

GMB

CONGRESS 2013

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SIS MARY TURNER MBE

(President)

(In the Chair)

.....

Held in:

**Plymouth Pavilions,
Plymouth**

on:

Sunday, 2nd June 2013

Monday, 3rd June 2013

Tuesday, 4th June 2013

Wednesday, 5th June 2013

and

Thursday, 6th June 2013

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PROCEEDINGS

DAY TWO

(Monday, 4th June 2013)

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SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

MONDAY, 3RD JUNE 2013 MORNING SESSION

(Congress re-assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Will Congress come to order, please? Colleagues, we have a busy day today. Thank you. I hope you all had a good evening last night and you are all ready to go, so let's start. Just as a reminder, could all speakers please state their name and region clearly when they come to the platform? Any questions on the ballot sheet and auditors' report need to be submitted in writing to the Congress Office no later than 5.30 p.m. today. Can I call on Helen Johnson to give Standing Orders Report No.3? Helen, good morning.

STANDING ORDERS REPORT NO.3

(Adopted)

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Moving SOC Report No.3. Withdrawn Motions. The SOC has been advised that the following motions have been withdrawn: Motion 182, Bullying and Intimidation in Schools, standing in the name of London Region; and Motion 189, The NHS, also in the name of London Region.

On the subject of emergency motions, the SOC has accepted a further emergency motion as being in order for debate. This will be Emergency Motion 2: The GMB Refutes the Coalition Government attack on Teaching Assistants and Vows to Defend Them, standing in the name of Southern Region. The SOC is recommending that this be heard on Tuesday morning.

President, Congress, I move SOC Report No.3.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Any questions on the report? No? All those in favour of accepting? Thank you very much. Thank you, Helen. Good morning.

Standing Orders Committee Report No.3 was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, before we start I just have one other announcement. I would like to wish Paul Coles a Happy 40th Birthday today, in the London Region. *(Applause)* Sorry, Paul. I will pay for that at branch, I suppose.

Moving on, before we start our political debate we have a short video message from Ed Miliband.

(Video played to Congress)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, this is the agenda to start with. I will be calling motion 247, GMB Scotland, 248 Midland and East Coast Region, and 249, Create a Constitutional Convention, Yorkshire Region. Then I will be asking Harry Donaldson to speak on Motion 247. Will the movers and seconders please come to the front?

POLITICAL: DEMOCRACY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AGAINST AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND MOTION 247

247. AGAINST AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND

This Congress Beith Engineering Branch would like to move that GMB support the Better Together Campaign regarding Scotland retaining full membership of the UK. We feel an independent Scotland would be an economic disaster for the country and our Union.

As our Branch is employed by the MOD we can't support an independent country as we do not know where or if our jobs would be in an independent Scotland.

BEITH ENGINEERING BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Referred)

BRO. G. COLL (GMB Scotland) moved motion 247. He said: This motion is calling Congress to support the *Better Together* campaign and delivering a no vote in Scotland against an independent Scotland. We believe that Scotland in voting yes for independence will result in an economic disaster for the United Kingdom, placing thousands of jobs at risk within our defence industries, including the MOD and shipbuilding, not to mention our young people needing hope and jobs for their future. A strong Scottish parliament within the United Kingdom gives us the best of both worlds now and in the future. Scotland is stronger as part of a United Kingdom and the United Kingdom is stronger within Scotland as a partner. In these tough and turbulent times the strength and the stability of the UK economy is a major advantage. Congress, please support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Gary. Seconder? Is it formally seconded? Thank you.

Motion 247 was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now ask for the mover of motion 248?

NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION – THE VOTE FOR 16-YEAR OLDS MOTION 248

248. NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION - THE VOTE FOR 16 YEAR OLDS

This Congress notes that, as reported in the press the Scottish parliament has taken the progressive step in allowing 16 year olds to take part in the referendum deciding the future of Scotland staying within the union.

As it is theirs and future generations that are going to be greatly affected by the decisions being made this is the right thing to do and in these troubled times it is about time Westminster also allowed all British 16 year olds to vote and have a say in decisions being made that will determine their future.

In the 2007-2008 parliamentary sessions a private members bill was sponsored by Julie Morgan and only got to the second reading in the commons, October 2012 introduced into the House of Lords sponsored by Lord Tyler awaiting a date for its second reading.

This motion is asking the CEC to support this bill and lobby parliament for its speedy introduction onto the statute book.

If they are old enough to work, old enough to join the armed forces and old enough to pay taxes then they should be old enough to vote and have a say in electing those who will be making decisions that will affect their future.

GRIMSBY FOOD & LEISURE BRANCH
Midland and East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. S. ORTEGA (Midland & East Coast) moved motion 248. She said: This motion is asking for a reduction in the voting age following on the Private Members Bill in the House of Commons but is still awaiting a date for a second reading in the House of Lords. Not only is support required for the bill but Parliament needs to be lobbied for a speedy introduction into the statute book for a lower voting age. The

argument for lowering the voting age is quite compelling. At 16 you can marry, consent to sex, pay taxes, join the Armed Forces, become a company director, enter work, join a trade union, obtain welfare benefits, consent to medical treatment, and even change your name by deed poll.

Already many European countries permit 16-year olds to vote, as does the Isle of Man. Why, then, deny over 1.5 million 16 and 17-year olds in the UK the right to vote? If we want to get young people engaged in society and influence decisions, it is patronising to exclude them. Certainly Scotland is leading the way in involving 16-year olds in next year's referendum on independence; after all, theirs and future generations will be greatly affected by the outcome of the referendum on deciding the future of Scotland and, quite rightly, they should be permitted to vote.

Young people leaving school at the age of 16 will either go into further education or the workplace, if they are lucky. Those going in to work are encouraged by the GMB and the TUC to join a union and participate in the voting of elected workplace representatives. They are at liberty to attend branch meetings where they can vote and participate in the election of branch activists, such as the president, secretary, etc. If 16-year olds choose to go into further education, then they may be invited to join the student union and will have the opportunity to vote for their student representatives. Why then should they be denied from voting for their local councillor or MP in local and general elections?

The Age Discrimination Act should not discriminate against voting procedures for 16-year olds. When contesting the last election the Liberal Democrats pledged to reduce the voting age. Quite apart from wanting to involve the younger people in politics they also wanted to target the student vote but this pledge has not yet materialised and we need to ensure this happens and we gain the student vote. Give our youth the opportunity and right to vote within our democratic society to elect those making decisions about their future.

I will finish on a rather poignant note. Out of the first hundred British soldiers to die in Iraq six were too young to vote but not too young to die for their country. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Secunder? And while the seconder is coming to the rostrum will the movers of 225, Southern, 227, London, and 228, Southern, please come forward?

BRO. J. GROCOCK (Midland & East Coast): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I am here to second motion 248, No Taxation without Representation. The bill for 16-year olds to be given a vote was put forward by parliament in the 2007/2008 parliamentary sessions in a Private Members Bill and then again in October 2012 it was introduced into the House of Lords sponsored by Lord Tyler. It is still awaiting a second reading. I know there are people who say that they should not have a vote as they show no interest in politics but about 20,000 young people are active in local youth councils which often work in close collaboration with public services. There is even a Youth Parliament that was established in 2000 and has held debate in the Houses of Parliament since 2008. There are over 600 elected members of the Youth Parliament. These show that 16-year olds do take an interest in the democratic system of this country, that they are knowledgeable and passionate about the world around them and capable of engaging in a democratic system.

Congress, we live in fast changing times. In 1969 when the parliament previously decided to extend the vote franchise to 18-year olds the then youth did not even have the same opportunities they do now; few went into further education and even fewer went into higher education. They did not have Smartphones, tablet devices, or social media that can keep them informed of global and local events 24 hours a day. I am sure today's teenagers have the same social interests as their counterparts in the 1960s but this decade's 16-year olds are better informed and have a similar maturity to the 18-year olds of over 40 years ago. It is now time for them to be able to use their knowledge and maturity to lobby Parliament to give them the vote. Congress, this motion I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: John, well done. Motion 249?

CREATE A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION MOTION 249

249. CREATE A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

This Congress notes that whilst there have been a number of changes to the British Constitution over the past 150 years; these have effectively been tinkering round the edges rather than radical alterations. After a number of false dawns, Britain is still essentially run in the same way, by the same people as two centuries ago. Congress therefore, calls on the next Labour government to set up a Constitutional Convention, composed of ordinary voters, not the usual suspects of academics, jurists and politicians.

This would have a remit to look at all aspects and components of the constitution, looking at how to bring it into the 21st Century. Such a convention would be given 12 months to report back, not just to Parliament but to the whole population its findings and to have a speedy implementation by the government of its recommendations.

The Constitution should work to the benefit of the whole population not the interests of a select elite.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, we have seemingly little to choose between the main parties and trust in politicians is in free fall. It is no wonder turnouts at elections are shrinking. With the executive, judiciary, and legislature all coming from a small select part of society, all defending the status quo, no wonder Ken Livingstone wrote, "If voting changed anything, they'd abolish it." At past Congresses some of you have spoken really eloquently and passionately supporting various changes to the constitution. Comrades, rather than tinkering with it, it is time to look at the whole constitution and bring it into the 21st century making it work for all and not just a privileged few. Let's have a constitutional convention and do the job properly. Any constitutional convention should consist of ordinary voters, not just those who make a good living out of being drawing room politicians. We are the ones who suffer the damage done by public schoolboys and upper class twits playing with our lives. With a comrade-led and fraternal debate following the footsteps of ordinary people from the Levellers back in the days of the Civil War to the Chartists of 150 years ago, we can construct a new workable constitution.

You might question the 12-month deadline in this motion but making considered important decisions is something workers have to do in double-quick time. How long do we have to decide whether or not to accept a pay deal? Twelve months to make a decision is a luxury, not a constraint. For far too long, comrades, we have lived under an oligarchy relying on the courts, the secret handshake, the Stock Exchange, and the old school tie, and, yes, I know it is from a Billy Bragg song. It is time for a change. It is time for a constitution that works for all, not the self-interest of the few. It is 750 years since Simon de Montfort's rebellion, 100 years, and tomorrow is the actual centenary, since the death of Emily Davison, the fight continues.

Comrades, support motion 249 as the first step to a fairer system for the 21st century. Support a constitutional convention to advance social, political, and economic justice, to give us a genuine democracy of the people, by the people, for the people. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian.

BRO. D. McLEAN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): This motion calls on the next Labour government to set up a convention to bring our Parliamentary process into the 21st century. Why do we need to reform our constitution? The answer is simple; we need a constitution that works to benefit the whole of society and not just the elite few. At first glance it looks like we have made great strides over the past

couple of hundred years in our political system. However, dig below the surface and it is clear that nothing has altered much. The majority of MPs, judges, and senior civil servants, are middle-aged, middle-class, white males. Entry to the House of Lords is based on political patronage and accident at birth. That is why we need to look at having a constitution fit for the 21st century and the way to bring it about is by having a constitutional convention.

The outdated system we have protects and looks after itself and not the suffering majority. That is why the convention should be composed of ordinary people with no vested interest in keeping the status quo. Its remit to report back to parliament and the population is twofold. Firstly, most inquiries and commissions take so long to report back that most people have forgotten why they were set up in the first place. That is why this convention should sit for 12 months maximum. Secondly, in releasing its report in full to the population it stops Parliament and Whitehall from drip-feeding us parts they want and losing or ignoring the rest.

There are many reasons for wanting to change our constitution. For example, as a British citizen you do not have rights, instead you have freedoms, freedom to be able to do things and freedom not to have things done to you, but these freedoms are subject to change by a parliamentary majority. A constitutional right is near on impossible to change. We have elections every five years? No, we do not. We have seen over the years successive governments delay election after election to a time when they feel more secure in winning the election. In theory, a majority parliament can sit indefinitely without calling an election. Between 1935 and 1945 we had a ten-year period without a general election. Granted, five of those were during the Second World War but, let's be honest, these days it does not take much to start a war. Look what the Falklands War did for Maggie Thatcher, it increased her popularity so much that she confidently went to the polls after just four years in office, and talking about Maggie, there are more laws governing trade union elections and strike ballots than there are laws about parliamentary elections. That cannot be right. Surely Parliament has to be more accountable to the country than the unions. Please support this motion. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? No? Can I call Harry Donaldson to speak on motion 247? Harry.

BRO. H. DONALDSON (Regional Secretary, GMB Scotland): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and asking Congress to refer motion 247. Congress, to set some context as regards the request for referral, let me remind you that on 18th September 2014 the people of Scotland will be asked to vote in an historic referendum to decide if Scotland becomes an independent country. The countdown has already begun. The decision of the Scottish people will be the most significant in their lifetime. Alex Salmond, the First Minister of Scotland and Leader of the Scottish National Party, is campaigning for a yes vote, setting out their economic case for independence. The recent launch of their *Vision for a Future: Independent Scotland* has drawn significant criticism from the Scottish media as being high on rhetoric but really low on detail. Their vision is about what possibilities would exist in an independent Scotland when they have control of the tools and weavers of fiscal power free from the constraints of Westminster government, and how a vote for independence will deliver a socially just and fair Scotland, a Scotland of growth and prosperity.

That sounds really good, but let's look at the reality, how can the SNP promote a socially just Scotland when their key policy is built on slashing corporation tax to attract big business creating tax havens for global corporate businesses, a proposed policy that will end up in a race to the bottom as Scotland tries to cut the rate to the lowest in the Western world in order to compete. There are no details of any substance on key issues, such as banking, finance, defence, mortgages, NATO, or energy set out in their document for a future Scotland. This, as I said earlier, has not gone unnoticed and receives much criticism in the media.

Congress, this is all about how best Scotland's interests and long-term future will be served. Will it be as an independent nation or will it be within the United Kingdom? As trade unionists and GMB members, and Scots, we also ask ourselves what is in the best interests of the United Kingdom, our members, their jobs, communities, and their futures. Scottish independence would not only break up the United Kingdom as we know it, a union of four countries all represented here today in Congress, it would also change the face of the political landscape for ever.

Congress, do not underestimate the significance of this referendum on the rest of the UK and our ability to return a Labour government to power. If Scotland became independent in September 2014, there would be a loss of 40 Labour MPs at Westminster, a major blow to the Labour Party in achieving the return of a Labour government, throwing doubt on the rest of the UK and its future political direction.

The motion also highlights that members' jobs may be at risk if Scotland becomes independent and refers to the example that this could be the case for our members employed by the MOD in Scotland. This really underestimates the reality of the potential Scotland could face in terms of job losses when we realise that the majority of control of the Scottish economy is based on companies outside of Scotland, especially within the manufacturing base; also, this could impact on Scotland's public services and the other sectors that are important to the Scottish economy.

Congress, the motion also calls on GMB to join the *Better Together* campaign. What this really means is to join in collaboration with the Tories, the architects of austerity, and that excuse for a party, the LibDems, the very people who are inflicting untold misery on our members, and the poor, and the disadvantaged. Do we really expect the Scottish people to be convinced that by Labour joining in with the group provides any credibility to the Scottish people in terms of delivering social justice for all within the UK?

Congress, let me be quite clear, this was an own goal by the Labour Party in Scotland and a position GMB Scotland made known to the Party. Richard Leonard, GMB Political Officer, stated in his speech to the Scottish Labour Party Conference in Inverness, the Coalition Government attempts to destroy the NHS in England and to dismantle the welfare state across the United Kingdom and this has nothing to do with their Englishness but everything to do with their Tory ideology. Raiding our members' public sector pensions, attacks on the weakest in society, the removal of protection against unfair dismissal, and Cameron's plan to cut off the health and safety culture for good are not anti-Scottish. What they really are is anti-working class and anti-trade union.

Congress, we are not against the basic sentiments of *Better Together* but to join with the Tories and LibDems would be to betray all that we stand for and we have campaigned for as a union in this proud union of ours. GMB Scotland have been lobbying the Party and we have told them what Scotland needs is a separate but distinctive Labour message in Scotland setting out a vision of a Scotland within the United Kingdom and a socially just and fair society at the heart of that message.

At this point I am quite happy to report to Congress the Labour Party have at last listened and we now have launched *United with Labour*, setting out a vision for Scotland within the United Kingdom. Congress, as I have said, this will be the most important decision people in Scotland have faced in their generation, a decision that may fundamentally change the future of Scotland and the UK as we know it. GMB Scotland embarked on a process of consultation across Scotland engaging with our members in informed debates, listening to their thoughts, views, anxieties, and aspirations, holding meetings from Kilmarnock to Inverness in the North of Scotland, and in addition holding political debates with guest speakers in Glasgow. These were all chaired by John McKenzie, chair of our political forum, and Richard Leonard and myself have attended all these meetings.

Post-Congress we will over the next few months conclude the last leg of our second consultation journey, including a final political forum to be held in Glasgow. Following the conclusion of this open process, GMB Scotland will set out our position in line with the decision of the General Secretary, which was

endorsed by the Central Executive that the democratic mandate weigh within GMB Scotland in this decision.

Congress, let there be no illusion, there are those voices in our membership who think things could not get any worse under an independent Scotland or that we could give independence a try. Congress, you cannot give independence a try. There is no second chance, no turning back, no third option. There are also those in the Labour Party who are members campaigning for a yes vote for an independent Scotland. Their view is that an independent Scotland will provide a platform to build a socialist Scotland in the belief that a post-independent Scotland would lead to the creation of the Republic of Scotland. This at best is naïve and at worst delusional, or I would say living in cloud cuckoo land; if only this was the case.

Congress, what is the point of independence if you then hand over monetary policy to a foreign bank, the Bank of England as it would be in an independent Scotland, who would then be central bank lender of last resort with no Scottish MPs in Westminster to influence that policy at all. The SNP tells us that we would remain part of the UK's energy systems; we will remain in NATO, remain within the European Union, and maintain the Queen as a head of state. I ask you again, what is the point of independence if the SNP vision of a socially just Scotland is built on a key policy of slashing corporation tax to attract major international businesses? This to attract businesses to Scotland would only be creating a Scottish tax haven for corporate tax dodgers that we have already seen and heard at Congress when people have been speaking about Google, Starbucks, and Amazon. Is Scotland to become the new Monaco, is the question. We really do not have the weather right enough but we could become the new Monaco. These are the questions that we have been asked by our members across all of these debates that we are having.

Congress, thanks for your indulgence. I will finish on this story, which is really one that was told by Johann Lamont at the Scottish Labour Party Conference, the female Leader of the Labour Party in Scotland, and that was really about not believing all you hear. She said that if she believed everything that Alex Salmond and the SNP told the Scottish people, she would wake up the day after we had voted for independence, she would be a size 10 and her husband would look like George Clooney. *(Laughter)* Now, I am sure and quite positive that with some dedication there would be no problem at all for Johann becoming a size 10; however, the second aspect to that, not even the Kardashians' cosmetic surgeons could actually make her husband ever look like George Clooney. *(Laughter)* Again I think the problem from that is, colleagues, do not believe what you hear.

On behalf of the CEC we are asking that Congress supports the Executive's recommendation and we ask for referral of motion 247. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Harry, very much. Well done. Congress, the statement Harry has just made has been so important and that is why extra time was given to Harry to put the case on behalf of the union on the referendum. Thank you, Harry, very much indeed. Now, is GMB Scotland referring? *(Agreed)* Congress agree? *(Agreed)*

Motion 247 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I will put 248 and 249 to the vote. We are supporting it. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 248 was CARRIED.

Motion 249 was CARRIED.

VIDEO ON WORKING PEOPLE AND POLITICS

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, the next part of our agenda is to introduce to you our National Political Officer, Cath Speight, who will introduce this item. Cath?

CATH SPEIGHT, GMB NATIONAL POLITICAL OFFICER, ADDRESSED CONGRESS

SIS. C. SPEIGHT: Thanks, Mary. Good morning, Congress. I am Cath Speight, National Political Officer, first time addressing Congress. *(Applause)* Congress, 12 months ago you took a really momentous and important decision about putting extra resources into the political work of this union. In a very short period of time, 12 months, we have produced a brochure to let you know exactly what your political team have been doing. You all have a copy of it this morning. We have a very short video to show you as well about encouraging (and I do not like using the term and everybody says we should not use it) working class people to become the politicians of the future. We have a fabulous team based in Euston, there is Hilary, Heidi, Gary, Lisa, Steve, Marion, and each region now has a regional political officer working full-time on trying to encourage GMB members to become Labour Party members and Labour Party activists. We need GMB members to become Labour Party activists in order to create a party that shares our aspirations and make the changes that we want to see.

We are encouraging GMB members to sign up to become Labour Party members this week. We have part of the Equality stand out in the Exhibition Centre where we have the ability to sign up online and we also have membership application forms that we are really encouraging you. We have a number of candidates that we have been successfully getting selected. We have Lisa in Peterborough, Clive in Norwich, Sarah in Hastings, Vicky in Lewisham, all GMB members who want to go to represent their members and their constituents in parliament and without GMB members working to make that happen it will not happen. So, we are asking you to get involved in the Party.

It just shows what we can do when we work together with the recent success of Emma Lewell-Buck, who is the first female representative in South Shields. She won that in a by-election. She has been a lifelong GMB member, a social worker, down to earth, exactly the sort of person that we want to encourage to become parliamentarians, councillors, MEPs. What a lot of people do not understand is they have the skills. If you are a GMB rep working in a workplace, you are representing members, you are articulating and advocating on their behalf, and that is exactly what politicians do. So, we want to encourage our GMB members to become active, to become involved, and to become politicians of the future.

I know that the decision that you took 12 months ago was, as I say, an important and momentous decision and it is already paying dividends by the work that is being done on your behalf by the political team getting people selected and, hopefully, we will get them elected when the general election comes. So, I just want to introduce a very short video that explains why we think you should get involved and some faces that you will recognise on the video. Thanks very much, Congress. *(Applause)*

(Video shown to Congress)

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, can we now ask the movers of 225, Southern Region, and after 228, I will be calling 229, 230, and 232.

POLITICAL: LABOUR PARTY THE BRITISH ECONOMY MOTION 225

225. THE BRITISH ECONOMY

This Congress notes

- That the British economy contracted in the last 3 quarters of 2012 which was the longest double-dip recession for over 70 years. Since the coalition's emergency June 2010 Budget the economy has not grown at all. By comparison the main industrialised countries of the OECD have grown by 3.3% over the same period.
- The Coalition claims that its policies are aimed at deficit-reduction. But the deficit is on a sharply upward path, rising by nearly a quarter in 2012.

Congress welcomes the Labour Party's 5-point plan for economic recovery. This includes:

1. £2bn tax on bank bonuses to pay for 25,000 'more affordable' homes and it claims there would be a jobs guarantee for all young people.
2. Bring forward investment projects like new school buildings.
3. Temporarily reverse the Tory-led Governments VAT rise – a £450 boost for families with children.
4. Cut VAT on home improvements to 5% for a year.
5. Give small firms a tax break to take on extra workers.

Congress believes that

- The Coalition policy is a complete failure, causing the economy to contract, living standards to fall and the deficit to rise.
- The commitment to create new jobs and homes under the 5-point plan is welcome, but insufficient.

Congress further believes that

- The scale of the country's problems goes far beyond the scale of the response outlined by the Labour Party's the 5-point plan.
- £2bn from the bankers' bonus tax is insufficient compared to the £56bn investment shortfall which has caused the recession.
- £2bn could fund EITHER 25,000 new homes OR could provide minimum wage for 200,000 under-25s. It can't do both.
- 25,000 "affordable homes" is inadequate compared to the 1.8m households on council waiting lists in England alone.

W15 WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): It was great to see Jon Trickett there, not only in the Shadow Cabinet but he can fix your boiler. How many on the Front Bench of the Tories and LibDems can say the same? There is a man who has done a proper job. *(Applause)* Jon Trickett made a very good point, he said it is a battle for ideas out there, and there is a battle for ideas. I am fed up with being told that the mess of the economy is the fault of the last Labour government. Look at our competitor countries in the OECD since the recession they have had average growth of 3.3%. What has Britain had, average growth of nothing. That is because of the deliberate policies by this Government to run the economy into the ground.

Also, I will share a secret with you that unfortunately people in the Labour Party Front Bench will not say, that is, that Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling did a good job. When they were hit with the recession in 2008 and 2009, they brought in a number of very sensible measures. They rescued the banks. When people talk about how much debt we have that is because they rescued the banks safeguarding the savings of hundreds of thousands of people and businesses, and safeguarding the jobs of hundreds of thousands of people, and part of the huge debt we have is because we bought the banks, we have those assets. You have debt and you have assets to offset them.

Also, there was no deficit before the recession, the deficit is the gap between the income coming into the Government and the amount of money the Government is spending. We were spending within our means and we were spending it on good things, but then what happened is with the recession people lost their jobs and the Government income went down. Now, when your income goes down you have two choices, either cut your spending or raise your income. The Tory Government policy is like someone who has lost their job and thinking, "Well, I'll save money to pay my mortgage by stop going to job interviews."

The Labour Party were coming up to the 2010 election with quantitative ease, which is basically printing money but it was working, with saving the banks, with the car scrapping scheme, with the cuts in VAT, it was actually working. When we went into the 2010 election the economy was on the upswing again.

Then what happened is bloody disaster, bloody disaster. We had a Tory government that did not even win the election, let's remember that. (*Applause*) Before that election Vince Cable and Nick Clegg were standing up and saying, "If you cut all the spending it will be a disaster for the economy." They got that one right but then they put those people into government and then that is what they did. (*Applause*)

We do have to say the five-point plan from Ed Balls is good compared to the Tory policies. They are talking about growth, they are talking about cutting VAT, they are talking about creating jobs but we were vulnerable, the economy was vulnerable to the recession, and it was because Labour relied too much on the financial sector and under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown we did lose a million manufacturing jobs. Let's not forget it was the Tories that destroyed the manufacturing industry in this country, it was the Tories that deregulated the banks, but the five-point plan is not going to be enough because we are not back in 2010 any more, by the time of the next general election we will have had five years of the Tories destroying our economy.

We actually need some very bold policies. We need to have policies that put people back to work. We need to have a rebalanced economy with a big manufacturing sector. We need to be building construction, civil infrastructure; that is what we need. There is right and wrong here. We have a government which is basically wrong. It is not just a crime what they are doing to the economy, it is a sin. The world does not owe Britain a living, we have to earn it, but the Tories because they have gone to Eton and they are all whatever job it is they do, they have never done a day's work in their life, they think the world owes them a living, but it does not owe us a living. We need to build an economy that puts people to work and we need that from the Labour Party. We need a bold policy. You cannot just triangulate the minor differences with the Tories because they are completely wrong and we need to go in a different direction, jobs and growth, proper jobs for working class people. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Andy. Seconder?

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Good morning. That is a difficult one to follow there, Andy. The current Government solution to our economic problems consist of austerity, printing money, and attempts to inflate the house price bubble, one of the things that got us back into this. They just never learn. The people of this country will be much better served if the points highlighted by Andy were translated into government policy, and that goes for a lot of the motions at this Congress.

In the original motion, Andy makes mention of the plan to build 25,000 affordable homes. It is just not enough. We need to build lots, lots more. There would be loads of advantages from this. It would boost the economy for one thing. It would provide jobs and training opportunities for the dreadful youth unemployment that we see. On top of that it would save the Treasury an absolute fortune in Housing Benefit. I have never resented paying taxes but I do resent seeing our money being wasted in enriching private landlords. Importantly, though, building a large number of affordable social housing would address one of the most fundamental forms of inequality that blights this country, that is, access to decent, affordable housing. I second this motion. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Motion 227. Morning, Vaughan.

PREPARING FOR 2015 MOTION 227

227. PREPARING FOR 2015

Congress agrees that with less than 2 years to the General Election, we, together with the rest of the Trade Union Movement and the Labour Party, need to start developing and promoting policies that will appeal to, and enthuse a massive challenge to the Tories in 2015 or before.

To this end we should jointly agree and publish a series of articles in our various Union and Party journals, ensuring that in opposition to the right wing press, we promote viable working class policies, as an alternative to the austerity propaganda we have been fed since 2010.

Congress agrees that it is vital that we put all and any minor issues to one side in order that we carry the major message to our 6-7 million plus Trade Union membership their families and friends.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. V. WEST (London): We are now less than two years away from a general election, less than two years to kick this disastrous, nasty, and scurrilous Coalition Government out of office; less than two years to get our act together; less than two years to ensure we not only defeat the Tories and their sidekicks, the LibDems, but also stamp out the little Englander, isolationist, small government and, yes, racist policies of Nigel Farage and Ukip, not forgetting the organisations to the right of Ukip, the Nazi BNP and EDL.

But all is not doom and gloom. Since the GMB launched its special political report we have made huge advances to ensure we are ready for the battles to come, a beefed-up, as we heard this morning, political department at head office, a political officer in every region, revitalising our engagement with other affiliated trade unions via TULO, both nationally and regionally, but, most importantly, as we have already heard this week, ensuring that we are getting more working class candidates both trained and selected at all levels as councillors, MPs, and MEPs.

Let's not be complacent. The Tories are not going to give up power willingly. Between now and 2015 we must ensure that we, the other trade unions, and the Party are prepared for the battle to kick the Tories out and their lapdogs the LibDems. For the sake of our members, we must ensure the return of a Labour government committed to the values of social justice, equality, and fairness. We will fight every by-election, every council election between now and then, we will redouble our efforts to ensure we are successful next year in the Euro elections, and finally, we must ensure that we are in the right place at the right time to ensure the return of a Labour government in 2015. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Seconder? Morning, sir.

BRO. J. OSBORNE (London): Congress, I have recently joined the Labour Party, encouraged to do so by the GMB. As a union our members will not forgive us if we spend the next two years sitting on our hands waiting for the next general election. We must redouble our efforts in ensuring the return of a Labour government in 2015 but a Labour government committed to ending this disastrous austerity programme, a Labour government committed to growth in the economy, and a Labour government committed to policies that promote the interests of our members. The alternative is another five years of the Tories attacking both us and our members with more cuts, more austerity, and more demonization of the working class. I joined the Labour Party to change that. I joined the Party to ensure we, as a country, take a chance to change the direction in 2015. Join me and the GMB in working to kick the Tories out. Congress, I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Jamie. Southern Region.

LABOUR PARTY ELECTORAL COLLEGE FOR COUNCIL GROUP LEADERS MOTION 228

228. LABOUR PARTY ELECTORAL COLLEGE FOR COUNCIL GROUP LEADERS

Congress believes that one of the greatest strengths of the Labour Party is its link with 15 trade unions, bringing the voices of 3 million working people into the party.

Congress believes that the experience and interests of working people helps to strengthen the electability and credibility of the Labour Party.

Congress therefore calls on the Labour Party NEC to consider the option of an electoral college for the election of the leaders of local authority Labour Groups, involving not just Labour councillors, but also individual members, and the members of affiliated organisations.

W15 WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Lost)

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): Labour Party Electoral College for Council Group Leaders: now, what does that mean? An electoral college is the same system that we used to elect the Leader of the Labour Party, Ed Miliband, where a third of the votes came from MPs and MEPs, a third of the votes came from individual members of the Labour Party, and a third of the vote came from the affiliated organisations, mainly the trade unions. Now, if we had not had an electoral college, the parliamentary Labour Party alone would have elected the leader, we would have had David Miliband as the Leader of the Labour Party who would have spent the last two years agreeing with everything the Government did and we would be dead in the water. Fortunately, three million people were able to vote in that election because they are part of affiliated trade unions and it was the trade unions who put Ed Miliband in, who has been quite an effective leader of the opposition and there is a possibility that we are going to have good, bold policies to oppose the Tories going into the next general election.

If the Leader had only been elected by the parliamentary Labour Party, it would have been a disaster but that same system does not apply for Labour Group leaders in local councils where they are only elected by Labour councillors. What this motion is calling for is re-engaging the Labour groups with the Party in the towns and cities of this country so that the Labour Group leader is elected not only by councillors but also by individual Labour Party members in that borough, and also by members of the affiliated unions. This will be an enormous step forward. We have had real problems with some Labour Group leaders full of right-wing ideas, progress, and all this.

We had a former Labour leader in Swindon, who, when faced with an equal pay issue, went straight to the newspapers without consulting the unions and blamed it on the unions by saying, "Oh, they're destabilising and they're going to cost taxpayers' money," etc. etc. We want that never to happen again. We want Labour Group leaders to have to consult not only the councillors but also to consult with individual members of the Party and, importantly, we are the biggest focus group, 15 unions, affiliated to the Labour Party with three million members, we are the biggest best focus group they can possibly have about what they can be doing to engage with working people who will vote them into office. That is why I urge you to support this motion for an electoral college.

It is just worth saying where the idea came from. When Ed Miliband came to be the Leader of the Labour Party, and Iain McNicol won the election to become the General Secretary of the Party, they started a *Refounding Labour* idea and the idea of local electoral colleges was in *Refounding Labour* in its first draft. That was an idea that came from the Labour Party. Then when it was put to Conference in the last year somehow it slipped down the back of the photocopier and it was not in there. So, this is a policy that even came from the Labour Party itself and it will be a big improvement, and I hope you support it.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Secunder?

SIS. N. PETRIE (Southern): I am here supporting motion 228. The idea of a local electoral college to choose leaders of the Labour Group was floated in the first draft of *Refounding the Labour Party*. It was regrettably dropped from the final document presented to last year's Labour Conference and we ask why because it is something that was worked at to be produced for people to vote on. This idea was giving

Party members more of a role and influence within our Party. It was a pledge by Ed Miliband to do this during his leadership campaign; so much for that campaign.

In recent years, we have all noticed that central government has made many changes to local government. I work in local government. Rules have increased the power of group leaders, so, "I'm in charge, do as I say. No questions asked," and then it makes them less accountable to us. We need to redress that. They need to be accountable to us. We want to put them there so that they are accountable to us. A local electoral college will enhance accountability to both councillors and to Party members. I move to support this. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 229, Midland Region.

JOINT TRAINING FOR THE LABOUR PARTY MOVEMENT MOTION 229

229. JOINT TRAINING FOR THE LABOUR PARTY MOVEMENT

This Congress agrees that GMB will invest further resources and work with the co-op and Labour Party with the objective of ensuring there are more GMB/Co-op and Labour prospective parliamentary candidates from a working class background to stand in constituencies at the next General Election.

GOOLE BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. SHORT (Midland & East Coast): Most of what I am going to say in this speech has already been said so I feel like chucking it away, to be honest. I believe that people in the Labour Party should come from all walks of life and that we have a cross-section of members as it is important for members to understand what it is like to come from a working class background. I would encourage more people to stand for election to the Labour Party whatever their background. You do not have to talk with a posh voice or know how to use a knife and fork, or know the difference between claret and Bordeaux. This can be learnt but what you need to do is to have commonsense, a willingness to work for the rights of the ordinary people, not to look after the interests of the rich and well off who will always look after themselves. The union has always done this and it has a fantastic history of doing this so we have to be careful how to put it forward when accepting members for the Party. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Miles, well done. Secunder? I will be calling 230, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, and 237 in the next round.

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): We need to get back to our grass roots. We need to train our people who have had the commitment and honest values of working class people. We need to be able to trust those that we support to deliver on the promises and commitments made. For far too long we have had to suffer the platitude of those who have no idea, no commitments to working class problems, and it seems to me that they are just not interested in facing up to working class issues. An effort has to be made to recognise these candidates and get them through the training and onto the streets to meet with us and understand our issues. I want to be safe in the knowledge that my vote is going to someone who can maintain my values, my beliefs, and not just pander to the beliefs of the rich fat cats. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Next, motion 230.

LABOUR PARTY RECRUITMENT PROJECT MOTION 230

230. LABOUR PARTY RECRUITMENT PROJECT

This Congress agrees GMB will work as a matter of priority to recruit more GMB members and Labour supporters into the Labour Party to stand as local councillors and Labour Party activists and that each Region establishes its own project to meet these objectives.

GOOLE BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. LASCELLES (Midland & East Coast): This Congress agrees GMB will work as a matter of priority to recruit more GMB members and Labour supporters into the Labour Party to stand as local councillors and as Labour Party activists, and that each region establishes its own project to meet these objectives. I believe that the Midland & East Coast Region is particularly fortunate in securing Richard Oliver as our new political officer and that future Labour victories actually need to come from the grassroots of the Party, just as we here in Plymouth this week and glorious Devon have come to make this GMB Congress 2013 possible coming as we do from all over Great Britain.

Congress, there was a time one hundred or so years ago when as a result of the Great War the realisation that the Labour Party was the future for workers dawned upon the labourers of Great Britain. So, Congress, let the GMB be part of a new dawn at this Congress 2013, and in future, by voting for motion 230. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Secunder?

SIS. S. ORTEGA (Midland & East Coast): Congress, this motion is asking that each region establish its own project to meet the objective of recruiting more GMB members into the Labour Party and to encourage them to stand as Labour Party councillors. We need candidates who are enthusiastic and eager to advance our cause and they should be given support and assistance with training to become councillors. Most councils provide a basic induction course to newly elected councillors but a more intensive training programme could be organised by the regions, possibly supported by the National Education Department in liaison with local Labour parties and constituencies. This would certainly prepare GMB Labour Party activists for their duties as potential Labour Party councillors.

As well as training for potential councillors, there is also the need to train GMB community campaigners in order to participate in local campaigns within their communities to recruit new Labour Party members. At the last local election whilst the Labour Party increased their councillors in many constituencies, there is still a lot of work to be done, especially in preparation for the next general election. We cannot allow the Tories or another Tory-led coalition to get back into power. We have seen what they have done in the last three years with their attacks on the poor and disabled whilst supporting their rich friends with tax cuts. Also, attacks on employment rights within the workplace affect many of our members. Congress, I ask you to support this motion and as we have shown many times in the past, let the GMB be at the forefront of the campaign to return a Labour government to power. I second the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I have the mover of 232?

RULEBOOK MOTION 232

232. RULEBOOK

This Congress recognises that Rule 2.8 of the GMB Rulebook states that an aim of the GMB is 'To help elect members of Parliament and Public authorities who promote our policies and the interests of members through Political methods, providing the candidates are pledged to collective ownership, under democratic control, of the means of production, distribution and exchange'.

This motion agrees with this rule and calls for it to be actively enforced. This motion therefore calls for Congress to ask the Regional and National Political officers to take an active role in enforcing this rule.

M27 LB MERTON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. K. GREENAWAY (Southern): This motion is very simple. We have a lovely rule in our rule book that says any parliament or public authorities that GMB wants to help and assist into position they pledge to take on collective ownership under democratic control. So, this motion is just asking for us to make sure that anyone we do assist upholds that pledge. It is as simple as that. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder? Is it formally seconded? Thank you.

Motion 232 was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 233, London Region, then 234, 235, 236, and 237.

MPs' VOTING RECORDS

MOTION 233

233. MPs VOTING RECORDS

This Congress regrets that the CEC failed to carry out the terms of the Composite Resolution 19 carried at Congress 2011 with regard to the voting records of GMB supported MPs and requests this now be implemented and a report prepared for Congress 2014.

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. R. POLE (London): Comrades, two years ago I was proud to second composite motion 19 on the Lawful Industrial Action Bill carried unanimously by delegates at Brighton. A major part of my speech expressed dismay that despite pleadings from head office many Labour MPs failed to support this bill, including GMB supported MPs, despite it being a hundred percent consistent with GMB policy and the TUC's. Our branch therefore sought a report on our MPs' voting records for Congress 2012 so that when we were next asked to support them financially or canvass for a particular candidate in the next election we would have some idea as to where they stood on matters of prime importance to our members as they did not wish to actively support those who ignored our union's wishes, in particular on issues like industrial action reform, fighting the cuts in public services, privatisation, etc.

Before the 2012 Congress, we attempted to ascertain how this report was progressing. Quite difficult to do, in fact, but we were confident the report would be before delegates. Frustratingly, no such report was forthcoming for delegates and when this was raised last year at Congress our branch felt that the response that there was no need for a report as this was constantly reviewed was not only totally unsatisfactory but a flagrant disregard for Congress's wishes, hence this resolution. We then learn after this motion was submitted that a report had been prepared. I have a copy and very helpful it is, but this somehow got lost between publication and last year's Congress and I doubt very many of you have seen it. Comrades, this is not the place to debate how this happened. It is the case, however, that clearly the terms of composite 19 were not carried out.

At the London Regional Council in October 2012, it is minuted in the political report that in respect of Labour Party funding the CEC view is that no Labour politician will get any money or support unless they adopt trade union values. Here is a case where many of our supported politicians failed dismally and they should not get our unconditional support. This is how it should be. Why should we spend time, money, and effort on supporting people who are not going to support us? I have heard it said that some

did not support the bill because they did not like John McDonnell. Well, if that is true, that is a truly shameful, disgraceful situation, and anyone one acting in such a way is frankly not worthy of our support.

Please, Congress, support this resolution, let's have a report in Congress 2014 so that we and our branches can have a say in who gets our GMB support financially and actively prior to the 2015 election, and make sure that our time, effort, and money is well used in GMB's best interests. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dick. Secunder? Secunder?

BRO. P. CULBERT (London): I am happy to second this very important motion. For too long, GMB sponsored MPs have reneged on their moral commitments and solemn promises made when seeking GMB backing. This backing is not only financial, colleagues, it is the time and effort of activists knocking on doors, leafleting, and canvassing. Congress, how many fewer Labour MPs would there have been if it was not for the work of GMB branches, officers, and activists: quite a few, colleagues. Any GMB sponsored MP who votes against our policy should have support withdrawn. Any GMB sponsored MP who does not support our campaigns should have support withdrawn. Any GMB sponsored MP who does not speak up in favour of GMB policy should have support withdrawn. Congress, enough is enough, either they put up or we pull out. I second. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Thank you. Motion 234.

GMB SUPPORT FOR THE LABOUR PARTY MOTION 234

234. GMB SUPPORT FOR THE LABOUR PARTY

This Congress recommends that there must be a new 'Warwick' agreement and commitment by the Labour Party to work with the trade unions when next in power, before the GMB supports the Labour Party at the next election.

SHEFFIELD LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. G. WARWICK (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): We desperately need a new Warwick Agreement before the next general election setting out relationships and roles between the Party and trade unions. Have you ever noticed when the Tory Party wins power they always pass legislation to benefit their supporters. It is time the Labour Party did the same. The present government are introducing policies which even Margaret Thatcher did not pursue, cutting the NHS, privatisation of education by their academy policy, disincentives to enter universities, cuts in public services, reducing pensions for public service workers, reducing benefits, welfare provision, privatisation, tax cuts to the wealthy; need I go on. These policies must be reversed and the next election manifesto must give voters a real choice.

We did not have a left-wing government from 1997 to 2010, it is now essential that the next Labour government represents the interests of working people and trade unions. For far too long we have benefits for the rich by successive governments but in recent history rarely have Labour reflected the needs and aspirations of people who put them in power. It is not just about policies, as important as they are, we need more Labour MPs who can identify with working people. There are far too many grey-suited Labour MPs from a narrow sector of the community. It is important that the selection process is revised to bring this about.

There is also an urgent need for Labour and trade unions to work together at local government level. All too often there is a trend for Labour councillors to dismiss trade union opinion and this division can easily lead to loss of power and influence within local communities. The Labour Party was founded by the trades union Movement to provide a voice in parliament. Together we have achieved great things but divided we have lost power to a group of class-driven public schoolboys. From its beginning the Labour

Party has been funded by trade union donations often causing resentment from right-wing commentators, but are we currently getting value for money? Does Labour respect the views of trade unions that support the Party or do they take the money and ignore us? The Labour leadership must recognise the need to return to grassroots values and ensure that the Party and trade unions work together to pursue policies which reflect the interests of their supporters. I suggest without this commitment the GMB must consider its future options. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gary. Secunder?

BRO. L. MOSBY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) President, Congress, there is a saying that oppositions do not win elections, government lose them. Well, that might have been true when politics was just a two-horse race between the Tories and Labour, but now in an era of coalition the rise of Ukip and Farage, and the emergence of the Greens and the single-issue politics, the electorate are much more savvy in an era of 24-hour communication and what they want to know before they cast a vote is what you stand for and, more importantly, what are you going to do when you are in office.

The Labour Party cannot sleepwalk into the next election keeping quiet about its plans to run the country and the economy. We need to make a clear commitment about life in Labour Britain, the British people deserve that; British workers certainly do. After five years of this ConDem Government working people have been set back 30 years-plus, that is why Labour must listen to trade unions now and, like Warwick, commit to delivery and legislation which restarts fairness and dignity to the world of work. A bold Labour Party standing on a platform of trade union and workers' rights will win. A timid left-of-centre party afraid of its own shadow will lose. Congress, we started the Labour Party, we fund it, and members need a Labour Party. It is time for this Party to engage with us and deliver. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks very much, Lee, well done. Motion 235?

EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION & LABOUR GOVERNMENT MOTION 235

235. EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION & LABOUR GOVERNMENT

Congress recognizes that at the time of meeting, there is less than two years to the next General Election.

It is a belief that a Labour Government may realistically be returned after only one term in opposition.

It is recognized that many traditional Labour voters have turned from our party and if the movement can persuade them to support in 2015, the following five years must demonstrate that Labour are on their side and must deliver tangible benefits to working people.

Congress recognizes that it is not politically possible to reverse all the Thatcher/Major, anti-working people legislation, but an incoming Labour government must selectively introduce progressive employment legislation which is currently 'stacked' heavily in favour of employers.

Congress wishes to see the production of a priority list of possible improvements with the intention of levelling the playing field as regards employment rights. The GMB leadership in conjunction with sister unions, its own CEC and political committee and membership, must produce a list of priorities which it expects a new Labour Government to introduce and is a pre-requisite for our support, financially and logistically.

Improvements to current industrial action balloting, so removing employers' ability to stop action on technicalities, dismissal rules on the basis of a civil test of balance of possibilities rather than reasonable belief, trade union recognition on a majority of those voting, are a few examples, but clearly this is not an exhaustive list.

Congress wishes the production a priority agenda which Labour must sign up to. Individual Labour candidates must similarly agree to support these priorities in return for the financial and other support mechanisms which they clearly require if they are to be elected.

Congress expects our requirements to be in place for Congress 2014, by which time we will be less than one year from the election.

X23 DOVER FERRIES BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Congress, the capital share of wealth relative to labour, and by labour I mean those of us who receive a salary in return for hours worked, is greater than at any point in history. In what we call the developed world income and equalities have grown since 1979, and continue to grow. Sadly, income and equality is one table the UK does get near the top of. In 1979, the share of gross domestic product paid in wages was 65%. Today that figure is less than 55% and it is still falling. That represents over £100bn a year. With that amount of demand missing from the economy, it should come as little surprise that we see no economic growth. Economists agree income and equality does not make for a successful economy. It does not make for a successful society either. Had we not witnessed or seen disparities in wages between those at the top and the bottom of company pay scales, we would not be stuck in this economic stagnation. Income and equalities accompanied by other forms of inequality, social mobility is falling, educational opportunity is limited, millions condemned to poverty with little way of getting out, not because they are feckless or lazy but because there are limited opportunities available to them. Material decline in living standards, both relative and absolute, has been accompanied by psychological deterioration in the quality of employment.

Since 1979, we have witnessed greater insecurity of work and many workers now face the prospect of perpetual zero-hours contracts. I thought I was getting old when I started saying, "I really pity the youngsters now," but I really do. In the workplace desperation and despair has replaced aspiration and hope. The reasons for these identified phenomena are numerous. You can lay the blame at globalisation, technological advances, and demographic changes. However, in the UK the primary cause has been the erosion in the rights of workers. There has been a legislative assault that negates our ability to assert our bargaining power over our employer by withdrawing our labour. Redundancy laws make it easier to dismiss a UK worker than in any other European country. In short, we have an employment law system that encourages inequality between employers and employees.

The Labour Party has never had a better opportunity to return to power. The present Government is spectacularly unsuccessful. It is premised on notions of inequality. It displays a toxic mix of malice and incompetence. It is a party of privilege, for the privileged, by the privileged; no conception of the lives of working people whatsoever. In order to win the next election the Labour Party must set forth a manifesto for its natural constituency. The clue is in the name, labour. We form a majority. As a Movement we must identify and prioritise a number of changes in employment laws to right the injustices we currently witness. A level playing field is not an outrageous request. UK workers are too easy to make redundant, they are too easy to dismiss; we find it almost impossible to assert our bargaining power over our employers. As a consequence, we find ourselves poorer and more insecure at work.

The Labour Party will find it difficult to win the next election without the financial and logistical support of trade unions. In order to secure this support, the Labour leadership must sign up to this agenda. Similarly, individual candidates must make a similar commitment if they are going to enjoy our support. Our members and the working people of this country deserve better. Congress, please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Secunder? Formally? Thank you.

Motion 235 was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. We move on now to motion 236, Southern Region.

**TRADE UNION ACCESS
MOTION 236**

236. TRADE UNION ACCESS

Congress wishes the GMB leadership to work with the Labour opposition on a policy of trade union access to non-trade union businesses. Congress wishes an incoming Labour Government in 2015 to introduce legislation in this regard. Congress recognizes that in many countries around the world, this access is an acceptable norm.

Congress wishes the lawful right of trade unions to access non-union business sites so that it may present and demonstrate the benefits of trade union membership and the improvements to businesses and workers, where common goals maybe shared.

A statutory right of access must be provided.

X23 DOVER FERRIES BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Good morning, Congress. To make a sporting analogy, employment law in this country resembles a game where employers get to pick the rules. Continuing with the sporting metaphor, they also get to pick the venue and enjoy perpetual home advantage. Aside from disciplinarys and grievances, trade union access to non-recognised workplaces is restricted. Many of the people in this room will have been involved in efforts to organise and gain recognition. You will be familiar with the obstacles and barriers that employers place in the way of access to the workforce. The previous motion identified a number of employment rights we wish to see the next Labour government enact. Motion 236 adds the statutory right of trade unions to access the workplace to this list. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Secunder?

SIS. N. THAKOOR (Southern Region): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* This motion calls for all of us to enjoy the benefit of being a union member. GMB is Britain's third largest trade union and our members work in all parts of the UK economy. We are looking for work to be done so all employees have access to enjoying the benefit of being a union member. Our existing GMB vision and values set out respect for fundamental rights, democracy, social justice, solidarity, equality, non-discrimination and universal access to equality and public services should be enjoyed by everyone. When Labour comes into power we hope that every individual will have access to union representation because, as it is, the rule of divide and conquer applies. Hence, we must put our house in order so that we are attractive to non-union members thus getting more members to join us. Congress, please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Nitisha. The mover of 237?

**FULL EMPLOYMENT
MOTION 237**

237. FULL EMPLOYMENT

This Congress calls on the Labour Party to include a commitment to "full employment" in the next General Election Manifesto.

SHEFFIELD MCP & LIGHT BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. TAYLOR (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, for Labour that goal of full employment has always been the foundation to get our country back on its feet; it was for Attlee's Labour, it was for New Labour. Today, the goal of full employment is important for a very simple reason, the faster we return to full employment the faster we can pay off our debts. Austerity would not be needed if employment increased. The plain facts are that no government has ever cut its way out of a deficit.

In 1945, following the Second World War, the deficit was greater than it is today but in 1948 Labour created an NHS and went on to build thousands of new homes, nationalised coal and rail, and modernised the war-torn infrastructure of the whole country. The deficit is not an issue. Near full employment will solve the problem. The Tories' problem is not just that they are failing but they lost the belief in full employment many years ago and never rediscovered it. That means more money spent on unemployment so there is less to go around for working people and less for care. Yet for all the promises they made in opposition, this Government has done nothing to re-skill the unemployed for the jobs that do exist and the truth is skills are more important than ever in today's global marketplace and low-skilled British workers are competing with workers paid 12 times less.

Congress, the result is more than half of those without skills are out of work and the number is rising. This is madness. More and more of our low-skilled or unskilled workers now live in Britain's poorest communities. In fact, some of the British poorest communities are open to five times more unskilled workers than Britain's richest communities and the truth is that ministers are allowing them to fall further and further behind. After three years of failure, we have to find new ways to break out of this vicious circle. That is why the Labour Party needs to lead the way. Unemployment is a blight on our nation. This Government is complacent but the electorate are not. The public would respond and support a party with a serious plan to tackle the jobless and one which is prepared to put a commitment to full employment in the manifesto for the next election. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Maureen. Seconder?

SIS. M. HUNTER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am long-term delegate but first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Seventy years ago Labour set out a new path to full employment. Just as the Beveridge Report is still a good roadmap for today on welfare so, too, is the 1944 White Paper on full employment. It teaches us to be radical reformers to bring down the cost of social security, building exports, supporting public investment, fanning consumer demand and taking determined action on jobs. It is a long road but tackling poor places would be a big first step to getting our country back to full employment.

Next year we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the White Paper on full employment. We should mark that anniversary not with empty words but with big plans, plans to rebuild the path to full employment for new times, plans which could help us modernise our social security system, rebuild trust, and crucially put our finances back on an even keel for the future. Congress, history shows that this is possible. If Labour has the backbone to adopt and see through the goal of full employment, what we need is leadership, strength, and commitment. Come on, Mr. Miliband, show us what you're made of. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Moira. The mover of 238?

THE LABOUR PARTY AND ITS POLICY ON WELFARE MOTION 238

238. THE LABOUR PARTY AND ITS POLICY ON WELFARE

Congress condemns the vicious attacks that the Con-Dem Government has launched against the most vulnerable members of society, such as the unemployed and people with disabilities, using them as scapegoats for the

economic crisis. The rhetoric being used harks back to 19th century notions of deserving and undeserving poor, when unemployed people were blamed for their plight and forced into workhouses so as not to be a “drain” on society. The misuse of data is also shocking (e.g. George Osborne launched a whole policy to limit the number of children the poor can have pointing to the number of families claiming 100K housing benefit per year – when an FOI was sent to the DWP it turns out this is just five families).

However, Congress is equally disappointed at the failure of the Labour Party to properly challenge the Government’s assault on the unemployed and other vulnerable members of our society. Instead of attacking the neoliberal ideology that underpins the Con-Dems thinking, and seeking to provide a genuine alternative perspective – based on equality, justice and fairness for all – it concedes the principle that there are deserving and undeserving poor. For example, Ed Balls has stated that if Labour wins the next election, after two years the unemployed will have to accept any job or lose their benefits.

Congress calls upon the CEC to lobby the Labour Party to change its policy on welfare to reflect the long-established principles of the Welfare State.

GMB@PCS BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. R. SMYTH (London): Congress, I move Motion 238. President, the Con-Dem Government will tell you anything to demean the poor. They use the welfare state to divide people into the deserving poor and the undeserving poor. They will conveniently forget that our current economic problems are caused by City spivs. Instead, they blame the poorest and most vulnerable people in our society and force them to pay back the country’s debts. The Government doesn’t want the welfare state to support the vulnerable. All they are interested in is supporting millionaires and people they went to school with. The Con-Dems brought in the benefit cap, using articles in the right-wing press citing people receiving over £100,000 a year in benefits. There was no mention of the bill being so high due to the lack of social housing and how the welfare payments ended up in the pockets of landlords. There was also no mention that, in total, there are only five cases of this happening in the UK. It has become common practice for the Tories to use extreme cases to justify punishing the many.

Iain Duncan Smith recently claimed that 8,000 people have chosen to return to work because their benefits were going to be taxed. He said nearly a million people on Incapacity Benefit have chosen to drop their claim rather than face the new medical assessment. The UK Statistics Authority has said that both of these claims are incorrect. We will never know for definite if these claims were made dishonestly or are as a result of out-and-out incompetence. The Con-Dems use these lies to create a culture of deserving and undeserving poor. They tell these lies to undermine the welfare state and want to change it beyond recognition so that it is no longer fit for purpose.

The Labour Party has, rightly, attacked these misleading statistics, lies and half truths. However, what they have not done is attack the policies and intentions behind the lies. In March of this year, MPs voted on amended to change the law after the Workfare Programme was deemed to be illegal. The Workfare Programme forces unemployed people to work for free; in effect, giving large companies, such as Poundland, free labour rather than paying wages to workers, which puts more into the shareholders’ pockets. This policy goes against one of the most basic and important principles of this Union and the Labour Party – a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work. The Labour Party had the opportunity to stand up and be counted, but they chose not to. MPs were instructed to abstain from the vote and people in senior posts were threatened with the sack if they did not follow the party line. Only 44 of Labour’s 257 MPs chose to put their principles ahead of their pay packets. The other MPs sat on their backsides with their hands in their pockets, while the Con-Dems rode a coach and horses through one of the founding principles of trade unionism. They put their pay packets ahead of their constituents, who were struggling to find work and struggling to live on the pittance that the welfare state provides, following its destruction by the Tories.

The welfare state plays a key role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social welfare of its citizens. It is based on principles of equality of opportunity and fair distribution of wealth and public responsibility to help and support the most vulnerable in our society.

Congress calls upon the CEC to make it clear to the Labour Party that until Labour returns to these principles and have policies that reflect them, they will not be the party for the working people, and the GMB will not sit by and allow this to happen. Thank you. (*Applause and cheers*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I have a seconder? (*Formally seconded*)

IMMIGRATION POLICY MOTION 239

239. IMMIGRATION POLICY

This Congress calls on the GMB, along with the Labour Party, to present a constructive policy on future immigration, in time for the next election, to stop the growth of the smaller political parties, which in most cases are anti-trade union and racist.

NOTTINGHAM TEC BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(*Carried*)

BRO. P. SOPER (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 239. Immigration has brought huge benefits to Britain, from the Polish heroes who fought for us during the Second World War to the West Indians, who helped us to rebuild afterwards. That is our small island's history – open diversity – but we must have a sensible immigration policy.

Several European countries have recently imposed some limited immigration. Controls are legally permitted by the EU in exceptional circumstances. We can't ignore any more the growth of small political parties, such as UKIP, which is now taking 25% of the vote. Thousands of disaffected Labour voters are joining UKIP. Is this just a classic protest vote, or are the political plates shifting? What is without doubt from the local election is that British people have never been more disenchanted with the Labour and Tory parties. Could a quarter of the public really elect these so-called clowns and loonies? Beware! They did in Italy in February with the election of a comedian called "Beppe" Grillo, whose election slogan "Fuck off".

What looks like to be the most important issue for UKIP supporters is immigration in Europe. As a Labour movement, we have to address these issues and put forward policies for the electorate before the next election, not raise it into one of controlling our borders. One in every five immigrants in the EU ends up in Britain. We have got to take some kind of action during periods of high unemployment and austerity to protect low-skilled British workers struggling to compete for jobs. One in five British young workers is currently unemployed, with about one million 18-24 year olds out of work. This is with Britain still facing an influx of people at unsustainable levels.

Phil Whitehurst of the GMB slammed Ministers for letting down a whole generation by the Government passing new rules to allow firms like Rolls Royce, Balfour Beatty, National Grid and even Bentley for bringing in cheap, non-EU and EU staff. This is when national welfare schools' outing is busting at the seams. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Seconder?

BRO. D. BREARLEY (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 239 on Immigration Policy. Between 2001 and 2011 one in eight of the population were immigrants. More than half arrived over 10 years to a total of 3.8 million, yet 3.7 million arrived in the previous 50 years. You can see that the

extreme right-wing parties will make this situation a major issue, that they take jobs and housing from the host nation's stock.

In 2014 the restrictions will be removed from the former Eastern Bloc states, but more than a quarter-of-a-million have come here in the past five years. I can tell you that 175,000 National Insurance numbers were issued to them. The remaining 75,000 settled here with their families and the pressure on public services figures show that 100,000 more primary school places will be needed by 2015. The total number of places at present stands at over 4.3 million. By 2014/15 there will be a deficit of 106,800 places.

The NHS, of course, will come under pressure as well, so we cannot allow the extremists of the far right to make advantage of this situation. Thank you. *(Applause)*

LABOUR PARTY MOTION 240

240. LABOUR PARTY

This Congress agrees that a future Labour Government will not enter a coalition with any other main stream political parties.

B43 BIRMINGHAM CITY GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. KEMPSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 240. We have had a taste of Coalition politics. For example, no mansion tax but a bedroom tax, massive tax handouts for the rich, benefit cuts for the rest, dismantling the welfare state, total disarray in the NHS and the A&E services, total destruction of care for the elderly – an utter disgrace – slashing payments for people with disabilities. Congress, I could go on and on and stand here all day. Who would have thought that in 2013 over 500,000 working people would be using food banks in the UK. We must also remember, Congress, what Nick Clegg said: “Trade unions are irrelevant in this day and age.” We must also remember some other Lib-Dems, like Shirley Williams, Vince Cable and others, who dumped the Labour Party in its time of need.

Congress, having been a Labour Party member for 38 years, in good and bad times, I will stick with them. There is nothing good about Coalition politics. So far it has brought misery and despair to millions, so let us elect a Labour Government in 2015 and put a stop to Coalition policies. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

BRO. G. BOULD (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am seconding Motion 240. I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. *(Applause)* President and Congress, we read in the *Guardian* articles last month that Andrew Adonis is already suggesting – already suggesting! – that Labour prepare for coalition. We should say, “No, it undermines the case to win”. In the 19th century, an agreement between the then Liberal Party and the Labour Representation League fell apart, with the formation, then, of the Independent Labour Party as a political force for working people in the UK. They said “No”, then and we should say “No” now, but why? Who are the main political parties on the block to do a coalition with? The Tories? No. The Lib-Dems, who have such a good record? No. UKIP? No. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, does anyone wish to contribute to the debate?

BRO. D. FAITH (London): Congress, I am a bit concerned, really, about the sentiments expressed concerning Motion 239 on Immigration Policy. *(Applause)* For me, a worker is a worker is a worker wherever they come from. This Union, frankly, has been built by immigrants, people who are the sons of Irish people, Jewish people or people from the Caribbean. That is what makes our Movement.

(Applause) When times are hard, like they are now, it is very easy to look for scapegoats, and you can see why UKIP are succeeding and why the Tories are so keen to tread on their coat tails. I think we have to be absolutely 100 per cent firm in giving any ground to racism. I remember a slogan from the 1970s, which said: “Unemployment and inflation are not caused by immigration. Bull shit. Come off it. The enemy is profit.” Really, those are the kind of views that we should be expressing. I am sure that the people who moved the motion are far away from UKIP and all the rest of it, but I just don’t think that we can give any ground at all on this issue. *(Applause)*

SIS. H. SMITH (Southern): Congress, I just wanted to echo what Danny Faith said. Some of UKIPs support might be a protest vote by voters disgruntled with mainstream politics, but there is also evidence of widespread scapegoating of migrants about our economic and social problems, which is often a common feature of recession. As a result, the labour Movement – us – must be the political alternative to UKIP and we must tackle its anti-immigration rhetoric head on. GMB has often led the way in organising migrant workers and we have a proud tradition of organising all workers, regardless of nationality and immigration status.

The solution to problems such as unemployment, low pay and the housing shortage is for workers, British born and migrants, to unite to fight for a working-class social programme to counter the austerity projects of the Government. Freedom of movement is an important working-class principle. If wealth is free to travel across the globe, then the workers who created that wealth should have similar freedoms. We should reaffirm GMB’s support for migrant workers’ rights and support every worker’s right to organise regardless of nationality or immigration status. We should be tackling the right-wing lies and distortions about immigration and refuse to let them swing the debate on immigration to the right. We should not be talking about the pressures on our public services because, Congress, we all know that there is enough wealth in this country. The political question is just how it is distributed. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Holly.

SIS. C. SIBLEY (Wales and South West): Congress, I am a first-time speaker and first-time delegate. *(Applause)* We have seen the mess of the Con-Dem Coalition, two parties fighting over separate policies of their own agenda is not going to help our economy recover, nor will a Labour Coalition. We need one party for one nation. We also need to ensure that the electorate is fully aware of the devastation caused by the Con-Dem Government, and this is where we come in. The propaganda in the recent press is doing a fine job for the Tories and so is causing division within our communities. Let us counter that situation. Let us show them GMB working with Labour and not just a small-time threat but in fact their downfall. Please support. *(Applause)*

BRO. T. PLUMB (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, while we are talking about the Labour Party, I want to mention Motion 241, which is titled: “De-Affiliation from the Labour Party”, but it wasn’t really about that. It was ruled out of order by the Standing Orders Committee for the second year in a row. I just wanted to clear a few things up, really. Me, the branch and our region are not on some sort of political crusade against the Labour Party. I am a Labour voter and I know that there are people in my branch who are all card-carrying Labour supporters. There are Labour Party card-carrying supporters in my region. Basically, we wanted to debate the relationship that we have with the Labour Party and get them to listen to us. That is what it was all about.

In relation to the Standing Orders Committee ruling on the wording, there is at least one other motion that talks about instructing Congress to do something. Our motion did not say anything about “instructing”. It just said “debating”. A play on words to stop us debating this very important matter is a bit out of order and thin. It makes it look like we have got something to hide and that we are trying to dodge the issue, which I don’t really think we are, but I do think that we need to debate it.

I would like to say one thing on the Labour Party. When the Labour Party announce that they were going to repeal all the attacks on the employment law that this shower have brought in, I'll join the Labour Party and I will be happy to do so. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Considering it wasn't on the agenda, you did well.

BRO. J. KNIGHT (North West & Irish): President, I want to pick up a concern I have about Motion 239 on Immigration Policy. It refers to the "smaller political parties, which in most cases are anti-trade union and racist." UKIP was mentioned. It is difficult to see how that that could be described as a "smaller" party at the moment, unfortunately. On the other hand, the Green Party is, fundamentally, anti-racist but very pro trade union. You could say the same, to a large degree, about other parties, such as Respect and Plaid Cymru. I would like a little clarification as to what is being said here. I don't think it is really accurate to smaller political parties on matters being racist and anti-trade unionist. Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. R. GUNN (North West & Irish): Congress and President, I am making my annual pitch on behalf of the Northern Ireland CLP. Just looking at the list of candidates for Europe, we look forward to the day when we have a Labour candidate for the Northern Ireland constituency. The NEC, in their wisdom, has still not given us the right to stand candidates. That remains the missing piece of our jigsaw but, Conference, the fight will go on. The CLP continues to grow with its significant TU representation, particularly the GMB, which holds the chair, the vice-chair, student officer, women's officer and seats on the Executive. I come to the rostrum to urge you, Mary, and Andy, as our NEC representative, to continue the fight to allow us to put up candidates in an election. Thank you. (*Applause*)

SIS. H. SMITH (Southern): I wanted to come in quickly on what a previous speaker said about the Green Party, but also about the Labour Party as well. I work at a bin depot and I am employed by Brighton & Hove Council and we, currently, have a Green Party local council. We earn £17,000 and they are proposing to cut our pay by four grand. We took unofficial action over this proposed but last month and we did a sit-in in our canteen for two days. We are currently balloting for official strike action with the support of our region, and our ballot result is announced this Friday.

Brighton Council has GMB Labour councillors in opposition. At every election they come to us and ask for money and to canvass for them. In return we ask for their support. When we were taking action last month, did Labour councillors come and visit us at our picket? No. When there was a coup in our local authority with a rebel Green group to oust the Green leader, who is the architect of our pay cuts, did Labour help us by voting to out him? No. When we had a demonstration outside our town hall against our £4,000 pay cut, did Labour councillors join us? No. Congress, having Labour councillors who are GMB members is pointless if they only want us to get our money and use us as a free election machine rather than support us when we are doing our work as trade unionists. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak? (*No response*) In that case, I will call Cath Speight to speak on Motions 228, 230, 233, 234, 235 and 240.

SIS. C. SPEIGHT (National Political Officer): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting Motions 230, 234, 235 and 240, with qualifications which I will give. The CEC is also supporting Motion 233 with a statement, and is asking Congress to oppose Motion 228.

Firstly, Motion 230 calls for regions to establish their own project to recruit GMB members into the Labour Party and encourage them to stand as councillors. As I said earlier, this is an absolute priority for the GMB and the qualification is that it has already been done as part of the Congress 2012 National Political Strategy. More GMB members are joining the party and they are standing as local councillors. Also we are introducing political education. Each regional political officer is being trained and they will be delivering political education in the regions.

Motion 234 calls for a new ‘Warwick’ agreement before the GMB will support Labour at the next election. We are already working at every level to ensure that trade union policies are incorporated into Labour’s next manifesto. Although negotiations are ongoing, we can’t wait until a full ‘Warwick’ agreement is in place before we pledge to support Labour in the next election.

Motion 235 calls for employment rights to be at the heart of Labour’s next manifesto. We are already working to make sure that that is a central theme within the next manifesto. The qualification is that the motion calls for the list of policies to be in place by Congress 2014. That is just too prescriptive and negotiations will still be going on right up the wire before the manifesto’s content is decided.

Motion 240 is against any Labour Government entering into a Coalition. Although, in principle, we are all against going into a Coalition, unless we work hard, get involved and work for an outright victory at the 2015 general election, we might be faced with that prospect. I don’t want to see it and everybody in this room doesn’t want to see it. That is why we need to get involved and work for an outright victory.

The CEC is supporting Motion 233 with a statement. Motion 233 highlights the failure of the CEC to carry out Composite 19 from Congress 2011 and prepare a report on the GMB’s MPs’ voting records. Dick, you are absolutely right. The work was done and you have been provided with a copy. It was a mistake. We can only apologise that it was not carried out as the composite requested. Another report will be prepared for future Congresses. It is a matter of record that you should be kept up-to-date with how GMB MPs are voting. If it doesn’t happen next time, you can blame him (*indicating the General Secretary*).

The CEC is opposing Motion 228, because it is asking the Labour Party NEC to consider implementing electoral colleges for Labour Group leaders. This would remove the democratic right of Labour Groups to choose their own leader. Andy and Nina both pointed out that the proposal was in the first draft to be found in Labour documents, but then it was dropped. Well, it was dropped after a debate within the Party, which decided that it was not the right way forward.

Therefore, the CEC is asking you to support Motions 230, 234, 235 and 240 with the qualifications I have given, and support Motion 233 with a statement and oppose Motion 228.

Let me just say in closing to our comrades from Yorkshire, it is a bit like the chicken and the egg. Labour Party members decide Labour Party policies, and Labour Party members choose the politicians who will implement those policies. That is why we want you to get involved. That is why we want you to be Labour Party members, to influence policies that will repeal anti-trade union legislation and elect politicians who will then deliver what we want. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does Midland & East Coast Region accept the qualification on Motion 230?
(*Agreed*)

Does London Region accept the Statement on Motion 233?

BRO. R. POLE (London): Congress and President, thank you very much for the statement. I am very happy to accept it, the apologies that are given and the manner in which it has been given. I would just like to make a quick statement because I am in a real dilemma now. Whilst these motions are being taken en bloc, my branch would absolutely slaughter me if I supported Motion 239 on Immigration. Therefore, if they are taken en bloc I will have to vote against my own motion. Can we have a separate vote on that, please?

THE PRESIDENT: You can have a separate vote on that. The region accepts all of those resolutions, so you can deal with the Regional Secretary about that. All right. However, I will, Dick, take them separately.

Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region accept the qualification on Motion 234?

(Agreed)

Does Southern Region accept the qualification on Motion 235? *(Agreed)*

Does Birmingham & West Midlands Region accept the qualification to Motion 240? *(Agreed)*

I now call on Southern Region and Andy Newman to exercise the right to reply.

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): Congress, I am replying on behalf of Southern Region on Motion 228. I feel like a little bit of a time traveller here because the arguments that are being used against an electoral college to elect the leader of a Labour Group were the same arguments we heard in the 1970s about why the wider party in the unions couldn't select the leader of the Labour Party. They used to say, "Oh, if the Labour leader was elected by the wider party, he might not get on with the MPs." Well, if we had a leader who could only get on with the MPs, we would have a bloody terrible leader because we would have David Miliband. Fortunately, the success of our political strategy is that David Miliband has retired from being an MP and joined International Rescue.

What we need, comrades, is the wider party, the members of the Labour Party and the trade unions, to be able to have a say in who is the leader. Holly, from Brighton, gave a brilliant example of why. In Brighton the Labour Group leader has given no support to our members in an industrial dispute that is taking £4,000 from their wages and, scandalously, trying to play women workers against men workers and union against union. That is what is happening to the council in Brighton. The Labour Group is not standing with our members. What we want with this motion is for our members of the GMB to have a say in who is the Labour Group leader in Brighton Council because they are members of an affiliated trade union. That is what we want. *(Applause)* The CEC last year gave us a fantastic political strategy that we are moving forward, and I fully support it, but they've got it wrong on this one. I hope, when it comes to the vote, that you will vote with Southern Region and overturn the CEC. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. That's very good of you. Colleagues, I am going to give Dick his request. Yes, Phil.

BRO. P. SOPER (Midland & East Coast): On the point of the small parties, personally, I think that BNP is a rated party. There is nothing different in the motion than what the propaganda press are producing all the time. People are not like us. We are not like that. But the majority of people are listening to this propaganda. All I am saying here is can *these* guys here make a policy that we all agree on so we can take it to the public instead of them having to listen to this Tory press. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Congress agree that I give the mover of Motion 239 the right to have a separate vote in the block? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

In relation to Motion 228, the CEC opposes. We are asking Conference to oppose. All those in favour, please show? Those against?

Motion 228 was LOST.

THE PRESIDENT: I will now move to Motion 239. The CEC is supporting. All those in favour, please show? Those against?

Motion 239 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Now move Motions 225, 227, 229, 230, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238 and 240 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Is anyone against? Carried.

Motion 225 was CARRIED.
Motion 227 was CARRIED.
Motion 229 was CARRIED.
Motion 230 was CARRIED.
Motion 232 was CARRIED.
Motion 233 was CARRIED.
Motion 234 was CARRIED.
Motion 235 was CARRIED.
Motion 236 was CARRIED.
Motion 237 was CARRIED.
Motion 238 was CARRIED.
Motion 240 was CARRIED.

POLITICAL LABOUR PARTY & CONSTITUTION REFORM MOTION 243

243. LABOUR PARTY RULEBOOK, CHAPTER 5, CLAUSE 1B

This Congress agrees to vehemently campaign at every level to bring about the Labour Party enforcing Chapter 5, clause 1b, of the Labour Party rule book which states “Where not otherwise prevented they shall also be a member of a trade union affiliated to the TUC or considered by the NEC as a bona fide trade union and contribute to the political fund of that union. Any exceptions to these conditions must be approved by the NEC.”

We feel that we should be encouraging the Labour Party Chapter 5, clause 1b rule to be adhered to for all people holding or standing for public office.

This should mean that all Labour Party MPs, County Councillors and District Councillors should all be members of a trade union. Let’s bring the Labour Party back to where it was started, at the heart of the trade unions.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH
Midland and East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. C. HARWOOD (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 243. I am moving this motion as a proud GMB member, but who has also been elected as a new county councillor. The Labour Party was created in 1900 as a result of long and hard work and effort by working people, trade unionists and socialists who felt let down by the Tories and were disillusioned by the Lib-Dems. Does that sound familiar? In Labour’s founding conference a vote was passed by 102 votes to 3 that the conference was in favour of the working-class opinion being represented in the House of Commons. Move forward today and we are finding that many of the members of the Labour Party and its elected members are no longer supporting trade unions, the very people who helped found the party!!

I move that this Congress push to ensure that the Labour Party Chapter 5, clause 1b, should be enforced and backed. Let us ensure that where not otherwise prevented they shall also be a member of a trade union affiliated to the TUC or considered by the NEC as a bona fide trade union and contribute to the political fund of that union. Any exceptions to these conditions must be approved by the NEC. I move that this Congress push to get Labour back where it belongs, with the workers and trade unions that helped to found it in the first place. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Colleen. Secunder?

BRO. J. CLARKE (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 243: Labour Party Rulebook, Chapter 5, Clause 1b. To have empathy with working people we have to understand the issues that affect their lives. No one does this better, in my opinion, than the trade union Movement. So come on, Labour

councillors and MPs, let's get back to our roots and stand proud with the union Movement. After all, you have a paid role/job representing people in your local ward, district, division and constituency. Thank you. (*Applause*)

LABOUR PARTY SELECTIONS COMPOSITE MOTION 15

C15. Covering Motions:

244. LABOUR PARTY CANDIDATES (*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*)

245. GIVE DEMOCRACY TO LABOUR PARTY SELECTION MEETINGS (*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*)

LABOUR PARTY SELECTIONS

Far too often, the NEC shortlisting committee dictates the choices available to local party members by parachuting candidates into constituencies without any explanation for their decision.

This Congress calls on the GMB to continue the campaign for more working class candidates to be nominated for political and Parliamentary office within the Labour Party. It notes with concern the selection process for the Rotherham by-election and calls on the GMB to demand an inquiry in to this selection and the role of the Labour Party NEC in the selection process in general.

This Congress calls on the Labour Party to reform its selection procedure for Parliamentary Candidates as a matter of urgency. Labour Party rules should allow a more open access to selection panels and a greater say for local CLP's in short listing and selecting local candidates.

In order to give CLP members a genuine, democratic choice, Congress calls on the Labour Party to:

1. Have shortlists of at least six at CLP selection meetings
2. Those shortlisted to hold a cross section of views to represent the various strands of opinion within the Party
3. At least one shortlisted candidate to be selected by the region.

The Labour Party has a history of comradely and fraternal debate, in other words, democracy. It needs to restore local democracy to the selection procedure.

One Member, One Vote, not NEC diktats.

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Move Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Second

(*Carried*)

BRO. T. PLUMB (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Composite Motion 15. I was asked to move this composite because at a pre-Congress meeting, as usual, I got up on my soapbox and started going on about working-class MPs. This composite, for me, is really about getting more working-class MPs. I would like to applaud the GMB for the work that they have done in the past year because they are trying, from what we have seen, to get more working-class MPs. What I think we also need is more transparency, when the NEC are making their shortlists, and an end to what I think is an absolute disgrace, which is parachuting candidate MPs into constituencies they know nothing about, which they have never even been near to, and then getting voted in to be a Labour MP.

We want MPs who live in the local area, who understand local issues and have a real feel for the constituency who they are representing. I want someone who works in a factory, a care home or a hospital elected as an MP, who knows what it is like to work 12-hour shifts, to work Christmas, sometimes for no extra money and works bank holidays, who knows what it is like to struggle to pay

bills. Basically, that is the sort of MP who I will vote for and that is the sort of MP that this composite wants to see get into Parliament. Thank you. *(Applause)*

SIS. S. WALKER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I second Composite 15, Labour Party Selections. We have, for years, taken a back seat by allowing the Labour Party to do what it likes. Congress, we believed that the Labour Party was acting in the interests of trade union members. Following recent events, this is, clearly, not the case. It is, with regret, that our region believes that the recent Rotherham by-election selection and short-listing debacle was caused by undemocratic manipulation at the highest levels within the party. Neither the local candidate nor the trade union candidate, who was unanimously supported by all affiliated unions in the region were placed on the final shortlist.

Congress, we urge the leadership of our Union to call upon all trade unions affiliated to the Labour Party to campaign for democracy. Our Union is immensely proud of its democratic tradition. Our internal elections are free from interference and are fair. We select the best candidate based on ability. Our Union would never put itself in a position of rejecting working-class members for two middle-class, unrepresentative candidates who have absolutely nothing in common with the vast majority of people whose interests they are expected to fight for. The aim of the Labour Party was, and still is, to stop the rich and powerful ruling class from exploiting working-class people. The Labour Party must select more trade union candidates. Many of our activists are ready to take on a political role. We are representatives who deal with issues of working-class people on a daily basis.

With help and support from our Union, we can be politically active. Looking after the interests of working-class people is what we do. We call upon Congress to work with all political affiliations to lobby the Labour Party for changes. Please support. *(Applause)*

GMB'S INFLUENCE IN LABOUR PARTY MOTION 246

246. GMB'S INFLUENCE IN LABOUR PARTY

Congress welcomes GMB's successful motion at the Labour Party's 2012 conference, resolving that "Labour in government will develop an active industrial strategy to safeguard the national energy infrastructure and ensure we have the manufacturing capacity that makes the country fit for a strong and prosperous economic future"

Congress calls on GMB to lobby at every level within the Labour Party for this motion, and others passed at the 2012 Labour Party conference, to be included in the Party's Rolling Programme of policies.

Congress reaffirms its belief that the GMB and other affiliates, and the constituency parties, must be able to move amendments to the Party policy documents at conference, or refer back parts of them rather than being required to accept or reject them in their entirety. Conference should vote to decide between alternative options.

Congress further welcomes the statement by Ed Miliband that "We should not be afraid of debate".

Congress therefore resolves to ask GMB delegates to the Labour Party National Executive Committee to push for the NEC to remove the restrictive "contemporary" criteria from motions, which ruled out 60 motions for the 2012 conference.

Congress also resolves to ask GMB delegates to the Labour Party National Executive Committee to push for NEC to allocate more time for elected conference delegates to engage in policy debates.

W15 WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. NEWHAM (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 246 on the Labour Party constitutional issues, really. Comrades, this motion is calling for the policies, which the Labour Party passes at its conference,

to find their way into the policy of the party, which doesn't sound very mysterious but it doesn't seem to happen.

Last year, Paul Kenny moved a motion on Industrial Policy, which was very good and it was passed. We would like to see that in the Rolling Policy document, and we would like to see it in the manifesto.

One of the problems with the current way as to how policy is arrived at in the Labour Party is that the National Policy Forum ends up producing a report which goes to the Labour Party Conference, which you have to accept in total. For example, Dick Pole said, "I want a separate vote on one of these motions", and we had a separate vote, which was very useful. If that was the way the Labour Party operated, they would have said, "You have got to vote on the whole lot; yes or no." That is, fundamentally, wrong. We want affiliates, like the GMB, and we want constituency parties to be able to make amendments to or vote against specific parts of the policy document. That is an absolutely fundamental democratic right and it is something that we would demand in our own Union.

The other difference between our Congress and the Labour Party Conference is that our delegates, some of whom, like me, are up and down like a yo-yo to the podium, and we make the agenda of the Conference through the Conference Arrangements Committee, which we elect, and through speaking and taking part in the debate on the Conference floor. Labour Party Conference has far too little time for delegates from the CLPs and for the unions to stand up and speak. We have long discussions sitting with Front Bench spokesmen, sitting on chairs and having a cup of coffee, talking about American philosophy or whatever it is, but it is all designed as an entirely media-friendly event. What we want is to go back to the days when the Labour Party Conference was a bun fight, not because it was division but we want to debate what policies the Party puts forward to the electorate. Then, when the voters have seen us debating amongst ourselves, developing policies, which speak to working people, where experts have contributed. I don't mean experts because they are academic, but I mean experts because they do the job, experts on the Health Service because the work on the wards cleaning them, or they are nurses or doctors. They are the experts who we want to see standing up and taking part in the debates.

Conference, things are getting serious now. We are about 8 – 10 points ahead in the polls, but that could disappear in a short campaign unless we solid up the Labour vote. The Conference coming this year will be the last real conference before we get into the long election campaign where we can really discuss how Labour is going to set its stall out for the next election. We really need to make sure that this is a working conference for the CLPs, the affiliated unions and MPs to discuss how we put forward a programme for a Labour Britain which is going to kick out this Coalition shower and have a Government that takes us forward with rights, dignity and decent jobs for working people. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

SIS. C. COTTERELL (Southern): Congress, I second Motion 246. We need to see GMB policies firmly embedded in the Labour Party manifesto. We call on Congress to reaffirm its belief that the GMB must be able to move amendments to the policy at the Labour Party Conference or refer back parts of them, rather than being forced to accept or reject them in their entirety. Ed Miliband said, "I'm up to debate." Bring it on, because the GMB delegates will be up for that debate. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I now call on Andy Worth to reply on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): I am a last-time speaker on behalf of the NEC. I have done four years and I am getting time off for bad behaviour.

I am speaking on behalf of the CEC, who are supporting Motions 243 and Composite 15 with some qualifications. The Labour Party Rule Book states that those standing for public office must be trade union members. Unfortunately, the party at the moment does not enforce that. It also says that any

exception to that should be approved by the NEC. Nothing ever gets referred to the NEC about that particular rule to ask if the exception can be applied. The motion asks for the rule to be enforced for MPs and councillors.

The CEC qualification is aimed at strengthening the motion because the CEC believes that all Labour politicians, such as MEP, MSP and AMs should also be members of the trade union. We want to extend it from just MPs and councillors to include any representative of the Labour Party.

Trade unions are, as you have heard in the debate, an integral part of the Labour Party and those seeking to represent the party at local, national or European level should always be members of a trade union. They should always support the workers when they are in dispute. Hopefully, that clarifies the CEC's position on Motion 243.

Composite 15 calls for greater democracy in the selection of Labour Party candidates. Too often we have experienced the Labour Party machine parachuting candidates into safe labour seats. This is totally unacceptable and it is a practice that both Mary Turner and myself, whilst on the NEC, have argued against. Local Labour Parties must have the biggest say on who will be the candidate to become their MEP.

The qualification is that the composite calls for an inquiry into the Rotherham selection where there were, certainly, questions and dubious practices brought into play, but we believe there is no need for an inquiry. Colleagues, the politest way of putting it is that there was one hell of a bloody row on the NEC after the selection in Rotherham. Trust me, there was a row, and every trade union delegate on the NEC took them to task. As a result, there were changes in the panel and changes in the way that the short-listing process is dealt with. One of the things that has happened is because one of the trade unionists was not available, the Party decided to slide another MP in to alter the voting situation. It has been clarified that that situation will never happen again. We do not believe that there needs to be an inquiry. That matter was dealt with because it was so important straight after the fiasco of that selection. We want proper, ordinary working-class people getting into Parliament. That is the only way we stand a chance of getting the policies through. It is one thing having a lovely debate about these things, but it is only any good having a debate with some bugger if they are listening, is it not? So we want the debate and we want working-class people. I would suggest, Congress, that we go even further than that. When we get people elected into Parliament, we need to follow them into Parliament to make sure that nobody else puts their arm round them, and say, "We don't quite do it like that here, do we? We do it this way, if you want to fit in." We should go through the doors and not allow them to go through the doors thinking that they have just bloody won *Stars in Your Eyes* and they wave goodbye to us when they've got the money. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Could I say to Andy Newman, I totally agree with you about Conference. At Party Conference there is not enough time. I, personally, on behalf of the GMB, with others, have complained fiercely. After last year's fiasco when we had an American at the rostrum telling us, for an hour-and-a-half, how they are closing down. We all know why they are closing down because we all live there, don't we. We didn't need an hour-and-a-half for what I believe should have been delegates' time. We are altering the situation. As soon as those settees come out, that is the time when everybody goes to have a cup of tea, and I don't blame them. So, yes, we are dealing with that part of the problem, Andy. Thank you.

Does Midland & East Coast Region accept the qualification. *(Agreed)* Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire accept the qualification? *(Agreed)* I now call Motion 243, Composite Motion 15 and Motion 246 with those qualifications. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 243 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 15 was CARRIED.

Motion 246 was CARRIED.

ADDRESS BY OWEN JONES

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to one of my favourite visitors. Congress, it gives me great pleasure to welcome Owen Jones to Congress. *(Applause)* I'm sure that Owen Jones is a familiar face to you all. He was born in Sheffield and grew up in Stockport. After graduating, he worked as a trade union and Parliamentary researcher. His first book, *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class*, and I have a copy of it, published in 2011, has received international and domestic recognition. He is currently working on his second book on the British Establishment. That'll be a long one, Owen. He has been named as one of the 50 top Britons and one of the most influential people on the Left. He is a columnist at the *Independent* and is the media and policy advisor for CLASS, the Centre for Labour and Social Studies. Most recently Owen was awarded the Young Writer of the Year prize at the Political Book Awards, and he donated half the prize money to support GMB's candidate in Peterborough, Lisa Forbes, with the other half being donated to Disabled People Against Cuts. *(Applause)*

Congress, after Owen has spoken, there will be an opportunity to ask him questions. Owen, please address Congress.

BRO. OWEN JONES: President, friends, brothers and sisters, firstly, it always throws people when I start speaking. Some of you are probably thinking, "He's that kid on *Home Alone 1*. Sometimes when I appear on telly, people go, "Why isn't he doing his paper round?" I've taken the morning off the paper round to speak to you today.

I want to start by saying this. I am proud and honoured to speak for the first time here at the GMB, and I'll tell you why. Firstly, trade unionism is in my blood. Going right back to my great granddad, he took part in the 1926 General Strike. He had his wages docked and I'm still going to get revenge for him at some point. *(Cheers and applause)* My dad was a senior shop steward, I'm not going to tell you which union because I don't want to get heckled at this point in my speech. I am also proud and honoured to say that after years of decline and retreat, we can see now the official statistics and we can say, loudly and proudly, that our movement, the trade union Movement, is once again a growing movement. *(Applause)* It is partly down to you, here, at the GMB. In the past few years your membership has gone up by 15%. It is a testament to your organising strategy, in both the private and public sector alike. You are making inroads into what have been deemed for too long almost no-go barren areas for the trade union Movement, like retail.

I am also proud to be here because of your history, and it is a proud history at that. You were the first union in Britain to support equal pay for women. Indeed, next year, as Paul has just told me, the majority of your membership will be women. It is, of course, working-class women who have, particularly, been made to pay for this crisis. I also want to make this point clear. We should be louder and more proud of our Movement than ever. The trade union Movement remains the biggest democratic movement in Britain, representing call-centre workers, shelf stackers, nurses, teachers, the pillars of our society, and it is more important than ever that we have a strong trade union Movement as working people are made to pay for this crisis by the Tories.

As a movement, what sort of country do we want to live in? Do we want to live in a country where the only industry booming is food banks, which trebled in size last year? Half-a-million people are now dependent on food banks in this country. Do we want to live in a country where Save the Children has revealed that mums and dads are skipping hot meals to make sure that their sons and daughters are fed? Parents are making decisions like whether they heat their homes or feed their children, where the size of school lunch portions are shrinking because of budget cuts. Britain is the seventh richest country on the face of the Earth and, apparently, we can no longer afford to feed our poorest children. What a damning indictment of Cameron's Britain. *(Applause)*

I ask you this. Do we want to live in a country which it remains boom time for the people at the top? Each and every year, the *Sunday Times Rich List* shows that the wealth of the top one thousand people in Britain has surged, whilst in-work and out-of-work benefits are being slashed by a Government of millionaires. Do we want to live in a country where the desperation – the desperation! – for work is so intense that when Costa Coffee opened a shop in Nottingham offering eight near-minimum-wage jobs, 1,701 applied for them? Do you want to live in a country where our – our – National Health Service is being privatised by a Government which didn't even have the guts to put it to the British people? *(Applause)* Do want to live in a country where comprehensive education is being dismantled, tuition fees trebled, the Educational Maintenance Allowance scrapped, seeing this Government of millionaires slamming the door in the faces of hundreds of thousands of working-class kids? Finally, do we want to live in a country where this Government can hire Adrian Beecroft, a multi-million pound asset stripper and Tory donor, to draw up a charter stripping what remaining rights working people have in this country? He actually had the audacity to call Vince Cable a Socialist, which is the worst smear against the good name of Socialism I have ever heard. *(Applause)*

Friends, let me be honest with you. We under-estimated David Cameron when in Opposition. We portrayed him as all style, no substance, a shallow salesman poncing about the Arctic with Huskies and all the rest of it, but he is leading a transformative Government, a Government which has turned a crisis of the market into a crisis of public spending, where the deficit is to be paid off on the backs of working people, disabled people and unemployed people.

Do you know what makes me more angry about this Government than anything else. I realise that it is quite a bold claim to make. It is this. The working poor have got justifiably angry about the fact that they are getting poorer year after year. This Government have redirected that anger from the people at the top who caused this crisis to people's neighbours down the street, the working poor. *(Applause)* It is the working poor against the unemployed, non-disabled people against disabled people, private-sector workers against public-sector workers, those already living here against immigrants. If you are a low-paid worker, your pay packet has been slashed by your boss and your tax credits are being slashed by the Tories. So who do they get you to hate? They get you to hate the scrounger down the road. If you are in the private sector your pension has been slashed by your boss, as it has across the private sector. Who do they get you to turn on? The nurse next door whose pension is still intact. If you are struggling to make ends meet, full stop, who do they want you to turn your hatred on? It is the immigrant down the road who has access to luxurious benefits that don't even exist.

It is the same argument each and every time. You've been mugged so your less-deserving neighbour should be mugged as well. We should be honest about what that is. It is the age-old politics of divide and rule. That is where we come in, friends, as a movement. I am sure that you all find this situation as well. When I go around the country I find no shortage of anger or fear but there is one thing missing, and that is hope. It was Harvey Milk, the US civil rights campaigner, who said: "I know you cannot live on hope alone, but without it life is not worth living." The point is this. It doesn't matter how angry people get, it doesn't matter how scared people get, because if they don't have hope, they don't fight back. They join the biggest party in the country, which is not Labour, the Lib-Dems or the Tories, but the "Yelling at the TV every time George Osborne appears" party, which is a pretty damned big party. All their anger is redirected against their neighbours, but they won't fight back, and that's where we come in.

We have to offer hope. What hope has to be is offering a coherent alternative to austerity, because what is being driven into people's heads since this Government came to power is that there is no alternative. Friends, there is. I just want to talk, briefly, about what that alternative could look like. We hear a lot about how welfare spending is too high. This might surprise some of you. They've got a point. It's not to do with a bunch of lazy scroungers in mansions watching large screen television sets, watching a repeat of Jeremy Kyle, but for three other reasons, and they are the housing crisis, the wages crisis and the jobs crisis.

People have absolutely every right to be furious about the £23 billion of taxpayers' money that is being wasted on Housing Benefit. That is not lining the pockets of the tenants. It is lining the pockets of private landlords charging extortionate rents, because they know that you and I will step in. *(Applause)* This is our answer. As well as controlling those rents, let councils build housing, thereby creating jobs, stimulating the economy and bringing down the five million people on social housing waiting lists. *(Applause)*

Friends, tax credits are a lifeline for millions. Let us be clear about what they are. They are a subsidy for low wages, because bosses aren't paying their workers properly. *(Applause)* Our politicians back the GMB campaign to make the minimum wage a living wage. It would bring down the billions being spent on tax credits and Housing Benefit alike. *(Applause)*

I am going to speak about the unemployment crisis. Again, we have spent billions of pounds and the fact is that so many people in this country just can't find work. So, instead, we need an industrial strategy, not having the same old New Labour and Tory dogma that you let the market decide. The state doesn't pick winners or losers. We must learn from the experiences of Germany, for example. We must have an industrial policy that creates hundreds of thousands of renewable jobs, taking on the environmental crisis but taking on the jobs' crisis, too.

We need to talk about tax justice. Friends, we hear about benefit fraud every single day. It does exist, and it amounts to less than 1% of welfare spending. Fraud amounts to £1.2 billion a year. Compare that to the £25 billion lost because the people at the top won't pay their taxes. *(Applause)* I am talking about the likes of Amazon, Google and Sir Philip Green, who owns Top Man and Top Shop. He has registered his company under his wife's name in Monaco, so he doesn't have to pay any taxes. Now, I wasn't attacked by this Government like Jimmy Carr for being morally reprehensible, or whatever it was. He was appointed as an adviser on how to slash our public services. So what we, the Movement, must go for is for the law to be changed, to have an all-out war against tax avoidance, to make the people at the top hear loud and clear, "Pay your taxes". *(Applause)*

Consider the banks. Let's be honest. If the Tories had been in power, as we all know, they would have let the whole system come crashing down. Let's be clear about what we did. We nationalised the debts and privatised the profit. We, the people who bailed those banks out, have no control over what they do. It's business as usual as far as they are concerned. So let's have a public investment bank, run by us, the people, who bailed those banks out.

Friends, I don't think that these are whacky ideas. I don't think that they are outside the mainstream. I think that these are common sense ideas about actually giving people hope in an alternative to the disaster of austerity which even, on its own terms, the debt, the deficit, growth has failed atrociously. I don't know if people remember the last election. Labour mocked up a poster of David Cameron and Gene Hunt from *Life on Mars* purchasing an Audi Quattro. They said this: "Don't let him bring us back to the 1980s", but how wrong they were. This is a far worse crisis than that of the '80s. It is worse than the '70s. Friends, this crisis is longer than the Great Depression. We are now in the longest economic crisis in modern British history. If there is a time for a coherent alternative, that time is now.

I want to ask this. Where does Labour come into it? Friends, Labour was founded with an explicit mission. There were two political parties at the time, the Liberals and the Tories. They were the parties of the bosses, the people at the top. Trade unions, like this one, said that working people need a political voice. Kier Hardy was one of the first Socialist MPs elected in this country. He turned up to Parliament for the first time in the traditional working-class dress of the period. The police officer guarding Parliament said, "Are you here to work on the roof?" Hardy said, "No, I'm here to work on the Floor." The point about Labour being founded was to give a voice to the interests of working people.

Working people often look a bit different than those in the time of Kier Hardy. They are less likely to work in docks, factories and mines, but more likely to work in supermarkets, call centres and offices. Friends, working people need a political voice as much today as much as they ever did. So we have to be clear, as a trade union Movement, that we cannot go into the next election with Labour not offering an alternative, and going in instead and offering austerity. It is not acceptable. *(Applause)* I hope that you, as one of the largest unions in this country, can make that clear, that you want a Labour Party that stands up for working people.

I want now to talk about some of the things which give me hope. One of the things that I am involved with at the moment is called The People's Assembly, which is an organisation involving various trade unions, labour activists and people in other parties, campaigning for disabled people, young people, elderly people and so on, to build a broad anti-austerity movement. I have been all over the country in the last couple of weeks – Bristol, Manchester, Sheffield, Newcastle, Nottingham, Brighton and so on – attending packed meetings of people who are desperate for an alternative. They don't just want to be in the Ranting-at-the-Television Party, but they want to unite with people, the people who really are all in it together. That will culminate on June 22nd with a mass rally in the Westminster Central Hall.

I want to talk about other things that give me hope when I have been travelling around the country. Last year, I went to Leeds and I met with GMB bin workers, who went on strike on in 2009. It was against a Lib-Dem/Tory Coalition before that was all the rage. That council tried to cut their wages by up to a third. Those workers went on strike for week after week. They got up every day at 5 a.m. to man the picket lines. One of the organisers, Desiree Risebury, is *here*. I am sorry, Desiree. I was always going to embarrass you. This is the point. They came out and it was difficult and hard, but they won. I will give you another example. The electricians who took on Balfour Beatty went on strike against a huge multinational, and they won as well. That shows that when working people standing together united against their bosses, they can win. That should be hope to all the work you do. *(Applause)*

Like the other GMB workers in Brighton, who are out on strike against the council, which is trying to turn working people against each other. I salute them. They are in the hall, I think. *(Applause)* That is the basis of our Movement. An injury to one is an injury to all, and we will stand with you till the end.

Another example is UK Uncut. Who was talking about tax avoidance three years ago? Just a few people on the fringes. Those people took part in the noble and proud tradition of peaceful, civil disobedience. They occupied shops, businesses and banks, which were engaged in massive tax avoidance. Now everybody is talking about tax avoidance. I will give you one other example. The Poll Tax. A lot of you are looking at me now and thinking, "There is no way that this kid was about at the time of the Poll Tax." I know all the jokes. You can get them out of your systems. I was five years old. I was taken by my folks to the Glasgow Anti-Poll Tax march. I started as a child. If you think I am precocious now, well. The point was this. At that time, people thought, "No one can beat Thatcher." She had seen off the miners, and people thought that if she could take on the miners and win, she could take on anyone and win. But that movement not only defeated the Poll Tax but it helped boot Margaret Thatcher out of No. 10 itself. *(Applause)*

Friends, all of that should give us hope. It is possible to fight back, not as a futile gesture, not to vent steam but to fight and win. It was Frederick Douglas, a 19th century African-American statesman, a freed slave, who said: "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." What he meant by that is that we get change not through the goodwill and generosity of those above us, but the struggle and sacrifice of those from below. It is ordinary working people organising with people who are like them to fight back. That is how we change things.

Let's remember this. We are up against a Government that has no mandate for what it is doing. I just about remember the last time the Tories won an election. I was seven-years old. I remember it well because my teachers came dressed in black. Friends, the last election was handed to them on a plate. We

were in the biggest economic crisis since the 1930s with a government that, at the time, if I am going to be brutally honest, was a bit less popular than cholera. They only got 36% of the vote. They have no mandate whatsoever for this programme that they are unleashing. Friends, I am confident that we can turn this situation around. We can demand that we have a Labour Party that represents working people with enough pressure from below. We can take on those who are hijacking the financial crisis to implement policies which this lot always dreamt of introducing but never, otherwise, had the guts.

I will end by saying this, as I always do, because I passionately believe it from the bottom of my heart. If we stand together and fight together, friends, we will win this battle together. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we haven't finished yet, thank goodness. You will take questions from where you are standing. I am just drawing up the adoption papers on behalf of the GMB. *(Laughter)* I have a list of some people to call. I want to hear questions, not a script.

SIS. V. DAVISON (Northern): How should Labour respond to UKIP and the European dimension to workers' rights?

BRO. A. DE-BANKS (Wales and South Western): First of all, Owen, I would like you to sign a copy of your book for me. The unrelenting attack upon trade union rights is depriving the working class of our country of a collective and public voice. How do you think the trade union Movement can effectively contribute to a resurgence of a respected working class in Britain today?

SIS. J. BRADY (Wales and South West): Owen, how would you suggest a greater involvement of young people within the trade union and wider labour Movement? Thank you.

BRO. JONES: Firstly, what a great set of questions, comrades. I will start with the first one: How should Labour respond to UKIP? That is a really important point. I am sure, like many of you, we all share the same concerns and fears at the rise of this populist right-wing. I think it is a sign of frustration and anger at the political establishment. UKIP has almost become the "Up yours!" party for many people, the "None of the above box" on the ballot paper. At the same time, what is so toxic about them is that they are re-directing people's anger in the way I spoke about away from those who caused the crisis to immigrants down the road. I think we should be open and honest about immigration and have a debate about it. The reality is this. Studies show UKIP has had a small impact on people at the lower end, but the way we rectify that is to enforce a living wage, to have strong trade union rights and to make sure that everybody is employed on the same terms and conditions to stop a race to the bottom. At the same time, we need a council-house building programme, because what has happened is because of the scandalous failure of both new Labour and the Tories to build council housing, people feel like they are competing for each other for what is left of the stock. They are thinking, "Hang on a minute. I've always lived here. How come my son and daughter are stuck at home with me, they can't get an affordable house, while private rents are soaring, but those immigrants down the road are getting the housing." If we built council housing we could actually respond to that threat and, instead of turning people against each other, we could give people some hope.

As to the point about the European dimension to workers' rights, it is interesting to point out that if you look at UKIP voters and what is driving them, it isn't the EU. The EU is way down their list of concerns. None the less, I do think that we, on the left, as the labour Movement, need to have a response. We defend the gains that we have made under the EU, but at the same time we want to change the European Union. We don't support the neo-liberal element. We want to make it more democratic. There is no reason why we would give up those arguments to the frothing-at-the-mouth populist right. We answer those concerns with our own progressive trade-union solutions.

Aaron, as to the point about the unrelenting attack on trade-union rights, it was Tony Blair who, famously, said that even under new Labour of 13 years we've got the most stringent anti-trade union laws

in Britain. That's got consequences. Even before Lehman Brothers came crashing down, people's pay packets were sliding. From 2004 onwards, if you were in the bottom half, your pay packet flatlined. The bottom third actually started declining. That is because we didn't have a strong trade union Movement. Corporate profits were booming at the time but they had no reason to give it out as wages. So we have to make the point that we won't be able to rebuild people's living standards unless we have a strong trade union Movement. The other point is that we've got to make sure that the trade union Movement gets people into Parliament. I know you were discussing this earlier today. The crisis of working-class political representation is one of the main crises facing Britain, and I'll tell you why. I interviewed Hazel Blears before the last election. Sometimes people "Boo". There we go. I said to Hazel: "There are five million people stuck on social housing waiting lists. Why didn't Labour do anything about it?" To her credit, she was honest. She said that there was no one in the government who was interested in housing, but if you've got people who are stuck on a social housing waiting list or their kids are in that position, if you get them into Parliament, those issues will be addressed. That is why trade unions have a responsibility to get people who are rooted in working-class communities into Parliament. There are a few things. Trade union rights and also working-class representation.

Finally, the point about young people is such an important point, Julia, and I am glad you raised it. Young people, first time since World War II are going to be less well off than their parents. That fact is only now just sinking in. We've got youth unemployment of over a million. It is catastrophic, because we know that if you are unemployed at a young age, you are more likely to be unemployed in later life and your pay packets will also be lower in later life. It also has an impact on people's mental well-being, so we need to organise the young unemployed. We need to learn from young community leaders. I spoke to a young man called Simeon Brown in Tottenham who has been organising young people. Let's start engaging, as a movement, with young community workers and start talking to them and, more importantly, listening to them about how we can go out and organise young people, particularly young working-class people who are facing such a huge and monumental crisis. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: We have some more questions.

SIS. B. CARSON (GMB Scotland): GMB Scotland will be a leading voice in the run-up to the Scottish independence referendum. What would be your view on how we can best communicate with and reach out to our younger members?

BRO. D. GILLIGAN (London): Owen, I see by your tweets that you are a firm supporter of the trade union Movement, and with a following of over 117,000 could you tweet "Join the GMB"? *(Applause)*
(Owen Jones tweeted as asked)

THE PRESIDENT: Can you tweet "I'm being adopted"? *(Laughter)*

SIS L. ZANITCHKHAH (London): Owen, following on from Barking & Dagenham introducing the £9.03p living wage, is it not now time to scrap the minimum wage and introduce a true living wage? *(Applause)*

BRO. JONES: Comrades, again, those were cracking questions. Firstly, Brenda, the point about GMB Scotland and the role it is going to play in the Scottish independence referendum. This is going to sound like a bit of a fudge. Of course, we defend to the end, I hope, the right to national self determination. It is up to the Scottish people which way they vote. I actually lived in Falkirk for a couple of years as a kid, as you can tell from my impenetrable Scottish accent. Much of my family now live in Scotland and they are divided. Some of my cousins are going to vote yes, but most of my family will probably vote no. Whatever happens and whatever the decision of the Scottish people is, I hope the trade union Movement, and particularly the GMB, will make it abundantly clear that a call-centre or supermarket worker in Glasgow has more in common with a call-centre worker in Manchester, London or Cardiff than they do with their own bosses. That is the point of solidarity. Working people should not be divided up by those

sorts of borders. That is the issue and point. However the Scottish people decide, we must not let people get divided up and we still maintain and, particularly, fight for the things that Scottish, English and Welsh workers fought for and won together; the welfare state, the NHS, all the things that are now under attack. All of us have a responsibility in English, Scotland and Wales to fight to keep those gains. Dean, I have tweeted, as you asked. It is all out. You can check, in case I am lying.

Linda from Barking actually got us to write “from Barking”, because she thought, otherwise, it would be “Linda is Barking”, which is not, by the way. Linda, the living wage is a really important point. As I say, tax credits are a subsidy. They are subsidising low pay. You could almost call it “corporate welfare”; welfare being handed for the bosses, not for working people. So instead of us, the taxpayer, having to step in and subsidise people’s wages, we should have a statutory living wage. That means turning the minimum wage into a living wage. Guilt-tripping companies is not enough. It is not going to work. The only way we do it is by enforcing it by law to stop the taxpayers subsidising companies who, frankly, can afford to pay their workers a decent wage. (*Applause*) It is worth bearing in mind that the majority of people in poverty in this country are in work. What a scandal! We have people going to food banks, who are low-paid workers, who can’t afford to feed their kids in one of the richest countries that has ever existed. It is a scandal! That is another reason why we need a living wage.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Owen. We come to the last two questions.

SIS. P. MAKWANA (London): Owen, what urgent policies would you, if you became the Labour leader, think are important to deal with, in fact, as a priority, when elected, to win back the confidence of the electorate who have left the Labour Party?

SIS. S. CAULTON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Owen, in the face of the raft of Coalition attacks on the welfare state, how should the Labour Movement provide a strong and coherent defence in the two years approaching the general election?

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): First, I would like to apologise because I never reviewed your book. It was sent to me before it was published by Left Future, and I never reviewed it but you seem to have done all right it. I apologise for that, but I did enjoy it when I read it. My question is this. A couple of weeks ago I had a meeting at which a senior Labour MP attended. We, from the unions, were pressing him on why the Labour Party are not defending their period in office. We asked, “Why aren’t we defending the good things that the last Government did?” He said that their thinking is that you can’t have two discussions with the British people at once. You can’t talk about what you are going to do in the future and talk about what you did in the past. We said to him, “No, you’ve got to defend what you did, otherwise people will think you were rubbish.” The point is that the Tories say you were rubbish. Do you think that the British public are so stupid that they can’t have an argument about what we do in the future and also defend what Labour Government’s have done in the past?

BRO. JONES: No, no.

A FEMALE DELEGATE (No name or branch given): Owen, I know you have done some work with the organisation CLASS – The Centre for Labour and Social Studies – of which GMB was a founder member, but what are the key aims of CLASS and how successful do you think it has been?

BRO. JONES: Friends, thank you for some cracking and really important questions. Pushpa, what you were talking about gets to the heart of what we, as a movement, are now fighting for. It is less than two years to the next general election. It is not that long at all. In terms of the policies and priorities that we all want to see, much of it is dictated by what we have already seen unleashed on this country and the absolute disaster it has meant to communities. It is true that many people have ripped up their cards and drifted away from the Labour Party. Some of the things I would like us to do in the future and the key absolute priority of a Labour Government has to be a house-building programme. That is not affordable

housing, whatever that means in practice, but it means, firstly, that you lift the borrowing cap imposed on councils. That pays for itself as you get a secure stream of rent coming in and, as I said, it creates jobs, stimulates the economy and brings down Housing Benefit bills, too. That has got to be an absolute lynchpin of a strategy of growth. The same thing applies to an industrial policy. That would create good, skilled and secure “green-collar jobs”, as they are called in Germany, renewable energy jobs, taking on the environmental and jobs crisis. One of the things which has driven many Party members away are foreign expensive wars in which not only British servicemen and women have died in the most appalling way possible, but also an absolute disaster for the populations like Iraq. We have to say, firmly, I think, as a movement, never, never again must a Labour Government ally with a neo-capitalist foreign administration and take our country to war. (*Applause*)

Of course, in relation to trade union and workers’ rights, the way we change things is not just as individuals pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. It is collectively organising together. If we want workers not to face ever-falling living standards, then we have to give them a voice in the workplace. We have got to enable working people to stand up for themselves. That means that the next Labour Government must not do what the last one did and let us have the most oppressive anti-union laws in the western world, but change them to set working people free to actually defend themselves, their communities and their families. (*Applause*)

Of course, the living wage. We could produce a manifesto here, couldn’t we? That would be fun. The welfare state is an absolute key point. April saw the biggest raid on the incomes of the poor by intention, if you like, since 1931. What we saw – I don’t know if people remember what happened – in January was politicians debating the Welfare Benefits Up-Rating Bill. What that Bill, in real terms, does is cut benefits for both working people and people who are unemployed. Honestly, if there is anything you remember in the coming most to the next election, remember what happened in that Chamber. We saw a load of over-paid, privately-educated, millionaire Tories laughing, baying and cheering as they debated cutting the incomes of the poor in a country where food banks are already soaring. It was, frankly, disgusting. We should always remember what that Tory Party is capable of. What we need to do – the Tories always say that we defend the status quo, but we don’t – is to make clear that we don’t agree with subsidizing landlords charging rip-off rents and we don’t agree with subsidizing bosses who won’t pay proper wages. The way we can bring welfare spending down – we will say this – without kicking people out of their homes, without forcing more people to rely on forcing and without forcing more parents to choose between heating their homes and feeding their kids, is by building homes and having a living wage. It is straightforward stuff. The point is that under this Government Housing Benefit is actually going up and, no wonder, because the rents are continuing to soar. Even as they kick people, even as they drive people into misery through the bedroom tax and punishing people for the fact that past governments haven’t built council houses, or whether it be cuts to disabled people’s benefits, the most degrading experience of disabled people having to go to ATOS, as well as seeing many of the most sick and ill people having their benefits stripped away from them, we have to say that we will bring down welfare spending in a different way.

Andy, your point about defending the good things that Labour did, it is interesting you made this point. I often find myself saying this to Paul on the platform, that we were in a really odd position. We spent all that time being at odds with Blairites under new Labour, but I suddenly find myself having to defend new Labour’s economic record to many Blairites, who will come out and argue the reason why we have got the problem we are in at the moment is because we spent too much money. That is a myth! It is a total myth that the Tories have propagated and that too many on our own side have failed to rebuff. The reason why we have a deficit is because we had a financial crisis, our tax revenues collapsed, our welfare spending went up, Ireland is a country which was in surplus and it was plunged into a deficit, as were countries across the western world, so we have to defend Labour’s own record, if you like, including from some of its former leading lights, those Blairite dinosaurs of yesteryear, by making it clear that we are in this mess not because of too much spending on hospitals and schools but because of a financial crisis caused by the banks. We have to make that clear. We also have to defend public spending, the

minimum wage, which in real terms has been cut, as it has not increased in line with inflation, and other good things. We must make sure that a future Labour Government builds on them and actually creates a Britain which is fit for working people.

Finally, I am glad that CLASS has been raised – I should have mentioned in it my speech – which is a think tank set up by several key unions, including the GMB, Unite, PCS and others. Some of you might think, “Ah, God, not another think tank. We’ve had enough of those people having talking shops and so on.” That is not what CLASS is about. It is bringing together economists, academics and others to create a coherent alternative. As I have said, unless we have that coherent alternative, we won’t give people hope, and if we don’t give people hope, people won’t fight back. They will resign themselves to what this Government is doing. So CLASS is doing a huge body of work on housing, for example, on industrial policy and on the banks. So I hope that all of you will pay very close attention to the policy documents that come out and will be propagating them far and wide. It is about arming us as a movement so that we can go out to our communities and actually have the confidence to stand up for an alternative, because we will have all the evidence to back up our cases. So CLASS is absolutely fundamental to our Movement and I hope you will support it.

I just want to finish by saying what a huge honour this has been to address you. You have been absolutely fantastic. In the months and years ahead, I and so many others will be standing with you every step of the way in solidarity as you fight back and stand up for the rights of working people. Thank you very much. (*A standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Owen, before I give you what is behind my back, can you make sure that you bring identification. We want to give you a bottle of GMB Whisky. It was made by our members in Scotland and they are proud to give it to you. Also, let me give you a book called *The History of the GMB*. (*Presentation made amidst applause*) On behalf of myself, the CEC and this Congress, you are an inspiration. If you inspire our young people in the way that you have inspired us today, please don’t give up your day job. (*Applause*)

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE PRESIDENT: I have one announcement. Please give generously to the bucket collection in aid of the Ambulance Heritage Society as you leave the hall today.

You will see details of fringe events displayed on the screen. Please be back promptly at 2 p.m.

Adjourned for lunch

AFTERNOON SESSION

Congress re-assembled at 2.00 p.m.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, please come to order. Those standing, please sit down. Congress, I would like to welcome into the hall Dirk McPherson, one of our blacklisted members from Southern Region. Dirk is just here for the day for a very important meeting this afternoon in preparation for tomorrow morning’s blacklisting debate. Dirk was put on the blacklist by Liz Keates from Carillion when he worked at the Pfizer site in Kent. His blacklist file describes him as a GMB shop steward and an agitator all because he raised concerns about health and safety on the site. Congress, if Dirk is an agitator, then so am I and every single one of us in this hall. (*Applause*) Dirk has often struggled to find work due to being blacklisted and this has affected his personal life.

Dirk, we are really proud to have you here at the GMB Congress and can I say thank you on behalf of the GMB, and your members, for being prepared to be a shop steward and standing up to be counted. As President of this union, I make you a promise that we will not stop this campaign until you, and every one of the 3,213 people on the blacklist, have an apology from Carillion and the other companies, and you have been compensated for the damage done to you and your families. Congress, I ask Dirk McPherson to address Congress. Thank you. Dirk, would you like to say a few words; whatever you want.

BRO. D. McPHERSON (Southern): Good afternoon, comrades. As you have noted from the speech, I was blacklisted at Phizers for having the temerity to demand for the shop floor hard hats, high vis. jackets, overalls, and steel toe-capped boots. This was not for more money; it was just for the safety equipment that by law we should have been issued with. For that I have been turned into an agitator and have subsequently had to work for agencies where I start a job that is supposed to last for three months, three days later mysteriously the job is finished, and yet you can see there is miles of work to be done. It has affected me quite a bit but by the same token I can look at myself in the mirror and know I have never let my comrades and brothers and sisters down. *(Applause)* Anyway, thank you for your support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I think we should give this man a standing ovation. He is standing up for all of us in this hall. *(Standing ovation)* It is not only us but the thousands of members out there who every day are being targeted unfairly. Thank you.

Can I now tell Congress that I have on the platform, as you can see, and he does not need a lot of announcements, Andrew Burnham. He has come in both to listen to Dirk and to hear the next lot of resolutions. Welcome, Andy. It is good to see you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I ask the mover of composite 9, from London Region, to move and second, composite 10, National Health Service, Southern Region, and Midland Region to second.

INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: PUBLIC SERVICES

SAVE THE NHS FROM PRIVATISATION

COMPOSITE 9

C9. Covering Motions:

184. CAMPAIGN FOR NATIONAL ACTION TO DEFEND THE NHS *(London Region)*
185. SAVE NHS FROM PRIVATISATION *(London Region)*

SAVE THE NHS FROM PRIVATISATION

Congress, the very future of the NHS is at threat.

- Huge cuts in public services are threatening hospital and community services up and down the country with closure.
- Thousands of health workers jobs have been cut threatening front line services whilst the pay and conditions of NHS staff are under the most serious attack ever.
- Private companies now run significant parts of our NHS for profit, and the Health and Social Care Act will accelerate that process further with services in whole hospitals and areas being readied for privatisation.

There has been massive opposition to the attacks with huge local protests against closures, with health workers beginning to fight back, and with unprecedented numbers of people taking some form of action against Lansley's Health Bill.

Congress condemns the on-going privatisation and dismantling of the National Health Service, most recently the Health and Social Care Act. According to corporate advisers Catalyst, there is a £20billion "opportunity" for private health care firms in the NHS over the next few years thanks to this appalling Act. We note the public support of the Labour Party for the repeal of the Health and Social Care Act.

We urge the Party to make this a firm manifesto commitment, as well as pledging to reverse privatisation of existing health services by bringing them back into the NHS and to end the principle that “any qualified provider” should be allowed to bid to deliver health services.

Congress calls upon the CEC to work with other groups to campaign for a referendum on the Health and Social Care Act as part of an on-going campaign against NHS cuts and privatisation.

Trade Union Activists and anti-cuts campaigners want to join a fight back but need far clearer calls for action now not just after the next election. A serious national campaign of action is urgently needed backed by the Trade Unions and the Labour Party.

We call on our union to:

- Give maximum support for campaigns and industrial action against cuts and privatisation
- Campaign for nationally co-ordinated action
- Give national campaigns such as Keep Our NHS Public the support and resources they need to continue their work
- Call a national demonstration in defence of the NHS to highlight the threat to the health service and to help co-ordinate and build the campaigns and the action to defend it.

London Region to Move London Region to Second

(Carried)

SIS. H. PURCELL (London): Congress, there can be no doubt that the Tories are set on dismantling the welfare state with our NHS at the centre of these attacks. Lansley, Hunt, and the rest of the Tory welfare wreckers, have released a massive ideological attack on our health service attempting to conclude the unfinished business of Thatcher, the most avid promoter of the marketisation of the public sector.

In the past three years the NHS has lost over 4,000 nurses, witnessed numerous crises in A&E, seen numerous hospital closures, cuts in services, creeping privatisation, and the latest chaos around the new NHS 111 telephone number; the list is endless. We cannot and must not sit back and accept this. Since the passing of the Health and Social Care Act, even with its numerous amendments, many influenced by the huge wave of opposition, particularly from trade unions and medical nursing professional bodies, the need to campaign and organise against the cuts, closures, and privatisation of our health service, has become even more imperative. The Act still has an emphasis on competition and this will inevitably lead to further privatisation and fragmentation of our NHS.

According to Catalyst, a firm of corporate advisers, there is a £20bn opportunity in the NHS to private sector healthcare companies. Indeed, some of these companies, like Circle, already provide services profiteering from the sick and vulnerable in our society. Just last month secondary legislation related to section 75 of the Health and Social Care Act was agreed in parliament. These regulations will virtually force commissioners to open up to private sector competition any part of the NHS that these companies are interested in with very few exceptions. Local health decision-makers will be able to do little or nothing to protect local NHS hospitals, which could be starved of funds as a result of losing their services. Essentially, these regulations will force commissioners to put services out to tender, even if they want to support a local NHS provider that is already providing a good service for patients. Further, time and money will be wasted on contracting and transaction processes, management consultants and lawyers’ fees instead of on patient care.

Healthcare should not be a competitive, profit-making enterprise but a public service that is collaborative, needs-based, and equally available to all irrespective of class, gender, ethnicity, or postal code. On the campaign for it we need to build on and work with the already established campaign groups, like *Keep Our NHS Public*, that fought so hard against Lansley and his bill. However, to do so we must galvanise support from the whole of the trades union Movement as well as the Labour Party. The Labour Party

must stand firm, denounce the Act, and make a solid commitment to repeal it when it comes to power. Further, it should halt privatisation and place the NHS back in the hands of the public sector. Our own union and other affiliates need to do all in their power to influence and ensure the Party places the NHS at the heart of its campaign manifesto for the next general election.

In the meantime, we must continue to campaign and protest so the momentum and public interest is maintained. Just last month there was a mass demo in London which attracted people from all walks of life. Our own union had a massive turnout on the day. Demos like this have been replicated the length and breadth of the country at local and regional levels but the time is now right to organise a national event that brings together all those who care. We must join together to further build the campaign, highlight the issues, and draw media attention. We also need sister trade unions to show solidarity and give support to any trade union members taking industrial action in relation to these attacks and campaign for coordinated action wherever an opportunity presents itself.

Congress, this is a big set of demands but we cannot and must not sit back and allow our NHS to be further wrecked by the Tories. We have to deliver our NHS from the greedy grabbing hands of the privateers and keep the NHS in our public sector. Comrades, I urge you to support this motion. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Secunder?

BRO. M. AKBAR (London): Where do I start? Most of you know how I feel about the NHS. This is a motion close to my heart. Those who know me know how I feel about the NHS. I have worked in the ambulance service for more than 20 years. I have seen the changes the successive governments have made to the NHS; corners have been cut, increase in waiting times, services cut, and the crisis in the A&E that we are facing today. Every time the attacks are made on the NHS, the Government justify these actions by claiming it is all about patients, it is about quality, and care, and outcomes.

Congress, privatisation only benefits those that can afford healthcare and private providers who put profit before people. This is not the NHS we want. When I first started working for the NHS I remember the gentleman who interviewed me, he said, and I repeat these words today, "The NHS is not for private organisation." When Labour founded the NHS it was founded on equality, not profit before people. Its goal was to provide the healthcare for those who needed it most, not on the ability to pay but upon people's need.

You know that just after Cameron became leader of the Tory Party he spelled out the priority of the three letters, N-H-S. We are now finding out at our cost that this was a barefaced lie. In 2001 and 2005 polls showed that voters would not trust the Tories with the NHS. I remember at Manchester Ed Miliband said in his speech, "You can trust the NHS. It's safe with Labour." I call upon the GMB Congress and the Labour Party members to prove this to the public and put this in their next manifesto. GMB rejects the idea that the NHS could benefit from profiteering investors. It is wrong. The GMB rejects the ConDem Government cuts and the shrinking of the social responsibility that is being passed out to others and I have a final message for those hovering around the NHS like vultures: the NHS is not for sale. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Mo. Composite 10 to be moved by Southern Region and seconded by Midland and East Coast.

COMPOSITE 10
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND PFI
(Covering Motions 186 and 187)

C10. Covering Motions:

186. SAVE OUR NHS (*Midland and East Coast Region*)

187. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (*Southern Region*)

C10 NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND PFI

In 2008 our government bailed out the banking institution and yet our NHS has been left to flounder to the point that it is almost destroyed. If we can save the Fat Cat Bankers, then we should help save the very institution that was set up to help our most needy and vulnerable.

Private Finance Initiative has now run its course, everyone can now see the disaster it has created leading to cuts taking place in non PFI hospitals to finance the PFI debts. PFI hospitals costing £60 million at least per year for each PFI hospital, costing more than 7 times the original cost to build.

We must campaign against this daylight robbery and this gravy train. PFI debt should be written off for public benefit to save the NHS service. This Congress will actively campaign for the Labour party to agree when next in government, our aspirations to bail out our debt ridden NHS PFI hospitals and renegotiate the poor contracts with escalating debts to PFI providers.

**Southern Region to Move
Midland and East Coast Region to Second**

(Carried)

THE PRESIDENT: I repeat, Composite 10, moved by Southern Region. Can somebody formally move?

Composite 10 was formally moved.

THE PRESIDENT: Midland & East Coast Region? Come on, Colleen.

SIS. C. HARWOOD (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, and visitors, I second this composite motion. The NHS is a jewel in Labour's crown and I urge Congress to push the Labour Party when next in power to stop the destruction of this vital service and the bad debts set upon them by PFI. Our bankers brought about a national crisis through greed and lining their own pockets yet the Government bailed them out. At the same time, our NHS is demonised, its staff demoralised and at risk of losing their jobs all in efforts to save money whilst fat cat bankers — I said "bankers" — still walk away with bonuses. Let's help save our NHS and help bail out our PFI debt-ridden hospitals by writing off the debt. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Colleen. Well done. Does anyone wish to speak on these two composites? No? Aren't you good! I am assuming Southern Region will accept the qualification? *(Agreed)* Right. Tell 'em when they come back. Composite 9, does London Region accept the qualification? Yes? Don't all speak to Mary. Sorry, I am running ahead of myself. I am calling Martin Jackson, CEC, on composites 9 and 10. It was a shortcut!

BRO. M. JACKSON (CEC, Public Services): Could I just explain what the qualification is? I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and we ask you to support composite motions 9 and 10 with the following qualifications. Covering motions 184 and 185 highlights the threat to our cherished health service from this Coalition Government and their so-called Health and Social Care Act. This motion makes points which are existing GMB policy. The GMB opposes this transparent attempt at wholesale privatisation of the NHS which is reducing services, destroying morale and conditions for the workforce, and siphoning public money to private profiteers.

I have been in the NHS for 25 years and I had the misfortune to get through the NHS, through the Thatcher years, through the Major years, and all through those years we had Labour MP after Labour MP coming to this Congress and promising us to stop privatisation of the NHS. Unfortunately, when Labour got in they did not stop that privatisation of the NHS, they made it worse. They did a lot of good things in

the NHS, I have to say, but they continued the privatisation. It has been encouraging to hear Labour Shadow Secretary of State for Health clearly commit to repealing the Act at the first opportunity. We have heard that on TV and in the press and I hope that we will hear him do so again when he addresses Congress today.

It is current GMB policy to campaign to prevent this Government's attack on the NHS and ensure the Labour Party are fully committed to undoing the damage next time they come to power. Back to Mo's point, I think Labour need to re-emphasise the point of need and not the ability to pay, and it should have an NHS slogan to back up its campaign. As we know, Cameron did not have any mandate and it was not on his manifesto to pillage the NHS.

The CEC supports the sentiment of the motion and calls for action. However, the qualification is on the call for a national demonstration. This will need to be considered with all other interested groups and other commitments.

Composite 10, covering motions 186 and 187, concerns the vast costs of PFI funding of NHS hospitals. Again, the GMB has an existing policy condemning the debt servicing costs of these contracts which are such a burden on our already overstretched NHS and again through the Thatcher years, the Major years, and even the Blair years, that was always policy but Labour kept on PFI. Existing GMB policy also calls for the renegotiation of PFI contracts to reduce that burden.

Composite 10, on the other hand, calls for the PFI debts to be written off. The qualification is that this may not be as good a solution to the problems of PFI as our current existing policy. Congress, please support the composites 9 and 10 with the qualifications that I have described. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Now, does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Southern Region accept the qualification? Yes, Mary. (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I put 9 and 10 to the vote? All those in favour please show? Anyone against, at your peril? No. Thank you. That is carried.

Composite 9 was CARRIED.

Composite 10 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, it gives me great pleasure to welcome Andy Burnham to the stage and to Congress. Andy has represented the Party at every level, from CLP Secretary to Secretary of State. He was elected as Leigh's MP in 2001 and still holds that post. He first began attending meetings when he was 14, a full year before he was allowed to join the Party. Born and raised in Merseyside, Andy saw firsthand what real "broken Britain" looks like and wanted to play his part in changing it. After the 1997 election, he joined the NHS Confederation. He was on the Health Select Committee where he earned the respect of health professionals and patients alike. He has been Labour's Shadow Health Secretary since October 2011. I know there has never been a dull moment. Andy, I would like you to address Congress. Thank you. (*Applause*)

ANDY BURNHAM, MP, LABOUR'S SHADOW HEALTH SECRETARY, ADDRESSED CONGRESS

ANDY BURNHAM: Thank you very much indeed, Mary. Good afternoon, Congress. The last time I stood before you was in Southport three years ago, the very first day of the Labour leadership hustings. From there I went on to get the least media profile, raised the least money, and secured the second fewest votes. Was it something I said? Here's hoping I can do a little better today. In fact, it is an honour to be asked back to address a union that unlike me knows how to campaign, that has steadfastly stood by the Remploy workers, blacklisted construction workers, like Dirk, and the 280,000 council workers paid less than a living wage, and of course not forgetting Mary's *Save Free School Meals* Campaign.

While I am at it, I want to pay my tribute to the best campaigner of them all who, I understand, addressed you yesterday, Margaret Aspinall is second only to my Mum in my affections. (*Applause*) She is an inspiration to any mother anywhere fighting for her child. She is here today and I have to confess it makes me nervous when she comes to hear me speak. She has been known to heckle one of my speeches before along with a few thousand others.

Southport in summer 2010 seems like a lifetime ago, doesn't it? It is so long ago it was when Nick Clegg was popular. Now, the only person in the country who seems to think Nick Clegg has done a good job is David Cameron. I am reliably informed that he considers him the best butler he has ever had. (*Laughter*) For the rest of us one thing is now clear, this Coalition has not worked. It is what my kids would call, "an epic fail", turning a growing economy into a flat-lining economy, breaking up a successful National Health Service into one showing increasing signs of distress, arrogant millionaire ministers with no clue what life is like for most people, ramming through policies no one voted for, designed to divide one group from another, punishing the poorest, governing by stoking conflict with dedicated public service professionals, repeatedly pulled up for misusing statistic to support spurious claims, forced into one U-turn after another. This is what passes for government in Coalition Britain.

For the sake of your members, of my constituents, we have to get them out at the first time of asking. This is the good news, Labour can win in 2015. Because of their record of failure, it is in our hands. Coming out of government is hard for any party but unlike at similar times in the history of the Labour movement Labour today is united and because of the progress we have made under Ed's leadership we can now be a one-term opposition, but it will not fall on a plate. It will only happen if Labour now steps up its game, hits this arrogant government harder than we have done today, and has the courage to think big. That is what I want to talk to you about today.

First, we need to open our eyes to what we are up against. What is becoming clear is that the Tories have concluded that the only way to win in 2015, coming out of a failed coalition, is to go right and go negative. Forget hugging huskies and hoodies, the nasty party is back with a vengeance. A Queen's speech written by a right-wing Australian tobacco lobbyist with its sights trained on the European Union, immigration, and benefits. They are dancing to Ukip's tune and getting ready to fight on a divisive agenda, turning one group of people against another, strivers versus so-called skivers, public versus private, immigrants versus the rest, doing what they have historically done, exploiting insecurity and fear, appealing to the worst side of human nature.

Labour needs to see what is coming and respond in the right way. First, we need to show financial realism and credibility and Ed Balls set out those priorities today. Second, we need a Labour alternative to the benefits debate based on rewarding and protecting people in work, supporting a living wage, not subsidising low pay; Labour, the party of work.

My main message today is that victory in 2015 lies not in playing safe and waiting to pick up votes by default from a failing government. It lies in finding new confidence in our policies, a one-nation Labour vision for 21st century Britain that surprises people in its ambition. It lies in making a break with the politics of the last two decades where parties have scabbled over scraps of the centre ground, stolen each other's clothes, and offered micro-policies designed to change the next day's headlines but not much else. How often when we knock on those doors at election time do we hear, "It's not worth it, they're all the same." People are crying out for something different from politics and Labour will be the party that has the courage to provide it. They want proper answers that will make a real difference based on a recognisable political tradition and philosophy, to the worries they have about the insecurities of life in the 21st century, worries about what jobs their children will do and how they will make their way when, as we hear again today, the first step on the ladder is too often unpaid, worries about their own job insecurity in a globalised workplace which seems to move inexorably towards a part-time, short-term, zero-hours

culture, and worries about their parents and how they will be properly looked after as they become more frail.

I am very clear about one thing, in this the century of the ageing society we will never ever get the standards of care we aspire to for our own parents, or indeed anyone's parents, from the malnourished minimum wage social care system that we have in England today, a system where care is delivered in 10-minute slots by overstretched and underpaid staff, who barely have time to make a cup of tea let alone exchange a meaningful word, where families face the soul-destroying task of emptying parents' bank accounts to pay for care which often is not good enough anyway, a system as unfair as American healthcare or pre-NHS healthcare where people pay if they are unlucky enough to need help and the more vulnerable they are the more they lose.

This is my point, the way to win in 2015 and restore some trust and faith in politics along the way is to provide real answers to worries like these. There is a film, you may have seen it, *The Spirit of '45*, a time when Labour looked to the future, had the answers people were looking for, and the courage to implement them. Twenty-first century Labour is determined to recapture some of that spirit.

The global financial crash brought a new reality and opened people's eyes to unfairness, excess, and inequality that had been tolerated for too long. If we can respond to that, bring a spirit of 2015 to our next manifesto, then who knows, we might just make politics a bit more relevant again and cut through the cynicism. We will not just win, we will deserve to win.

There is no better place to start than to renew a true Labour vision for the NHS in the 21st century. In just one month's time the NHS hits 65. That is one retirement age this Government does not want to extend. You can see it in the comments now being made by Tory figures. An A&E crisis of their own making caused by the toxic medicine of cuts and reorganisation is being used as evidence that it was, after all, in their words, a 60-year mistake. That was what a former No.10 adviser was telling *The Telegraph* last week. His answer? More marketisation. It is all part of the plan that dared not speak its name before the last election, run down the NHS to justify privatisation. That is now what is happening at breakneck speed and nothing is sacred, even blue light 999 is up for sale as GMB members have worked with me to expose.

This toxic Tory medicine of budget cuts and top down reorganisation has plunged the NHS into chaos with people waiting hours on trolleys, in the back of ambulances, treatment tents in car parks, back to the bad old days of the mid-1990s, a spin operation in full flow to obscure the fact that from Labour they inherited an NHS with the lowest ever waiting list and the highest ever patient satisfaction.

This Wednesday I have called a Commons debate to hold the Government to account on its failure on A&E. I have today challenged Jeremy Hunt to return half of last year's under-spend to shore up collapsing social care and I have also called on him to ensure adequate and safe staffing on the NHS Frontline. A survey last week showed one in four trusts are planning to cut more nurses' jobs this year, one in five cutting doctors. The NHS cannot take this onslaught and it cannot see A&Es closed across England when existing services are full to capacity.

It is Labour showing leadership that is needed on the NHS. As far as I can tell, the Coalition have made no plans to mark the 65th anniversary. We cannot let that happen so I can tell you today that, in the absence of any government plans, Labour is helping organise a celebration of our NHS with two special events in Liverpool and London in the first week of July. This is all part of building the campaign in defence of the NHS from the onslaught it is now facing. Nye Bevan famously said, "There will be an NHS for as long as there are folks left with the faith to fight for it." That fight is now and we need those folk of faith to rally to the cause. There could not be a more important cause to unite the labour movement, the best expression of our values, Britain's finest achievement but now on a fast track to fragmentation and privatisation. Make no mistake, Cameron's zero-hours NHS is coming to your

community. The NHS will not survive two terms of this prime minister and that is reason alone why we must win in 2015.

To do that I know that Labour needs to offer staff, your members, who are feeling battered, bruised, and demoralised by what is happening, some hope and, yes, there are people who frankly are cynical about all politicians. They will say, "Labour let the market in too far," and they are right. That is why I will mark the 65th anniversary of the NHS renewing a commitment to an NHS based on integration over fragmentation, collaboration over competition, and people before profits. (*Applause*)

It is simple, marketisation is the wrong answer to the challenges of 21st century care. All the evidence from around the world says market-based health and care systems cost more, not less, than planned systems like the NHS. How then can they be the answer when managing rising demand and the cost of ageing are this century's biggest challenge? But, more importantly, marketisation will not deliver what people, what families are looking for. Markets deliver fragmentation, families are looking for integration, and that is what the future demands.

Let me give you a clear guarantee to pass on to your members. Labour will repeal the Health and Social Care Act 2012. We will stop the sell-off. We will restore the "N" in NHS. (*Applause*) By the way, while I am talking about the Health and Social Care Act, and with all of this focus today on the House of Lords, do you not think serious questions should now be asked about the business links of those lords who voted through the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and the section 75 regulations? (*Applause*) I can assure you I will be asking those questions.

But Labour, of course, needs to do more than all of this than just oppose, we need to offer a Labour alternative for health and care. In 1948, the year the NHS was created, the World Health Organisation defined health as follows: "A complete state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." For all that the NHS was a huge step towards that vision, it only went two-thirds of the way and that failure to include social care in the NHS is becoming a bigger and bigger problem as we all live longer, when our needs become a blur of the physical, the mental, and the social. "One nation" Labour should renew Bevan's vision for the 21st century by fully integrating health and social care, a national health and care service, one service looking after the whole person. Imagine what a step forward that would be, one point of contact to coordinate all of your Mum or Dad's needs, no longer being passed from pillar to post, the frustration of repeating the same story to every professional who comes through the door. Imagine if Mum or Dad had to go into hospital that known care staff could go with them onto the ward providing help with eating, drinking, washing. These are the things that become possible when you think of a fully integrated system providing whole person care. Imagine a care system with a fully integrated workforce which did not offer low-paid dead-end jobs to young people but offered a pathway for young care assistants through to clinical grades. Looking after someone else's parents is the highest calling that anyone could do. Is it not about time that society recognised it as such?

My mission is to give you an NHS and care policy that your members will not just want to vote for but they will want to go out and campaign for and a whole person approach can move mental health from the fringes to the centre of our health service. The insecurity of 21st century living means mental health and wellbeing must now be a much bigger priority. Constituents of mine have seen their fulltime jobs become two 23-hour part-time contracts or, worse, a zero-hours contract. They are living with the uncertainty of not knowing what their wages will be from one week to the next. What does that do for people's mental health? Can we find policies to give ordinary families support and security as well as a fairer social care system where Labour helps ordinary families protect what they have worked hard for, their savings, their homes, and their pensions.

That is where Labour wins, when our policies speak not just to people's sense of fairness, but to their sense of aspiration too. Tony Blair taught us that, and we must not forget it. But he recently said that Labour must be "dispassionate". I disagree. We must now move beyond the technocratic managerial

approach to politics. We need to show people we believe in things, that we are passionate about what we do, that we are proud of who we are and where we come from. So, let's now have some fire in our bellies, let's put some hope in Labour hearts, let's have union members voting for us not through gritted teeth but with a genuine sense of pride, let's have the audacity to think big, to be as bold in this century as Bevan was in the last, with the most ambitious Labour manifesto since 1945, and let's find what people might in future call the spirit of 2015 winning back trust in politics and giving your members a Labour government they can believe in. Thank you very much for listening, Congress. (*Applause*)

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy, very much indeed. Congress, we now move into question and answer time. There will be a slight change to the question and answer session. When I call you to speak, please make your way to the lectern and speak from the floor level. We have dropped this (the microphone) down and it will be turned around. Keep to your questions and do not make speeches or statements, and then we can get in as many questions as possible.

I will now take Andy to the settee and give him some supper! Oh, dear, whose lap am I going to sit on? (*Laughter*) Andy, these are members of the NHS and they care very deeply about it. They cannot be in their uniform because they will be disciplined. What a load of nonsense but there we are they are the rules. Can I ask you all to introduce yourselves?

BRO. D. HENRY (North West & Irish Region): I am Dougie Henry, I am the president of the North West of England and Irish Region. I have been 37 years in the Health Service.

BRO. B. DAVIES: (North West & Irish Region) I am Brian Davies, an ex Remploy worker of 33 years.

BRO. M. AKBAR (London): I am Mo Akbar, from the London Ambulance Service. I have been in the ambulance service for about 22 years now.

BRO. T. HACKETT (Birmingham & West Midlands): I am Tony Hackett from Birmingham and West Midlands and have worked in the Health Service 29 years.

SIS. J. WEEKS: (Wales & South West) I am Jenny Weeks and have worked for the NHS for 26 years.

BRO. C. PUCKETT: (Wales & South West) I am Colin Puckett from North Bristol NHS Trust and have worked for them for 10 years.

ANDY BURNHAM: I am trying to add up all these years as we are going along. It is a lot of years.

SIS. C. SIBLEY (Wales and South West)): I am Charlene Sibley, Wales and South West Region, and have been working within the NHS Service for nine years.

BRO. N. HOLMAN (Wales and South West): I am Nathan Holman, Paramedic. I work for the Welsh Ambulance Service. I have been in the Welsh Ambulance Service for 18 years.

BRO. M. JACKSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am Martin Jackson, from Yorkshire Region. I work at Barnsley General Hospital. I have been a nurse there and I have worked there for 25 years.

ANDY BURNHAM: I am Andy Burnham and I was Health Secretary for 11 months but that does not really compare to this.

THE PRESIDENT: I am Mary Turner. I was an inpatient for two years. (*Applause*) Okay, right, can I ask Mo, would you like to ask the first question?

BRO. M. AKBAR (London): Andy, you have recognised that there is a crisis in the A&E and welcome the spotlight you have brought to this at work in the ambulance service. I am increasingly getting worried on the increasing use of the ambulance trust of private ambulances and the increased privatisation of the patient transport service. All this is adding to the crisis we currently have. What assurance can you give that this will be rectified when you are back in the office? (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Mo. I am going to take three questions at a time, Andy. The next one is from Charlene.

SIS. C. SIBLEY (Wales and South West): The profitable areas of the NHS are increasingly being offered out to private providers. This is leaving the NHS with loss-making services therefore making it impossible for NHS trusts to operate within their budget. Can you promise us today that you will reverse the commercialisation of the NHS? (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Question 3 is from Vaughan, from London Region.

BRO. V. West (London): Andy, how will the Labour Government address the issue of out-of-hours access to GP services?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan, very much indeed. Andy.

ANDY BURNHAM: Three easy questions to kick off, Mary, thank you. Mo, let me go straight to your question. I met colleagues from London Region in Parliament about two months ago, GMB at London Region, and they said to me, "Do you realise what's going on in terms of the speed with which private sector organisations are being brought in to deliver 999 without, as far as they could tell, proper safeguards around training, around equipment, huge amounts of questions. So we looked at it working with them, and I mentioned it in my speech.

Just so colleagues have an understanding of the scale of what we are talking about here, their spending on private ambulances in the London Ambulance Service has gone from £400,000 a year or so ago to £4m in the space of about a year. At the same time they have laid off, and you will correct me if I am wrong, Mo, won't you, around 400 paramedics, so that is what they are doing. This is the private sector replacing NHS staff. So not like it was in the past where sometimes at times of peak demand when there was pressure on holidays and rotas where they brought in on a spot basis supporting capacity, this is the replacement of 999 services by private organisations. If that does not bring home to people what is at stake then I don't know what will. One of you put it at the end of your speech, absolutely, this prime minister needs to be reminded that the British public have never given him their permission to put the NHS up for sale, and he needs to be reminded of that every day up until polling day.

Then Charlene asked me, what about you, what are you going to do about this? I understand it was said before that people come before and just give a lot of words and a lot of commitments, and then you think, "Well, do they ever get delivered?" The thing I want to point to is what I did as Health Secretary. I came in and changed the policy on contracting and the use of the private sector. I introduced the NHS preferred provider policy that we prioritised the public NHS. I want to say to you today that that policy, NHS preferred provider, is the bedrock of the policy that I outlined to Congress this afternoon. That will not change.

I am not against other organisations providing additional support to the NHS but I want to protect the public core of the NHS in every community. I said it in my speech and I will say it again, we let the market in too far. If you let the market in further and further, in the end you let the genie out of the bottle and you never have back what is precious about the NHS, what Danny Boyle was celebrating at the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, that idea of a part of our national life that still puts people before profit, and once that has gone we will never get it back.

NHS preferred provider, that is my policy and that is the starting point for all the things that I do now in renewing Labour's vision for the 21st century health and care, prioritising the public NHS.

Vaughan, your question about out-of-hours services, one of the things that makes me want to weep, to be honest, is the sheer kind of destruction of NHS Direct and NHS walk-in centres. These were things that we did early in our time in government to improve out-of-hours access to care. NHS Direct, actually, is like a microcosm of what they are doing to the NHS as a whole. It was a successful national service, nurse-led, provided by NHS staff. What have they done, they have broken it up, they have privatised parts of it in this fragmented 111 service, with untrained staff handling call staff. To be honest, not being unfair to them but they do not have that expertise and so they are saying to people, "Well, you better go to A&E," and that partly explains the pressure that A&E is under at the moment.

We did a huge amount to open up access to out-of-hours care. We encouraged GPs to open in the evenings and weekends; all of that is in reverse at the moment. I understand people's concerns about whether they can get GP appointments and the out-of-hours service provided by GPs, and we need to have a proper look at that as part of our policy review. We need to make the argument for what we did, NHS Direct, NHS walk-in centres, 41 NHS walk-in centres have been closed around the country and this is my worry about GP commissioning. I am not against the involvement of GPs in commissioning but I am against the domination of GP commissioning, or even the control of commissioning by GPs. What is good for GPs may not be good for the public and I am worried about the conflicts of interest that there may be now in these clinical commissioning groups.

That is why the Act has to go, the first thing that we will do, and what we want is better integrated services to take the pressure of A&E, and that is absolutely at the heart of our policy. NHS Direct, just look at it, it tells you in a kind of example what they have done to the rest of the NHS, a successful national service smashed it to bits, privatised, and now we are picking up the pieces.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. A question from Jerry Banks, Midland and East Coast Region?

ANDY BURNHAM: Is this part of the GMB Health Policy, you run to ask your question!

THE PRESIDENT: You should have brought that ambulance with you.

BRO. J. BANKS (Midland & East Coast): I work on the emergency ambulance preparation team within EMAS, which is East Midlands Ambulance Service. Given the current crisis within the A&E hospital departments, with ambulance services being penalised for poor performance, in our case £3.5m, the introduction of 111 has impacted the service increasing call volumes by 20-30% in a misdiagnosed need for A&E vehicles. Hospital A&E departments are so busy now crews are experiencing turnaround times of an hour-plus. What plans does the next Labour government have to reduce this farcical situation and increase funding to the ambulance service trust and will the next government remove or review the shambolic eight-minute target system?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much indeed, Jerry. Martin.

BRO. M. JACKSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Andy, we welcome the support you offered, and Ben Bradshaw, to challenge the South West pay cartel that threatened basically to break up the NHS. We know that that cartel threat has not gone away and we are aware of similar cartels have been established in the North West and in Yorkshire. What assurance can you give us in supporting the NHS National Agreement and retaining the National Agenda for Change Agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: And we have question 6 from Taranjit Chana, London Region.

SIS. T. CHANA (London): Andy, women are bearing the brunt of this Government's cuts, be it in health, A&E closing, maternity units closing, safety, closure of our local 24-hour police stations, welfare benefit cuts, and closure of Sure Start centres, which are a lifeline to many families. Now, the fundamental right of access to justice is being denied to a lot of women, low and middle income women fighting over child custody, divorce. There is no equality of arms for women when they have to defend such proceedings in court following the implementation of the LASPO Bill in April 2013. What will Labour do to ensure that access to justice is restored, this bill is repealed, and those who need it most are not denied the access?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Okay, that is three.

ANDY BURNHAM: Jerry, on your point about ambulances services being fined because they cannot hand over patients at A&E, it is ridiculous, isn't it, if one part of the system is going to start fighting another, hospitals fighting ambulance services. If we are going down that path, then I do not know what lies at the end of that when the NHS starts turning in on itself and fighting amongst itself. It cannot make any sense at all. That is the pressure that the system is under at the moment. Hospitals are running up towards 100% capacity. There is no give in the system. Hospitals across England are sailing dangerously close to the wind and that is why I have been saying for weeks, I have warning Jeremy Hunt for weeks, about the pressure in A&E. For 34 of the 38 weeks that he has been in his job major A&Es have missed the Government's lowered A&E target. I found out through an FOI last week that he did not even visit an A&E for seven months in his job. He went to his first A&E in March or April, well after the winter. It is unbelievable. His complacency is dangerous and that is why we have called the debate on Wednesday.

We held an A&E summit last week in Westminster as well and I think the GMB helped us to pull that together where we brought frontline professionals to Westminster so they could speak in their own words about the reality on the front line and have focus where it needs to be, on the causes of what is putting the pressure on A&E.

Jerry, you asked about money for ambulances services. I think, personally, the big priority is social care. I think that is the major driver of the pressure on hospitals. Why? For two reasons, actually: the first is older people are being left without the support they need at home as councils cope. Councils have been cut to the bone here. Older people are left without support. People are failing them. They are coming in through A&E. We heard at the summit that there are so many older people are coming in to A&E with dementia because of the lack of support in the community. That is completely wrong.

Secondly, and this is a really important point to get over, if social care is not there in the community, you cannot discharge people from the ward, you cannot put a discharge plan in place so the wards stay full, the beds are not becoming free, so A&E cannot admit to the ward because there are no beds available, so A&E becomes full, and then ambulance services cannot hand over at A&E because A&E is full. That is why A&E is the barometer of the whole health and care system. If there is a blockage anywhere in the system, it starts to back up through A&E. That is why A&E tells you if there is a serious problem in the system.

That is why I said in my speech we have asked Jeremy Hunt, basically, about handing back the NHS under-spend of £2bn to the Treasury last year making a mockery of these promises about real terms increases. They are an absolute fiction, take it from me. We said to him that he should get £1bn of that back to give emergency support to councils to provide integrated home-based care and support. That is, in my view, the best way to unlock the pressure in the end on A&E. If you have collapsing social care, in the end the problem ends up on the doorstep of the NHS.

Martin, in response to your question about pay, particularly regional pay, you mentioned the South West cartel because we did with union colleagues put up a pretty formidable front against that and hope we have seen it off for now, but you are probably right, it will come back in another form. I want to be absolutely clear with everybody about this, for me national pay is part of the glue of a national health

service. It makes no sense at all to go to a model where one area is trying to poach staff off another by trying to pay them more, or if there is a shortage in one area you destabilise staff in another. That is not a national health service.

Agenda for Change stays. I would like to see it extended to social care so, as I said, we can give young people coming into care from school the hope that they will go on and work through social care jobs into clinical grades, that the whole spectrum of care is a possibility. I would like to see it extended as we bring social care within the NHS. But absolutely a firm guarantee — Agenda for Change had a difficult birth, I am sure many people may remember it, but I am proud of it, it was one of the best achievements in terms of our health policy in the last government, we need to build upon it, we need to improve it, but absolutely make no mistake national pay, again like NHS preferred provider, is a cornerstone of the new policy that I am building.

Taranjit, I am not an expert on justice policy, I am afraid, but I will absolutely take back your points to the shadow justice team about the LASPO Bill, isn't it? I have to say the principle of access to justice, absolutely, and I think the broader point is the one I am going to pick up that you mentioned. What you described was the combination of cuts as they are now affecting the most vulnerable people. Some people in constituencies like mine are facing the cumulative pressure of all of these different cuts. It is the benefits tax, it is Universal Credit, it is DLA, it is the reduction of Legal Aid, it is increasing care charges, a whole range of things, and they are affecting some people disproportionately and those people are at real, real risk. I am really worried about what is happening to some people who are receiving these threatening letters from ATOS or other parts of the benefit system, particularly people on the autistic spectrum, or with mental health problems. This really can push them over the edge, it can frighten them. I am really worried at the moment about how this accumulation of cuts is really hurting the most vulnerable people. If Labour is not a voice for the voiceless and the vulnerable, then I do not know what we are. We have to stand up and speak up for them. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Nathan Holman.

BRO. N. HOLMAN (Wales and South West): Andy, should the NHS and social care services, and their budgets, be merged to provide a seamless service between acute care and community-based care?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Nathan. Bill Heley, Midland and East Coast Region.

BRO. B. HELEY (Midland & East Coast): Andy, what are you planning to do about the chronic state of social care, in particular, the vast under-funding in elderly care which is leading to understaffing in care homes, which not only puts the staff at risk but is putting the residents under serious risk. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Alma Stewart, Northern Region.

SIS. A. STEWART (Northern): How would Labour respond to companies who have won PFI contracts, many awarded under the last government, and who operate in a captive market with guaranteed rates of return but who blacklist workers and perhaps put their profits offshore?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alma.

ANDY BURNHAM: Shall I take those three, Mary?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

ANDY BURNHAM: Nathan, the idea of full integration is the policy that I am putting forward at the start of Labour's policy review. If you look back, if you had a 1948 moment again, I do not think we would exclude social care from the NHS settlement, knowing what we know now about ageing and the

effects of ageing. The way I would describe it is that when you hear these recurrent stories of older people let down by the system, not supported properly at home or going into the acute ward and becoming lost in the hospital, disorientated, dehydrated, you have to ask yourself why are these things happening, why is this the story that keeps coming out and out and out about older people not being properly looked after.

The way I would describe it to you is that at the moment we have a health and care system in England and wherever people are within it, it is looking after some of their needs but not all of their needs. Take a very elderly person in their 80s or their early 90s, if they go into hospital they may be having their physical needs looked after but there is a chance that their social and mental needs are being neglected. That explains why older people can often drop like a stone in the acute hospital environment and be on a downward spiral towards institutional care of one kind or another.

That is basically the argument I am making. It is time to unite that trio, physical, mental, and social, one service, one budget, where you can decisively tilt the system towards prevention in the home. We have always said it, why isn't the NHS more of a health promotion service, or a prevention service? It is too much of a sickness service or a treatment service. I think the reason is because the social side of care was excluded. Social care is the preventative part of care, help with daily living, help with washing, help with dressing, and help with feeding. That is the bit that can keep people out of hospital but because it was not in the NHS settlement, the NHS kind of feels that the home is the council's job, the council does the home, we will pick up the pieces when things go wrong. It is kind of in the DNA of the NHS to be a treatment service rather than a prevention service.

My argument is that in the 21st century we have to turn that on its head. Actually, we will do better for people if we had integrated home base support that stopped them going into hospital in the first place. To be honest, we would make more of the budget because hospitals, if you ask any hospital chief executive, are becoming increasingly full of older people. It is the last resort because other services are not there for them they gravitate towards the hospital. That is not good enough. That really is not good enough. We need to do better and that is why we are putting forward this idea of whole person care, physical, mental, and social, one system, one budget, where we can extend the Bevan vision for the 21st century. I think if we explain it to the public they will know what we mean. What can it mean, one point of contact for the coordination of all of Mum or Dad's needs and social care support on the wards, all of these things I think are what people are looking for. I think it is a policy that can have real resonance come the next election.

Bill, you are touching on similar ground. I said in my speech that we just will never get the quality we are looking for from a system that is malnourished and pays the minimum wage. We will not get what we want for our parents in that system. I do not believe that we will. The reason I have been on this mission about social care is because I saw my own grandmother, proud, working class Scouser that she was, first one in her family to own her own terraced home. I saw her go on a journey through the English care system and it was utterly soul-destroying. I saw her lose everything that she had and it broke her heart, I can tell you, because she wanted to try and pass something on to us. We kept saying to her, "Gran, we don't need it. We'll be okay. We've been to university, we'll have jobs." It was like her mission to try and pass something on to us. She could not do it. She ended up in a care home where one day when I went in her knuckle was red-raw because her engagement ring had been ripped off her finger. My Mum turned to me that day and said, "If you ever get into politics", and I was not an MP at the time, she said, "If you ever get into politics you're going to have to do something about this."

Obviously, I do not ever forget something like that. I am not blaming the staff, I just think they are working, as I say, in a malnourished system that is not geared up to provide the care that we need. It will only get worse as we all get older. If we do nothing, if we leave the status quo in place, we will just see more neglect, which I think your question hints at, Bill, more neglect of older people, more older people in hospital, back to Nathan's point, and more people just losing everything that they have worked for.

That is the same issue that was in place pre-NHS, wasn't it, that if you are unlucky you have to find the costs of care from your own family budget. It is the same issue with social care. It is the 21st century equivalent of the issue Bevan solved, that you do not have to pay for the doctor. Now in the 21st century you have to lose everything to pay for your care. If we cannot change that, then nobody will.

That is why we have to have this courage, have this vision for an NHS that is expanding in the 21st century, that offers everybody peace of mind. If we do not do anything, remember when they created the welfare state, Bevan and Beveridge, they identified the five social giants, the five ills, if we do nothing, if we leave the current system in place, you will soon be able to add a sixth giant to the 21st century, fear of old age. That is where it will go. People will increasingly fear a longer life, being isolated at home, neglected in an institution, losing everything they have worked for. Surely we can do something about that and that is what I am on a mission to do.

THE PRESIDENT: We have very little time because I know you have somewhere else —

ANDY BURNHAM: Sorry, I went off on one there.

THE PRESIDENT: — but you have Alma's question, and then I just have two questions. Could you make yours very quick, Dougie, please, and Dean Gilligan?

ANDY BURNHAM: Shall I answer Alma's question first?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, if you answer Alma's first and then the others.

ANDY BURNHAM: I do not want you to think I was doing a long answer to avoid Alma's question, difficult as it is. PFI, Alma, firstly, the point on blacklisted workers, absolutely. Public sector contracts should not be given to companies that do that, as far as I can see. (*Applause*) As Chuka Umunna is saying, they should have requirements around apprenticeships. Anyway, that is a different point. PFI, generally, there are lessons to be learnt here, absolutely. Just for a minute remember what we inherited. In 1997, the NHS was falling to bits, it was crumbling. We had wards with water coming through the roofs, 50% of the buildings of the NHS in 1997 predated the NHS itself and we had to find a way quickly of restoring the fabric of the NHS, and PFI was the vehicle to do that. There is no getting away from it, some of the early PFI deals were poor value for money. We have, as I say, to learn lessons from that. I just want you to understand why it was done. We had simultaneously to rebuild hospitals around the country. We had to give places that were waiting for a new hospital, we had to get it done, build those modern facilities for patients and staff. Although some of these contracts are too expensive, there is a value in patients being treated in modern facilities and staff working there too. But let me just say to you, I do not have all the answers on that today; we do have to reflect on it and learn the lessons.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. We have a question from Dean Gilligan, London Region.

BRO. D. GILLIGAN (London): Hello, Andy. Would you call for more transparency of those MPs who have vested interest in the NHS reforms? My last count was 59 Tories and four LibDems. And on another side note will you now Tweet *Join the GMB* as Owen Jones said earlier. (*Laughter*)

THE PRESIDENT: He did. Thank you. Will you now Tweet *Join the GMB* as Owen Jones did a minute ago. He did it while he was here. Dougie.

BRO. D. HENRY (North West & Irish): Listening to you, Andy, this afternoon I am absolutely thrilled to hear what you have been saying but the first thing I would like to say is thank you on behalf of the people of Liverpool and Merseyside for what you did for Margaret Aspinall and what they covered up at Hillsborough. (*Applause*) We will never forget that. We will never forget that. The other thing is the practical experience that some of my colleagues have expressed. You know what happened a fortnight

ago in Liverpool, it was the Battle of the Atlantic celebrations and a certain gentleman called Mr. Churchill said, if we did not win, right, we would have lost the war, so you would not have been here, you would all have been burnt to death, and there would be no trade unions. But the classic example was they were all veterans and their families and they were all old gentlemen and old ladies, and we had to close the A&E and we had to turn seven ambulances away from the Royal Liverpool to Whiston Hospital and Alder Hey. All my colleagues are saying the same thing, your best weapon to get back into power is get the NHS back. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dougie. One quick one because he has to go.

BRO. B. DAVIES (North West & Irish): After this Government has ripped the heart out of disabled people and Remploy, most of these people now, a lot of them, over 100 people just in our region alone, have ended up in hospital because they basically have nothing to do. The wheelchairs for the NHS, we made them; special shoes that people wear after they have been hurt, Remploy made them. It is going out now to private industry. What have we got for our disabled workers out there?

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. These are the last three, Andy.

ANDY BURNHAM: Thanks for your questions. I am sorry, I did not catch your name. Brian. Sorry.

Dean, on your question, absolutely, I made a point of saying that in my speech today. Serious questions have to be asked about the links between some people in Parliament and private health, particularly in the House of Lords. (*Applause*) The question is, would the bill have got through without them? I am told people came back to vote in the Lords to get the bill through and then get these section 75 regulations through who had not been sent here for years. This has to be asked and I can assure you it will be asked, it will be asked, and we will be raising it in the Commons on Wednesday.

More broadly on transparency, Dean, another question about this, we have tried under any qualified provider, the new privatisation of community services, to find out details on the companies who are winning these contracts and we are told that it is commercially confidential. Talking of transparency, how can that be right if they are bringing in all of these private providers that they are then out of view of what is going on? After the Francis Report on mid-Staffordshire, how can it possibly be right that some areas of the NHS are under a cloak of commercial confidentiality. It cannot be right. So, another campaign we have to run and I hope you will join us in it, to ensure that freedom of information applies fully to all providers of NHS contracts. I think there is absolutely no ifs or buts about that. (*Applause*)

Lastly, where is the consultation here? In Greater Manchester, back on to ambulance services, patient transport services have been handed over to a bus company. If that does not kind of tell you anything about where the NHS is heading under Cameron, nobody consulted my constituents about whether or not they wanted that. This is what has to change and these are the campaigns we have to fight.

Doug is absolutely right, thank you so much by the way, Doug, for what you said, but it was those amazing ladies over there that did it, not me. I might just say we did not do enough for them when we were in government but in the end we belatedly put that right. The campaign the families have run is unbelievable. It will never be forgotten. What they have done is something that will go down in history.

We do need to make the NHS the top issue, if nothing else for the betrayal of the country. As I said, who gave this prime minister the right to put people's services up for sale? He did not ask for the permission before the last election. He said there would be no top down reorganisation. He said there would be real terms increases for the NHS. He said there would be a moratorium on hospital closures. It is unbelievable what has happened within days of getting into Downing Street they bring forward the biggest ever top down reorganisation. The scale of the insult to the public is unbelievable and you are absolutely right, we have to make the NHS a top order issue at the next general election, and we will.

I might just say to everybody here, this is why we have to work, we have to remind the country what strength there is in this labour movement of ours when we fight as one, party and unions together. Let's start doing that again. There is strength in this Movement. I am going to need all of you as people to help me get the message out at the next election. It is hard enough as the opposition to get on the BBC to talk about the NHS and what is happening to it as it is, so we are going to have to do it through other ways, aren't we? We are going to have to use the strength that we have in the labour movement to get the message out, to tell people about what we are doing to stop the destruction, to put forward the positive vision that Nathan alluded to before, to explain the policy. I want a million advocates for our health and care policy come the next election out on those doorsteps making the case for it.

I will finish, Mary, on Brian's question. It is disgraceful what has happened to the Remploy workers, the way they have been treated but more generally the attack on disabled people. It is sickening at times. The stories you hear in the surgery are just depressing. As you say, it is a false economy, isn't it? If you take hope away from people, they end up having to use services in other ways and that is why I say this Coalition is a failed government already. We have now to show that we have the answers. We did not get everything right. I am sure there will be issues that you would say to me, "You didn't get everything right either." Fair enough, and I would completely agree —

BRO. B. DAVIES: Give us a chance.

THE PRESIDENT: All right, Brian.

ANDY BURNHAM: — we want to do that again. We want now to work with you to expose what they have done but, as I say, give people who have been battered by this Government a bit of hope.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy, very much indeed and can I thank all our workers and members up here who provide the most valuable asset that we have, our health service. Thank you. (*Applause*) I need you up here now. You have had your time on the settee. It's over! Can I thank you for coming and giving up your time today to speak on something we care very deeply about. Could I ask you to accept from the GMB our History and have a good read. There are some funny ones in there, especially from Paul Kenny. And of course, this is what we want, a revolution! Read it carefully and get some notes from it. Thank you. And GMB whisky!

Presentation amid applause.

ANDY BURNHAM: Thank you very much, Mary. The perfect present for the Shadow Health Secretary! (*Applause*) Cheers. Thank you, Mary.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now go back to the programme and start off with the Standing Orders Committee Report No.4. I call on Helen Johnson to move Standing Orders Committee Report No.4. Helen.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO.4

(Adopted)

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee) moved SOC Report No.4. She said: Emergency Motions — the SOC has accepted a further emergency motion as being in order for debate. This is Emergency Motion 3, entitled, SITRAP, COSTA RICA, standing in the name of Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region. The SOC recommends that this be heard on Tuesday afternoon. President, Congress, I move SOC Report No.4.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. All agreed? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

Standing Orders Committee Report No.4 was ADOPTED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move into the Industrial and Economic Policy, composite 11, Northern Region to move, Yorkshire to second; then on to 191, London Region, 193, Wales and South West, 195, Midland, 196, Birmingham, and 197, Midland, if the movers could come to the front, please, and the first one is composite 11, Northern Region.

INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY: PUBLIC SERVICES

NHS

COMPOSITE 11

C11. Covering Motions:

- 190. NHS (*Northern Region*)
- 192. NHS (*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*)

NHS

This Congress deplores the coalition Government's attack on the National Health Service by the biggest shake up in the history of the NHS.

Public money is being used not for patient care but political dogma.

The Government's policy will not address the postcode lottery and make it more difficult for the elderly and vulnerable to get medical help.

Congress calls on the Government to think again on its proposals and let medical staff get on with doing a tough job in difficult circumstances, free of political interference.

This Congress calls upon MP's from all parties to work together to ensure that NHS facilities and providers within their constituency remain within the NHS and a public service.

Northern Region to Move

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Second

(Carried)

BRO. A. WINTER (Northern): Congress, the Government's attack on the NHS and the new NHS Act is a privatisation. The Tories have always opposed the National Health Service as part of their way of life. They voted against the formation of the National Health Service, indeed it was Thatcher, then Major, who introduced the internal market into the NHS. An example was the GP fund-holding system, which is back again in the new legislation. Previous governments brought about creeping privatisation led by former secretaries of state for health who are now quite well off as a result of directorships in companies operating within the NHS. That is the kind of hypocrisy of biting the hand that feeds and it has happened with politicians of all parties, let's be honest about it.

This ConDem Government is hell-bent on privatising the NHS just like their views on the rest of the public sector. They hide their views behind cutting the deficit. The Coalition Government is putting price and profit before medical staff. The claims about increasing efficiency are bogus. It is a fact that the overheads are greater in countries with privatised and social market health systems than the NHS. We know that some GPs and big companies are rubbing their hands at getting more income off the public purse by providing services in the NHS. A whole new raft of delivery mechanisms we know is being developed each one with its own system of support. The changes being brought are not going to improve efficiency. What this legislation is delivering is an attempt to move away from national pay bargaining to local determination and an erosion of terms and conditions; indeed, it is already happening.

Congress, what we need and the country needs are for these things to be scrapped. We also need the Labour Party to commit to repeal changes when a future Labour government comes into power. The

NHS is still the best way of delivering health services free to all. Medical staff are against the new system yet the Tories and the LibDems in government have gone ahead regardless. These changes need to be reversed and workers allowed to get on with their job without politicians who do not have a clue. We need to keep the jewel in this country's crown. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tony. Secunder?

SIS. A. BURTON-KEEBLE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Here is an example of what privatisation of the NHS can and will mean. NHS Direct had an impressive track record by triaging patients they reduced the amount of A&E referrals by 24%. It became an integral part of the NHS. Then the Tories stuck their oar in and NHS 111 was born. NHS 111 is run privately, mainly by Harmony, who were recently bought out by Care UK. Care UK gets 96% of its income from NHS contracts. Their CEO, John Nash, donated £21,000 to Andrew Lansley's personal office. They were rewarded with a £53m contract to run healthcare in the prisons of the North East. Since the introduction of NHS 111, referrals to A&E have increased by 50%, which equates to around 437,000 extra referrals. A&E departments are struggling to treat a higher number of patients with less resources. This is resulting in longer waiting times. Did you know hospitals are fined for not meeting A&E targets, the target being dealing with 95% of A&E patients within four hours. Funny that. Anyone would think that the Government actually wanted the NHS to fail or is that just me being paranoid? If there was ever a time to stand together this is it. We need MPS from all parties to work together to ensure that NHS facilities and providers within their constituencies remain a public service and within the NHS. Please support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alex. Mover of 191?

NHS TAX FREE PROPOSALS MOTION 191

191. NHS TAX FREE PROPOSALS

Congress finds it incredulous that consideration is being sought for, and/or considered with a view to giving Private Health Care Providers for profit both British and foreign Tax Free status.

The current decimation of our National Health Service enacted by Andrew Lansley continued by Jeremy Hunt is in itself criminal and gives the lie to Cameron's claims to cut costs not the NHS.

That they should now be even considering giving the vultures and venture capitalists a tax free entry to our most hallowed institution reeks of treachery and must be opposed.

WHITTINGTON SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. V. WEST (London): Just before I start speaking about the motion can I just link this afternoon's debate so far with this morning. I think this afternoon demonstrated the strength of the Labour movement and why we need a Labour government in power. Unless we get a Labour government in power we know where the NHS is going, it is going into the hands of private contractors and not to the benefit of patient care. I think that demonstrates the links between us and the Party, and the need. I was very heartened by what Andy said to us earlier on this afternoon.

Moving on to motion 191, we have already seen the scandal of multinational companies, such as Amazon, Starbucks, Google, and others, avoiding tax but what we are now seeing is also private health companies lobbying for tax breaks on the spurious ground that they are not competing with the NHS on a level playing field. I have a message for those private health companies, if you make a profit on people's health, then you pay your taxes. I do not want a level playing field between BUPA and the NHS. I want

an NHS that continues to provide for everybody's healthcare from cradle to grave. I want a tax regime that supports the NHS, not tax breaks for the private sector. The NHS remains the Labour Party's greatest achievement. Our task is to defend it against creeping privatisation. Our task is to keep it the jewel in this country's crown. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Secunder?

BRO. G. SHARKEY (London): Congress, over the past few weeks I have been on a number of demonstrations in defence of the NHS and local hospitals up and down the country. The GMB, along with other unions, and the local communities, have seen demonstrations and organisations springing up to defend our local health services, but at the same time the Tories are attacking the NHS their friends in the private health companies are lobbying for tax breaks, tax breaks that will allow them to continue to get a foothold in the NHS, tax breaks that will continue the process of creeping privatisation. Our NHS is not going to become a tax loophole, our NHS should not be a means of tax avoidance for private companies, our NHS is not for sale. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, George. Motion 193.

SOUTH WEST NHS PAY CARTEL MOTION 193

193. SOUTH WEST NHS PAY CARTEL

This Congress supports action to stop the break-up of the NHS National Terms and Conditions and its preparations for handing over services to private providers.

19 NHS employers in the South West of England have banded together to form an employers group that intends to break away from National pay bargaining. Under the guise of the economic challenge they are looking at ways of drastically cutting pay for local NHS staff by up to 20% in numerous hospitals. This will lead to different rates of pay for NHS staff employed within the same cities dependent upon the decisions of each individual Trust. It will also prepare many of the profitable services for selling off to the private sector.

The effect upon local health communities will be devastating as staff move to areas that are receiving higher pay rates, causing staff shortages in the South West. There can be little doubt that this will seriously undermine the ability of the NHS in the South West to provide the level and quality of care needed. Already we are aware that hospitals in the area are recruiting from abroad as they are unable to attract staff to the area. Housing costs etc. are high in the area. The population within the South West is older than in many areas as it is a prime retirement area. This is leading to increased pressure on NHS and Social Services.

Local economies are already struggling with massive drops in incomes as pensions and benefits are pegged below inflation. All Public Sector workers have seen long term pay freezes and thousands of job losses. Within the South West public sector employment is higher than most other areas within the country and the cuts have already disproportionately affected the area. The local economies are very dependent upon tourism that has suffered significant downturns as people's incomes become squeezed. To cut the pay of NHS workers even further will lead to increased financial pressures on local businesses and further job losses in the private sector.

We call upon Congress through the CEC

- To put national pressure on the cartel members to call for funding increases not staff pay cuts.
- To continue the lobbying of MPs for the area and generate a national campaign against the proposal for local pay and ensure that national agreements are upheld.
- Through its GMB sponsored MPs the Labour Party should commit to a policy of maintaining national negotiations for NHS staff terms and conditions and disbanding the cartel.

NORTH BRISTOL NHS BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. C. PUCKETT (Wales and South West): I am one of the lucky public servants, I work for the NHS, the very area that this Coalition has promised will not be subject to the savage cuts experienced by all other public services. Our budget is ring-fenced. There will be no cuts to the NHS. I know it is true, Dave and Nick told me. What a surprise, then, that my trust has been informed it will have to save at least £92m in three years. We spent the last 10 years cutting all services back, even during the years of Labour investment. Here in the South West our managers hatched an ingenious plan, they joined a pay club and it was rather exclusive because they charge £10,000 a year for membership. All the HR and Finance Directors joined, along with the Chief Execs. Through innovative thinking they have decided the best option is to cut the pay of nurses, porters, and cleaners. Luckily, they thought it out and at least one director of facilities had taken £25,000 in pay rises in the four years before; his cleaners had received £1,000. His pay rises were worth the pay of two cleaners. The HR and Finance Directors had also had the foresight to do much the same; no pay cuts proposed for them and of course all the plans were hatched in secret. We found out.

Nineteen NHS employers in the South West of England banded together to form an employers group that intended to break away from national pay bargaining. Under the guise of the economic challenge they are looking at ways of drastically cutting pay for local NHS staff by up to 20% in numerous hospitals. This would lead to different rates of pay for NHS staff employed within the same cities, dependent upon the decisions of each individual trust. They will also prepare many of the profitable services for selling off to the private sector. The effect upon local health communities will be devastating, staff will move to areas that are receiving higher pay rates causing staff shortages in the South West. There can be little doubt that this will seriously undermine the ability of the NHS in the South West to provide the level and quality of care needed. Already we are aware that hospitals in the area are recruiting from abroad as they are unable to attract staff to the area. Housing costs, etc., are high.

The population within the South West is older than in many areas as it is a primary retirement area. This is leading to increased pressure on the NHS and social services. Local economies are already struggling with massive drops in income as pensions and benefits are pegged to low inflation, all public sector workers have seen long-term pay freezes and thousands of job losses. Within the South West public sector employment is higher than most areas within the country and the cuts have disproportionately affected it. The local economies are very dependent upon tourism and have suffered significant downturns as people's income become squeezed. To cut the pay of NHS workers even further will lead to increased financial pressure on local businesses and further job losses in the private sector.

We call upon Congress through the CEC to put national pressure on any pay club members to call for funding increases, not staff pay cuts, to continue the lobbying of MPs for the area and generate a national campaign against the proposal for local pay and ensure that national agreements are upheld. Through its GMB sponsored members the Labour Party should commit to a policy of maintaining national negotiations for NHS staff terms and conditions, and disbanding any local pay cartels that form. We ask Congress to support action to stop the breakup of the NHS national terms and conditions and its preparation for handing over cherry-picked services to private providers. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

SIS. C. SIBLEY (Wales and South West): Since this motion was submitted much has happened to our national terms and conditions in the NHS. The South West pay cartel has more than done its job with the NHS staff council introducing a new annex into the NHS pay terms and conditions handbook, also known as A4C. This annex only affects NHS England at the moment but Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, beware, as I believe it will be your turn next. This cartel has put pressure on all NHS trade unions to accept reduced terms and conditions and ultimately they have been given the green light for further changes in coming years. The GMB have stood firm and continually opposed all these proposals whilst others face to rise to the occasion. The cartel may now have disbanded in the South West but already we are hearing of similar cartels being set up across the length and breadth of England, all have similar

purpose and all want to break national terms and conditions, all would like regional pay agreements, and with the foundation trust network also preparing negotiations with the employers as opposed to using the NHS staff council group, we are in for a torrid time in the future.

We must act now to put pressure on these cartels and their member trust to change their ways. We must influence them that instead of cutting pay and staff numbers they should be investing money to improve conditions for staff which would in turn improve services for patients who they are meant to support. MPs should be lobbied, forced to fight for a better NHS, and not sit back and watch while it declines. They should be supporting the very people that voted for them and not turn their back on them in their hour of need. Let there be no doubt about it, the South West were targeted by this cartel encouraged by the low level of trade union membership in the region. The ConDem Government said that it did not support what the cartel was doing but still did nothing to stop or even discourage it. Our campaign in the South West may not have prevented the cartel from conspiring to take away national terms and conditions but it did put up a fight they did not expect, which ultimately did lessen the cartel's impact. We must continue to fight what remains of this cartel and we must also take on the newcomers whoever and wherever they are. Congress, I second this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Charlene. The mover of 195?

AMBULANCES TO BE EXEMPT FROM ALL UK LOCAL BYLAWS PREVENTING THEM FROM USING BUS LANES
MOTION 195

195. AMBULANCES TO BE EXEMPT FROM ALL UK LOCAL BY-LAWS PREVENTING THEM FROM USING BUS LANES

This Congress instructs the GMB National Office to lobby parliament for ambulances, whether on an emergency call or not, to be exempt from all UK local by-laws that prevents them from using bus lanes.

GMB EMAS BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. BANKS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, let me paint you a little picture. It is 18:30 hours at the Leicester Royal Infirmary in the heart of Leicester City Centre. An A&E ambulance crew based at Lutterworth, some 20 miles away in the south of the county, has just been given permission to return to base as their shift of 12 hours has finished. Ten minutes after being told to head back they encountered the rush hour traffic. It is now five past seven, 25 minutes later. Back at Lutterworth the oncoming night shift crew, who started at 6 o'clock in the evening, are sitting waiting for the vehicle to return so they can start responding to save lives. As the stranded crew stuck in traffic sit there, they are aware to their left is a perfectly good section of road that they cannot use. Why can't they use it, because it is marked up and signposted as a bus lane. So, as they crawl out of the city and the night crew sit unable to do anything due to the lack of a vehicle, people seriously ill must suffer and get worse across the county all because of the restriction placed on that crew by a local traffic order. A traffic order is a legal document produced and held by a council that specifies the exact location and times of operation for parking, loading, bus lane, or other restrictions set out in it, the Local Authorities Traffic Order Procedure (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

What we at GMB at EMAS branch would like is for Congress to back our motion in getting our national officer to lobby parliament and have these restrictions on the use of bus lanes by ambulance service vehicles, be they on emergency or not, removed at a national level. This exemption would not only assist the crews in finishing closer to their shift cessation times, a welcome move towards the health and wellbeing of those members, but it will also increase the availability of emergency service vehicles to the general public that require their assistance. It is with this in mind that we seek the Congress backing of

this motion and keep the ambulance services of the UK moving. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jerry. Secunder?

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, and visitors, independent ambulances undertake an estimated 50% of all patient hospital journeys on behalf of NHS primary care trusts yet regulated ambulances, whether NHS or independent, are not permitted to use the bus lanes unless they are on a blue light emergency. This means if someone is ill enough to require an ambulance but not ill enough to require the blue lights, the ambulance must wait in traffic like the rest of the driving public. At a time when all businesses are feeling the economic pressures doesn't it make sense to allow access to bus lanes in order to speed up ambulance journey times? Just the saving on fuel should be enough for the council to realise the benefits, an upward spiralling expense the NHS can ill afford. Some councils take a commonsense approach by either deciding against prosecution or cancelling fines on appeal but, as you can imagine, this creates a lot of confusion and red tape which would be removed if this policy is changed.

This change would have a beneficial impact for many of the millions of patients serviced by our ambulances. With the NHS under financial strain, commissioners are constantly looking for better value for money and higher efficiency targets and this change will deliver on both counts. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Shane. The mover of 196?

SOCIAL MOTION 196

196. SOCIAL

This Congress does not agree with the recent closures of Mental Health facilities in the NHS and the transfer of patients to the Private Sector.

We urge the CEC to lobby Government to curb this trend for the benefit of our members and their families under such care.

R35 ROCESTER JCB GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. C. BURTON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I am speaking on behalf of Motion 196. In popular imagination the closure of the old Victorian mental institutions was considered a manifestation of Thatcher's cruelty, a travesty of care in the community, which has not really worked and has led to the ejection of thousands, some of whom have been dangerously mentally-ill, of patients on to our streets. Enoch Powell, the then Health Minister, described them as follows: "There they stand, isolated, majestic, imperious, brooded over by the gigantic water-tower and chimney combined, rising unmistakable and daunting out of the countryside – the asylums which our forefathers built with such immense solidity to express the notions of their day."

The Dickensian behemoths were terrifying to look at and to visit, let alone to be a patient in, so I, for one, didn't cry when they closed. Descriptions of insanity were just as disgraceful as asylums themselves. However, there has to be a place for mentally-ill patients. As a caring society, there should be availability of NHS facilities to cope. There should always be enough beds for the acute mentally ill patients who require or need treatment. Why should these be a movement to transfer a whole raft of patients either into private care homes or into the private sector. What we should aim for is more attention to detail as in the Mental Health Collaborative Toolkit, which has delivered a wealth of improvements. Even the Con-Dem Government set out their own. Why are the facilities being closed in the first place. Local commissioners decide what services are being provided and are then suitable for the patients' needs.

In North Staffs NHS cuts have slashed services to mental health services and offered transfers to private institutions. If this is the way forward, then it is systemic of the National Health Service which is totally focused on dismantling every facet of what we hold proud in the NHS. I have witnessed first hand patients thrown on to the streets in all weathers, heading for either the off-licence or the first open hostel. This is not the excellent service provided by some responsible care facilities, but we have all heard horror stories of unscrupulous facilities. Admittedly, caring for mentally ill patients cannot be easy, which is why specialist professionals should be entrusted with extremely vulnerable human beings, our families and our friends. Just because they are different, they should be treated with respect. So let us campaign to improve the standard of care for mental health patients in NHS facilities. Please don't allow them to be cattle herded into the best price-negotiated home. Let's treat them with dignity and offer them the best possible, not the cheapest, care home. Admittedly, some of these facilities are the best but, sadly, at the worst, they hanker back to the asylums that we are glad to see the back of. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Seconder? Formally. *(Formally seconded)*

RACIAL AND VERBAL ABUSE IN MENTAL HEALTH MOTION 197

197. RACIAL AND VERBAL ABUSE IN MENTAL HEALTH

This Congress would like to see attempts made to curb racial and verbal abuse from mental health patients as at present excuses seem to make it acceptable for this vile behaviour to continue. We have members finishing their shifts in tears because of what they have to endure.

LINCOLN TEC GENERAL & APEX BRANCH
Midland and East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. D. ROBERTS (Midland & East Coast): I am a first-time speaker and first-time delegate. *(Applause)* President and Congress, you may be wondering why this is an issue, when many large institutions, like the one I work for, the NHS, look after people with mental health illnesses. On a national level, recent research by the Mental Health Foundation found that 47% of people who had experienced mental distress said that they had experienced discrimination in the workplace, and 37%, myself included, have experienced discrimination when seeking employment. In the past, I was a patient. I had a breakdown in the 1990s, and that is the reason why I ended up in Lincoln.

The other issue is an old-age one. You can experience racial and verbal abuse as part of your job, and it is what you get paid for. For the last seven years – I say “seven years” because the lady in question passed away last year – I have experienced direct verbal and racial abuse. It came in the form of things like not being allowed to serve the patient her meal because of my colour. If I touched her plate, she would back up and walk away. My colleague's well-meaning attempt to address this racism made me serve this person. What caused me undue distress was that I knew she would be going hungry. I knew that that was a problem for that patient, but I used to take it personally. Six months ago, in the middle of dealing with a patient who was poorly, who actually knew me on the outside but I did not recognise her, my sexual orientation was raised in an abusive term. This took me aback. Again, when I talked to my colleagues, the same statement was said to me: “It's part of your job, Dawn. It's what you get paid for.” She said, “I'm a large person. People take the mickey out of my size.” She just laughed it off. Ironically, when I raised the issue at an equality meeting, because I now attend my Trust's equality meeting as equality officer, in the break, they called me to one side and said, “Your manager's got three days to address this.” So at the coal face it is a problem.

Yet I work for a trust whose mission statement is “Respect”. Respect stands for that we recognise and value people's differences, ensure that we do as we say, that we support personal development, we put people first, we enable and support our staff, continue to work in partnership and take pride in what we do. It also works the other way round. Recently, I was asked to speak at an LGBT conference last

month, and there I heard a gay male police officer explain that when he was in hospital the curtain was pulled around him. When asked why, he was told, “We don’t want to offend the other patients.” Equally, I also met a transgender person who was out of work, a fully qualified hairdresser, who walked into Nottingham City JobCentre and was told, “Stop right there. We’re not ready for your kind.” So it works both ways.

Thankfully, my trust in 2011 set up Wellbeing clinics, and mediation as well, because they recognised that they have to look at the personal issues that their staff are facing, and mental health is becoming an increasing problem. In fact, in that year alone there were 250 referrals. Even more insidious is what we have heard so far at this Congress – we’ve heard it a number of times this year – which is that this Coalition introduced an Equality Act which contains provisions on third party harassment and discrimination. It is an Act which erodes our rights. If we don’t attack it now, we will lose all of our rights and our Union won’t be able to defend us. I ask you to support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

BRO. W. KERR (Midland & East Coast): I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker, seconding Motion 197. Vice President and Congress, I am sure that everybody agrees that racial and verbal abuse in society is unacceptable, but this is what many of our members face every day when working in the NHS and private care homes as many of these services have been privatised. When a service user verbally assaults one of our members in the workplace, our members are often left feeling isolated and vulnerable. They cannot reply. They just have to stand and take it. Further, if allegations are made against them, the system stigmatises our members as they usually find themselves suspended or reported to the Care Quality Commission. Simply giving members the right to walk about without disciplinary action being taken against them would be a step in the right direction. At a time when our members desperately need support, more often than not they are let down by their employer, often because they do not know how to deal with the abuse they are suffering, or else interaction with service users is an integral part of their job. Racial and verbal abuse is not. Verbal assaults on a member have long-lasting effects. These emotional wounds are deep and long lasting – no visible scars. The situation can no longer be acceptable or tolerated in society or in the workplace. Wherever possible, the GMB should be educating employers and building the best policies to protect our members. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, Composite 11, Motions 191, 193, 195, 196 and 197 are all being supported by the CEC. With your permission I will take them altogether. All those in favour, please show. Any against?

Composite Motion 11 was CARRIED.

Motion 191 was CARRIED.

Motion 193 was CARRIED.

Motion 195 was CARRIED.

Motion 196 was CARRIED.

Motion 197 was CARRIED.

CARE HOMES

COMPOSITE MOTION 12

C12. Covering Motions:

198. HAS THE CARE GONE OUT OF CARE FOR THE CARERS *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

199. CARE HOMES THE PRIDE OF OUR NATION *(GMB Scotland)*

CARE HOMES

Due to the present government's approach to care, whereby those people who are mobile and do not need specialist care are encouraged to stay in their own homes with support from community care workers. The trend in residential / nursing care homes is changing, in that, the people coming in to care are people with more complex needs such as behavioural problems, alzheimers, dementia, alcohol and drug abuse as well as mental health problems. This is resulting in people being accepted into care homes which cannot provide them with the correct care they require.

Why are our senior citizens paying for the current status of the Government. Our old folk are the backbone of our nation and what is happening to them.

Too many stories have come to light about the care homes, treatment, food and care of our retired, ill health and old members of our communities. Let us stop hearing the horror stories about the care industry, Substandard care, Substandard food and put the right legislation in place to stop them.

This Congress we respectfully call upon to bring pressure to the government to look at new legislation concerning the private sector of the care Industry, one of the fastest growing industries in our country. There is no legislation setting out a ratio between the number of staff and service users.

The CQC standards say that as long as the service users are not at risk of harm due to incorrect staffing levels, then they have nothing in place that addresses the level of staff in a care home; it is left to the manager's discretion. This however leaves the recommendations of the CQC open to abuse by penny-pinching managers and owners, who do not want to pay for staff.

We are aware of a care home where there are 29 service users on one floor all of which need personal care consisting of showers, baths, incontinence pads changing, catheter bags emptying, meals serving, beds changing and there are only two care assistants allocated to meet their needs and a senior member of staff to administer medication, do daily reports and help with meals if possible.

Can anyone put their hand on their heart and say that it is acceptable that two people should be expected to take responsibility for 29 people, work in this environment and be paid minimum wage?

People seem to live with the misconceptions that care assistants make cups of tea, serve up meals, make beds and sit chatting to service users. Long gone are those days unless you work in a residential home where the Service Users are quite independent and need a small amount of time for personal care and the home is well staffed.

Many homes give in-house training, this consists of watching a DVD followed by a question and answer session and then receiving a certificate that goes into their personal file to show any inspecting body that a person has been trained in that subject. (This is a joke).

The government has responded to the recent outcry over care provided in hospitals and care homes to sufferers of dementia by proposing to give more money to the hospitals and private care sector. I believe that there are some owners who will not use this money where it is needed but will use it to their own advantage.

What the government should be doing is closing loopholes in the legislation which allow bad management in the care of the elderly and vulnerable adults. Lets look into this further and solve the problems. Look at putting a system of assessments in place to stop poorly staffed homes taking in service users with special needs. Put the money into building facilities that meet the requirements of these people with the right number of staff with the correct training and with legislation in place to protect both service users and care assistants alike from being exploited by greedy owners.

This Congress I am asking to look into the care homes of our elderly and make sure that they are treated with the respect that they have worked for and deserve. Let the GMB take up the challenge and start a National campaign to put legislation in place where by the ratio of care assistants to Service Users is more realistic and also ensure that before a person goes to work in a care home of any kind they have a minimum of a NVQ Level 2 Certificate or similar in Health Care.

**Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Move
GMB Scotland to Second**

SIS. A. BURLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Composite Motion 12 – Care Homes. Delegates and visitors, currently in the private sector there is no registration for setting out a ratio between the number of staff and service users in care homes. The CQC Standards say that as long as service users are not at risk to harm due to incorrect staffing levels, then they have nothing in place that addresses the level of staff in a care home. This is left to the manager’s discretion. This, however, leave CQC recommendations open to abuse by managers and owners who do not want to pay for their staff. Fact: We are aware of the care homes where there are 29 service users on one floor, all of whom need personal care, meals serving, incontinence care and beds changing. There are only two carers allocated to meet their needs and a senior carer to administer their medication, do daily reports and assist when meals when possible. Can anyone honestly say that two carers should share responsibility for 29-service users and be paid the minimum wage? Currently, in the public sector, the ratio is three service users to one carer.

Due to the present Government’s approach to care, those people who are mobile and do not need specialist care are encouraged to stay in their own homes with support from community care staff. The trend in residential nursing-care homes is changing in that the people coming into care homes are people with more complex needs, including mental health issues. This is resulting in service users being accepted into care homes which cannot provide them with their correct daily needs. Many care homes also give in-house training, which includes watching a DVD followed by a question and answer session, and then receiving a certificate which goes into their personnel files, which shows the inspecting body that that person has been trained in that subject. In my opinion, this is just not acceptable.

In March 2013, Liberal Democrat Minister of State for Care and Support, Norman Lamb, has acknowledged the situation by saying: “There are no clear standards for training that must happen in care. A basic course of teaching essential skills should be fundamental.” The Government should be putting money into building facilities that meet service-users’ needs, with the right number of staff, with correct training and with legislation to protect service users and care staff.

Although GMB acknowledges Mr. Lamb’s statement regarding a basic course, we urge the GMB to campaign to put legislation in place setting out the ratio of carers to service users, and to raise the bar from a basic course to a minimum of NVQ Level 2 Healthcare for all carers, which is only current afforded to the public care sector staff. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

SIS. E. MARTIN (GMB Scotland): President and delegates, I second Composite 12. Care Homes the Pride of Our Nation! Are they? When you make a comparison between care homes in Scotland and England, Scottish nursing and care homes are better, which provide free nursing care and free personal care. This is assessed by social workers and paid directly to the care-home provider. The amount for the year 2010-11 was £29,429 per person per year. The average cost of staying in a care home is between £600 - £800 per week. According to the Scottish Prison Service for the same year, it costs £32,146 to keep someone in prison.

What do the elderly get in a care home in Scotland? The minimum staff levels, again, are slightly better than their counterparts in England which are set by the Care Inspectorate. The ratio is one trained nurse to approximately 30 residents and five to six care assistants to the same amount of residents during the day. At night it should be nine residents to one nurse and two care assistants. There should be televisions in the communal lounge. If they want one in their own room, they have to provide it for themselves. The feeding budget is £2.20 per day per person. Yes, £2.20 to feed an old person for a day!

What do prisoners get? They get televisions in their cells, games consoles, access to leisure activities and access to further education. I do not exactly what the daily catering budget is, but I am sure that is more than £2.20 a day. Is this a fair system? Better provision seems to be made for people who commit

crimes against society and end up in prison than the elderly who did their National Service for their country, who worked hard for low wages and struggled to raise a family. Our elderly deserve better. Yes, there are stories in the media about poor care and sub-standard food in care homes. Has anybody bothered to ask why? I will tell you why? In most cases, it is lack of money and mismanagement. Many staff in care homes work hard and get stressed in trying to provide a high standard of care. They get frustrated because no one seems to listen to them when they have problems. Staffing levels are at a minimum. Catering staff do what they can but £2.20 is not sufficient to feed anyone. Staff in care homes are sick and tired of the level of work that they are expected to do, which occurs because there is not enough money in the budget. I ask you to support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

LIVERPOOL CARE PATHWAY MOTION 201

201. LIVERPOOL CARE PATHWAY

This Congress calls upon the GMB to campaign to ensure that those receiving end of life care are afforded all necessary support and appropriate care during the latter stages of their life.

We are deeply concerned that evidence has come to light that some of the pathways in managing end of life care may be contrary to the dignity of the individuals concerned, especially where access to necessary nourishment, food or drink is denied as a means of speeding up the end of life.

We are asking the GMB to work with our members in the care professions and other caring organisations to ensure that those who are facing terminal illness can enter this stage of their life in the full knowledge that their dignity and humanity will be preserved at all stages till it reaches a natural end. Furthermore, we ask that the Quality Care Commission (QCC) and Healthcare Trusts/NHS include in their scrutiny the management of end of life care to ensure strict and appropriate guidelines are followed in managing people with terminal illness.

Q22 MANCHESTER CENTRAL BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. MURPHY (North West & Irish): Congress, I am speaking on Motion 201 – Liverpool Care Pathway. Looking at this motion, you would think that it is a nice way of looking after people. Don't be fooled. It's not a way of looking after people. It's a way of despatching people in a very insidious manner by depriving sick people of food and drink so that they die in an agonizing way, slowly and painfully. They not only are withheld food and water but pain relief as well. This motion is asking that the GMB works with our members in the care profession to ensure that those facing terminal illness do so in the knowledge that they will not be tortured in this way and, in effect, murdered. We need to know that when we reach this stage in our lives we can rest assured that we will be treated with dignity and full consent, and that relatives know what is happening.

Furthermore, we ask that both the Minister for Health and the Shadow Minister for Health ensures that this is not forced upon the vulnerable just to stop them bed blocking or as a way of getting rid of the elderly, who may be seen as a nuisance instead of a sick, vulnerable person. We all deserve the right to life. We all deserve the right to compassion. We all deserve the right to dignity. We all deserve the right to reach the end of our lives in a natural, unhurried, dignified and free-from-pain way.

This motion calls on the Quality Care Commission and Healthcare Trusts and the National Health Service to include in their scrutiny the management of end of life care to ensure that strict and appropriate guidelines are followed in managing people with terminal illness. I ask and plead that you support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. K. FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Congress, I second Motion 201 on the Liverpool Care Pathway. There are two things in life that we are sure of: you are born. What's the other one? Everyone

of us here is, sadly, going to die. All we ask, and all this motion asks, is that when that time comes, no matter at what age or time, and particularly in the care of the hospitals, is that the basic principle that we die with dignity, that we are afforded the appropriate care at the point of death and leading up to death. All we ask is that people die with dignity. That is all we ask. Yet the Liverpool Care Pathway has been used inappropriately in a number of circumstances where the loved ones of those who were dying have not been informed, when the process is not monitored 72 hours before they die, and when they are put on the pathway, it has not been monitored in a way that ensures that appropriate treatment is administered to the dying. That is not acceptable, it is not in conformity with dignity and it is not what people expect. They don't want to enter the last stages of life with fear that they will be pushed over the edge quite simply because nobody cares. We care, the GMB cares. The Liverpool Pathway was probably an appropriate way of trying to ease those who were on the pathway but, nevertheless, we ask that it is fully monitored, that clear guidelines are given and I ask you to support this motion so that people die without fear and with the appropriate care. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. Colleagues, once again, the CEC is supporting both Composite 12 and Motion 201. With your permission, I will take them both together. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

*Composite Motion 12 was CARRIED.
Motion 201 was CARRIED.*

SOCIAL POLICY: WELFARE RIGHTS & SERVICES GOVERNMENT HEALTH CARE CONTRACT MOTION 311

311. GOVERNMENT HEALTH CARE CONTRACT

This Congress agrees to initiate a campaign to repeal the decision to award the Health Care Contract to ATOS, a government contracted health care company who have been responsible for causing unnecessary stress and anguish to thousands of people who are medically unfit for work and have been instructed to seek employment or lose their benefits.

GMB GRIMSBY GENERAL BRANCH
Midland and East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. LASCELLES (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 311 on the Government Health Care Contract. This Congress agrees to initiate a campaign to repeal the decision to award the Health Care Contract to ATOS, a government contracted health care company who have been responsible for causing unnecessary stress and anguish to thousands of people who are medically unfit for work and have been instructed to seek employment or lose their benefits. ATOS is an organisation that we have been hearing a lot about today.

Congress, the *Labour Research Department Bulletin* of April 2013 also raised concerns about the flawed system of medical assessments for people with disabilities in relation to the introduction of the Personal Independence Allowance from 8th April of this year, and which replaced the former Disability Living Allowance and the fact that the charity, SCOPE, published research back as far as 2011 showing that the system now used by both ATOS and Capita to be deeply flawed. It is quoted on Wikipedia and various other sources – they have a contract worth £400 million with the Department for Work & Pensions – as stating that half of those found to be “fit for work” by ATO Healthcare’s Work & Capability Assessment on behalf of the Department for Work & Pensions remained unemployed and without income as a result during last year, 2012. As many as 43 complaints – probably rather more – against ATOS doctors and nurses have been investigated by the General Medical Council or the Nursing Midwifery Council. Patients with brain damage, terminal cancer and multiple sclerosis have been declared fit for work.

According to Government statistics, further claims that 1,300 people died after being declared fit for work by ATOS are common place and rising.

The original statement made by Motion 311, therefore, is not only sound but I hope that, today, it is reasonable for me to call for your support invoking this motion. Before I leave this rostrum, may I say that I never thought that this country would ever get into a state where we have to call for something like this for your support. Thank you.

SIS. V. ROWE (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 311, Government Health Care Contract. It is clear that this scandal of mistreatment by the present regime in Downing Street is worthy of your attention. Meanwhile, you may wish to know, for the benefit of our GMB members so afflicted by this discrimination, that the best practice to approach the forms and the assessment by ATOS is by, first, a reference to Citizens Advice and the Disability Rights UK Handbook, prepared by its editor, Ian Greaves. It has also been stated on the radio by Ian Greaves that to complete ATOS paperwork without guidance is like trying to find an unknown destination without a map. Please support Motion 311. *(Applause)*

INDEPENDENT LIVING MOTION 312

312. INDEPENDENT LIVING

Congress is appalled at the proposed withdrawal of the Independent Living Allowance Foundation being withdrawn.

EAST DEREHAM BRANCH
London Region

(Withdrawn)

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Vice President, General Secretary and Congress, I move Motion 312, Independent Living. This organisation is a very valuable organisation to many of its clients who are in receipt of funding from the Independent Living Foundation. Are you aware or not aware, as I was not, that due to Government cuts this foundation ceases to operate in 2015? From 2015 it is being passed on to local county councils to administer. Under the foundation scheme some of its clients are two-tiered, supported by receiving funding from the foundation and from councils. I want to emphasise that a great proportion of the foundation's clients only receive the Independent Living Foundation funding, giving an enormous fear as to how these people will be supported in the future to enable them to get the funding to remain independent living within their own homes as they so rightly deserve and have enjoyed.

When I found out about this cessation, there was only a three-line report in the newspaper. I can tell you I researched this matter by speaking to David Smith, the head of the funding section of the Living Foundation, who supplied me with four lengthy documents, and I read every word of each one of them, including one on the so-called consultation, which ended in October 2012. I can tell you that he would welcome any support that the GMB can give to reverse this disgraceful decision which badly affects those who cannot speak for themselves. I welcome the fact that the CEC warmly supports the intent of this motion. Let me say that I deeply regret the double use of the word "withdraw". This reverses the actual intent of the motion leaving the CEC no option but to seek withdrawal. It is, again, with deep regret that I agree to withdraw, but I appeal to all speakers who have resolutions and motions on benefit cap, please can you include the Independent Living Foundation. I will withdraw Motion 132 and I thank you for listening. I hope the four documents can be used within your fight for benefit cap.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Congress, the mover and region have agreed to withdraw Motion 312. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)*
Motion 312 was WITHDRAWN.

SOCIAL CARE MOTION 313

313. SOCIAL CARE

This Conference asks in the time of cuts on why the needs of the most vulnerable are being failed by the CONDEM Government.

In my city of Liverpool the local Labour administration have already stopped services to Moderate Users that means Service Users who are already finding it hard to cope and there is some risk to their health, and cannot carry out some basic tasks no longer receive direct care from the authority but from voluntary groups already swimming against the tide of these savage cuts.

Now due to £252 per head cuts put on this city, they are now considering removing the substantial banding, this means Service Users who are having significant difficulties in coping and are potentially at significant risk such as abuse or neglect or an inability to carry out the majority of personal care or domestic routines will have their services removed.

This means thousands of elderly and vulnerable service users without care directly from the local authority are to be left fending for themselves, or to be ripped off by the profiteers who circle like vultures on the carcass of this nation and the weak to store their profits in offshore accounts.

I call on the Executive committee to lobby this Government to resource the authority to take care of the most vulnerable.

413 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. CLARK (North West & Irish): Congress, I move Motion 313, Social Care. This Conference asks in the time of cuts why the needs of the most reliant are being failed by the Con-Dem Government. The most vulnerable in our society are being affected like no others. These are the ones who need the most help. Does this Con-Dem Government support the most needy? No. They use austerity as a sharp knife to cut some of the final threads of council support from them. Some of you may not know that if you have a family member or a friend who needs support from their local council, they will be assessed through the Fair Access to Care Scheme. They are assessed and then placed into either a low, moderate, substantial or critical band. I will not go through the ins and outs of the banding system but if you fall into the moderate band, it means that you cannot or will struggle to carry out everyday general day tasks, such as going shopping or making a cup of tea, doing the housework, being socially isolated and usually have no support network in place to assist you. Some of the actual wording of the moderate banding is that “there is or will be an inability to carry out several personal care or domestic routines”.

Liverpool City Council, alongside other councils across the country, stopped providing these services to people eligible for them over a year ago due to the Con-Dem cuts. They are now referring these cases to voluntary or charitable organisations to assist them to do the housework and to make their cups of tea and to take them to day centres. That is okay, you may think, but you may ask yourself “Where do the voluntary groups, the charitable groups, get the main bulk of the money to provide these services?” Actually, it is from the same councils directly to the service users. So the Con-Dems have come along and cut the grant funding to the councils and, in effect, cut support for these groups. Who is helping Betty get a bath or taking Billy to the day centre? So what do Betty and Billy do? They call the council again, who then refer them on to another charitable organisation which is also under great financial pressure to help them.

The offshoots are these. Without the necessary support Betty’s and Billy’s needs worsen, so they are then referred back to the council again to get them reassessed, and this time they fall into the “substantial”

banding of care, which costs, on average, an extra £8,000 per year compared with the £4,000 they would receive if they received care in the moderate banding. It does not make sense, but does anything with this shower? You may now think that they will now receive the help that they require having “substantial” needs, but now with the cuts that Liverpool City Council is facing it means, in effect, they are losing, per head, £252. You may think that that is not a lot, but when you have got a population of around 475,000, that is nearly £120 million.

With these cuts, Liverpool City Council has put forward a motion to remove the “substantial” banding work, which will affect people who cannot even clean themselves. They have rejected doing that this year, but there are some councils which are implementing this removal of services. This means that service users who are having significant difficulties in coping and are potentially at significant risk such as abuse or neglect or an inability to carry out the majority of personal care or domestic routines will have their services removed. What do they do then? There is nothing they can do. They can’t go to the voluntary or alternative sector any more. They have to turn to look for family members to support them, but when that support breaks down they have no choice other than to move to care homes when with such support they could have remained in their home, or hire private care firms to provide the care that should be theirs by right, and maintained and carried out by public-sector workers. Yet these care providers then take the hard-earned profits from these vulnerable people to make a profit, which, in most cases, leaves the country as fast as Pickles is cutting the council’s main support for the most vulnerable or as fast as Eric is when eating a jam butty.

Finally, I call upon the GMB to continue to lobby this Government to resource local councils to provide the care to our families, to our friends and the most vulnerable in this country. I ask you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder? Formally? (*Formally seconded*)

Does anyone wish to come into the debate before Eddie Marnell speaks on behalf of the CEC? (*No response*)

BRO. E. MARNELL (CEC, Manufacturing): President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking you to support Motion 313 with a statement. The cuts that this Government have inflicted on local government have devastated the lives of some many of the most vulnerable in our society. Faced with the impossible task of balancing decimated budgets, councils across the country have, at a stroke, stopped providing services for many with very real needs. This motion highlights the situation in Liverpool where even those in substantial need of care now face the prospect of relying on overstretched charities for the help they should receive as a right. The CEC supports the call for the GMB to lobby the Government to better resource Liverpool City Council’s social care provision, consistent with the Union’s policy that demands full funding for all local authority care provision. It is a sad fact that there are already five councils that have shut the door in the faces of people in substantial need. Liverpool must not be allowed to join that risk. That is why I am proud to report that we are already providing financial assistance to Liverpool City Council to produce materials for their campaign for more funding.

Congress, people in substantial need deserve substantial support. Please support Motion 313.

THE PRESIDENT: Conference, I now put Motions 311 and 313 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against?

Motion 311 was CARRIED.

Motion 313 was CARRIED.

**POLITICAL: GENERAL
MOTION 219
AUSTERITY**

219. AUSTERITY

This Congress should campaign for and build support for a general strike against the government's devastating austerity measures. We should base this campaign around the TUC consultation on their 2012 Congress resolution with the objective of coordinating days of action with our sister unions and covering as many sectors as possible.

This will in turn reignite the fight against the Condemns and build on our resistance against their appalling and discriminatory attacks on working class people.

SHEFFIELD MCP & LIGHT BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SIS. S. WALKER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 219 on Austerity. President, the Oxford Dictionary's of "austerity" is defined as, "Difficult economic conditions created by government measures to reduce public expenditure." To us "austerity" means that working people, pensioners and young people are paying the price for the capitalist economic system that is in a state of crisis, caused overwhelmingly by greed and avarice of its star performers, the bankers. The price we will have to pay is more unemployment, lower wages, lower quality jobs, poorer pensions and worsening public services. In short, it is blighting lives for millions of ordinary people.

We have been here before. The 1930s saw the longest depression experienced by working people. It lasted 48 months and left an indelible mark upon our Movement. This depression has already lasted longer and many are expecting it to go on beyond 2015. We cannot stand idly by and let this happen to another generation. The various calls for action and a new direction contained in this motion shows that the Movement understands it with a passion. We learn from history that the simplistic idea of cuts as a way of tackling our economic problems is simply wrong. Increasing numbers of people are recognising that the politics of austerity discourage recovery. They did so in the 1930s and are doing so again today. The problem with the economy is a lack of demand. People don't have the money or the confidence to spend. Companies are sitting on £700 billion of potential investment funds but are refusing to invest. This leaves the Government as the only other agency with the potential to kick-start the economy.

All the fine talk about bringing forward capital infrastructure projects is just smoking mirrors. Let us never underestimate our enemies or the neo-liberal policies that have been pursued since the 1980s, which have failed us again. They have created an industrial wasteland and it is up to us, as trade unionists, to fight for our future. Something has to be done to make this despicable Government change direction. We have to consider the possibility of a general strike. We owe it to our future generations. Comrades, now could be the only time that we have this option. If we do have enough support for a general strike, there can be no hiding place for the squeamish. It will quickly become a class war as a parallel to the miners' strike in 1984. This is a war that we cannot afford to lose. It is a tough call. Destiny awaits us. This is the fight of our lives. Please support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

SIS. M. TAYLOR (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Motion 219. President, this morning I tore up the motion. How could I, in two minutes, try to express the reasons to support this motion better than Owen said this morning. It was fantastic. I want to say that if the Government does not alter their destructive cuts programme, many more public-service members will face unemployment. All alternatives must be considered. We must work together with other trade unions to fight this destructive Government before it is too late. Yes, we have to consider the prospects of a General Strike.

How can we stand idly by whilst everything we stand for is destroyed? If what is required is a general strike, together with our sister unions, we must fight. Thank you. *(Applause)*

GENERAL STRIKE COMPOSITE MOTION 14

C14. Covering Motions:

220. GENERAL STRIKE *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

221. GENERAL STRIKE *(London Region)*

GENERAL STRIKE

We demand the right to withdraw our labour as our fellow trade unionist can in the EU. To accept the attacks on our living standard without increasing our resistance will only lead to the Government continuing unabated in removing the gains the Trade Union Movement has made through the years.

This Congress 2013 agrees to support the growing call for a one day general strike in response of the destruction of jobs and services and the wholesale attacks on working class living standards we are enduring from this Tory/Liberal Coalition Government. We do understand the difficulty that this would mean because of the anti-trade union law that was brought into place by the Thatcher Government and continued under Labour.

This Conference calls upon the Central Executive Council to work with all trade unions to organise a general strike. We say enough is enough and believe we should now be applying maximum pressure within the TUC to name the day

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Move London Region to Second

(Carried)

BRO. B. KIRKHAM (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Composite Motion 14 – General Strike. I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

Owen Jones said that he saw no shortage of angry people in Britain. He is right. I'm one of them. Congress, we have a responsibility to ourselves and those our *there* in Britain to channel this anger. We are seeing the destruction of jobs and services and with it those in work face attacks on their pay and conditions. For the last five years, Britain's unemployed and working poor have faced the implications of what the Con-Dems' ideological attacks are all about. Their already insufficient benefits have been cut. The disabled have found themselves subject to demeaning and invasive work capability assessments. The low paid have seen real-term wages cut. Further welfare reforms are being rolled out, while those who rely on the benefits are continually demonised. Enough is enough. The time to demand the TUC to name the date is long overdue. *(Applause)* The need to co-ordinate a 24-hour general strike is here.

In recognising the threat posed by anti-union laws, we, the GMB, need to be brave and direct in our actions. Unite insists that the action would be legal under the law of European human rights – they have taken legal advice – but the threat that we face as trade unions is that of decline if we are not seen as fighting bodies. Support is vital. The NUT and the NASUWT have called on the TUC to consider calling a 24-hour general strike. The PCS has indicated that it would join others in national action. However, the responses have been luke warm at best. Unite argues that it would “desirable” and urge the TUC to prepare for such massive industrial action. Unite documents correctly state: “It would be a landmark in our Movement's recovery of its morale, strength and capacity to play a leading part in society, crying out for credible and honourable leadership.” UNISON back the principles of a general strike. Even the Prison Officers' Association, who are denied the right to strike, have defied the law on two previous walkouts, neither served with injunctions. In July 1972 five dockworkers were arrested under the anti-trade union laws. The then government took flight and released the Pentonville Five. That

was the last time that talk of national co-ordinated action was properly discussed. The Prison Officers' Association, Steve Gillan, moved the motion for a general strike at the TUC Congress. The vote was in favour.

Senior Tory Ministers are enraged by the threat of a 24-hour general strike. Well, let them be. The Conservative Party Chairman said: "Labour's single biggest union paymaster is threatening British businesses and hardworking people with mass strikes. Let's not be put off by such bluster." After the successes of the two major rallies co-ordinated by the TUC it is imperative that the labour Movement follows its successes with further action. The call has come for the GMB not to be left behind, and I urge Congress to back the call for a 24-hour general strike. Congress, 90 years ago this year – I make no apologies for name dropping – my great-great aunt, Margaret Bonser, was chair of the TUC General Council. With the 1926 General Strike looming, the former Secretary of the National Union of Shop Assistants, and in 1908 the Secretary of the Women's Labour League, would, indeed, have been a great believer if she had been present here today.

I shall repeat what others have already said. The TUC needs to get over the fear factor and do what needs to be done: Name that day! If they do, trade unionists would respond and so would millions of others suffering austerity.

THE PRESIDENT: Ben, please wind-up.

BRO. KIRKHAM: Congress, please support this motion and Owen Jones will get his revenge. *(Applause)*

BRO. J. HIOM (London): Congress and President, I second Composite 14. This composite before you is a composite that no union would want to support if there was no other way of registering our anger at the policies that the Coalition is imposing on the working people of Britain. The GMB is not a union that stands aside while other unions rest against the Government's attacks. It is our duty to join those who call for a general strike or offer an alternative, if there is one. Are we to remain on our knees hoping that a Labour government is returned at a general election? We have seen the privatisation of gas, electric, telecoms, the railways and the public services, to mention a few. Are we now to stand aside and watch the privatisation of the NHS by stealth and do nothing? Let us join with other unions and say "Enough is enough". We demand the freedom to protest and call a general strike. We demand the right to protest. Anti-trade union laws should not stop us. Unions will have to defy anti-trade union laws to defend the NHS. Privatisation was not in the Tories' manifesto and they have no mandate to privatise. We demand the freedom that our brothers and sisters across the European Union have. We must join the others on a one-day general strike and plan further action. The argument that there are workers who are not members of a union and would not support a strike is flawed. Are our actions to be decided by those who are not trade unionists? Have we the courage to resist? We have to stop the neo-liberalism that has been sweeping across Britain for decades. We see before our eyes a gradual privatisation of the NHS – the golden egg – the thing that international capitalism so much wants. Nye Bevan is quoted as saying: "The NHS will survive as long as there are folk left to fight for it." The TUC has to wake up and start to organise unions to fight back against the Coalition's policies. To not support the composite will be a vote of surrender. We cannot afford to do that. Remember the saying: "It is better to live one day as a lion than a lifetime as a sheep." Please support. *(Applause)*

PEACEFUL CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOTION 222

222. PEACEFUL CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

This Congress notes:

1. The government has aggressively advanced on all fronts against the interests of working class people.
2. It continues to aggressively attack employee rights at work and their ability to hold employers to account.

3. The impact of Government policies are that the living standards of the working class have been reduced, whilst the living standards of the richest 1% have continued to increase.

This Congress believes:

4. That the attacks by this government on social security, employment security and health and well-being for the vast majority of people will continue and increase.
5. That an effective campaign to defend public services and living standards may require acts of peaceful civil disobedience and protest.

This Congress resolves:

6. That it will support grassroots collective campaigns of peaceful civil disobedience and protest against the policies of austerity pursued by this government.

LEEDS GENERAL BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. K. BARNES (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 222 – Peaceful Civil Disobedience. This ConDem Government have, since day one, continually and ambitiously attacked the working classes of this country. We have seen attacks on workers' rights and the welfare state, which have resulted in their living standards being at their lowest for many a year. They tell us that we are all in it together, but the rich are still getting richer and the poorer are still getting poorer. We have seen individual benefits for children, housing and health have been frozen, cut or abolished. People with disabilities and unemployed workers face punitive new systems based on conditionality, sanctions and low benefit levels. We have the dreaded bedroom tax, a policy that will see people being evicted on to the streets when they cannot finance the money to pay for their spare bedrooms. That is still not enough for this Government. They are saying that there are more cuts to come.

However, there are a number of grass-roots campaigns of pressure groups springing up all over the country to fight these attacks. Some of these groups are pushing for more direct action, such as peaceful, civil disobedience, whether this be blockading the roads or staging sit-ins. The GMB is involved in many of these campaigns. I myself and other branch members have been on a number of demonstrations over the past few years, but we need to be at the forefront of these campaigns, supporting, protesting and marching alongside the disadvantaged and the hardest hit. If this means that laws may be broken, then so be it. Peaceful civil disobedience works and it has been proven to work in the past. Peaceful acts of civil disobedience have been at the heart of many major struggles that humanity has fought over the past several decades. I am thinking of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, the civil rights movement in the US and Gandhi's fight against British colonial rule in India, to mention just a few examples.

We are not saying that we should support people who riot and smash up their local communities, but there has to be an expectation that certain laws may be broken and this may lead to arrest. We must support these action groups whenever this occurs. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

SIS. I. WALTERS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I wish I could say that I was a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker, but I'm not. Comrades, Kevin has covered most points, and he gave you all the reasons why my branch submitted this motion and why it should be supported by you all. Please support. *(Applause)*

GMB PORT TALBOT OCCUPIERS MOTION 223

223 GMB PORT TALBOT OCCUPIERS

Congress congratulates the GMB members who staged a protest on 8 January on the junction with the M4 outside Port Talbot Steelworks. This action led to huge tailbacks for rush-hour motorists. It was against the laying off of 40 contractors with 3 months' work remaining – the employer planned to use cheap labour to finish off the job.

As a result of this demonstration, the workers won their dispute and were all reinstated.

Congress calls on the CEC to ensure that where immediate action or demonstrations result in victories then GMB publicises these to all members, in order to give confidence to other workers facing attacks from their employers.

GMB@PCS BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. T. CHOLERTON (London): Congress, I move Motion 223 – GMB Port Talbot Occupiers. This motion highlights one of the fastest, most effective and inspirational strikes of the modern era. Despite the underhand tactics of the Tata management to replace contracted workers with cheap, overseas labour, the unofficial picket line of GMB members forced the management into the fastest turnaround that I have ever seen by an employer. The quick action of our comrades took them completely by surprise. By staging their protest at the main junction of the M4, they brought traffic to a standstill and this was beginning to attract media attention that would have brought the Tata Steelworks the kind of publicity that would have shamed any large company. Tata would have had no sympathy from the public who were sick and tired of seeing our jobs undermined by the cheap labour of the ruthlessly exploited overseas workers. This is the sort of dispute that the Tories have tried to ban for decades, but you cannot legislate against a determination and bravery of the 47 workers and GMB trade unionists who stood together and said “No” to a large multi-national company.

Unfortunately, this dispute was over so quickly that it had ended almost before it had begun and became a major story. For that reason, Motion 223 calls on the GMB to bring this dispute to the attention of all members so that we can gain in confidence and be inspired. Please support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

SIS. J. HUNT (London): Congress, I am second the motion, and I have to admit that before I was asked to speak on it we had been having a discussion in the London Region about it. Before we spoke about it, I did not know of this particular dispute. However, I believe it is an example of the growing cases of workers who have been forced, because they have no option, to take immediate forms of action because there are no legitimate roads for them to go down. As happened in this case, workers went to work and were told that they were down the road that same day. I work in an industrial-relations department, and we all know that balloting for industrial action in that instance is not going to be a reality for people because by the time you have done the triple salko through all the legislation, 47 people have already lost their jobs and are out of work. I can't tell you how greatly encouraged I am that our comrades have told us more of the detail about this particular instance. The point is that these people went out on the motorway and blocked the road until they were all reinstated on that same day. It encourages me that the GMB have recruited these people, identified with the workers in this instance, and I think there will be more of that type of instant action as people see their jobs threatened.

The reason why we are asking the GMB Port Talbot Occupiers to be highlighted is because it is a question of solidarity and learning the lesson that if you fight, you can win. In this case, they did win their jobs back so, please, Congress, move to accept. *(Applause)*

UNION FLAG PROTESTS MOTION 224

224. UNION FLAG PROTESTS

This Congress notes the violence in Northern Ireland over the flying of the Union Flag at Belfast City Hall.

Congress strongly reaffirms its commitment to the Peace Process as the only way to sustainable peace and calls on all politicians to put peace before rhetoric and self-interest for the betterment of citizens and communities across Northern Ireland.

DURHAM COUNTY LA BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. FORSTER (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 224 – Union Flag Protests. In a recent opinion poll taken for the BBC more than three-quarters of the people interviewed thought that the Union flag protests should stop, but nearly half of Unionists believe that they should continue. Belfast City Council voted to restrict the flying of the Union flag on 3rd December last year. Since the Peace Agreement was signed, there have been understandable and real difficulties with how to put generations of divisions behind the population. Colleagues, the peace process and the Agreement is the best that is available. People who have changed their minds on the Union flag protests have given a variety of reasons, the main one being the violence brought by the protests, followed by the damaging impact on business and the disruption to traffic.

The alternative to this peace is to go back to the violence and division of the past. It is clear to some observers that some from the mainland are fermenting trouble, especially those with EDL or BNP sympathies. We must not allow this situation to succeed. I know it is easy to stand here and say that peaceful dialogue and negotiation are far better than playing politics or fermenting struggle. We need Northern Ireland's economy to recover from this financial crisis in the same way that we need the wider-UK economy to recover. That can only happen if there is relative peace for the people to live, go to work and invest. We need the people and democrats of goodwill to stand up and be counted and come together to bridge the gap. It can only happen if politicians locally and Assembly Members have confidence in working with each other for all of the communities in Northern Ireland, and in doing so show respect for the different traditions and their sensitivities. That can only happen if the Peace Process is continued at Stormont. The alternatives to this are too great to contemplate. Please support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

SIS. M. GILBRAITH (Northern): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and speaker. *(Applause)* I second Motion 224 – Union Flag Protests. In supporting this motion, it is important to say that in these protests the majority of the street demonstrations have passed without incident, but some have resulted in serious rioting and injuries to more than a hundred police officers. Main roads have also been blocked on many occasions. It is important that the Parades Commission gets to work and tries to clarify matters to stop events taking a course of their own. If needs be, its remit should be widened to help resolve sensitive disputes such as these.

It is also important that the flag protests do not become a rallying point for dealing with wider tensions. Threat to life and destruction of houses and political party offices can only end up adding to the problem, not solving it. If the problem is going to be sorted out, we need a common sense, political solution, not point-scoring between politicians. Either we have a democracy covering the whole of the UK or we don't. We have all suffered when the troubles in Northern Ireland were allowed to spiral out of control by those seeking power for themselves. So a solution needs to be found. That means respecting expressions of culture and balancing that against the wider needs of people and communities so that Northern Ireland can go from strength to strength, but it can only happen if the politicians of all parties work together for the greater good. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Mary. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate?

BRO. B. GUNN (North West & Irish): Congress, reluctantly, I must ask you to oppose Motion 224. I say “reluctantly” because there is much in the motion that we agree with, certainly in the second part. All right-thinking people will agree with the sentiments expressed in the second part of the motion. However, the opening lines of the motion make no mention of the on-going threat from dissident Republicans. They pose a threat which has been condemned right across the divide by political representatives from both communities and, as I said, right across the political divide. Congress, the GMB has 12,000 members in Northern Ireland. We work with our colleagues in the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to build a shared future for all. We must always be mindful of the sensitivities and strive to be balanced. In that context, I, reluctantly, must ask you to oppose Motion 224. *(Applause)*

BRO. K. GREENAWAY (Southern): Congress, I speak against Composite 14 on a general strike. What is really needed is for action to be taken in individual workplaces whenever an issue arises. Action taken every day of the year in different workplaces when we have issues is much more powerful than us all going out on a big march on one day of the year. One day of action when TU members are only a quarter of the working population is not exactly going to frighten the ideologies of the Conservatives. What we need is a more organised and empowered forces in workplaces and that will frighten them. Let us not think that the TUC can solve the issues around austerity from the top down. We need to resolve it from the shop floor. *(Applause)*

BRO. P. DUFFY (GMB Scotland): Congress, I support Composite 14. When you are down and somebody is sticking a boot in your stomach or standing on your head, what do you do? What do you do? I joined a union in 1960 and I became a shop steward. I negotiated with different employers, and every time it came to money we had to walk out the door. We had to go on strike. It was the only way that we got any response. The capitalist class – especially the people who are in power now – we have now are fascists. They will stand and talk to us continually until something happens. We don’t want to happen what happened in 1926 when the TUC General Strike collapsed. We want to do something positive. I also agree with peaceful civil disobedience as well. In conclusion, the TUC has to come up with some kind of general strike. Support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak? *(No response)* I will call Sheila Bearcroft to reply for the CEC on Motion 219 and Composite 14.

SIS. S. BEARCROFT (CEC, Manufacturing): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting Motion 219 and Composite 14 but with qualifications that I shall now give.

Motion 219 and Composite 14 highlight the impact of this Coalition Government’s policies on working families throughout the countries. In Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and in my country, Wales, a country that is governed by our Welsh Assembly, a country that is governed by the highest-elected Labour Government, and by my own constituency AM, who is Carwyn Jones, the top Labour Government person in Great Britain today. These policies affect us all, the standard which the trade union movement has fought for over generations. These are standards which are now being eroded in a matter of a few years, only since 2010. The trade union movement must defend working families and protect their rights to good-quality public services, decent living standards and proper employment rights and protections. Only the trade union movement will effectively campaign and defend the rights of working people.

Motion 219 highlights the devastating austerity measures and calls for the TUC to co-ordinate a day of action with every trade union and cover as many employment sectors as possible. The feasibility of a co-ordinated day of action is currently being investigated by the TUC. The qualification is that once it is clear that the Government’s austerity measures have touched the whole of our membership, the GMB notes the wide differences between TUC affiliates. The day of co-ordinated action last October was hugely successful, and we need to ensure that the issues are kept alive. As a key campaigning union, the GMB is happy to support the TUC co-ordinating campaign and work with other unions to build

opposition to the austerity cuts. GMB is working with the TUC on a People-united union co-ordinated bus tour. This will be running over a two-week period from June 22nd to 5th July. The buses will travel across the country, taking in towns, cities and communities which have suffered from the austerity and vicious attacks by this Government and been forgotten by Westminster.

Mary, can I indulge both you and myself. Can I congratulate June Minnery on her election to the Scottish TUC. Her position is now Vice-Chair of TUC Scotland. *(Applause)* Well done, June.

Congress, TUC Scotland and TUC Wales – my home – will have their own buses going around the constituencies because we need, as a union and as just normal working people, to get out *there*, tell your next-door neighbour and your friends when those buses are around, because that is how we will tell the Coalition Government that we are not prepared to put up with this austerity any longer. The buses will stop in main destinations, to work with local people on ideas for a People's Manifesto around the main themes of jobs, wages, housing and communities, so do watch out for the buses. Find out when they are in your area.

Composite 14 highlights the damage that the current Government's policies are causing and calls for a general strike to be co-ordinated by the TUC. The TUC are reviewing this call. The qualification is that a general strike would involve calling all unions in both the private and public sectors to co-ordinate action, and we note the real differences in opinions between a number of unions on the legality of a general strike. It is clear that no immunity on the ground of a trade dispute would apply. GMB has many members who would be exempt from industrial action as they provide emergency cover or are in the caring professions. Furthermore, GMB would not call our members to action without a democratic ballot. GMB stands ready to work together with other unions and to take joint action where agreed. Congress, the CEC is asking you to support Motion 219 and Composite 14 with the qualifications that I have just mentioned. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Before I call the vote, does the mover of Composite 14 wish to exercise the right of reply? *(Declined)* Do you accept the qualification? You do. Thank you.

Would the mover of Motion 224, Union Flag Protests, like to have the right of reply? *(Declined)*

Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire also accept the qualification on Motion 219? *(Agreed)*

In that case, I put Motion 219, Composite 14 and Motions 222, 223 and 224 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 219 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 14 was CARRIED.

Motion 222 was CARRIED.

Motion 223 was CARRIED.

Motion 224 was CARRIED.

POLITICAL: HONOURS

RECOGNITION FOR OUR WOUNDED SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN

MOTION 251

251. RECOGNITION FOR OUR WOUNDED SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN

This Congress calls upon the government to put in place some form of recognition for our soldiers who are wounded in action, in service to our country.

Many show visible scars or injuries, others do not, but they have one thing in common; their suffering does not stop when their wounds have healed. Many suffer the rest of their lives.

Would a medal be too much to ask to mark the debt that society owes these men and women?

LINCOLN TEC GENERAL & APEX BRANCH
Midland and East Coast Region

(Carried)

THE PRESIDENT: I call Motion 251, Midland & East Coast Region, to move Motion 251. We do not have a CEC speaker.

BRO. M. PRECIOUS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move Motion 251.

We need a recognition for our wounded servicemen and women. The physical and mental scars that they have suffered will remain with them for the rest of their day-to-day lives. These scars can produce strains on their families and many relationships are destroyed as a result of difficulties in adapting to living with severe disabilities. Although this is no consolation, recognition of the sacrifice made by the members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces who have been wounded on active service should, I believe, be awarded an official medal. The United States has the Purple Heart for service personnel, issued initially at the time of the Second World War and it is still presented today for outstanding bravery. We owe our servicemen and women a big debt and to acknowledge them a medal is a small price to pay. Congress, please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

SIS. K. HOLM (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I support the motion on Recognition for our wounded Servicemen and Women. President, in the light of the recent grotesque attack in broad daylight on the street of London, this motion has even more relevance. In America, as my friend just said, they do have the Purple Heart, and I believe that a British equivalent is called for.

I recently spoke to a wounded ex-servicemen, who showed me his physical scars and told me how they had affected his life and work, and as time has passed by his wounds have healed yet caused more health issues. Whilst talking to him, I felt his passion and saw his anguish. He told me, "We are prepared to fight for our country, to get injured in the line of duty, to die for our country, yet a medal is too much to ask for." We should support our Armed Forces. I am not asking you for you all to get behind our servicemen and women, but I am asking you to stand in front and support them. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Would anyone like to take part in this debate? While the next speaker is coming to the rostrum, let me say that these individuals, what with the austerity cuts in benefits, are also being denied benefits by this Government, which shouts very loud that they will look after our servicemen and women. I am afraid that they don't in the real world.

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): Congress, I am speaking in support of Motion 251. Give them a medal – yes – but should we not be giving them more, more such as additional care and support. I support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. T. PLUMB (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, back in the early '80s, when you left school, like I did, there were only two options for many of us. There was either YTS or join the Army, so I and a pal of mine decided to join the Army. When we finished training we both ended up fighting the war in Northern Ireland. I came back from Northern Ireland in one piece. He didn't unfortunately because he was wounded. In 1997 he lost his life after suffering many years with post-traumatic stress. I would like you all to support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to speak? *(No response)* I now put Motion 251 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against?

Motion 251 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: As you can see, we have a visitor on the stage who I will introduce much later. Welcome, Stephen.

POLITICAL: RACISM & FASCISM
RACISM
MOTION 252

252. RACISM

This Congress calls on the self-regulation of Football in the UK to be brought within the law of the land on vital day to day matters as tackling racism. In addition Congress calls on politicians nationally and locally to be working through their collective channels of influence to put maximum pressure on International Football Authorities, so that those bodies recognise the social responsibility to the people who participate in and follow “the Beautiful Game”.

UNITED BISCUITS CARLISLE INDUSTRIAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. GRANT (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 252 – Racism. I am a first-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

The way that football self-regulates means that the game that most people follow is a law unto itself. The fans are just bystanders, as footballers and their agents cream off the vast amounts of money that go into the game. It has become one of the latest examples of the difference between those who have and those who have inside society. The way that the authorities have gone about tackling racism is a disgrace. The football authorities at home and abroad are stuck in a time warp. These self-important people are regulating a national and international game, seemingly at times outside the law, that the ordinary fans abide by.

In the Northern Region we have signed up to *Show Racism the Red Card*, and actively support the anti-racism agenda. Our national and regional equality agendas have led the way in trying to tackle racist attitudes. So the GMB is heavily involved in turning the tide of racist attitudes in football. We know that there are comrades in the wider trade union Movement who are also engaged in the anti-racism agenda as a way of setting an example. It is sad that some in football are not. The recent example of racism language behaviour on the pitch and, indeed, racist chants at football grounds, shows that football still has a very long way to go. We now that FIFA is a joke and so are its leaders, but that should not stop us fighting for football to be much more robust in how it tackles racism and all its forms within the game. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

BRO. T. HUNTER (Northern): Congress, I second Motion 252 – Racism. The racist behaviour that has come to light at football grounds both here and abroad is alarming. There have been high-profile cases and the way that clubs have responded shows that some do not understand the issues. Quite simply, role models and those in-charge in the world of football must demand that people conduct themselves not just within the law but also within the spirit of the law. We all know that bad language, abuse and behaviour happen on a football pitch on a Saturday afternoon or on a Sunday morning in local football. They are allowed to happen without proper punishment following. Other sports, such as rugby, just to name on, have different codes that demand that players behave properly on the pitch. Football, regrettably, is still lagging behind, and the examples set by some professionals is dire. If football can't get itself in order regarding racist attitudes within the game, then policies will forcibly be brought in so that people respect each other on and off the pitch. Football can't take, take, take off the ordinary fans and then treat them

with contempt as though the footballers and the football authorities are above the law. Thank you.
(*Applause*)

**POLITICAL: EUROPEAN UNION
EMPLOYMENT LAW (TUPE) TUPE REG'S – EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
MOTION 253**

**253. EMPLOYMENT LAW (TUPE)
TUPE REG'S – EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

This Congress is called upon to support this motion to call on our MEP's to put pressure on European Parliament and ask why they do not apply TUPE Reg's, as 1000 Security Officers were made redundant when security was brought in-house from Private Sector, i.e. Luxemburg and Belgium.

S20 SECURITY BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(*Carried*)

BRO. W. CARSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 253 – European Union TUPE. In July 2012 the European Parliament decided that they would move the security for their buildings in Belgium, France and Luxembourg from the private sector back in-house. About a thousand security officers could lose their jobs. These security officers are currently employed by Securitas and G4S. The decision by the European Parliament is particularly surprising. It is clear that the decision is dictated by economic and financial considerations. The human and social aspect is totally ignored. The European Parliament brought forward the closure date for applications to October 2012, after 3,500 European citizens had already applied for the positions. The majority of security officers currently on the sites did not apply, given the precarious conditions offered, with no guarantee of a permanent contract.

Those security officers who participate and pass the new selection procedure will see their long-term contracts turned into a two-year fixed-term contract. We note that the European Parliament does impose on member states complying with the European Directive of Safeguarding Employee Rights, but the same directive does not apply to the European Parliament. This is a directive on the transfer of undertakings.

We in the S20 Security branch calls upon this Congress and the GMB to engage with our MEPs to put pressure on the European Parliament to respect workers' rights. Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. A. DUDSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I second Motion 253. Although TUPE laws are not as strong as we would like them to be, they do offer protection to employees transferring to new employers. These laws, though, should not only cover employers in a single country but they should apply across Europe. We call upon the GMB to lobby the European Parliament to implement the TUPE laws across the whole of the European Union. Please support.

**INTERNATIONAL
MOTION 254**

254. INTERNATIONAL

This Congress believes that the UK should play an active role from the inside of the European Parliament. We therefore disagree with any proposals which could take the UK out of Europe and reduce our nation's effectiveness in all issues that affect our members.

We therefore call on the CEC to lobby our MP's to actively promote the need to remain a full and active European Member State.

R35 ROCESTER JCB GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. G. GOLDSMITH (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

President, the links between Britain and Europe have never been so fragile since we joined the European Economic Community in 1973. Many Britons see our role as purely one of finance and commerce, whereas in reality we are much more an integral part of its whole infrastructure, socio-economic as well as political.

UKIP has made recent headlines in many ways with a major voice. Their voice was the ambition of many politicians as to isolate Britain from Brussels. In real terms, does anyone really think that UKIP is anything more than a mid-general election, one-trip phony protest voice, whose jingoism becomes increasingly darker by the day.

Crucial issues relating to the single market and trade within this market are of a symbiotic nature, not just good for us but good for the whole. Yes, coming out of this alliance may be overcome but, as in 1973, Europe is now not only about free trade. The EU passes laws that touch on all aspects of our lives, namely, foreign policy, policing, immigration, the environment, transport, aid, both nationally and overseas, health, criminal law, taxation, agriculture, education and not to forget health and safety. Few areas are not impacted by EU law in some way or another, and we have our say, which is likely to continue. The “out” lobby has never come up with any definite proposals of what happens when we come out, or if we decide to be out. Should we have a referendum? I’m not so sure. If that is the only way forward, then the real facts about isolationism must be given to anyone with a notion not to return back to the bad old days of the 1930s. An inter-connected, globalised real world knows it is the route to economic disaster. Isolation smacks of North Koreanism, hardly a bastion of democratic ideals.

Since the Jacques Delors’ speech at the Trade Union Congress in 1998, Euro-scepticism within the labour Movement has, rightly, decreased. Conservatives have increasingly become much more sceptical about our involvement in Europe, with the rise of UKIP, which seems quite bizarre, as UKIP wants to have an Euro MP in the first place. We need to stay in the European Community. After all, we are fundamentally European. Our elitism about politics doesn’t wash any more, and we need to understand that the empire is gone and will never return. Furthermore, we don’t want it back. The war is over and the shackles of the little Englanders should be thrown off. In fact, we are as cosmopolitan as any European nation and as liberal and open-minded as any part of the EU, and are proud to be so. So let’s stay in Europe. Let’s enjoy its benefits and, most importantly, let us have a say rather than the so-called Norwegian model, where they have all the laws, pay their way and have no say. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

BRO. C. BURTON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I second Motion 254. No Euro, no social rights, no fundamental rights, no Working Time Directive, no health and safety recommendations. I’ll tell you what. Let’s start by saying no to the media who paddle this tabloid-campaign journalism. I also say that we should have better EU politicians, like the GMB is advocating in its political agenda. You can only make effective change as an integral part of the EU. The alternative is to accept policy without the ability to change or discuss policy in the future. I urge us all to ensure that we remain where we belong, which is in the Community, at the table, negotiating the policies, not isolated on a limb in the North Sea. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Before I call Dave Clements to respond on behalf of the CEC, does anyone wish to come in on the debate?

SIS. K. HUMPHRES (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am speaking in support of Motion 252. I wholeheartedly support this motion and that we need to eradicate discrimination out of football. Full stop. We have got fantastic female footballers who leave this country to go and play in the USA where they are paid and supported better. Why isn't our FA doing more to support our female sportswomen? Why is that gay footballers feel the need to resign from the game for fear of bullying before they come out? Sisters and brothers, discrimination in football does not just stop at racism, but at least this motion is a step in the right direction. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

BRO. M. LANCASTER (London): Congress, I am speaking in support of Motion 252. Actual racism is a hate crime, be it committed in the workplace, pub, club, a gym or on the street. It is a crime based on hate and it must be dealt with in the same way, even if that act is committed on a football pitch or on the terraces. Racism has the same effect wherever it occurs, so please support this motion. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Dave?

BRO. D. CLEMENTS (CEC, Commercial Services): President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting Motions 252, 253 and 254, each with a qualification. On Motion 252 the qualification relates to the reference in the motion for "self-regulation of Football in the UK" to be brought formally within the law on issues such as racism. Football is primarily regulated by the Football Association, but it has to act at all times within the law. Laws on racism apply on and off the field, and recent court cases involving very high-profile football players on accusations of using racist language confirm this position.

Turning to Motion 253, whilst GMB, together with UNI Europa, is supporting the security workers involved in the subject of the motion, the qualification is that GMB generally support the services returning in-house to public provision. However, the rights and protections of workers must be fully protected, which does not appear to have been the case in this instance.

Finally, Motion 254 calls on the CEC to lobby our MPs to actively promote the need to remain a full and active European Member State. The qualification to the motion is that GMB support for the EU demands firm action to promote and protect the social and employment rights' dimension of Europe, which is currently under attack. We want commitment from all member states, including the UK and all EU institutions, to restore and build a stronger social Europe. GMB members will not support a Europe that makes them second-class citizens if the UK Coalition Government tries to negotiate a Europe for business at the expense of the individual and collective rights of members.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motions 252, 253 and 254 with the qualifications I have outlined. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does Northern Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*)

Does Birmingham & West Midlands Region accept the qualification to Motion 253? (*Agreed*)

Does Birmingham & West Midlands Region accept the qualification to Motion 254?

(*Agreed*)

I will now put Motions 252, 253 and 254 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 252 was CARRIED.

Motion 253 was CARRIED.

Motion 254 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, the winning ticket for the Durham Miners' raffle plate is 141-145. Will the winner please go to the miners' stall. Thank you.

Let me tell you of a new publication from the Women's TUC Committee. It has been compiled by the Scottish trade union women, in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian. Please visit the GMB Equality stall this valuable document, which will be officially launched at one of the big book festivals later this year. The price is £6 individually or £12 for two. (*Laughter*) Oh, that's typical of a good saleswoman. If you buy three, it's £18.

ADDRESS BY STEPHEN HUGHES, MEP

THE PRESIDENT: On our platform, Congress, will you give a warm welcome to Stephen Hughes, MEP. (*Applause*) This is going to be a double act. Before Stephen speaks, here are a few facts about him. Stephen is the Labour MEP for the North East representing 2.5 million people. He was born in Sunderland but raised in County Durham. He went to Newcastle Polytechnic and Leeds University. He was elected to the European Parliament in 1984 when he was a local government officer and he has served continuously in the region since then. From the way he has moved about the North East, he can support all the football teams. Now it is over to Kathleen Walker Shaw.

SIS. KATHLEEN WALKER SHAW (GMB European Officer): Thank you, President. Congress, from 1994 to 1999 I had the privilege of working with Stephen very closely when he was chair of the Employment & Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament. It was at a time when we did a lot of business on social and employment rights, not least a whole raft of health and safety rights that you enjoy in your workplaces.

Stephen continues to serve on that Committee and we were very proud to see Stephen's great report on the health threats of asbestos go through the Parliament earlier this year. Stephen is currently vice Chair of the wider European Socialist and Democratic Group. Stephen has held the position of convenor of our GMB MEP group for most of his time in Brussels.

However, times have changed in Brussels. Our current GMB MEP group is a select group of three, comprising Stephen, Glenis Wilmot and David Martin of a group of 13 Labour MEPs. In the 1990s I can confirm to you that our GMB group alone was 17 members of the European Parliament of a wider Labour group of 62. Congress, this shows us the importance of your votes in the European elections. This is not an election for trade unionists to sit out. I hope that next year, in 2014, you will get out and vote for our Labour MEPs. Good trade union MEPs who want to help us Europe cannot do much if they are not part of a wider majority group within the European Parliament, so we really must realise how important our voice is.

Stephen's commitment and natural understanding of trade union concerns has stretched not just to his representation of us as GMB members but far more widely to supporting other unions in Europe, such as the ETUC and internationally through the ITUC as well.

Stephen, we know that the pressure that has put on has not always been easy, but can we say how grateful we are that you have always been there for us and our trade union colleagues internationally, because often we really don't know what we would have done without you on so many occasions.

At the next election Stephen will have clocked up an amazing 30 years in the job, and what a great job Stephen has done. Stephen has decided not to seek re-election in the 2014 European elections, which take place next May, and if anyone deserves a rest, Stephen, it's definitely you. Thank you, Mary.

THE PRESIDENT: Stephen I would like, personally, to thank you for the help and support you gave me in Europe when Helmut Kohl and John Major were trying to take away the transfer of undertakings. As a result of that meeting with you and myself, we went and sat down and amended some of those regulations as to what should be taken into account when awarding a contract. That was the effect on the community and unemployment. I, sincerely, thank you for all the help that this Union got on that

particular issue. Thank you very much. (*Applause*) Stephen, we are going to miss you greatly, but we hope to continue to work with you in your future path, as we sense that you are not ready to hang up your boots just yet.

Stephen on behalf of Congress and everyone at GMB Congress, can we thank you for your support to us all, and wish you and your family all the very best for the future. (*Applause*)

I now ask Stephen to address Congress.

BRO. S. HUGHES, MEP: Thank you very much, indeed, Mary. Brother and sisters, Congress, it is a great honour and a privilege for me to be here to address you in Plymouth. That was quite a build up. I hope the speech lives up to the profile you have built for me. I should have been in Bristol today but, instead, I sat on a train for six-and-a-half hours travelling from Darlington to Plymouth. You might ask why? First, of course, it was because of the wonderful people who are in Plymouth and in the Wales and South West Region. Secondly, to speak at the Congress of the best trade union in Europe, but the real region is the remarkable and legendary persuasive powers of Kathleen Walker Shaw. I would like to place on record my thanks to the GMB generally and to Kathleen Walker Shaw in particular. Kathleen heads up the GMB office in Brussels. I would like to thank the Union for maintaining that office and strengthening its presence in Brussels over the years because it has been invaluable. I would like to thank Kathleen for all the support that she has given to us, the members of the GMB group in the European Parliament in our legislative and policy-making work. Not many of you will fully appreciate the positive benefits that her work in Brussels will have brought to your in your daily lives and to those of your families but, believe me, it is very real and tangible. I would like to thank the GMB and Kathleen most warmly. (*Applause*)

I would like to paint, briefly, a picture of the institution I work in just to give you an image of the environment in which our GMB and other Labour members are working so that you can put it into context. Imagine a big room, something like *this*, and I am going to tell you about a meeting of the Socialist Group, much bigger in the days that I am recounting than it is right now. In that room, it is chaotic, because anybody who wants to listen to the debates that are going on has earphones and a little dial to dial a language to listen to their particular language. Everybody else is doing what people do in politics, which is that they are gathered in little cliques and corners – it is what people do in trade unions as well – plotting and counter plotting. At this point in this particular meeting on this particular day, the women President of the group, Pauline Green, looked around for the next speaker on the list, who was a guy called Willie Golak, the leader of the German delegation, who should have been on the front bench but instead he was right at the back of the room talking to a group of people. So Pauline said, “Willie, it’s your turn. Are you going to come down to the front?”, but Willie reached for the nearest microphone and said, in his very best English, “No, I will stay here and speak from the backside.” (*Laughter*) I thought at first it lacked honesty in politics, but it did not. A little learning can be a dangerous thing.

I will try not to do what Willie said he was going to do on that occasion in the next few minutes.

Let me start by giving a brief report on what the GMB group has been up to. As Kathleen has said, the group is far too small. It comprises of only three members now and we need to put that right at the European Parliament elections next may. There are, as has been mentioned, only three of us; me, Glenis Wilmot, who is the leader of the European Parliamentary Party and David Martin, the longest-serving Scottish Member in the European Parliament. Glenis is an excellent leader for our group of only 13 Labour MEPs in the European Parliament, which is far too few. We need to increase that number at the election next year. She has done a phenomenal job of raising the profile of our delegation in the work of the Socialist and democratic group in the European Parliament. She sits on the NEC, she is now invited to all Shadow Cabinet meetings and, let me tell you, she is an excellent channel of communications but does not put up with any bullshit. She is famous for not putting up with any bullshit.

She is also a leading member of our Environment and Public Health Committee in the European Parliament. She has been doing excellent work on a whole range of issues, such as on clinical drug trials and the European Emission Trading Scheme, which one of the important cornerstones of our climate change policies. She has been working on the marketing and use of medical equipment, which might sound a little arcane. What's that about? Actually, it is continuing work on a piece of law that I put in place five years ago now about introducing safe-needle technology, to make sure that we reduce the one million needle-stick injuries that workers were suffering at that time in Europe. We are trying to make sure that we eliminate needle-stick injuries by introducing safe needle technologies.

Like much of the work we do, the direct link it can have with people at work might not seem apparent at first. That is just a typical example. Glenis is an outstanding member of the European Parliament.

David Martin is a leading member of the European Parliament's Trade Committee. He works hand-in-hand with the Union in our attempts to try and block the EU-Colombia Trade Agreement. Sadly, we failed on that. It did go through against our wishes in the European Parliament, but we are now working to try to block its ratification in national Parliaments. David is also taking a leading role now at the beginning of the talks around the EU-USA Trade Agreement. He was speaking in the Parliament just last week on the need to ensure that we do not end up with an agreement that does what NAFTA in North America did for employment and social rights at work. We need to safeguard absolutely the rights that we have established and won in Europe.

As far as I am concerned, I continue to serve as the first Vice President of the Socialist and Democratic Group in the European Parliament. That is the second-biggest group inside the European Parliament. There I look after economic, employment and social policies, internal market policies and education. Subjects that I have been getting my teeth into recently include the report that Kathleen mentioned, namely, asbestos. Ironically, the very first report I did as a member of the European Parliament way back in the mid-1980s was on asbestos. I was pressing then for the complete banning on the marketing and use of all asbestos in Europe. This one is about trying to deal with the continuing problem of the amount of asbestos that is locked up in our infrastructure; our schools, hospitals, public buildings and private homes across the European Union.

Another thing I have been working on is the Posted Workers Directive, to try to make sure that workers who are posted from one country to work in another have guarantees on their basic employment rights and pay. Remember the Lindsey Oil Refinery dispute. The Posted Workers Directive was at the heart of that dispute. I am also working on the need for a social pillar in Europe's economic and monetary union, and I have been working with Kathleen and others to try and make sure that the reform of Europe's public procurement rules take account of social, employment and environmental considerations. We worked on this package of law over a decade ago and successfully introduced a clause on sheltered employment schemes to safeguard the position of Remploi. Sadly, this Government have walked away from the provision that we built into European law that would have allowed the continued successful operation of Remploi. That is an absolute disgrace.

We are also working together on the issue which has just been mentioned in relation to one of our resolutions in the last batch of motions, namely, the issue of TUPE regulations and the change in the employment contract of security staff inside the European Parliament. I will continue to work with the Union to make sure that those workers receive the justice that they deserve. *(Applause)*

I mentioned that the European Parliamentary Labour Party is small, but it does punch above its weight. Other members of that group are working on a whole range of very important issues. Our members have played a leading role on, for example, limiting bankers' bonuses, separating out the banking and casino-activities of banks, tackling tax evasion and avoidance, improving the energy efficiency of buildings, tackling early school leaving and on and on. There is a great long list of very important things that we have worked on successfully that affect all of our lives.

The Socialist group as well punches above its weight. We are the second-biggest group, as I have said, but we need to increase our size in the Parliament next year. Let me give you three examples of how we have led the way on changing ideas and thinking at the European level. One is on austerity and the pace of debt and deficit reduction. We said right from the beginning that, of course, high levels of debt and deficit are a major problem, which need to be overcome, but you don't do it overnight. You need to time it carefully and target it very carefully over time to avoid, for example, the massive damage to the public services that we have been seeing. If a family runs a massive credit card debt, that is a problem, but you do not try to pay it off in six months by starving the children. You pace it far more carefully. This week an announcement has been made that the European Commission is granting an extra two years to a group of nations to increase the time over which they reduce their debts and deficits. That is an argument that we successfully deployed, and one that, at long last, has now been put into effect. What a pity it took so long. What a pity that we have seen so much additional suffering when that could have been avoided.

A second example is the Financial Transactions Tax, sometimes called the "Robin Hood Tax". We were arguing for this four years ago. We were told at the time that it was a pipe dream that would never happen. Now we have a proposal from the European Commission. We have 11 Member States going ahead. We, on our form of FTT, estimated that we could raise Euros 180 billion a year. Imagine what that could do in terms of ensuring high levels of quality-public services, and also in reducing the amount of financial speculation.

The final example I mention is on tax evasion and avoidance. Three years ago we commissioned a study which showed Euros 1 trillion – one thousand billion Euros – a year in the European Union is being lost because of tax evasion and tax avoidance. Now it is suddenly top of the agenda. Imagine if we had done something three years ago. There would be Euros 3 trillion additional tax take if we really had policies that bit and drove down tax evasion and tax avoidance. So we are winning the arguments but, unfortunately, it takes for ever because the right of centre-dominated European Commission and the majority of governments really don't believe in this stuff. They drag their feet at every stage. We, therefore, need to radically shift the political spectrum to the left at the European level to make sure that these policies are fully implemented and as quickly as possible.

If we can shift that balance, there is a whole range of things that we want to do. Let me give you just a flavour. The outstanding issues for this year alone include the framework that we have been calling for on information and consultation of workers to anticipate and manage industrial restructuring. This report got a massive majority earlier this year. We are pressing the Commission to act. Another is a new health and safety strategy. For the first time in almost 25 years the European Commission has called a halt in the programme of health and safety work at the European level. We are insisting that we need a new strategy to deal with, for example, working with nano materials, endocrine disruptors and muscular-skeleton disorder. Those are examples of the range of problems that still need to be tackled.

Other outstanding issues are the revision of the Working Time Directive and getting rid of the individual opt-out on that Working Time Directive; a framework for social services of general interest, to make sure that we protect both the quantity and quality of social services of general interest within the European Union, and the final one that I will mention is revision of our 2004 Directive on the Protection of Workers from risks related to carcinogens and mutagens at work.

However, we want to go way beyond that. We are arguing that we need a different framework for action at the European level. Why is it that the obsession with making sure that deficits do not exceed 3% and that debt does not exceed 60%? We are saying that we should take that further. We want to see binding targets. We want to see a 75% employment rate within the European Union. We want to see an unemployment rate of no more than 5% in any Member State of the European Union. We want to see 6% of national GDP invested in education, 3% of national budgets invested in research and development and

a reduction of people at risk of poverty and exclusion down to 20% by 2020 and 15% by 2030. These are the things that really matter. These are the things that we need to deliver for the future.

We also want Euros 10 billion to be allocated to the new European Youth Guarantee. It is an absolute disgrace that 56% of young people are now unemployed in Spain, and that figure is even higher, at over 60%, in Greece. We really have to do something about that massive waste of human potential and the misery that it represents.

The final example I will give you is that we say so that we need a binding target for all Member States to reduce the gender pay gap by 2 percentage points each year. They are the targets that really matter. We want European minimum standards for childcare and parental leave. We also want to make sure that we have 40% women on the boards of listed companies throughout the European Union. The list is much longer than that but I will leave it there. There is a huge agenda to be addressed. We need your help to do that. Many of you will soon be filling out ballot papers to decide the order of Labour candidates for the European elections next year. Where you have a GMB candidate, and we have worked hard to make sure that there are GMB candidates in as many regions as possible, please vote for that person no.1 on the list. If you do not have a GMB candidate, make sure that you vote for a good strong trade unionist. They are the people who will work for you in Brussels, who will deliver for you.

Europe matters. We have already delivered, as has been mentioned, a number of things in the past: rights for temporary agency workers, for fixed-term contract workers, for part-time workers, work information and consultation rights, anti-discrimination laws, parental leave, annual leave entitlements and a whole lot more besides that. We have delivered and that cannot easily be taken away. Cameron would like to repatriate powers from Brussels, but one of the one thing he wants to repatriate is the European Social Chapter. He has got some disappointments coming his way, I am glad to say, because there are no takers for that idea in continental Europe. They are not about to support the idea of a sweatshop Britain off the shores of continental Europe. *(Applause)*

I was very pleased to hear the debate a few minutes ago supporting our continued active membership of the European Union. That is vitally important for the future. In my own region, Nissan directly and indirectly employs some 17,000 workers. They made it clear that without our participation in the European Union they would have not decided to have based themselves in the north-east of England. Add to that, Ford, Toyota and a whole list of other companies, you begin to get a glimpse of the potential damage that could be done by a reckless gamble on a referendum of the sort that Cameron is proposing.

As to UKIP – I thought that not many of you would be tempted – some people will be tempted to vote UKIP in the European elections next year. Please try to persuade them not to. UKIP is your enemy. They have opposed every one of the progressive policies that I have outlined here today, and they will continue to do so. Let's make sure that they don't get any votes at all next year. The important thing is to get as many good, committed trade union candidates at the top of the list as possible to deliver for you in the next five-year European Parliament, beginning in May of next year.

I would like to thank the GMB from the bottom of my heart for the support that they have given me in all of my years in full-time politics. Without that help and support I could not have delivered many of the things that I have been able to deliver in the 30 years that I have been a member of the European Parliament. I thank you on my own part, but for all of the millions of workers who have benefited as a result of your work. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Stephen, thank you so much for your speech. You must have thought on occasions, "Bloody GMB. What am I doing?" with the amount of work that we have given you over the years. Stephen, you have never let us down. To show how much we care and value you, you are to be awarded the GMB's Gold Badge of Office. *(Presentation made amidst applause)* We also have a bottle of

Scotch to drown our sorrows from GMB Scotland, and an up-to-date book on the History of the GMB. Thank you. We wish you well.

Stephen, that MEP wasn't the only one who made a blunder. I was in Europe at a meeting and a French Minister who was giving us his history. He said that his mother was an Alsatian. We all started barking and he could not find out why. Eventually, he realised that he should have said that his mother came from Alsatia. Anyway, Stephen, thank you very much, indeed. You are a valued friend.

This is the final announcement. You will be pleased to know that there will be no 7 o'clock tonight. Let me remind you that there is a delegate questionnaire in your wallets. Please return this to the free tea and coffee stand or else you will get no more this week in the Exhibition Hall. There will be a prize draw for three bottles of whisky.

For those who wish to stay, we have a special screening of Ken Loach's new film *The Spirit of 1945*, which will be shown in the main hall. This documentary depicts the coming to power of the post-war Labour Government, which was full of hope, with the central idea of common ownership, where production and services were to benefit all. It shows the creation of the NHS, nationalisation of coal, steel, rail, road transport, electricity and the housebuilding programme. How I wish '45 was back again. Congress, I suspend Congress until tomorrow morning at 9.30. Thank you.

Congress adjourned