Party, at both the national and local level, that the GMB is a founder member of the Labour Party. Page 19 of our new book, for those who have not read it, elegantly modelled by our General Secretary yesterday, states: "We have a past that is of shared values that we share that Labour Party representatives should be proud to stand by and for GMB members." Perhaps we should be able to inspire the Shadow Cabinet by giving them a copy of our new book and ask them to begin by reading page 19 and remind them of their heritage. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Natalie. Colleagues, before we take Motion 131, can we be a little bit more strict on the rostrum and watch your times, please. We are running a little bit late. It is four minutes for movers and two minutes for the

seconded. If you could re-check your speeches, it would help quite a lot. I now call the mover of Motion 131.

CUTS

MOTION 131

131. CUTS

This Conference calls for the reduction in the level of spending cuts to stimulate economic activity across sectors of the UK economy.

The Tory/Lib-Dem Coalition Government clearly believe that full employment is not a goal of Government.

This Conference believes that the scrapping and reduction in cuts is desperately needed to enable communities to recover and grow more quickly.

This Conference calls on the Labour Party to signal its clear commitment to public sector investment to enable growth to take place in the UK economy.

CUMBRIA PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. C. TAYLOR (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 131 on Cuts.

Congress, this Coalition is a one trick pony. It is pulling up the economic drawbridge, scrapping projects and taking a machete to public spending. It is very clear that the remedy for the economy has not moved on in the eyes of the Tories and Lib-Dems.

In the 1920s and 1930s it was a settled Treasury view that public spending should balance and that included a then government sitting on its hands. That is exactly the same as the current day. Now we have a Tory Lib-Dem Coalition Government wiping out jobs and communities across the UK. Indeed, some of the effects of their economic policies are blatant gerrymandering. They do not believe in full employment. It is simply not a goal. Their view is that the free market must have its head and, once again, Tories and Lib-Dems in Government are ringing their hands.

Congress, it is very clear, even excluding the crisis in the Eurozone, that the current Government's spending plans, or is it spending-cut plans, will fail to bring the deficit down until well into the next Parliament. This is because the Coalition's policies are restricting growth and, as a result, tax revenues are less than that forecast by the Coalition's own Office for Budget Responsibility. We desperately need action by the Government and we desperately need an alternative to be put forward by the Opposition, the Labour Party.

Congress, the spending cuts need to be changed or reversed. We desperately need the stimulus that the public sector investment brings by way of economic activity. The economy will not recover if policymakers and lawmakers simply sit on their hands. While they draw fat-cat salaries, our people are hurting. By the way, Congress, it is not working. Intervention, public spending, investment and consumption, effective taxation and rewarding success not failure are the way forward for the UK. Please support.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Colin. Secunder?

BRO. D. CLEGG (Northern): Congress, I second Motion 131 – Cuts.

Congress, the massive cuts programme embarked upon by this Coalition is hitting every community and the fabric of our public services. Buildings are being left to rot, schools are not being adequately maintained and libraries, leisure centres and residential homes are all being shut down. Community centres are closing and our highways are crumbling all around us. This is the legacy of the Government's public spending cuts. That does not include the scrapping of half of the Government's construction programme or the scrapping of the *Building Schools for the Future* programme. The facts are, Congress, that fair taxes collected from across the board and closing loopholes in the process, as well as preventing avoidance and bringing in a financial transactions tax, will bring about a tax pool that allows for proper choices to be made on spending. It will be a great help for the Labour Party to support our approach and give a clear commitment to public investment to enable growth in our economy. Growth through investment is essential. From the way we are going, this Coalition Government is heading for a lost decade and a lost generation. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I call Composite Motion 13.

LABOUR PARTY AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE COMPOSITE MOTION 13

C13. Covering Motions:

132. LABOUR PARTY *(Birmingham & West Midlands Region)*
133. PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE STATEMENTS *(London Region)*
134. TRADE UNION CONCERNS *(London Region)*
135. LABOUR PARTY *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

LABOUR PARTY AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR PAY FREEZE

This Conference deplores the Labour Party's stance in regard to Local Government future pay claims and is deeply concerned at the recent statements from, and subsequent interviews by, Labour Leader Ed Miliband and Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls saying they cannot promise to reverse any Tory cuts and have endorsed Tory Chancellor, George Osborne's public sector pay freeze.

To continue with the Tory policies of public sector pay freezes is a clear example where two Ed's are not better than one.

Congress expects Labour leaders to stand by GMB policies, so is disgusted and disappointed; we are facing class war from the Tories and need to fight back.

Congress calls for a debate at Conference as to whether the GMB supported the right person in the elections for Leader of the Labour Party, when Labour politicians make statements that affect the very people who put them in office and political positions.

The idea that opposition to the Coalition's cuts and wages policies is based on a narrow trade union stance is wrong and needs to be challenged.

Congress, this clearly signals a need for greater trade union engagement with the Labour Party not only at national level but for more involvement at local level extolling GMB values by members not only affiliating to, but becoming more proactive within their Constituency Labour Parties following from a GMB Congress 2011 decision.

Congress therefore calls on our union leadership to unite with all unions in the public sector and oppose the real pay cuts and other Tory attacks public sector workers are facing as Labour can't be relied on.

(Carried)

BRO. G. SHARKEY (London): Congress, I move Composite 13 on the Labour Party and the Public Sector Pay Freeze.

This composite goes to the heart of our relationship with the Labour Party. It also goes to the heart of the needs of our members in the public service. Faced with what is now a three year pay freeze or, to put it another way, a 14.5% pay cut over three years for our members in local government, I listened with disbelief when the two Eds – Miliband and Balls -- said that they would endorse the freeze at a time when the cost of living continues to rise, and telling our members that they could not have a pay rise for three or, maybe, four years. This is hardly going to encourage them to go out and vote Labour. GMB members deserve and demand better from our Labour leaders. GMB members deserve a pay rise. Ed and Ed, you've got it wrong. Put it right. Put it right now and reconnect with your core voters. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, George. Secunder?

SIS. T. PARKINSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second composite 13. I am a first-time delegate and speaker. *(Applause)*

Congress, Ed Miliband and Ed Balls have gone too far when they back the Government's public sector pay freeze. They, clearly, don't understand how important an issue pay is to our members. In local government we have received a 1% pay rise in three years, with inflation running at 5% for a lot of that time. Now the Government are telling us to accept regional pay, which could see our wages in Yorkshire cut by around 13%. Now is the time we look to Labour for protection and support. We hope that when they win the next election, and Labour can win, we look to Labour to help working class people. So to hear Miliband and Balls say that they would not commit to reversing Tory cuts if they won the next election was so disappointing, but it was good to see Paul Kenny, along with other union leaders, speak out against this position of Miliband, with Paul Kenny talking of the long-term implications that this new stance by the party has on GMB affiliations. We should be able to give support to candidates who genuinely represent the interest of workers and some members are asking why they should pay subs to a party that is failing them.

Ed Miliband won the Labour Party leadership with the backing of trade union votes, but now he talks of the difficult choices facing a future Labour Government and how

fast and deep the cuts have to be. He has shown himself to be weak and unwilling to stand up to the Tories, and he has accepted that the deficit has to be brought down by public spending cuts. With the Tories inflicting such pain on millions of working class people, Labour should be miles ahead in the polls.

The ones who are offering a serious challenge to the Tories' assault, however, are the workers, who have been striking for their futures. Millions of trade union members have shown their willingness to take on the Tories and on 30th November of last year we saw the biggest public sector strike in Britain for decades. 2.6 million workers were out together. The Tories are divided and have done many u-turns, but they can be beaten. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tracy. Well done. Birmingham & West Midlands Region.

SIS. E. DALEY (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, council workers in this country have had their pay frozen for a third consecutive year. The Local Government Association has not only failed to provide even a basic cost-of-living rise to 1.6 million workers but this Tory Chancellor announced in November 2011 that a wider public sector pay freeze, due to end in 2013, would be followed by a 1% cap on rises for the following two years. All this on top of an already stretched public sector, enduring stringent cuts and large-scale redundancies.

The politicians who lead our local councils are a disgrace to the workforces they employ for offering no pay rises for the third consecutive year, whilst feathering their own nests by increasing councillors' allowances by, in some cases, massive amounts. Council leaders' pay has shot up as councillors vote themselves higher allowances, while the carers, dinner ladies, dustmen, social workers, school support staff and all other council workers serving their communities will have seen their pay fall in real terms by over 15%. The three year pay freeze is not an austerity measure, but it is a deliberate political choice by local government politicians who want to win votes by keeping their workforces' pay at poverty levels to fund council tax freezes.

The Labour Party – our Labour Party – have backed the proposed 1% cap and backed the three year pay freeze. I call upon Congress to lobby the Labour Party to influence and campaign vigorously on the plight of our public sector workers. Please support Composite 13. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Elaine. Motion 136.

TORY-LIB DEM-LABOUR CONSENSUS ON CUTS MOTION 136

136. TORY-LIB DEM-LABOUR CONSENSUS ON CUTS

This Conference notes with disappointment that Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls claimed in January this year that he would not promise to reverse any of the Tory cuts. He followed this by endorsing Tory Chancellor George Osborne's public sector pay freeze. Labour leader Ed Milliband supported Balls' comments by stating that the party's leadership wants to prove itself a 'responsible' party of government to the bankers and big businesses.

It would appear that the labour party is happy ignoring its responsibility to the millions of workers and vulnerable people who are suffering vicious attacks from the cabinet of millionaires. They seem happy ignoring the half a million people who joined the TUC's march for an alternative last year and the half of the country, at least, who are against the cuts.

If Labour wants to win back voters' trust after years of New Labour betrayal it has to remember their responsibility is to the working class people and just as importantly us in the Trade Union movement. It must remember the principles on which the party was founded. The leaders of the three main parties who now agree on a common agenda of austerity are the same political elite that were united in promoting the City-first deregulation policies that led to the crash in the first place and are now united in asserting that ordinary people must pick up the tab for it, to get their broken capitalist system working again.

This Congress resolves to

1. Suspend all GMB funding to the Labour Party until the shadow cabinet, fully commits to where possible righting the wrong and repairing the damage done by Tory-Lib Dem Government, by where possible reversing damaging cuts and removing pay caps imposed on our members.
2. Supports our General Secretary to join with other Trade Unions to instigate a major debate throughout the Trade Union movement exploring the question of real working class political representation, our affiliation to Labour and all possible alternatives.
3. Encourage everyone within our Union to where possible fully support our brothers and sisters in the wider Trade Union movement who continue taking direct action in the fight against the Tory cuts and austerity measures.

B10 BANBURY BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. S. ROBERTSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, brothers, sisters and comrades, I stand before you as a member of the Labour Party, but above all I'm a member of the GMB. We all know in this room that for a hundred years the trade union movement has loyally backed the Labour Party, but in recent years the cracks have begun to shown between the unions and the Labour Party.

For much of my childhood I was brought up under a Tory Government – the Thatcher years. Although it was bad then, but I think it is going to be worse now. Most of us will remember the joy we experienced in 1997 when the Labour Party finally got back into power. I was singing, “Things can only get better”. I was singing that song for bloody weeks. “Things can only get better”. But, let's be honest, in 13 years New Labour did very little. They did some things, but they did very little for the grass roots and shop floor workers who we represent.

New Labour did not reverse any of Thatcher's decimation of the working class movement in this country. They did not tackle the anti-trade union laws that she brought in, the privatisation, and the selling of the council houses without rebuilding them, as we had hoped and expected of them. Instead, we were told that boom and bust was over for ever. We were encouraged to borrow money, money we couldn't afford to pay back. You can believe all the propaganda, if you like, but apart from the minimum wage, which is still a pittance, nearly every other good piece of legislation has come from Europe. I am talking about the maternity rights, health and safety

legislation, the Working Time Directive, and the list goes on and on. That is in the past, and it finished with the two B's: Blair and Brown. I thought that New Labour was over because Thatcher famously quoted New Labour "as one of her greatest achievements".

Now we've got our own man in, Red Ed, and we optimistically looked to the future and thought, "He's got good old-fashioned values and principles and things would look up." Then in January, they hit us with a bombshell. Ed Balls and Ed Miliband told us that they would not reverse any of the Tory cuts. "Oh, we cannae do that because we don't know what's going to happen." They didn't even say that they would try! They told us that they were not going to change anything. Well, it was a warning. At least we got a warning this time, because we expected so much of the Labour Party in 1997. This is our Party. It was born from the trade unions by folk like Will Thorne and all the rest. It is our baby.

When my lad, Tommy, plays up and he gets out of control I am not going to disown him. Whatever he does, I'll never disown him, but I'll stop his bloody pocket money. When the folk that are supposed to be on your side, your friends – our friends in the Labour Party – start ganging up against you and agreeing with the baddies, you would send in your big brother – that's where you come in, Paul – to sort them out. When your brothers and sisters have got a fight on their hands, you jump in and support them. It is time that Labour must tell us which side they are on. Are they on our side, are they on their side or are they somewhere in between? We have to tell them that we are better than them and start committing ourselves to stopping the damage that this Tory bunch are causing. I ask you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Secunder?

The motion was formally seconded from the floor.

THE PRESIDENT: Delegates, before we move on to the next group of motions, I ask the movers of Motions 142, 144, 146, 147, 149 and 152 to come to the front of the hall.

I have a couple of announcements to make while our colleagues are coming to the front of the hall. The first one is that the bucket collection for *Live Life/Give Life* collected £500, and the region says thank you very much to all of you for your generosity. Can I say that the CEC will double that, Harry, and we will make it £1,000. (*Applause*)

The next announcement is that we were expected to be joined to do by the striking Carillion workers from Great Western Hospital in Swindon. We have been advised that their coach has been delayed by the floods but they are on their way. Ironically, I understand that it is stuck at Pease Pottage on the A23. I know you are looking forward to giving them a very warm welcome to Congress, so fingers crossed that they can make it. We are due to take the emergency motion on Carillion later in this session.

I remind all delegates to give their name and region when they come to move their motions.

LABOUR MPs' ATTACK ON WORKING PEOPLE MOTION 142

142. LABOUR MP'S ATTACK ON WORKING PEOPLE

This Congress expresses its disgust at so called Labour MPs continuing failure to support working people in struggle and condemns those who are happy to speak out publicly against the Unions despite being union members, themselves accepting our money and support at election times.

We call on our Political Committees to ensure that those MPs failing us receive no further support whatsoever and that instead we commit ourselves only to backing Labour MPs who know how to behave as Labour MPs.

SOLO BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. LANCASTER (London): Congress, I move Motion 142 – Labour MP's Attack on Working People. President and Congress, the financial and social pressures being imposed on ordinary working people by this bitter and twisted Coalition are beyond belief and most of their evil policies never saw a manifesto. People suffering like this look for support from two sources: Labour MPs and trade unions. GMB and other trade unions provide that support and provide it well. However, colleagues, it is simply not being provided by Labour MPs. Those same Labour MPs, who come knocking on our doors, promise to support our principles in exchange for our money, and then the principles go out the window.

We expect attacks from the Government when we defend our members, but we certainly don't expect attacks from Labour MPs. There has been a loud condemnation of our actions by them. Even the Shadow Business Secretary, Chuka Umunna, warned us not to take industrial action. Congress, enough is enough! These MPs were supported by the unions and elected by people on the basis that they would defend our union rights.

We want no more taxation without representation. Congress, whilst we reiterate our support for the Labour Party, this motion calls on the General Secretary, the CEC and our Political Committee to ensure that MPs who fail us and our principles get no more financial help whatsoever, and they should be told this in no uncertain terms. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Mick. Secunder?

BRO. V. WEST (London): Congress, I second Motion 142. When we come to the CEC's Political Report later on this morning, we will understand that our relationship with the Labour Party has got to re-focus. It has got to re-focus on the basis of shared common values, of social justice and equality. We have got to be saying to those MPs who seek our name behind them as "GMB-sponsored MPs". This is no longer a badge of convenience. It is a badge that says "You share our values. You will be accountable to us and you will do what needs to be done to support our members." Thank you.

ELECTED LABOUR REPRESENTATIVES AND INDUSTRIAL ACTION MOTION 144

144. ELECTED LABOUR REPRESENTATIVES AND INDUSTRIAL ACTION

This Conference congratulates those elected Labour representatives who have supported industrial action by trade unions, especially Labour MSPs who called for the Scottish Parliament to be suspended on 30th November 2011 in solidarity with the national public sector pensions strike.

Industrial action is a legitimate course of action by trade unions, and, given the potential financial loss they suffer, not one undertaken lightly by trade union members.

Where trade unions decide that industrial action, including strike action, is required to defend jobs, pensions, or terms and conditions of employment, we believe that Labour MPs, and all other elected Labour representatives, should publicly support that action, attend picket lines, and take part in demonstrations in support of the action.

Conference therefore:

- Instructs the GMB's Executive to communicate the contents of this motion to all Labour MPs, and Labour Members of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.
- Agrees that no GMB funding is to be provided to any Labour elected representatives who fail to actively support industrial action by trade unions in his/her constituency.

GLASGOW GENERAL APEX BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

SIS. L. MILLAR (GMB Scotland): I move Motion 144 – Elected Labour Representatives and Industrial Action. We should congratulate all Labour Members of the Scottish Parliament who showed solidarity with the public sector workers during last November's public sector pensions strike. They refused to cross the picket lines and join the demonstrations in support. When workers decide to strike, we should now expect our elected Labour councillors, Labour MPs and Labour Members of the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh and London Assemblies, to show in public 100 per cent for all future actions. They should join the picket lines and demonstrate to support workers. Gone are the days when Labour representatives can wring their hands and give pathetic excuses for not supporting our members. We have been loyal to the Labour Party, and during 13 years of a Labour Government we have received little in return. There has been no repeal of anti-trade union laws or the privatisation of our public services and the sickening spectacle of a Labour Prime Minister flying halfway around the world to toady to Rupert Murdoch.

Working people are now being attacked daily by the most right-wing Tory Government in living memory. Labour must get off the fence and support us in every struggle to save jobs, wages, pensions, protect the welfare state, the NHS, rebuild our manufacturing industry and end the scandal of youth unemployment. They are not so slow in putting their hands out for political funding with no strings attached. They should now be told that there will be no more blank cheques. We have the right to demand that. Unless they support us, we will not support them.

Labour should be in the forefront of workers' actions, not on the sidelines. There should be no more free lunches for Labour. You are either with us or you are with the Tories. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Secunder?

BRO. C. ROBERTSON (GMB Scotland): Congress, I second Motion 144. In seconding this motion, I would ask Mary, our President, to use her strength in her role within the Labour Party to bring forward this message: GMB will not give support to elected members, whether they be MPs, MSPs or councillors, unless they genuinely stand for a fight back against austerity, unless they adopt and support GMB's agenda in supporting our members in their struggle for social justice and to ensure our members have the best conditions of service that our trade union inspires to deliver for them. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Charlie. I will do that. No problem.

THE LABOUR PARTY MOTION 146

146. THE LABOUR PARTY

This Conference reviews its support for the Labour Party.

LEICESTERSHIRE 2000 BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. L. GUBB (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

President, I move Motion 146. The motion reads as follows: "This Conference reviews its support for the Labour Party." The motion itself contains just nine words but it asks a thousand questions. I ask a few myself. What support do we review and who undertakes it? How would we act on the review findings? As a result of the findings, would we have a robust policy with which to measure their future performance and our relationship but, most of all, our members' expectations?

At the last general election when I was encouraging members to use their vote, what did I hear muttered: "Why bother? Labour's not done anything for us and the rest are no better." This was coming from people who have lived through the Thatcher years.

As a branch committee member of Leicestershire 2000, the branch secretary reported that he had written to all the Leicestershire MPs, of all parties, about the NHS and the situation at Bombardier. I was appalled to hear that he had received only two replies, and those replies were from Conservative MPs. As of this date, nothing else has been received. I am sure that most of you here have to have a performance management review as part of your employment. I know that I do, not that I get a pay rise, and we all want value for money. Are we getting this from the Labour Party? Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Laine. Secunder?

BRO. J. EVANS (Midland & East Coast): President and Congress, having had the honour to participate in this Congress for the past six years, I know that we have debated our support for the Labour Party in each of these years with varying levels of urgency.

However, the current political climate now makes it crucial that we can rely upon the real support of the Labour Party when campaigning for our members against the attacks from the Con-Dem Government and in formulating a credible alternative. We must have clear accountability from those who we choose to back. I ask you to support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Jason.

LABOUR PARTY FUNDING MOTION 147

147. LABOUR PARTY FUNDING

This Conference agrees to reduce the amount of funding it gives to the Labour Party and re-invest such monies into a programme of political education with the object of securing more prospective Labour Party candidates who are more representative of the needs of ordinary working people.

GOOLE BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. CLARKE (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 147. President and Congress, first, let me say that I am a proud member of this democratic trade union and a member of the Labour Party, our party, so why do some Labour MPs distance themselves from the trade union movement? Let me tell you this, Congress. We live in the real world. So the time has come to invest in what this union does best: provide training, organise and educate our members in politics. That way we can achieve a Labour Party that is a true representation of all society, not just a few from the top chasing a career. After all, socialism comes from the heart. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Jim. Secunder?

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 147. Brothers and sisters, I look at the present Con-Dem Government and all I see is a bunch of toffee-nosed, public school prefects who don't have a bloody clue about what's going on in the real world. *(Applause)* Then I look at my own party, and I think to myself, "Hang on! There are a few in there like that as well."

In 1997 the percentage of the Parliamentary Labour Party who were from manual labour backgrounds was then at a low of 13%. Today this figure is at a new low of 9%. I am not advocating a workers' party, where if you are middle-class or privately educated you're not allowed in, but just a bit of balance that reflects society at large.

It is possible, because half the ministers in Atlee's Cabinet were from working-class backgrounds, and there were over a quarter in Harold Wilson's Government. That was because there were more working-class MPs. We need to get back to the political weekend schools that bore the future councillors and MPs. We need to channel away some of the political funding we afford our party and use this to fund the school and potential working-class MPs. Let's have a party that is balanced in its views, a party that sees what problems our members face day in and day out. I urge you to support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Shane.

DEFEND THE POLITICAL LEVY MOTION 149

149. DEFEND THE POLITICAL LEVY

This Conference calls for a rigorous defence of the political levy.

Any attack on the political levy is an attack on the rights of our members. Because of the wide range of what constitutes political activities, the removal or reduction of the political levy would restrict not only the union's support for electoral candidates, but also any attempt to defend local services. This cannot be allowed to happen in a democratic society.

Congress, defend the political levy, defend our members democratic rights.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 149. President and Congress, once again, sleaze allegations involving donations to the Tory Party have hit the headlines. Once again, it's been twisted around to attack trade union political levies: the political levy, those few pence paid freely and without compulsion by the majority of our members, with every last penny audited and accounted for. It is no secret that money obtained by the levy goes to the Labour Party and towards the expenses of individual political candidates, but – this is something that the GMB and other unions need to be more vocal about – the levy also funds campaigns on the bread and butter issues affecting our members, their families and local communities. It means that the GMB can actively campaign against attacks on public services, we can fight for school books, beds in hospitals and protect libraries. In short, we could defend all the things that stop life being nasty, brutish and short.

Talking of “nasty, brutish and short”, it also allows us to campaign against the fascists. All these are legally classed as political action, all impossible to do without the political levy.

Let's be honest, comrades, the Tories don't tolerate dissent and they hate popular democracy. They have always gone for the political levy, as after the General Strike and in the 1980s, in order to stifle effective opposition from both the political and industrial wings of this great movement of ours. That's why we must defend the political levy, not just to allow us to help fund the Labour Party, which I know that

some of you are opposed to, but to allow us to organise and fight to protect jobs and services, to allow our members to be engaged in the political and democratic processes.

We've got a Government of plutocrats acting like 18th century oligarchs, trying to restrict political engagement to the chosen few. This can't be allowed to happen in the 21st century. Comrades, support Motion 149, defend the political levy, defend our communities and defend democracy. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Secunder?

SIS. C. GAVIN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Motion 149 – Defend the Political Levy. I did have a really lovely speech prepared – in fact it was a quite polite speech – in support of this motion. As I lay there last night waiting for the power to come on in my room, but that's another story, I changed my mind because when I get a passion about something, politeness goes out of the window. So I am going to make no apologies for what I am about to say.

The political levy enables the union to have a say in supporting elected candidates who are striving to make a change. Congress, that is, indeed, what we need. To tell you the truth, like most of you in this room, I am fed up waiting for our party to make a stand for everyday folk. Labour is our party, paid by the workers for the workers, so let's take it back. We have all, in recent times, sat *there* and complained, "It ain't what it used to be". To be really controversial, I do wonder whether, if we took some of our local Labour MPs, cut them in half, it might say "Tory" all the way through. So we need to stop complaining and we need to make a change. Defend the political levy, keep our chance to have our party and give strength and support to the common sense folk, like you and me. Listen to the top, get them a seat in government and show, truly, what Labour is all about. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Cindy, your bed has just been moved to the beach. *(Laughter)*

TRADE UNION RIGHTS MOTION 152

152. TRADE UNION RIGHTS

This Conference requests that Ed Miliband publicly declares that when the Labour Party returns to power he will make it a PRIORITY to return trade union rights to where they were before this Tory led coalition came to power.

SHEFFIELD BOILERMAKERS BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. K. GILBERTHORPE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 152 – Trade Union Rights.

The motion in front of you, or what I am going to ask you to support, is quite simple. However, the long-term implications could be critical to the Labour Party returning to power at the next general election and, as Tom said, Ed Miliband becoming the next Prime Minister.

If you take my branch – Z13, Sheffield Boilermakers – it is what I would describe as one of the “front line” or “cutting edge” branches of industry. They are very good at what they do and they are very proud of their jobs. The rest of the manufacturing workers, including Remploy, throughout the UK are not militant. All they are are honest, hardworking people, whose only demands are to have a decent wage to maintain a good a standard of living, a safe working environment and an element of security in their jobs so that they are their families can plan for the future.

All of us in this room know that the Con-Dems inherited a small deficit. In all probability, if the Labour Party was in power, they would be trying to reduce it as well, but I am quite sure that a Labour Government wouldn't be punishing the lowest paid of our society. Cameron's Tories want to turn Britain's workplaces back into Victorian workhouses as they plan to rip apart employment laws, where workers could be fired at will or made to work longer hours, and they plan to scrap pension rights, redundancy rights, etc. Yet they still claim it will create jobs.

Many reports show that where employers and employees show commitment to each other confidence in the workplace grows and everyone benefits. So, come on, Mr. Miliband, show some commitment to the working people of our country and trade unions who are only striving to achieve a fair deal. We have millions unemployed, a double-dip recession and our public services providing fewer and fewer jobs and services. We, as a union, need to ensure that this Government cannot get away with the despicable changes that they have made and are proposing.

This present Coalition is the perfect storm giving Cameron and Osborne exactly the conditions to do whatever they want. They have slashed public spending, they've attacked union reps' facility time, they have used the Jackson report to attack union funding, they've changed the timescales for unfair dismissal, they've changed employment tribunal costs, thereby making claims far more expensive to lodge, and the most frightening thing of all is that if people don't like what they are doing, they'll blame it on Clegg and Lib-Dem cronies.

Mr. Miliband, please, pledge that we return to where it was before these Con-Dems seized power, or go even further. What is more, do it publicly. You cannot go back on your pledges. Considering what we have already done for him, Brothers and Sisters, I would say that it is the least we could ask for. I, therefore, ask you to support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ken. Secunder?

BRO. A. CROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Motion 152 – Trade Union Rights. I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

It is evident that trade unions, on the whole, have lost rights as a result of the new Coalition Government coming to power. However, union rights have been up against attack from the Government with significant changes having been made during the Thatcher years and progressing to the present day with a new Tory-led Government with even more serious attacks on unions and workers' rights. This is to the detriment of the trade unions and our members, with the aim being to stop workers fighting back

or even having the right to do so. All we are requesting is that when Labour come back into power, and they will do, a public promise is made by Ed Miliband to ensure that rights for the unions and the workers be reinstated to what they were before as a minimum, and also ensure that it happens this time. These laws do not exist to make industrial relations fair, but to stop workers fighting back. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I go back to Motion 127. I ask whether anyone wants to come in on the debate?

BRO. I. HARRIS (London): Congress, this is my first time speaking at Congress. (*Applause*) I would like to speak in support of Motion 136, especially points 2 and 3 at the end. I think that building unity across the trade union movement at the present time is one of our most important tasks. On that point, I would like to congratulate our members in the NHS who, along with Unite and Unison members, have strongly rejected the Government's pension deal by, in our case, 97% in the ballot. I hope we can use this opportunity to build unity across the GMB, Unison and Unite in health and try and link up with PCS and the BMA in taking further strike action against this Government.

November 30th saw one of the biggest strikes in this country and it shocked the Government. If we can do something similar again this year but for longer and with a stronger action, we can start to build a real alternative to austerity. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Well done. Are there any more speakers?

SIS. S. NICHOLLS (North West & Irish): I am a first-time Congress delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*)

Further to Billy saying that he has been in the GMB for 60 years, I have only been a member for five years but I have been a rep. The next general election is a must. Cameron must go and Clegg must go. He did say that was going to help the vulnerable, the elderly and the disabled, and he has done exactly the opposite. I don't particularly like talking about this because it really gets on my nerves and I get really angry about it. I am very passionate about my work because I've had hours cut and a 1% pay rise, and I can't live on what I earn. They have made people lose their jobs, they have closed down schools, care centres, hospitals, raised the tuition fees and, basically, wrecked pensions. I am thinking just how far are they going to go.

I feel sorry for people who have children today because their future is not very stable, in my opinion. In 1997 when Tony Blair came into power my life improved dramatically. As soon as Cameron came in it went right downhill again. I think that Labour will win the next election. I know that we can get there and improve absolutely everything.

In the 1980s, when Thatcher was in power and Neil Kinnock was the Labour leader, I wrote a four-line poem, and I hope you don't mind if I say it:
"Labour will win this year's election, we do not want the Thatcher infection,
Neil Kinnock will make it to No. 10, Labour should be in the lead again.

Spend the money on schools, equipment for lessons,
Don't waste the money on nuclear weapons."

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sam. Well done. Is there anyone else wanting to speak? (*No response*) Now, Andy.

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and I will be covering Motions 127, 136, 142 and 144. Before I do that, Billy asked for fire to get back in the belly. Billy, I think you've just experienced some of that in the GMB and it's brilliant to see.

Congress, the CEC is supporting Motions 136, 142 and 144 with a qualification, which I will detail for you shortly. We will also be asking you to refer Motion 127.

Motion 136 highlights the totally unacceptable statements made by the two Eds and many of the Shadow Cabinet in regard to public sector pay. As Mary said, you could be in no doubt that they have been told by Mary, myself and all the other trade unionists on the NEC that they were totally out of order in making such statements. They will be told again, again and again until they actually "get it" as they say in the political world nowadays. So you can rest assured of that.

Labour politicians, or some of the Labour politicians, seem to have forgotten its value, and again the CEC supports that sentiment. The qualification for this motion is that "all funding should be suspended until Labour commits to reverse the Government's policies", which is too prescriptive. The CEC needs flexibility to be able to negotiate to achieve the aims that the GMB sets after the consultation process. With that qualification, we would ask you to support Motion 136.

Motion 142 highlights again Labour's unacceptable lack of support for working people and, again, the motion calls for financial support only to be given to MPs who support working people. The GMB is evaluating its MPs but the qualification is about the technicality. The GMB does not give money to MPs. It gives money to constituency parties. So that is the qualification in respect of Motion 142.

Motion 144 calls for MPs to support strike action by attending picket lines, but there are times when the GMB would rather the MPs be in the House of Commons. The 30th November was actually one of those occasions when the GMB wanted MPs in the House to put across the concerns and to fight for the rights of working people because they were debating the pensions in Parliament on that day. So to have them on the picket line might have been good as a token, but the Tories left on their own would just do as they bloody like, wouldn't they? So the MPs needed to be in the House.

The CEC is asking, Congress, therefore, to refer Motion 127. This motion highlights the attacks that are taking place by the Coalition and they are falsely saying, "It's Labour's fault", "It's the mess Labour left" and stuff like that. This is untrue and the party needs to start strongly to rebut this on every occasion. It needs to respond to

that. It seems to be silent on it and allows the myth to gather pace, so we need to deal with that.

We need, though, a radical agenda going forward and that's what the consultation we are wanting to go through is all about. We must redefine Labour's policies, get a radical agenda and then, colleagues, we must take that forward. In consideration of what the Special document asks for, I am sure we will come up with that agenda.

Congress, there have been many calls for the Executive to make sure that the Labour Party hears the GMB's views. Again, I would reiterate that there is no doubt that the party can hear both mine and Mary's voices and can hear the 'Big Brother' Kenny's voice, can't they? So that is in no doubt. However, it needs more than just this Congress saying that it is for the Executive – us – to do it. I would say to Congress that you need to get back into your constituency Labour Parties and you need to help the GMB to take those parties back. We need to give you an agenda to go back with after the consultation but then you must play your part and take action. It is not just about talking and telling other people to do it. Colleagues, if you are pissed off, get up, get back and do something in your own locality. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Well said.

Is London Region prepared to refer? *(Agreed)* Does Congress accept reference back from London Region? *(Agreed)*

Motion 127 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Birmingham & West Midlands Region accept the qualification to Motion 136? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Does London Region accept the qualification to Motion 142? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Does GMB Scotland accept the qualification to Motion 146? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much.

I put Composite Motion 12 to Motion 152 to the vote. All those in favour, please show?

Composite Motion 12 was CARRIED.

Motion 131 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 13 was CARRIED.

Motion 136 was CARRIED.

Motion 142 was CARRIED.

Motion 144 was CARRIED.

Motion 146 was CARRIED.

Motion 147 was CARRIED.

Motion 149 was CARRIED.

Motion 152 was CARRIED.

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE PRESIDENT: I have a lovely announcement. Congress, will you send congratulations to Bob and Sylvia Grimley on their 30 years of marriage today. It says, “Love from us all at the Midland & East Coast Region”. (*Applause*) Sylvia, you could have been freed twice from life sentences. Well done.

POLITICAL

LABOUR PARTY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM MAINTAINING UNITY IN THE LABOUR PARTY MOTION 154

154. MAINTAINING UNITY IN THE LABOUR PARTY

Congress notes that the pressure group within the Labour Party, Progress, has now raised over £2.8million to fund its activities. Its annual income is now well in excess of the maximum ever achieved by the Militant tendency (which raised £283,818 in 1986 according to its published fighting fund totals)

Congress notes that Progress provides training for its preferred candidates for parliamentary selections, and promotes candidates for internal elections, and has been described as a “party within the party”. Congress notes that the principal Progress patron is Lord David Sainsbury who has been a donor since April 2004 and continues to fund Progress at the rate of £260,000 a year. His donations of over £8.4million to the Labour Party stopped when Ed Miliband became leader. Progress is also funded by pharmaceutical companies, Pfizer and Pharmacia.

Prominent Progress members have briefed against Ed Miliband to the press, and it was Progress who argued that Labour’s front bench needed to support cuts and wage restraint. Congress regrets that Ed Miliband caved into this pressure. Congress notes with concern the support by Ed Balls and Ed Miliband for public sector pay restraint, thus giving credibility to Tory arguments about the deficit.

Congress notes that the November 2011 edition of Progress magazine sought to undermine Ken Livingstone’s campaign for London mayor, casting doubt on his suitability as candidate.

Congress notes that Progress advances the strategy of accepting the Tory arguments for public spending cuts.

Congress believes that such factional campaigns to undermine Labour candidates, and to soften opposition to Tory policies, endanger the unity of the party and the movement in our fight against the coalition government.

Congress resolves that GMB will work to maintain unity within the Labour Party, but that the Labour Party can only succeed when we promote policies that benefit working people.

Congress resolves that the national political officer should monitor the factional activity of Progress, and report to the CEC with recommendations

W15 WILTSHIRE & SWINDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): Comrades, I move Motion 154. Let’s be clear. We’re in the fight of our lives with this Government, but there is an obstacle to us

fighting that, and that a secret organisation in the Labour Party called *Progress*. Some of you may not have heard about this party within a party so I am going to spell out the dangers it represents to our movement, to our union and to the aspirations of millions of working people in this country.

So what is *Progress* and how does it work? It was set up in 1994 as a Blairite pressure group in the Labour Party and for the first ten years it was loyal to the leadership, but when Blair stepped down it started to destabilise the party. In 2008 and 2009 you will remember that a number of high-profile Front Bench Labour MPs resigning just on the eve of elections in order to destabilise Gordon Brown. In November 2011 the *Progress* magazine issued an article saying that Ken Livingstone was an unsuitable candidate. They briefed the press arguing that Labour should accept the Tory cuts, and they have briefed against Ed Miliband and Gordon Brown before him. They have been reckless as to whether that would endanger Labour winning an election.

I am going to say something controversial here, and that is that not everything was bad about the Blair era. It brought in double spending on the National Health Service, the National Minimum Wage, a statutory route to trade union recognition, 40,000 more teachers, 120,000 more school assistants, abolished clause 28, civil partnerships, devolution for Scotland and Wales and peace in Ireland, plus the Working Tax Credit that put £65 a week, on average, into 4½ million working people's wallets. That was good stuff, but what Blair also did was to bring in neo-liberalism and a belief in the private sector. It was a Labour Government – a Labour Government – that brought Carillion into the National Health Service. (*Applause*)

They also took us to war and they left us with a legacy of a housing crisis that has left millions of people without affordable housing. They also brought in a policy of spin and triangulation, when they would go to the press about minor differences with the Tories to try and get swing voters in marginal constituencies to vote for them, while they neglected the core voters. They left millions of working people feeling ignored and betrayed by a Labour Government. That is why we lost five million votes between 1997 and 2010. *Progress* wants to re-fight the 1997 election time and time again, even though times have changed. That is a really serious obstacle to us developing the radical policy agenda that we need to fight this Coalition and also to get a government in that opposes austerity and builds jobs and growth. We need a radical policy agenda and *Progress* are an obstacle to that.

Comrades, *Progress* are worse than that. If it was just about ideas – our ideas are better than theirs – we would win. It is not a level playing field because although *Progress* is a membership organisation, and you think you can join it – would you believe it? – it's a private company registered at Companies House. When I said it's a party within a party, it's not. It's a company within a party. What that means is that membership is covered by company law. If you join *Progress*, you are not really joining the decision-making body. We don't know who the real members, the guarantor members, of the company are who are registered in Companies House. We don't know who makes the decisions. We know who makes the big donations, those of over £7,500 a year, which they have to declare, but we don't know anything about their income, we don't know anything about their expenditure and we don't know how the decisions are made. What we do know is that they have got massive funding.

Three million pounds has been given to *Progress*, and £850,000 was given by Lord Montague two years after he died! How does that work? It's because a trust has been set up in his name and the trustees gave money to *Progress*. David Sainsbury is giving £260,000 a year. Pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer are funding *Progress*. It's a very serious problem.

Comrades, we need to fight the ideas of *Progress*, but we also need to go into the Labour Party and say, "We want *Progress* investigated and we want to make sure that they are held to account so that we know what these people are doing." The fight is on. We need to lay a message down to *Progress* and say "You're a cuckoo that's laid an egg in our nest and the war is starting with you now. GMB is going to hold you to account." (*Applause*)

BRO. G. PATTISON (Southern): Congress, I am a first-time speaker and delegate. (*Applause*) I am seconding Motion 154 that Andy has just spoken to in great detail. Basically, we have listened all morning to a whole series of speakers effectively criticising what we have got in the past from Labour and arguing for winning the party back for working class people. We have heard how the party has disenfranchised millions of working class people, former voters who find themselves with nothing left to vote for because nothing rationally represents their views.

Motion 154 is asking for an investigation of where the problems have occurred in the past and may occur, potentially, in the future. We are asking, simply, to understand how *Progress* is organised, who are the individuals involved in it, what influence they have and where that influence falls, what resources they have and how we can counteract their ideas, if indeed we need to.

Progress, as has been explained, is a private company. They use that private company status to cover up their tracks, to hide their activities and this motion is a call for transparency. For decades we have seen purges of left-wing groups in the Labour Party and so on, but it seems here that we have a potentially dangerous, right-wing group, a very business-orientated group, about which we can have no vision on what is going on. I ask you to support the motion. (*Applause*)

LABOUR PARTY RULES

MOTION 155

155. LABOUR PARTY RULES

Congress notes with appreciation the work by GMB representatives in cooperation with the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Committee (TULO) in resisting moves in the Refounding Labour process that would have reduced union influence in the Labour Party NEC, CAC and conference itself.

Congress nevertheless still believes that key changes for the Labour Party rules advocated by TULO are still required:

Congress strongly endorses TULO's recommendations to

1. Remove the restrictive "contemporary" criteria for Labour conference motions; and ensure that CLPs can submit four separate motions for debate, in addition to the four motions from the unions.

2. Ensure that motions carried by conference are duly inserted into the Party's rolling programmes of policies.
3. Allow affiliates like the GMB, and also CLPs, to be able to move amendments to Party policy documents, rather than having to accept or reject the whole document.

Congress believes the NEC must retain its responsibilities between conferences; and that the current structure gives too much weight to MPs. Congress supports the TULO proposal to increase the number of CLP seats, and in addition to reserve seats for Scotland and Wales.

Congress believes that a sitting MP should have no reason to fear an open selection, and we note that sitting MPs are anyway guaranteed a short list place. Congress supports the TULO proposal that a sitting MP should need 66% of nominations from wards in the constituency and from affiliated organisations to avoid a contest, rather than the current 50%.

Congress agrees with the TULO position that any proposed Labour Party rule changes should be circulated well in advance of conference and voted on one by one.

Congress resolves that GMB will continue to press for these rule changes in the Labour Party.

W15 WILTSHIRE & SWINDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 155 – Labour Party Rules. You might wonder why the dry issues of constitutional rule changes in the Labour Party should be of interest to the trade unions, but our values are founded on communities of solidarity, compassion and equality. We have a political vision to fight for our members' interests based on those values. We have 600,000 members who voluntarily pay every month money to GMB because we represent them. They trust us. They trust us to understand their issues and to represent them. Our members trust GMB more than they trust the Labour Party. Therefore, we need to prosecute their interests in the political process. We need to take our party back – I know we have said this many times – and change that from a slogan to a number of tasks that we tick off until we have actually got it back.

These rule changes are in order to empower our activists, our friends in the constituency parties and in order to work effectively in the Labour Party. I think that Ed Miliband is a good leader of the Opposition. He has made some mistakes, but I will tell you why he has made some mistakes. It is because he is under massive pressure from the right. The dilemma that Ed Miliband is in is because he is the second most left-wing person in the Shadow Cabinet and he is the most left-wing person in his office. All of the pressure from the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Shadow Cabinet comes from the right. We need to start pushing back in the other direction.

We need to say that this union wants to see a Labour Government, that we are loyal to Ed Miliband, that we are loyal to the vision that Ed Miliband spelt out in the leadership contest that there would be an end to the control freakery, an end to distrust by the members and an end to distrust of the unions. These rule changes are about empowering the members and the unions, effectively, to work in the Labour Party, to put forward our ideas and to represent the aspirations and needs of millions of working class people. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Secunder?

BRO. C. ADJE (Southern): Congress, I am seconding Motion 155 – Labour Party Rules.

President and Congress, the motion talks about the good work which the GMB reps have done in co-operation with TULO in resisting the moves in refounding the Labour process. Those of you who are Labour members will know of the new Labour policy document, known as *Refounding Labour*. TULO, of which GMB is a member, has been doing quite a lot of work in responding to a number of the proposals in the documentation. Some of those proposals, as you would have seen, apply in the motion. If it goes through, as Andy has outlined, it would ensure that the CLP, who form the grass root members, and the trade unions, in terms of GMB and other affiliated trade unions, will not be able to engage within the party machinery.

I speak as a GMB member as well as a local councillor. I think it would be better for us if we were to – I wouldn't say "resist" or "fight" – engage with our party to ensure that the stuff that is outlined in the motion is seen through by both the CEC and our party. I would urge you to support the motion.

Just before I finish – I know I've got the red light – there is an issue about the MPs re-selection. Councillors have open re-selection, so I don't think that the MPs have anything to fear. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Charles. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) Then I put Motions 154 and 155, which are being supported by the CEC, to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 154 was CARRIED.

Motion 155 was CARRIED.

**INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY
SOCIAL JUSTICE
'SYSTEMATIC SOCIAL ENGINEERING' OF THIS CON-DEM
GOVERNMENT
MOTION 98**

98. 'SYSTEMATIC SOCIAL ENGINEERING' OF THIS CON-DEM GOVERNMENT

This Conference calls on the present Labour Party to recognise attempts of social engineering we are seeing month by month, day by day, the stripping back of working class ideals.

We are seeing the richer getting richer and the poorer getting poorer. As Unions we see these rights being eroded and rightly defend ourselves. Is it not about time this Labour Party joined us in our fights and gives us, as Unions, what they have promised in the past.

HULL PAINT & ENGINEERING BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 98 – ‘Systematic Social Engineering’ of this Con-Dem Government.

We call on the Labour Party to recognise attempts at social engineering and the stripping back of working class ideals. The rich get richer whilst the poor get poorer. As union members, we see these rights being eroded and rightly defend ourselves. The Labour Party must join our fight by supporting the unions to expose this cynical engineering campaign.

“We are all in this together”. The words are continually spewed out, and I can smell the nausea filling Congress. These words have so many holes in them that after two years they are absolutely threadbare, but if you look beyond the holes and the spew and you can see what is really happening: jobs continue to go. Yes, there has been some goods lately at BAE and Vauxhall, but those deals were only possible because of the efforts of the unions and their ability to make the platform for secure working conditions. Good jobs go, decent paid jobs go and the Government does nothing. Why? Because it is all part of the unspoken plan to socially engineer decent paid workers down to the bottom. If we are lucky, we end up with the minimum wage, but as thousands and thousands of workers are finding out, they end up with nothing. Then they have got to struggle their way back up to the minimum wage, where they will stay. Again, there are no pay rates above this level.

The Tories are engineering the workforce to the bottom of the pile and this rush is getting faster and faster. Look closely at the Tory philosophy and it starts stripping away people’s rights, particularly the right of support, never mind the destruction of the NHS where, in future, you will only get healthcare if you can afford the insurance.

Look at the facts. Legal aid has been reduced and gradually stripped away with nowhere for you to go. Protection in employment has been reduced as they move us to a hire-and-fire state with no rights of appeal. Health and safety has witnessed attack after attack on your rights to a safe working environment, all because it costs the employer a bob or two for compliance, and they call it “red tape”. But what cost is it to someone who is injured or killed? The Tory answer is as little as possible because they do not believe that you should have the right to appeal or the right to go to court. They are making it harder to get to court with more costs for the applicant. Eventually, there will be smaller compensation with the likelihood of now’t.

Is this correct? Look at what they tried to do regarding the asbestosis campaign. I rest my case. Their social engineering campaign has no brakes. Onwards it goes with higher bills, a strain on ordinary households but for many completely unaffordable. What did Cameron do? He got the culprits in for a chat. That really shook them up. Result: nothing has changed.

Desperate families now flood to loan sharks who rip the lifeblood out of millions but they have no option. They either pay up or they sink completely. Scrapping the libraries, again, hits the poorest in society. Charging to enter parks and play areas – that’ll keep the working class out. On and on this social engineering continues.

We call on the Labour Party to open its eyes, use its voice and join us in exposing what the right are up to. Let’s bring Cameron’s blood to the boil. We must attack this

social engineering campaign and give the public all the information we can. Come on, Miliband. You need to expose what is actually happening.

During last week's festivities, as millions have been dragged down, I thought of these words from a Sex Pistols' chorus line:

*"God save the Queen,
There's no future for you,
The nasty Party is still alive."*

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Shane. Seconder?

BRO. R. WHILDING (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 98 – 'Systematic Social Engineering' of this Con-Dem Government".

President and Congress, this Con-Dem Government is at the moment at a cross-roads of its power. For as long as I can remember, any Tory Party in government has strived to keep the working class down. They want to return to our forefathers' days of tipping our caps and being grateful for our working class existence. Our fathers and our fathers' fathers, quite rightly, fought this oppression with all their might, but to what end? All I see these days in the eyes of my fellow working class brothers and sisters is the misery of the situations that are being presented to them. All our hard-fought rights are being eroded slowly but surely by this Con-Dem social engineering machine.

The time has come, President and Congress, for the Labour Party to get back on board with its members and its people and put a stop to this underhand, immoral attack on our working-class ideals. We need to support a Labour Party that shares our ideals but, more so, we need a Labour Party that recognises the evils of the 'nasty' party. Please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate?

BRO. J. McCROSSAN (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I support Motion 98. Earlier today Kim Hendry described the Tories' disconnection. In actual fact, it is the way that Britain is being governed today by a shallow elite, the privileged 1 per cent, who care not for any of you. You are just an inconvenience, a commodity when it suits them and an inconvenience when you are not.

The blueprint of their intent can be seen in the Beecroft report. Employment rights will be a thing of the past. Our friend Tom Watson claims that they want to return to the state of 30 years ago. No. Their true ambitions want to take us further back into the past than that. They look upon Victorian days with green-eyed envy and how they salivated its return.

They would have us queuing at the factory gates begging to be picked for work that day. They expect us to doff our hats showing our total subservience, and we will thank them for the privilege of being paid a pittance, which will be passed across on the

table. Make no mistake: poverty is their goal. People in desperation are much easier to manipulation.

The Jubilee scandal was only a preview. By no stretch of the imagination, the greatest social injustice will be formed of the working class, the great unwashed. They are starting to put their plan into fruition. Make no mistake, Wonga in the “misery” party means to make their form of social engineering come true. We need to strongly support Motion 98.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any more speakers? (*No response*) In that case, I put Motion 98 to the vote. The CEC is supporting it. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 98 was CARRIED.

CEC POLITICAL SPECIAL REPORT

THE PRESIDENT: We will now take the debate on the CEC Political Special Report. I will now explain how I intend to take this debate. The CEC Special Report will be moved and seconded on behalf of the CEC. I will then call for any speakers who wish to speak on the Report. We will then move to the vote on the Report.

I call Paul Kenny to move the CEC Political Report.

Central Executive Council Political Special Report

CEC POLITICAL SPECIAL REPORT

THATCHER’S LEGACY

In 1997 the success of the Labour Party at that year’s General Election was greeted by the trade union movement and indeed overwhelmingly around the UK with hope, joy and relief in fairly equal measures.

The Thatcher/Major governments from 1979 to 1997 had engineered huge social change with mass unemployment, attacks on public services, and in particular education and health provision. The ideological move to private sector provision in local services, health and social housing all marked the Tory march to dismantling state provision in favour of private profit.

It seems a long time ago now, but those of us who lived through it should never stop reminding people of the destruction of our industrial and manufacturing base and the social problems that followed in its wake.

The price our members and our communities paid was mass unemployment, and a generation of young people whose only chance of work lay in short term schemes. We saw schools, begging parents for money, not for skiing trips or special projects, but for the purchase of books, or roof repairs or a new boiler so children did not need to wear their outside coats in class to keep warm!

And hospitals where patients were stacked in corridors on trolleys because of a shortage of beds, and yes, some died.

The same Tory governments conned the British public into virtually giving away public ownership and control of energy, water supply, and communications.

Margaret Thatcher never rode a public train in all her years at Number 10 that anyone can remember. So our railways and any possibility of an integrated transport policy passed to the hands of the profit takers with disastrous results.

In our local authorities and hospitals a race to the bottom on wages and standards opened up public services to exploitation and profit taking, all under the conquering phrase of “value for money”, as services worsened, hospital wards became harder to keep clean, we saw levels of infections caught by in patients on a scale Florence Nightingale would have recognised!

The privatisation of our elderly in residential care was a new “market opportunity” for the city.

The list could go on and on. Well, some may say, that is all a long time ago, what’s your point?

The point is this, New Labour swept into power, because people wanted a change!

NEW LABOUR’S LEGACY

All sections of our society came out to give the Tories the boot in 1997 and Labour achieved a landslide victory winning seats in parts of the country it never dreamed of succeeding in.

The problem is to this day, there exists within the Labour Party, those who believe that those results had nothing to do with how unpopular the Tories had become, but was down to New Labour marketing and all that needs to be done to win at the next election is to repeat the New Labour strategy and tuck the party just to the left of wherever the ToryLib government take us and, hey presto, the British public will flock back to Labour on the ballot paper.

Such belief is misplaced, indeed it is the classic denial logic of an alcoholic who thinks just one more drink is all they need to get the courage to take the cure.

Between 1997 and 2010 close to five million people stopped voting Labour. A few predictably went back to the Tories, some to Nationalist parties, and a shed load became so disillusioned that they just stopped voting.

Traditional areas of support were taken for granted in pursuit of new friends in the city and the media.

The influence of Murdoch and News International over governments will probably never be fully known, but its power was there for all to see, after all why would Prime Ministers or wannabe's travel half way around the world to sit at the court of the "dirty digger". Even now, with all the revelations of law breaking, corruption, abuses of power, how silent so many politicians are about the Murdoch empire from which they conjured favour.

So a new Tory government takes up the reins on privatisation but not from where the last Tory government left it, but from where New Labour took it forward.

Let's be honest, of course New Labour in government did some good things.

- The extra investment in hospitals and schools were not only desperately needed but the electorate demanded it and were prepared to pay for it which they did without complaint. It is a shame the vehicle of PFI was used, despite trade union warnings of its shortcomings, an expensive disaster.
- New Labour created employment both in the public sector and by stimulating demand created private sector jobs as well.

But New Labour fell under the spell of the free market Gurus. The private equity brigade and a breed of city and financial speculators who made Del Boy from Only Fools and Horses, look like St Francis of Assisi.

Building social housing was ignored in favour of continuing the Tory policy of private sector provision through landlords, with the state picking up the bill, by way of housing benefit. The end result has been the billions passed to the pockets of private landlords many of who have tax affairs which remain cloudy, and the blame now passes on to tenants!

All this money and, barely a handful of council owned social homes built in thirteen years of New Labour.

And in health and education, New Labour vision was for private sector provisions from foundation hospitals, and school academies to cleaning, catering and clinical services.

Well, we have the minimum wage, four weeks holiday pay, rights for agency workers and limits on working time. In practice the first two had to be extracted over years of reluctance to do either of them and the second two were finally delivered thanks to the European Labour Party who withstood awful treatment from New Labour in Downing Street in order to keep faith with the promises made to working people up and down the land.

And some advances were made on workplace rights such as representation, recognition procedures, and protection against dismissal during lawful industrial action.

But harsh realities remained: the gap between rich and poor widened under New Labour.

- Family tax credits were matched by reduced tax rates for private equity speculators on over leveraged, over priced takeovers and buy outs.
- Freedoms from cost controls over energy suppliers and a complete failure to protect our people from the greed of the city speculators and their bonus culture left New Labour unable to balance social justice with an expanding economy.
- The reliance on the city and financial markets to prop up our economy was a stupid mistake which this union and others saw ending in tears.

The UK economy is out of balance as we have been telling successive governments for years.

A lack of real manufacturing strategy over the last thirty years has added to the major problems of our economy and the tragedy is that those who benefited most from all this will end up paying less towards our recovery whilst those who had no control or influence over the current crisis are the one who will end up losing most and paying more.

The British public, our members, have bought into the need to bite the economic bullet, as a movement we must face up to that fact. However, the anger against those who took us into the deepest recession and the largest financial crisis in modern times is still as fresh as ever and the cuts and austerity measures from this Government has brought us unemployment and double dip recession.

We must use that to ensure our members become active in shaping the politics of the Government, whoever wins elections.

The Labour Party: re-engagement with Social Justice

The fundamental questions which now face the GMB and other trade union affiliates focus on whether it is possible or even desirable to rely on a Labour Party victory at the next election and whether such a victory will produce the workplace rights improvements and the social justice changes which never materialised in thirteen years of previous New Labour government, no mainstream party has any policies which even begin to redress the imbalance in the workplace, the imbalance of power of employers over employees. Individual employment rights and collective rights need action to help re balance that situation.

It is nonsense to suggest that there is no difference between Labour and the Conservatives on the issue of workplace and employee rights, indeed already after only two years of Government, attacks have been made on qualifying periods for claiming unfair dismissal proceedings at an employment tribunal as well as seeking to

create a financial wall blocking off access to justice for thousands of working people who are victims of bullying, victimisation and unlawful treatment at the hands of bad employers.

And the Government will go further, gurus at Number 10 already favour introducing laws which allow employers to get rid of workers because their face doesn't fit, or they don't fit in. In other words sacking anyone the employer wants to when they want to, because they want to. A battleground awaits us, there is no point or logic in thinking that you can keep your head down and get through this.

The GMB will have to fight these political attacks and campaigns for workplace and trade union rights. This is not the question. How we do it and what vehicle we use is.

Politically, the Labour Party potentially still offers working people the best route to economic and social justice, but if their agenda is more of the last thirteen years it is doubtful they will win the next election, let alone have the courage or political will to address the issue of workplace or trade union rights.

- The GMB and all other affiliates will have to be far more aggressive in our arguments for progressive economic and social policies than we have been for some time.
- The GMB cannot however just afford to rely on the current policy process designed by New Labour which is so discredited, in order to ensure our key objectives become reality.
- It is clear we need to launch, build and sustain specific policy goals and place them into the mainstream of the political agenda.
- Force the issues of employment rights, social housing, equality, tax fairness, trade union organising freedoms and full employment into the battle ground of the next election.

No candidate knocking on our door for support should be able to walk away without answering our questions.

THE FUTURE POLICY DIRECTION OF THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNION MOVEMENT

The wider political issues which surround elections have to include workplace rights and tackling exploitation and vulnerable employment issues. Our task is to form a broader alliance with other unions, including some not affiliated to any political party and put these issues centre stage.

Trade unions have millions of members, and more millions in the wider family. The mobilisation of these people for trade union issues is long overdue. A strategy like this will cost a lot of money to ensure it is effective at the ballot box.

The spending of our political fund on political campaigning for working people's rights seems both logical and is likely to be supported by the overwhelming number of GMB members, irrespective of how they currently vote.

The challenge for us is as it always has been: Do nothing and moan or stand up and sort out the problem.

Our members deserve better from the politicians of this country. It is time we turned up the heat on policies rather than personalities.

This Congress is pivotal in reshaping our relationship with the Labour Party but also to go much further and create a new policy objective which empowers our union to campaign for employment and social issues independently of any political party.

In previous years we introduced annual evaluations of the work of those MP's whose constituency received financial or organisational support from GMB.

We have ended our relationship with some and strengthened it with others.

This process will be enlarged, we want to provide support to those who share our values politically and this should be done at the expense of those who seek our financial and organisational support yet fail to grasp the need for social justice in any context other than words in a game of scrabble.

The trade union movement must organise training support for prospective public office candidates, and TULO is the perfect vehicle to adapt to do this.

We have had some limited success in helping to secure the selection of more parliamentary candidates with trade union and real life experience.

We must go much further, organisations like Progress, have grown up within the Labour Party to carry the flame of New Labour. They have resources, influence and large networks. Their aim is to get those who support their ideals selected as candidates. Those who support more privatisation of public services, oppose trade union and employment rights improvements are not those on the same page or perhaps even reading the same book as this union.

Within the ranks of New Labour grew a body who saw the Labour Party as a vehicle for personal advancement and ambition, rather than how they could contribute to a better life for all.

To these people trade unions were an outdated, unwelcome set of uneducated, argumentative workers who barely knew a Sauvignon Blanc from a Pinot Grigio and whilst those attitudes took a nose dive when so many lost their seats or leadership ambitions, it is clear a battle is upon us for the future direction of a Labour Party designed, and born to bring to Westminster, social justice for working people through the ballot box.

The GMB needs to enlarge its political organisation. To target local government accountability where so many of our members actually work. We have seen in places like Islington Council what can be achieved by rebuilding a united Labour Party at local level.

- We need to re-engage our key activists to join with others and rescue local CLP's from falling membership.
- We need to insert into Labour the industrial organisation that we are experts at.
- We must above all accept no more diversions from those who have never had a real job in their lives!!

The GMB and other affiliates such as Unison, Unite, CWU, Usdaw, Ucat, Aslef and others represent millions of working people's voices. It is time to make ourselves heard above the chatter of the dinner party brigade.

A new direction of resources, effort and intent. Not outside the Labour Party but inside and alongside.

The GMB must do what it is best at, campaign for those policies our members want.

And to do this we must re-organise our Political structures to bring about greater accountability.

1. A systematic approach to bringing Political education and activism back to our members.
2. A GMB Councillors network with services and a budget to keep the latest up to date information flowing between the Union and its activists in all parts of the Country.
3. The re-instatement of Political Education courses so that a whole new generation can discover our Political roots and help re-define our future Political activity.
4. The re-establishment of Regional Political Officers.
5. Political progress reports to be part of every Regional Committee agenda.
6. Regional Councils will receive Political reports.
7. GMB expects Labour MPs and Labour candidates to accept invitations to GMB Branches and organised workplaces so the grass roots views of members are heard.
8. The GMB Executive Council will expect the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party to accept an invite to speak to the Executive at least annually.
9. Regions have developed Political campaigning methods like Team GMB, which has been so successful in elections, sometimes putting over one hundred GMB members, many of whom had never been involved in Political activity before, into key seat struggles.

10. GMB will begin Training programmes for those members who wish to consider running for public office.
11. GMB will campaign for Trade Union and Employment Rights as well as core issues like full employment, equality, affordable social housing and a decent education and health care system for all.
12. Every GMB member should receive an annual report detailing the Political activities of the Union, and the key objectives for campaigning.
13. The GMB will continue to play a full role in the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation (TULO) as well as developing stronger relationships with non-affiliates of the Labour Party.
14. The GMB National Political Department will be re-structured and re-organised to ensure the delivery of our key Political objectives and policies.

The GMB will continue to review its effectiveness on Political campaigning, and will work with the Labour Party and others to advance our members interests, but we cannot be shackled to any element which is going in opposite directions to ourselves.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you, President. Paul Kenny moving the Special Political Report. If there were any people in the Labour Party or outside who thought that the anger and frustration that had been expressed by people like myself, Mary, Andy and other colleagues to Labour Party people over the last x-number of years, they would have gone away pretty well convinced that what we have been saying has been the reflection of people's anger and frustration right through the union.

Some people might sit here saying, "Well, why are we spending all this time on this political debate?" Anybody who says that they don't care about politics or they are not interested in politics, in reality, they are saying that they don't care about having a job, what their pay is, what their pension will be, what type of education their children will receive, whether there is a Health Service or even how much tax they pay. The list is endless. So it is not, really, a serious question about whether the union should be politically active. It is all about the political decisions made in town halls, Westminster or Brussels, and how those decisions impact on our members and their families.

Some might say that there is no difference between the parties, and at times we would have to admit that they were right. But that logic has a very hollow ring after two years of a Tory-Lib Government. The roots of our union are bedded in political activity and campaigning for social justice. We don't have the luxury of opting out of the process. We are more than just a focus group or an on-line petition pressure group. We draw together the experiences, desires, hopes and demands of, literally, millions of people. We have elected representatives at conferences like this – you – to debate ideas and we emerge with democratically arrived at policies and a political agenda.

The problem is not, nor has it ever been, arriving at the point of what we want. It is about how we get the political change needed to fulfil our aims and dreams. The trade unions have had huge – tremendous – success over the years with health and safety laws, employment protection laws, equal pay, pensions, anti-discrimination laws, holidays with pay, the minimum wage and, actually, the weekend! It was the unions that brought people the “weekend”. Everybody used to have to work on Saturdays. Do you remember that? Did you really think – does anybody really think – that the government of the day or employers woke up one sunny morning and said, “I think it would be a bloody good idea if workers had paid holidays”? It was trade union movements, it was resolutions and pressure that produced paid holidays. That was a political debate. It’s a very long list.

Frankly, we made little or no progress on social justice under Tory governments, and it is pretty obvious why. The interests of working people clash with the interests of the Tory Party. Surprised? Well, not really. But what has caused so much frustration and anger in recent times has been the lack of vision, passion and commitment to enacting our agenda by a Labour government. So many times – I repeat, so many times – during those 13 years of Labour government our voices were lost, frankly, in the sea of wine-bar chatter, career-chasing carpetbaggers, focus-group gurus and New Labour devotees who saw the future as a project – a project – with the Liberal Democrats, minus, of course, the trade union links. We were battling over foundation hospitals, privatisation, education, tax breaks for private equity and PFI. They were depressing years, actually, of public frustration and a lot of private anger. Of course, we achieved things: four weeks paid leave, 12 weeks strike protection, rights to repudiation, improvements in healthcare, improvements in state education facilities and rights to representation, but time after time we felt ignored and passed over. Even our own members drifted away from supporting Labour, along with five million others, who stopped voting Labour between 1997 and 2010. I repeat: Five million voters!

It is not a lot of comfort sitting, as we do today, with a Tory-Liberal Government, to say, “We told you so.” Harsh criticism of what New Labour failed to do is absolutely unavoidable. Anger at some of the things they did do is understandable and inevitable. The sidelining of trade unions from the selection processes for MPs favoured lawyers over labourers, consultants over carers and bankers – I said “bankers” – over builders. This has to change, and the Report deals with both education support and co-ordination with other unions to use our collective strength to secure our candidates, working class candidates, in the selection for safe seats so that they get them into the House of Commons and reflect the views of ordinary working people and decent trade unionists.

The shift to policymaking inside the Labour Party away from a conference based decision-making system weakened the Party’s links with the real world. Trade unions and constituency Labour Parties – not just trade unions – were seen as troublesome, embarrassing and almost ignored in favour of pre-determined and pre-judged policy consultations and policy commissions. They all ended with one disaster after another. This process over a period of years left New Labour devoid of credibility amongst its core supporters. It also left New Labour close to achieving the disaster of the break with the trade union links, and the CEC Report lays bare our frustrations.

The CEC Report also makes it clear that we are not buying into any more of the same. The key to changing the Labour Party lies at the heart of that selection process, the background, experience and commitment of candidates to Socialist policies.

Let me touch on motion 139 that is coming up from North West & Irish Region. The failure to wholeheartedly support public sector workers, attacking their lawful rights to stop work to oppose the tax on their pensions, by the Labour leadership was misguided and wrong, and this union spoke out about it at the time. If there was a need to say anything, then they should have condemned the Con-Dems who created the dispute by attacking working people's pensions in the first place. (*Applause*)

Since that time and the comments made by Ed Balls, the GMB has actually shut the money box. Apart from our affiliation fees, funding for elections and fighting the Tories and the BMP at the local level, that money box is going to stay shut until we see major changes.

On Motion 141, I make the point in advance of the speakers that I understand the content of the motion, and it is a good content, but it does seek to duplicate the scrutiny arrangements already in place. It also seeks to replace the elected regional committee scrutiny and the elected CEC Political Committee to review the regional and National Office recommendations on consistency funding with a completely different group from whatever. We are not sure. Not only does the substance of the resolution already happen, but it has already resulted in the reduction and withdrawal of funding from some areas and has proved an attention-grabbing story in others.

The system is clear, and it is obvious from some of the comments, but it is clear that people don't know about the system. I apologise for that. We have explained it but I will apologise again. It should be transparent to all regions. The document and the committee report makes it clear that not only should we be doing those reports to regional committees but to regional councils and, indeed, to every member of the union. It is a very simple system. Each year we ask the regions about the MPs in their areas and whether or not, effectively, they have met criteria, and some of those criteria are really simple: Did they go along and meet GMB members? Did they support GMB policies? How did they vote? Are they in touch? Do they support GMB members when they have problems like Carillion? We also do the same from National Office. Did they get on to Early Day Motions? Are they available? Did they speak in the House? What did they do? What was their record?

If the region says, "Well, they did a pretty good job for us" or "We don't they did a pretty good job for us", then that's okay, and vice-versa, but if both the region and national say, "Actually, they didn't do anything for anybody", then they are out. We have done it to a number and we will continue to do it to a number. It is obvious that some parts of the union don't know about that system and we will make sure that they do. We want it to be transparent because it is in our interests for it to be transparent. I can assure that since we started using it, a lot more people answer our letters than they used to.

The report, as I have said, goes further than the current system by saying that we think every member of the union should get a political report every year on our progress

and activities. I ask the movers of those motions to consider those points when they come to the rostrum.

You heard Terry Plumb speak with such honesty and passion. Terry, by the way, is a first-time delegate and speaker. He didn't say that when he spoke, but I am going to say that for him. (*Applause*) Terry is like so many other members; frustrated, angry and feels let down. They want Labour to be a party that they can boast about at work and to be proud about. This goes to the heart of what the arguments and what the Special Report is all about. We don't want more of the same and we are not having more of the same. It just won't wash. It just will not give us the social justice our members demand and, frankly, I don't believe that the public of this country, however disillusioned they are at the moment with the Tories, will vote for a Tory-light approach from a Labour government. They want social change. They want social advances for working people. We can't go back to people in the workplaces and in our communities and say, "Well, the best reason we have got for voting Labour is that they are not Tories." We have got to have a constructive, positive programme and agenda that shows people that the Labour Party is at the heart of working people's interests in this country. That's the battle that's going on at the moment. (*Applause*)

I want, briefly, to go through the recommendations on the back because I think it is important if you have not read them. There are only 14 of them, but they are as far-reaching as you can probably get in terms of laying out a strategy for putting more of our real members into the House of Commons.

The first is a systematic approach to bringing Political education and activism back to our members. As Terry said, many of our members out *there* don't know what we are doing. They don't know the political battles that we are having, and we need to reinstitute that.

We are doing a new structure for GMB Councillors so that we can support good GMB Councillors on the ground.

We are recommending the re-instatement of Political Education courses, something long since called for.

The fourth recommendation is the re-establishment and re-grouping of our Regional Political Officers.

Then we want political progress reports, and not the ones, Andy, that you were talking about. On *Progress* let me say this. I know that at this very moment a resolution is written and will be delivered to the Labour Party shortly. It is a rule amendment which will go before this year's Conference for next year which, effectively, will outlaw *Progress* as part of the Labour Party, and long overdue it is. (*Applause*)

We recommend political progress reports to be part of every Regional Committee agenda. Every Regional Council will receive Political reports. We have to put the political process and accountability up the agenda. We expect every Labour MP, actually, and all Labour candidates to accept invitations to come to GMB branches, organised workplaces and anywhere where the grass roots membership is. We expect them, as part of the support that we should give them, to come along and listen to

what our members are saying so that they have a grounding in the real world. I hope the time comes when we have so many MPs that they all come from those very workplaces and won't need that education.

I think it is right and proper – you have seen me do this on two or three occasions, and sometimes some colleagues thought I was being a bit controversial – that people who make decisions in our name become accountable to those for which they hold office. That is why the CEC thinks it is right and proper that the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party should come to the Executive at least once a year and report back on the progress that they are making on the core issues that we've identified and other trade unions have identified about the social agenda. They must be accountable to the processes of making announcements like the 1% cap on public sector pay. We think it is right and proper. We don't have anything to fear. I don't have anything to fear as a General Secretary that somehow I, Mary or Andy don't reflect the views of our Congress and of our Executive. I think this is a very progressive move and I hope that the Labour Party sees it that way.

I think we need to develop campaigning teams like they did in the London Region, which were very successful.

Quite clearly, we need to have training programmes for members who want or aspire to be either councillors or Members of Parliament, because they start from a completely disadvantaged position, whether it is money, support, knowledge, but if they have got the conviction, if they've got it in *here (pressing his heart)*, I would much rather somebody spoke from their heart than their arse, quite frankly. (*Laughter and applause*)

Number 11 is a very important one, because it says: "The GMB will campaign for Trade Union and Employment Rights as well as core issues." I want to make this plain. We are not having the issues about employment rights and trade union rights snuggled away somewhere in one line, tucked away in a 700-page manifesto. The Tories, thankfully – Mr Beecroft, thankfully – has now put employment rights for working people in this country bang, smack in the middle of the political agenda, and you can bet your bottom dollar that we are not going to let it go off. We may have to spend millions from our Political Fund, along with other unions, in order to make the issues of workers' rights in this country, trade union rights – look, nothing happened! I didn't struck by lightning – and employment rights in this country a core issue. I will tell you this. It is not just trade unionists who get victimised by the taking away of employment rights. It is mostly trade unionists who fought for them who got them on the statute books who enforce them, but actually it will be millions of other people who are not in unions at the moment who will be the easiest victims when there's a society without any decent employment rights. So employment rights are going to the centre of our argument and they are going to continue to be there. We have looked at a number of possible lessons, a number of ways that we can campaign, but the issue about employment rights and employment justice is not going away.

[Let me say this. We are not getting on the elevator on the fourth floor when Party policy has been pre-determined and pre-worked out over a few dinners or a few.... They are not smoke-filled rooms any more. I don't know what sort of things they have in those rooms, but they are rooms to which we don't have the keys and haven't

had the keys for a number of years. We are not doing it any more. We are not buying into it. We either get in on the ground floor and make sure that people understand at each stage of policy formation that the core issues that will get working people back voting Labour and back out campaigning for Labour will be the things that impact on them. We either get in at the ground floor or we are not getting in the lift at all. People need to understand that we are very serious about this. *(Applause)*

There are key issues that we restructure the union's Political Department. Mary, I know that this is a very difficult debate. There is a lot of anger, there's a log of frustration and, frankly, it's all true. This has brought us to a crossroads where we have one of two options. You see, throughout all my life, I am exactly the same as you. I am exactly the same as you, Bill. I am exactly the same as colleagues and exactly the same as Terry. Terry doesn't give up when he is faced in the workplace by an employer who is not listening to the arguments and who is acting unfairly. He battles. All of us do that. This, now, is exactly the same argument.

This is not a political party that belongs to pseudo intellectuals. This is a that was born out of, belongs to and should serve the mass of working people in this country, and our task is return to that. Mary, I move the report. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I am going to go round the regions, as I promised, but there are a few regions that did withdraw their motions in favour of the Political Report. I will move to them first. Does anyone wish to speak in the debate from London Region? Midland & East Coast, if you wish to, please come forward. Southern Region. Vaughan.

BRO. V. WEST (London): Congress, I speak in support of the CEC Report. I am practically standing here today as vice chair of the Eastern Region Labour Party. I am also proud that one of my branch stewards, who is sitting in the balcony, was elected last year as a Labour councillor. I am proud we both got there because of GMB support. I am often asked whether I am a Labour Party or a trade union member first. My response has always been that they are indivisible. They are flip sides of the same coin.

For those of you who have started to read the history of the union, this has been the case for the GMB from its earliest days. As a union, we were there at the founding of the party and I, for one, am not prepared to lose that legacy. But it is a legacy that we now have to refocus, so that those five million voters who have left supporting the party will be proud to vote for us again, to refocus so that we again become a party whose values are based on social justice and fairness, a party that stands with ordinary working people and not a party that stands with unregulated bankers, press barons or big business.

We are now within three years of a general election, an election that we and the wider movement need to start preparing for now. The CEC Report clearly sets out the terms of that preparation, and the terms of our need and the Labour Party's need to refocus. We have to admit that too often we, as a union, have been a bit loose in our engagement with the party. We have been far too passive. We have thought, perhaps, that it was enough to give a cheque to Iain McNicol's predecessors or to the local CLP treasurer. We thought it was enough for a Labour candidate to attach the name

of GMB sponsorship as a badge of convenience. Well, those days are over. We have got to get real about our engagement. We need to adopt the systematic approach laid out in the report. Our support for Labour can no longer be passive. Our support for Labour can no longer be a badge of convenience. Our support for Labour must be based on accountability, shared values and policies that advance our members' and ordinary working people's interests. Ian said this morning, "Get organised." I, for one, intend to organise, organise not only in the workplace but in the party. As I said before, it's the flip side of the same coin. I do not intend to abandon the party that we established but I do intend to ensure that it is accountable and democratic. Go away from Brighton this week and ensure your regions and branches engage with their local parties, send delegates, work with other unions holding the party to account, support ordinary working people to get selected and elected as MEPs, councillors and MPs. Together we can ensure that the party again becomes the party of working people, the party of the disadvantaged and the party of social justice and fairness. I move.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Vaughan.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Midlands & East Coast Region.

BRO. R. MORGAN (Midland & East Coast Region) responding to the CEC Political Special Report, said: I welcome this report. I think it is a realistic analysis of how and why Labour won and then lost the trust of the electorate. The steady decline in manufacturing, the loss of union rights, and the widening gap between the rich and poor are a feature of both the Thatcher and the Blair years. The main feature was the rate of that decline. It must be obvious to even the most casual observers that this decline has speeded up under Cameron and his poodles. Those who remember the Thatcher years know how bad it was then but those in power now are even more heartless and rapacious than she ever was. The Con-Dems are intent on dismantling the welfare state. This is based on the Beveridge Report and it aims to provide a comprehensive system of social insurance from cradle to grave. Beveridge wanted to ensure that there was an acceptable minimum standard of living in Britain below which nobody fell. I see this as a fundamental pillar of the Labour Party and the basis for social justice for the union Movement and GMB epitomises that stance. I see it as the responsibility of all of us to deliver this. Unless the GMB and our sister unions mobilise and organise we will cease to have any political influence at all. This is at a time when we need it more than ever.

Delegates, Congress, at last year's Congress the CEC statement on political organisation gave us a menu of options for the regions to consider. Some regions may well have considered them. Amongst them was to deliver a political education programme, encourage more members and reps to become CLP candidates, set up regional councils, organise election hit squads. Some regions may well have considered them from any lack of notable change in the Party's activities, and in some regions. I wonder how many have actually done anything to put them into action. The anger and passion of this year's motion is obvious, it is directed at the party that has taken our member support and money for granted for far too long. We were given assurances and promises in 1997 and a lot of those have not come to fruition. We have had a lot of objectives and advances but not enough. I want just to go on, if I may, just indulge me, please, Mary.

The Department of Work & Pensions has employed ATOS to remove as many disabled people from their books as possible, plus the ConDems continue to betray Remploy workers. This is a wonderful government. It has taken the Bible to heart. It has produced a bill that follows Matthew 11:5 and it has instructed its ATOS assessors that the blind shall receive their sight, the lame will walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf will hear. The dead are raised up and the poor have the Tory gospel preached unto them.

What they are actually doing is re-categorising the sick and disabled to conform to the Treasury statistic not based on the actual ability to find work. This all supposes there is any work for those who apply for it. The millions at present looking for jobs would disagree with that supposition. I will recall the illiterate headlines, *It's the Sun what done it*. Well, it is the unions that done it. We do it time and time again. We need to mobilise our strength, time to rebuild our political organisation, time to activate and educate, time to demand action, and time to take the Labour Party back to the unions that built it. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Please, it is getting very late. Thank you. Yes.

SIS. M. TAYLOR (London Region): First time delegate and speaker. (*Applause*) I wanted to say that there are many valid and important criticisms of the Labour Party and Labour MPs included in the CEC's report. As an example of the crisis that we face is the fact that less than 30 of the more than 80 GMB sponsored MPs voted in favour of John McDonnell's lawful industrial action bill which sought to make only minor improvements to the trade union rights within this country. That was despite a three-line whip from the GMB. Last year Congress passed a motion from my branch and in that motion it instructed the CEC to carry out a review of our sponsored MPs' voting records over a six-month period of parliamentary activity and to prepare a report for next year's Congress. I have been assured that this monitoring has been done and that it takes place on a continuous basis but I have not yet seen a report. I would like to ask the CEC when will Congress and GMB members see a full report of our sponsored MPs' voting records? Congress, we should have before us the information about our sponsored MPs so that we can have an open debate and, in the words of the CEC, we can turn up the heat on these MPs and their policies, and their actions. It is up to us the members to hold them accountable and to influence and decide which of those MPs we should and should not continue to sponsor. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Southern Region.

BRO. M. SMITH (Southern Region): Southern Region supports the political report. What always figures to mind was something someone said to me once, that union money in politics in the light of everything the Government is saying about the levy at the moment is the purest form of money in politics but it is the least effective, seemingly. We are in the position as a founding member of the Labour Party, one that since its inception has been an essential part of fighting for its candidates, fighting originally for socialist politics, and fighting to represent working people the best it can. We are finding a leadership at the moment of the Labour Party which, frankly, is not up to task. Everything that has spilt over into the pre-Congress motions, not

supporting the fight back against the pay cap on public sector workers, seeing Labour-sponsored MPs by GMB crossing picket lines, in effect, and this is the time where this debate is actually vitally needed to be had. I would say, firstly, with the report itself that there are a number of good things it does talk of. It talks of tax evasion. It does talk of the degeneration of the leadership into the hands of the bankers and the ruling class but it is not talking particularly of the role the union can play where it has its strongest hand in the three or two instances, and one is the over £2m that the Labour Party, unlike 1997, is absolutely in desperate need of, not from us but all affiliates within the trade union Movement, and it also neglects to represent its record on the NEC and the fact it has such in its power with GMB members controlling the Labour Party Conference Arrangement Committee. We could be fighting incredibly hard not to be nice, not to say respectable things, but to force the Labour Party into representing the union policies because they are backed into an absolute corner. We should be saying to every Labour MP, such as Siobhan McDonough who backed academy status within her own area, that we are not going to be backing money into you if you are going to be backing policies which undermine national trade union rights. We should say to Sadiq Khan, who is going to equate us with the government and say that we took part in November and in and around June in irresponsible strikes, how dare you equate us with the government; we are going to stop sponsoring you now.

Every single Labour Progress MP, stop sponsoring them now. Go this lunchtime, go right now, Paul, go and make sure that we never give them a single penny ever again of our union funds. You can see the power that we could exert. If the Labour Party is told to stop and we find they do not, for god's sake start a campaign, say we will come and vote for Labour but we are fighting within the Labour Party, we are fighting to represent you, there is nothing that you can lose, and you will be amazed at how many people would be on your side. The report does state that people have accepted the cuts but if you see that on November 30th even *The Daily Mail* ran a poll where 87% of people supported the public sector strikers on that day around the country. People see that if the union and the labour Movement and ordinary people together collectively are fighting back against austerity in the Tory-led government, then we can win and we can get mass support. We should not be tailing onto the idea that the mass media and the right can lead this debate. We can be pushing on to it.

THE PRESIDENT: Matthew, please wind up right now.

BRO. M. SMITH (Southern Region): I will wrap up. Use the levy to fight back within the Labour Party. Change it from absolutely everything that it represents now. Have absolute accountability of what the union is doing in there and never ever, ever, let people or organisations like Progress and Labour Party MPs that we sponsor who are on the right ever lead this debate. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Birmingham.

BRO. S. ROBERTSON (Birmingham & West Midlands Region): Well said, Matthew, but unlike him I will not rabbit on and on and on. My belly is rumbling. I am speaking in support of the Political Report, or should I say Special Report because, thank you, Mary, Paul, the CEC, I always receive it from the GMB and when I read it the other week when I got it through the post I was dancing about the room.

It is a step in the right direction or should I say in the left direction. Every journey starts with one step. We need to go all the way. As the proclaimer said, I would walk 500 miles. This is one step back to our roots, back to a socialist party of the working people, for the working people. United, we need to be united and that way we will never be defeated. I support this. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Stevie. Northern Region. No. Billy, my heart won't take this. (*Laughter*) Can somebody find me a balcony to jump off, quick? (*Laughter*)

BRO. W. HUGHES (Northern Region): Worthy President, after the Lord Mayor's Show. There is nothing I can get my teeth in, in this document. What I will say is the CEC are to be complimented on the document that they have produced. (*Applause*) They are. Believe it or not, I have read the document twice in case I couldn't believe my eyes the first time. (*Laughter*) It might not be a bad idea if we sent a copy of these documents to our sponsored MPs and our councillors as well. (*Applause*)

Congress, let's be absolutely clear. I know we go on about the five million votes that we lost in the 13 years but they did not vote Tory, they voted against Labour. Why, it is because Labour did not deliver their hopes and aspirations. Many were trade union members. Many were our members. No doubt about who the Tories represent and who their enemies are. They have set about their task with relish and speed in a Formula 1 car with a high octane turbo charged engine, with the ink not yet dry on the ballot paper. Austerity is their creation and a weapon to bring the working people to their knees whilst ensuring their rich City friends remain unaffected by recession. Organised labour, employment protection, and health and safety laws, are the Tories natural enemies.

What do we get from the two Eds in response, the same old story, take a cut in your wages and you might save your jobs. What a load of rubbish. (*Applause*) To hell with the National Policy Forum charade this weekend, that is about as good as it does get, policies falling from the sky. The stance that it will hurt you less but for a little longer does not exactly comprehend with the working people. So when our members look at the Coalition and our Party in opposition, what do they think they are supposed to make of politicians? Do they think perhaps they are all the same? I will tell you what, it comes as no surprise because there is not a thickness of a tab of paper between the two sets of them. They are saying that the Coalition is cutting the living standards and helping their own kind. We knew that. What did we expect? Cameron, the chameleon, Clegg, the wolf in sheep's clothing, not forgetting Dr. Spock Osborne, and Uriah Heep Cable, the response therefore should come from us because it is certainly not coming from our Labour leadership, and they appear to be devoid of any tangible ideas.

Congress, it is about getting our members involved and active in the Party. No more carpetbaggers, no more career politicians, select our people to represent our people so that we get a Labour government that will govern the people, for our people, for our families and for our communities. We move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Billy, Worthy President. Next, please, GMB Scotland, in case he changes his mind on the way down. Do you hear me, Scotland?

SIS. L. MILLER (GMB Scotland): I am supporting the CEC Political Special Report. I wonder how many in this hall joined the GMB to exploit the poorest members in our society? None, I hope. How many here joined the bandwagon to remove the safety net of those in dire need, the unemployed, the sick, the senior members of our society, the young unemployed with no hope? Who agrees with the benefit cap? That will create a mass population move that will be as devastating as the Highland clearances. Where is Labour when this is going on? Are they campaigning to stop this? No, they say they would still make the drastic changes to our welfare state but not as quick.

Congress, that is not what I joined the Labour Party for. We all remember Thatcher's legacy, the current Tory government are much worse but what about New Labour? There are some who say that a return to New Labour is the way to get a Labour government elected. Wrong. In Scotland 600,000 voters have left Labour, many of them not voting at all. Why, PFI, lack of social housing, a race to use the private sector, the decline of our manufacturing industries, our schools and hospitals and social services sold to the lowest bidder, massive youth unemployment, and the disgraceful closing of Remploy factories started by a Labour government.

In Scotland we have devolution, our own parliament, and a party who favour separation and divorce from the rest of the UK. We all know divorce is not a good experience but let me be perfectly clear, the problem with the UK is not the English, the Welsh, or the Scots, I am a proud Scot, the problems today are not about nationalists, the problems are about the Tories and their apologists.

We have to move forward in a new direction with a new attitude. We must not surrender to the Tory deceit. If one of the problems they say is high pay, look at those at the top that are getting massive tax breaks, not those at the bottom struggling from week to week. We must have a Labour Party who supports the trade union and its members, not a party filled with career politicians with little concept of the realities working people have to put up with. Why should we campaign for an idea that does little for our beliefs and social justice? While I support this special report we must go further. Our socialist beliefs are more relevant now than ever. We have a strong message. Let's get out there and shout it from the rooftops. Congress, please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Congress, with your authority I am asking you to suspend Congress right now, this debate, not suspend Congress, the reason being it has been a long debate, and there is a bit more to come, but we do have some very, very important people as well in here who are only here for the day, and they have been caught up in traffic jams and floods, and whatever. That is the Swindon strikers who are up in the balcony. *(Applause)*

Congress, these are the brave Carillion workers who are fighting for their rights, their right to work, their right to a decent workplace, and the right not to be bullied. They are only here for the day so I think it is right that the emergency resolution is now put forward while they are here so they can hear the true honesty of the GMB. Is that agreed? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Can I have the mover?

CARILLION DISPUTE EMERGENCY MOTION NO. 1

CARILLION DISPUTE

This Congress notes that Carrillion produced their initial findings on the 27th April 2012 that led GMB members to take their 19th day of industrial action in May in an effort to secure resolution to individual and collective grievances related to bribery, corruption, intimidation and racism.

Carillion has not released a final report into investigations of such activities, but admit to having uncovered wrongdoing in an interim report. Rather than seek to punish those involved in demanding gifts and money from our members, Carillion have indicated that those who were forced to give money and gifts are likely to be subject to disciplinary action.

This Congress further notes that senior Carillion managers involved in the dispute have also been involved in the active blacklisting of trade unionists through their links with the Consulting Association.

This Congress confirms GMB support for the members in dispute and vows to support a campaign of industrial action, political and media activity in order to secure a settlement of the dispute including the recognition of GMB.

**W15 BRANCH
SOUTHERN REGION**

(Carried)

SIS. C. VALLELLY (Southern Region): This motion asks for support from the members in dispute with Carillion at the Gt. Western Hospital in Swindon. The members are here today on their 20th day of strike action, 20 days of strike action. We salute you for that. *(Applause)* This is action that they have been forced to take. Nobody wants to go on strike. It is not easy to go on strike. It is not easy to go back into that workplace when not everybody actually agrees with what you have been doing. It is a really difficult thing to do. They have been forced into it because of the corruption and the bullying, and the harassment that has been absolutely endemic in Carillion at the Gt. Western Hospital. It has been shocking what we have uncovered that has been going on there. For example, if you wanted extended leave to which you are legally entitled, the supervisor would ask you for a bung, about £400 was the going rate for extended leave, or if you wanted a fulltime contract and you were from the agency, about £1,000 was the going rate for that. Absolutely shameful. It was not until the GMB got involved there and the members took their first strike action that Carillion even began to look at these allegations. They had known this has been going on for at least 18 months that we have evidence of, but they did not do anything about it.

At the beginning of this campaign I started talking to Dave Smith. Some of you might know Dave Smith, he is a blacklisted construction worker, he actually went to tribunal, and he said to me, "Has Liz Keats been involved at all?" I said, "Funny

enough, that's who Carillion sent down to deal with us right at the start of the campaign." Liz Keats's name is all over the tribunal documents from Dave Smith, literally her name is all over it. She is the woman who provided information to the consulting association to enable them to blacklist Dave Smith. He was blacklisted because he was a Health & Safety rep. His crime was to try and prevent workers being killed while they were up doing their daily work. That is no crime but Carillion punished him for it. I think just the fact they sent her down shows you what sort of company Carillion are, a tough anti-union company.

Our campaign has centred very much around *Respect at Work*. We have used it on all the banners. We have used it all the time. We have said from the beginning our campaign is about the rights to respect and dignity at work whether you are a consultant in that hospital or you are a cleaner, you are entitled to the same respect and dignity. (*Applause*) Our members do not deserve to have to put up with the bullying and harassment, and the corruption that Carillion has thrown at them and we are not going to stand by and watch them put up with it. We are not going to let it happen. We should not let it happen and we will not let it happen. I was told by the Regional Secretary of another union when we got involved with the blacklisting support group that we should not get involved with them because we might be seen as being a bit militant. Thanks for the compliment, you know, I think that is what we are here for, isn't it, that is what a union is here for. (*Applause*) Unions are here to fight for working people. We are here to fight companies like Carillion and we are here to stand up for our members. That is what we are here for.

Throughout this campaign we have been attacked from all sides. We have had attacks from the Carillion management, from the racist bigots on the street, and a load of other places in between which Paul and our Regional Secretaries know all about. But the one place we have not had to fight has been with our union because our union has been with us and behind us the whole way. They have picked it up and they have run with it. I am proud to be a member of a union that will stand toe to toe with bullies like Carillion and take on the fight. I am proud of that. (*Applause*) What we have proved in this campaign is that together we are strong, together in the union our members are strong and we will win. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Secunder.

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern Region) seconding Emergency Motion No.1, said: I used to be a hospital porter and Carole used to be a cleaner so, to be honest, when we were in the hospital it was an environment I felt quite comfortable in. When we did a recruitment campaign we were in the porter's lodge at Gt. Western Hospital and I was hearing some of the stories and I said, "When I was a porter we would have gone on strike." What has happened with Carillion is that things have been known about since 2008. Other people have walked away. The GMB did not walk away. I will tell you this, Carillion are a very tough employer but we are a bloody tough union and we are going to win. We're gonna 'ave 'em. (*Applause*) The determination of our members who now have taken 20 days of strike action, absolutely solid, has told them absolutely clearly, we put in a grievance signed by 109 people back in December and the staff were interviewed and then at the beginning of February Liz Keats said, "We're not going to uphold it. There is no evidence." The next day we had a strike. Suddenly the supervisor who is at the heart of it was suspended. After our strike

suddenly they said they were going to do a proper investigation, interviewed everyone. They had been telling the press that it was all lies, there was no corruption, there were no bungs, and there was no racism. They issued a report at the end of last week that admitted there was racism, there was corruption, there were bungs, but I will tell you what a load of bastards they are, they said in their report that it is a cultural thing, Goans do not mind giving bungs, that is what they have said in their report, gift-giving is a part of Goan culture. I will tell you, Carillion, the Goan members were the ones that came to you and reported it, they were the ones who came to you and asked for protection, they were the ones who came to you and asked that the supervisors be disciplined and instead Carillion covered it up. You know why they covered it up, institutional racism. We have heard this, "Oh, it's part of their culture; oh, they're whingers." It is absolutely scandalous. Now they have said that they will discipline people who admitted that they gave bribes in order to get holiday and overtime, even though that was the policy that their managers were implementing.

We have checked with our lawyers and what Carillion have said is completely wrong in law and we absolutely will not accept any of our members, any of our members, being disciplined for giving bribes which they were required to do by their supervisors. I will give you a message, Carillion, we are going to win this dispute. We are going to go on. We will never walk away from our members. As long as they want a fight, we will fight with them. We have had tremendous support from fantastic shop stewards; we have had support from the branch, from the region, from Paul Kenny, all the way. I tell you, I send a message to Carillion, we are a fighting union and we are going to bring you down. (*Applause/Standing Ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Congress, I now move to the vote. All those in favour of Emergency Motion No.1 please show. Anyone against? That is carried unanimously. (*Applause*)

Emergency Motion No.1 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to the last part of the business and before I do, just in case you all go mad and run out, as soon as I finish Congress the Section Conferences will start one hour from the closure of this Congress. Okay.

PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP AWARDS FOR EQUALITY

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, it gives me great pleasure, as it did yesterday but they were not here, to present the joint winners of the President's Equality Award to the Most Inspirational Project for Making a Difference at Work to the Carillion shop stewards, Jose Estrochio and Paulo Fernandes. Would you like to come forward, please? (*Applause/Standing Ovation*)

(Presentation amid applause)

PAULO FERNANDES: Our high profile dignitaries and my GMB colleagues, I am Paulo Fernandes working for the multinational company, Carillion; today no more Carillion, they are chameleon. (*Applause*) Dear friends, I am very much surprised at the conclusion finding of our collective grievances which have run, and after months that conclusion is they have admitted there is intimidating, bullying,

threatening, bribery, extortion, etc. It is shocking. There was an article the day before yesterday, our general manager has published what I said now, but there is a serious shortfall. They want disciplinary against three of our members. We are sure in this multinational company there is bribery, extortion. It is admitted yet they want to take stipulations against us. This is the conclusion. This is the surprise we are still on the news article and a letter, the disciplinary letter they have sent to us. This is a request to this huge GMB and our presence to this Congress, please do support us. This is not India. What they want to say about the conclusion is very, very long. This is a pure directly high management threatening our small class four employees working as a cleaner in this country. I do not know what to say. I hope you have understood my little bit of English. I have my first English in Goa but the pronunciation may be a little different. I hope you have understood. Thank you very much. I hope you will support us. We will win this fight. I also thank Paul Maloney, our Regional Secretary, and our Local Secretary, Andy Newman, Carole, and including our General Secretary, Paul Kenny, as well. Thank you very much. *(Applause/Standing Ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, the last announcement: as you leave the Congress hall for lunch please have a look at the giant snakes and ladders game that highlights the difficulty of climbing out of the poverty trap. The game was devised by our colleagues in Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. It is absolutely brilliant. Look at the snakes and then see where the ladders go.

Please give generously to the bucket collection on their behalf as you leave the hall and also support the fringe meeting on Wednesday afternoon for our brave strikers up there, the Carillion workers. *(Applause)*

For the football fans amongst you, I am delighted to tell you that we have made arrangements to show the England and France game live on the screen, kick-off at 5 o'clock.

We will now break and, as I said, an hour from now the Section Conferences. Thank you, colleagues, half past two.

The main Conference adjourned. Sectional Conferences began at 2.30 pm. Main Conference resumed on Wednesday, 13th June at 9.30 am with proceedings Day Four.
