

**DAY 3
GMB**

ANNUAL CONGRESS 2014

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

.....

Held in:

**Capital FM Arena,
Nottingham**

on:

**Sunday, 8th June 2014
Monday, 9th June 2014
(Tuesday, 10th June 2014: Sectional Conferences)
Wednesday, 11th June 2014
and
Thursday, 12th June 2014**

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**PROCEEDINGS
DAY FOUR
(Thursday, 12th June 2014)**

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**FOURTH DAY'S PROCEEDINGS
THURSDAY, 12TH JUNE 2014
MORNING SESSION**

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Come to order, Congress.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PRESIDENT: While you are settling down, I've got a couple of announcements to make. First of all, I've still got this silver bracelet. If you don't claim it, it's going in the pawn shop.

We have a birthday today in the Hall. Can you all wish Northern delegate, Tommy Earl, affectionately known as "The Earl of Carlisle", happy birthday. He is 50 today. Happy birthday. *(Applause)*

The winner of the draw for one night's free bed and breakfast at Wortley Hall is Paul Ramsay from Northern Region. *(Cheers)* Please collect at the stall, Paul.

Someone made a cash withdrawal from a machine in the venue but left the money behind. It's been handed into the Congress Office. Please come and collect.

Some cash was found outside the venue, which has been handed into the Congress Office. If these are not claimed, the money will be equally allocated to the three bucket collections.

Congress, this is the last day of a very heavy week. So we will get moving. Will the little groups at the back, please sit down. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves last night. *(Cheers)*

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 6

THE PRESIDENT: I now call Helen Johnson to move Standing Orders Report No. 6. Helen.

THE CHAIR OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE (Sis. Helen Johnson, Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move SOC Report No. 6. President and Congress, withdrawn motions: Branch Accounts Fit For Purpose from Midland & East Coast Region was withdrawn from the floor during debate yesterday. I move SOC Report No. 6.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Does Congress agree. *(Agreed)* Helen, thank you and for all of you in Standing Orders for your work this week.

Standing Orders Committee Report No. 6 was CARRIED.

ADDRESS BY SIS. MONICA SMITH, NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, it gives me great pleasure to invite a certain lady to address Congress. She works so hard for the retired members. Monica Smith. *(Applause)*

SIS. M. SMITH (Chair, Retired Members Association): President and Congress, it is, indeed, a privilege to be invited to the rostrum to give an update of the RMA activities since we last met in Plymouth. The

National Committee discuss everything, from pensions to care homes, from benefits to travel and, of course, the general election, which is not very far away. I do know that I am speaking to the converted. Although we have done reasonably well in the local and European elections, we did expect to do better. We have to get the message across to our members to be prepared to fight for what is legally theirs – a fair day's work for a fair day's pay.

They say that employment is on the rise. If that is the truth, then why do we still have soup kitchens and food banks? Why do we still have dole queues and our young people sending in CVs that employers can't even be bothered to answer. We also have zero-working times, where you finish at any time of the day.

Congress, we are being dragged back into the past with trade union rights representing our members a thing of the past. Congress, Thatcher was a Sunday school teacher compared to Cameron. Last November we sent to the Houses of Parliament to meet our GMB-sponsored MPs. After queuing for a long time to get inside, to our dismay we were informed that there was a three-line Party whip out, so we only saw one MP, really, and her time was cut short. So all in all it was a bit of a damp squib because our delegates did not get the chance to put the questions and get the commitments that they were looking for. Never mind, the next time we will invite them to our meeting where we can lock the doors until we do get answers and commitment. *(Applause)* Who says that you can't teach an old dog new tricks?

Next week the National Pensioners Convention is holding the Pensioners' Parliament in Blackpool where we hope many of our retired members will attend and walk proudly behind the RMA banner which will be held high for all to see. I hope it keeps fine for us. Anyway, in October the RMA is holding its own conference in Manchester with delegates from around the regions putting their motions forward. The RMA is pleased to have the full support of the General Secretary, Paul Kenny, and our National President, Mary Turner MBE. So we are hoping that Mary will Chair the conference and Paul will be in attendance to address our Conference.

A big thank you must go to our national co-ordinator, Gerry Nelson, for the work he does on behalf of the RMA; to our Chairman, Derek Baker MBE, for keeping the committee in check, and our Treasurer, Brian Adams, who watches over our finances. Also thanks must go to all the National Committee members who travel from all parts of the UK to attend meetings.

Colleagues, let me leave you with these thoughts. The RMA not only fights for the RMA members of today, but also for better conditions for our retired members of tomorrow. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Monica. You are a very committed lady.

Congress, before I move on to Congress business, we have to draw the raffle on the questionnaires. We will draw two raffle tickets. I will ask Paul to draw. *(The draw took place)* Bro. Andy Thompson from GMB Scotland has won the SIM Card loaded with £100, and Bro. Kevin Baker, from Birmingham & West Midlands has won the Galaxy Tablet. *(Applause)* Will you collect your prizes from the TPO.

We now come to Employment Policy: Rights at Work and to Composite Motion 4.
This section also contains Motions 91, 92, 63, Composite Motion 5 and Composite Motion 6.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK
TRADE UNION RIGHTS & ANTI TRADE UNION LAWS
COMPOSITE MOTION 4

C4. Covering Motions:

- 58. ANTI-TRADE UNION LAWS (*London Region*)
- 59. TRADE UNION RIGHTS (*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*)

TRADE UNION RIGHTS & ANTI TRADE UNION LAWS

This Conference is appalled that an inquiry is being held by this Tory-LibDem government into trade union tactics that could see an end to our right to strike and right to protect.

As austerity continues and millions of people face falling real wages, unemployment, part time or casualised low paid work, the need for strong union organisation is clear.

This Congress is appalled by the Government's anti-Trade Union Laws and attitude and is determined to fight these Tory attacks and will unite with other unions to ensure they are stopped.

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Move London Region to Second

(Carried)

BRO. B. KIRKHAM (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Composite 4, Trade Union Rights and Anti-Trade Union Laws.

Forty-three years ago, the anti-trade union Industrial Relations Act became law with its anti-strike provisions, put in place by the Tories completing what Labour's In Place of Strife had set out to do. Some activists may question whether a survey of the explosive events following that period is only a trip of nostalgic reflection of a bygone era. Pivotal to those struggles was the role of the shop stewards. The shop stewards articulated the developing militancy of its membership, like we have seen today. In the past we saw the likes of protest and solidarity strikes in support of stewards. Later, in the 1980s, Thatcher and her successor, John Major, strengthened the anti-trade unions with eight shorter and specific pieces of legislation, which had been attempted and failed a decade earlier.

Thatcher's anti-trade union laws remain a shackle both at local level and in terms of more generalised action today. Defiance of such laws, like in the '70s, may prove necessary again, when they act as a barrier to workers defending against measures and attacks from the Coalition. Whether or not there are contrasts between the 1970s to day, there is one common enemy: a Tory Government offloading an economic crisis on to the backs of the working class. Diverting attention away from this, the Tories have repeatedly attacked and smeared the actions and strategies of the trade unions. The Government's announcement of an inquiry into trade union tactics is further proof of its determination to undermine the right to protest against austerity. The inquiry into the Grangemouth dispute and allegations of leverage tactics and vote rigging with the Falkirk CP to secure the seat of Unite's favoured candidate was one of those cases, demonstrated by the fact that the appointed chairman is the former QC for British Airways, who led the attack on Unite during the previous dispute between Unite and BA in 2011. Maybe the Government should ask questions of its own strategy – the so-called support for rogue employers and their inappropriate or intimidatory actions, blacklisting and the storm in the Falkirk teacup, where the unfettered power of one non-resident's actions in holding the country to ransom, quoting our General Secretary: "That is the real scandal at Grangemouth."

Millions are facing a fall in real wages, unemployment, part-time or casualised low-paid work and the rape and destruction or privatisation of the welfare state is standing in need of trade union organisation and the right to protest more than ever. Congress, we should call for the immediate reinstatement of the previous level of facility time to enable workplace organisers to function effectively for the benefit of all workers, and campaign for mass co-ordinated and sustained action to resist and oppose any attempt by the Government to further regulate the already anti-trade union laws. Instead of capitulating to Tory taunts, we should call for the Labour leaders to galvanise the entire labour Movement against the Coalition's austerity programme, arguing for an alternative of socialist policies. Please support. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder.

BRO. G. HARRIS (London): Congress, I second Composite 4 – Anti-Trade Union Laws. Trade union rights are human rights. They are stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organisation Convention and a host of international human treaties. However, over the years, with past and present Governments, there continues to be a reluctance to remove some of the draconian anti-trade union laws. The Tories are constantly bleating in the House of Commons to increase anti-trade union laws in their 2015 manifesto. It is clear that the Tories will restrict trade union rights if they gain full control of the Government. We can't let this happen.

The facts are that it was Thatcher who introduced anti-trade union laws, but Cameron wants to go even further. Cameron believes that the lawful rules on the balloting benchmark needs to be tightened up, so that those union members involved in strike ballots must have a result of more than 50% of the membership affected. As Paul Kenny recently stated, "If more than 50% is going to be the benchmark for democracy in this country, then it means that no MPs will be sitting in the House of Commons as none of them get more than 50% of the vote in their bloody elections." Again, one rule for the Tory politicians, another for the trade unions.

What about Cameron's mates who lobby and buy favours from the Tories, many of whom have a direct interest. Just look at the healthcare sector. Look at having a meal with Cameron for £250,000 in Downing Street while our members rely on food banks. It is a disgrace. It is clear that the Tories are attempting to stop trade unions from organising by bringing in more laws to restrict us, when all we are trying to do is to represent our members and society. The best way to stop Cameron from implementing his 2015 election manifesto is to beat the Tories at the next General Election and get the vote out for Labour.

However, a message to you, Ed, and the Labour Party. If you really want trade union members to engage and individually affiliate to the Labour Party and then campaign to win elections for Labour, then give our members the respect by removing Thatcher's anti-trade union laws in the first term so that we can stop the increase of abuse of working people and build both the Union and the party. Please support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)* Is anyone against? In that case, I will now put the Composite 4 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? Carried.

Composite Motion 4 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, before I move on to call the mover of Motion 91, as you are aware, this morning we will be joined by Ed Miliband who will be addressing Congress as our guest. Please ensure that you treat him with respect, as you always do. Thank you.

The next order of business is for this Congress to send our support to the firemen and women who are in dispute today for justice and fair play. We will make sure that that a support document is sent, because we do have a lot of members also in the Fire Brigades Union.

**CHANGES TO THE TRANSFER OF UNDERTAKINGS (PROTECTION OF EMPLOYMENT)
REGULATIONS 2006
MOTION 91**

**91. CHANGES TO THE TRANSFER OF UNDERTAKINGS (PROTECTION OF EMPLOYMENT)
REGULATIONS 2006**

This Congress does not welcome some new provision in TUPE Regulations, which come into force 01/10/14 in the Security industry. The purpose of TUPE is to protect employees if the business in which they are employed changes hands. Its effect is to move employees and any liabilities associated with them from the old employer to the new employer by operation of law.

While handling tax breaks to millionaires, this Tory-led government has announced policy after policy designed to make it easier and quicker to throw ordinary people out of work. The new changes are made on the basis that the current TUPE provisions are “overly bureaucratic” and “gold plated”. The changes include: enabling renegotiation of terms derived from union collective agreements one year after the transfer.

Congress calls on the GMB to lobby Government to delete or amend the statutory notice in order employers fully discharge undertaking and employment rights are fully protected.

GMB LONDON SECURITY BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. BYRNE (London): Congress, I move Motion 91 on the TUPE Regulations. I have been asked to move this motion by the London Security Branch but, unfortunately, they appear to have got the dates confused and the new TUPE Regulations referred to in this motion are already in operation. In saying that, I hope to have pre-empted the inevitable qualification from the CEC. The only purpose in coming to the rostrum is to encourage everyone here to continue to protect GMB members whenever the new TUPE Regulations impact upon them.

The most recent piece of legislation allows employers to re-negotiate the terms and conditions that transferred one year after the transfer, as long as the outcome does not leave the transferees with less favourable conditions overall. This could be used in some instances to harmonise conditions with other staff in the new company and, in some cases, it might even prove to be a useful tool. However, it is clearly something that is open to abuse as the term “less favourable” can be interpreted in many different ways. Hence, our challenge is to maintain our links with the GMB members who transfer, to recruit the people working alongside them and to be prepared for any moves by the employer to interfere with the TUPE arrangements. It is absolutely vital that we are organised in this manner so that we can understand all the different rates of pay and other terms and conditions that apply to both the transferred staff and their new colleagues so that we can properly protect our members when the employer attempts to use this new law.

Finally, and in line with what Nina said the other day about preventing problems arising the first place rather than trying to repair the damage afterwards, we need to remain constantly vigilant and ensure that the Tories do not water down TUPE to such an extent as to render it meaningless and unfit for purpose. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. Seconder? (*The motion was formally seconded*) I move now to Motion 92 to be moved by Southern.

THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL FEES ON DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS MOTION 92

92. THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL FEES ON DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS

That since 29th July 2013 workers are now charged a fee to submit an employment tribunal and additional fees when the claim is heard. These costs can total up to £1200.

The first data released by the government after the introduction of the fees show some worrying trends. The number of single claims submitted to ET's has historically been around 4500 – 5000 per month. Following the introduction of the fees system the number of single claims dropped to 3,645 in August and only 1,117 in September.

In the months prior to the introduction of fees the monthly average for sex discrimination claims was just over 2000, yet in December this dropped to a very worrying 129 claims

This conference does not believe that this decrease is as a result of there being less claims and employers no longer discriminating against workers.

It is clear to this conference that the fees are having a direct impact on access to justice especially in relation to discrimination.

This conference calls on the CEC and the national political department to Publicise the data which shows that the impact of the introduction of fees is detrimental to access to justice

Put pressure on the government to review the impact of the fees and argue that the fees should be reversed

Put pressure on the Labour Party to make repealing of the fees a manifesto commitment

K19 LONDON SW GENERAL BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. WIJE (Southern): Congress, I am moving Motion 92. A few years ago the Government established an Independent Equalities Review to investigate persistent causes of discrimination and inequality in British society. The final report of the IER in 2007 found widespread, entrenched and persistent forms of discrimination and inequality. It is a long list of findings, but let me summarise three of them. Firstly, the report held that disabled people at 30% more likely to be out of work than non-disabled people with the same qualifications, age, place of residence and so forth. Secondly, the report held that at the present rate of progress it may take more than 75 years for women to achieve equal pay, that is despite the Equal Pay Act being in force from the 1970s. Thirdly, the report held that people with multiple markers of discrimination are more likely to be out of work. So, for example, the older, disabled, female of ethnic origin is more likely to be out of work. Rather than seeking to strengthen discrimination law, the Coalition Government have, instead, implemented more barriers to access injustice and discrimination claims, the most devastating of which is the implementation of tribunal fees. During the consultation, the calls for certain types of claims and claims below a certain value to be exempt from the fees fell on deaf ears, so now, a woman who is dismissed when she tells her employer she is pregnant or an epileptic who is dismissed because he cannot drive, or a 60 year old who, after 40 years service is dismissed, whereas someone with two years service is kept on – these are all claims brought by Southern Region members – so for each of those, it will now cost £1,200 in tribunal fees to take any one of those cases to court. That £1,200 applies regardless of the merits of the claim, regardless of the value of the claim and regardless of ability to pay. Add to that the new ACAS Early Conciliation and Procedure, which is mandatory, so unless you comply you cannot bring your claim; add to that the new procedure where a judge can look at a claim and chuck it out if he thinks it has got no reasonable prospect of success; add to that the fact that you cannot now fax or email ET1 forms to the tribunal; add to that the slashing of legal aid and the removal of funding for law centres and CABs, it is no surprise that there has been a 79% drop in the numbers of claims being brought.

The reality we are now living in is that unscrupulous employers can discriminate, safe in the knowledge that access to justice is out of reach for many people. The first step in restoring access to justice is for the Government to carry out a full consultation in respect of the impact of tribunal fees, and I call on the Government to do so. I also call on the Labour Party to make repealing the tribunal fees, in all discrimination claims, a manifesto commitment. Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. C. WATTS (Southern): Congress, I second Motion 92. Three years prior to the introduction of the tribunal charges there were 200,000 cases lodged with employment tribunals. There were 180,000 and 190,000 cases lodged respectively. This number is set to drop to below 50,000. The Minister of Justice, when these figures were announced, stated that this astronomical drop is largely as a result of the improving economy. Well, I think I can put forward another scenario. If you have got someone who is on a minimum wage, a zero-hour contract, living from day-to-day, being treated badly by his employer and is more interested in putting food and breakfast on the table for his kids, is he really going to want to spend £1,200 on a speculative case at a tribunal or is he going to be more concentrating on living day-to-day? Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) Thank you. I now call Brenda Fraser to speak on Motions 91 and 92.

SIS. B. FRASER (CEC, Manufacturing): President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC, asking you to support Motions 91 and 92 but both with qualifications. On Motion 91 the qualification is that changes to TUPE introduced on 31st January 2014, changes that the motion rightly criticises, are not limited to the security industry, as the mover has now stated. Colleagues, they apply to all areas of the economy. Whilst the Government was restricted by the constraints of the European (Acquired Rights) Directive, the new rules on TUPE damage collective and individual rights. They are difficult and complex to follow, and I can only highlight some of them.

Collective consulting rights in respect of TUPE in relation to redundancies have been weakened. The re-negotiation of terms derived from collective agreements to take effect one year after the transfer is now permitted. There is a static approach to the transfer of terms derived from collective agreements, meaning that a transferred employee cannot benefit from the subsequent collective agreements negotiated between the old employer and the union where the new employer is not party to the negotiations. Variations to contracts have been made easier, as have dismissal.

The new rules impose limited constraints on management employers in these areas. In essence, the new TUPE rules undermine the central purpose of the European directive, which is to safeguard the interests of employees who are subject to business transfers.

On Motion 92, the qualification is that the GMB policy is to oppose the introduction of tribunal fees generally and not just for discrimination claims. Congress, we were warned that when tribunal fees were introduced in July 2013, access to justice would be denied. This has been borne out by the significant fall in the number of claims being made. Statistics show a 79% drop in claims in the first six months after the fees were first introduced. However, some of this fall might be explained by the changes to the law, such as the two-year qualifying period for unfair dismissal.

Despite some weasel words from the Government about treating the figures with caution because of the exemptions, there has been a dramatic drop in claims. Congress, GMB is calling on the Labour Party to commit to repeal tribunals fees on return to office. So, Congress, the CEC is asking London Region and Southern Region to accept these qualifications that I have outlined. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brenda. Does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Does Southern Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) I now put Motions 91 and 92 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? Carried.

Motion 91 was CARRIED

Motion 92 was CARRIED

THE PRESIDENT: I now ask the mover of Motion 63 from Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to move Zero-Hour Contracts.

ZERO HOUR CONTRACTS

MOTION 63

63. ZERO HOUR CONTRACTS

This Conference notes:

1. The increasing use by employers of zero hour contracts.

This Conference believes:

2. The use of zero hour contracts is not a positive economic innovation. It is insecure work causing stress, worry and social insecurity for millions of people.
3. Workers are often unable to enforce their limited rights under these types of contract, or fearful of doing so.
4. The use of zero hours contracts should be made unlawful.
5. In the absence of abolition, any legislation to restrict the use of zero hours contracts should include measures to provide workers with:
 - a. A statement of employment particulars after a set number of weeks, with a minimum number of hours worked based on the average hours worked and a maximum number of hours that the individual should be available for work.
 - b. An on-call payment for those hours the individual should be available but is not called on to work by the employer.
 - c. A statutory presumption that any individual on a zero hours contract is an employee not a worker or self-employed.
 - d. A prohibition of exclusivity.
 - e. Where no work is provided for a defined period of weeks the worker should be entitled to request a severance payment.
6. Individuals who agree a zero hours contract should only be able to do so after receiving advice from an independent trade union.
7. Where an employer wishes to use zero hours contracts they should only be able to with a collective agreement with an independent trade union.
8. The proportion of workers employed by an employer on zero hours contracts should be restricted.

This Conference resolves:

9. To call for a future Labour Government to abolish zero hour contracts or legislate to restrict their use in line with the above beliefs.
10. To call for Labour Councils to ensure that their commissioning procedures include a requirement that bidders do not utilise zero hour contracts, and to ask GMB Councillors to act consistently with this.

LEEDS GENERAL BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. R. WARD (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Can I, first of all, add to what Paul Kenny said by sending solidarity to the FBU workers as well.

I am moving Motion 63 – Zero Hour Contracts. There are at least 1.4 million workers on zero hour contracts, and this figure could increase by a further 1.3 million as the number of jobseekers face benefit sanctions. Many people are put in an impossible position by Jobcentre staff by being pressured into taking zero hour contract jobs. The Jobcentre staff themselves are bullied into this due to unreasonable targets that they are supposed to meet. Many employers are cynically interested in zero hour contracts for the benefit of their business rather than in the national interest. In our region, this is a particular issue. Recently, members of our Polish and Migrant Workers Branch held a meeting with Shadow Cabinet member, Yvette Cooper. Their experience on zero hour contracts tells a bleak story. One member said that he once complained about his conditions. He never received any work from that company again. Another member was told by a supervisor, “If you don’t work the hours I tell you to work, you know where the door is.”

Congress, fear is a powerful tool. This is modern-day slavery. *(Applause)* Zero hour contracts create social instability. Many people are given only a few hours each week and even when more hours are worked, providing regular earnings is almost impossible. If you are in this market, it is virtually impossible to obtain a mortgage or tenancy agreement. Zero hour contracts also affect the ability of workers to claim benefits. How can a family budget for a future when it is impossible to know from week to week how much they will earn? Congress, this situation impacts on women particularly, especially if they have children. This is not a family life. This is a mere existence. This is a circle of misery that is difficult to break. Zero hour contracts prevent workers from agreeing any other contracts.

Disappointingly, Rachel Reeves, who spoke on Monday, attempted to justify certain zero hour contracts. This is wrong! *(Applause)* As Paul Kenny said on Sunday. It’s quite simple. Just abolish them. Congress, Labour must not let employers get away with this situation. Ed Miliband talks about a cost-of-living crisis, but what Ed Miliband needs to realise is that zero hour contracts are a sickness in the crisis and will never be the cure! All these contracts do is offer workers insecurity and doubt.

Congress, let me tell you what wouldn’t offer workers doubt: a clear commitment by the Labour Party to abolish zero hour contracts. *(Applause)*

BRO. B. GOLDING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Motion 63 – Zero Hour Contracts. As Ryan said, zero hour contracts should be outlawed. They are akin to slavery. The arguments for them don’t stack up. Annualised hours could easily replace them. Rachel Reeves is out of touch. Hopefully, Ed Miliband isn’t out of touch and the next Labour Party should ban them. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to come in? *(No response)*. In that case, I call Composite 5 to be moved by Southern Region, with priority in debate to Birmingham Region.

ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS SHOULD NOT BECOME THE NORM COMPOSITE MOTION 5

C5. Covering Motions:

- 62. ZERO HOURS CONTRACT *(Southern Region)*
- 64. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS *(Birmingham & West Midlands Region)*
- 65. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS SHOULD NOT BECOME THE NORM *(Midland & East Coast Region)*

68. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS (*Midland & East Coast Region*)
69. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS (*Midland & East Coast Region*)

ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS SHOULD NOT BECOME THE NORM

This Conference is extremely concerned at the growth and increased use of zero hours contracts leading to the disempowerment and increased exploitation of workers and asks that zero hours contracts are not allowed to become the norm.

These are particularly prevalent in industries where workers are already under pressure and often exploited, like security, retail, hospitality and care.

These contracts are blight upon the workplace and the working population of the early part of the 21st century. In 2013 there were over 200,000 people on zero hours contracts. The vast majority of these workers will be desperate for as much work as is available. The flexibility of these contracts in most cases only really benefits the employer.

Workers on zero hours contracts are reminiscent of workers lining up outside of docks during the last century and beginning of this one. Modern day workers awake and stay by the phone in the hope that they will be given some work that day.

This causes harm both to the individual but also uncertainty for their family. It also causes problems for the benefit system which is not nuanced enough to cope with this.

This Conference opposes the use of zero hours contracts by various employers. Employers use zero hours contracts to cut wages, avoid holiday pay, pensions and other benefits enjoyed by employees and agency staff.

Workers on zero hours contracts:

- Work fewer hours on average
- Receive lower gross pay
- Have a lower hourly wage

In most cases it should not be impossible for these often large companies to give their staff guaranteed hours. In lots of cases zero hours contracts are used to control workers as companies know that if workers complain about working conditions or pay they can just stop giving them work.

Workers are also unable to take on other work as they are obliged to be available for work at the whim of the employer and with the high level of insecurity comes the risk of bullying, harassment and stress. How can members be expected to survive when they have no idea whether they are going to get any hours in order to get pay, when they cannot get a mortgage or loan because they are not guaranteed hours.

The rise of zero hours contracts in the workplace is the latest attack on workers' rights and dignity. It's time to end the exploitation. The use of these contracts do not afford our members with the same legal protection as permanent contracts. Moreover, this Conference is of the opinion and notes with deep concern that the steady erosion of Trade Union rights in recent years has greatly contributed to this situation.

There may be cases where zero hours contracts suit both employees and employers. However these are minimal and the very high use of zero hours contracts must be kerbed.

They are supposed to allow flexibility on both sides, however who can afford to turn down work in today's economic state, and if work is turned down, how many times are employees made to feel guilty about it?

Zero hours contracts must be legislated for to ensure that companies do not take advantage. Give our members a chance, and stop employers from using these contracts in order to get labour on tap 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

This Conference calls upon the CEC to use every effort and to campaign vigorously to achieve these aims and for an end to the disgrace in our workplaces of zero hours contracts. Such a campaign must seek equality in employment standards and a level playing field, especially for the young, who are deliberately being discouraged from work!

We therefore call for:

- a full investigation of zero hours contracts, leading to proposals for changes to Employment Law
- a legislative framework which enables Unions to operate effectively in obtaining and defending fair and just working conditions for all workers.

**Midland & East Coast Region to Move
Southern Region to Second
Birmingham & West Midlands Region Priority in debate**

(Carried)

SIS. Z. WARREN (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Composite Motion 5 on Zero Hours. President and colleagues, this Congress calls upon the Government to end the discriminating practice that occurs as a result of zero hour contracts. These contracts do not afford our members with the same employment rights as members with traditional contracts. It is a full calendar week break without any work which brings about a break in their employment. This means no entitlement to maternity, paternity or adoption leave, to name just a few. Zero hour contracts are supposed to allow flexibility on both sides. This same flexibility, where the employee can refuse work or the employer has no obligation to offer it, causes problems around the worker/employee status and the rights of our members. Congress, who can afford to turn down work in today's economic state, and if the member does turn down work how many times are they going to be made to feel guilty by the employer? How many times will the employer let that member decline work before they don't contact them again or they end the contract?

What a surprise it is that the employers who use predominantly zero hour contracts are hostile to unions. I wonder why. How can members be expected to survive when they have no idea that they are going to any hours of work in order to get paid? Getting a mortgage or a loan is hard to near impossible when you are not guaranteed hours of pay. It is difficult to organise workers who have scarcely no money to live on, never mind their Union subscription. Can you imagine wanting to bring a claim against the employer, assuming you are eligible, if you are on zero hours? Do you really think that, if you are on zero hours, you would have spare money to pay the fee to lodge a claim, never mind the further fee when the case is heard? The GMB is member led. Give our members a chance. Stop the employers who use these contracts for their benefit in order to have labour on tap 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, with no consideration to the members on them.

The Office for National Statistics, as you heard Rachel say, says that there are 1.4 million workers on zero hour contracts. It's funny, but when I went to the fringe yesterday their figures were seven million! It's a bit of a difference. When Rachel Reeves spoke, as you all heard, she spoke about the end of abuse of the zero hour contract, not the use of. She spoke about flexibility. Well, Rachel, we don't need zero hour contracts for flexibility. We've got other ways of doing that. *(Applause)*

In the *Daily Mirror* on Monday there was an interesting story on zero hours contracts, and I pinched the quote: "The rise of casualisation, zero hour contracts and part-time jobs when workers need a full week's wage, might be good for the employers but they are terrible for the people." Congress, please support. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Secunder.

BRO. P. SONY (Southern): Congress, I second Composite 5. In the security industry the use of zero contract hours is the norm, even for relief officers. How can they expect to work on these contracts not knowing what hours and what pay they will be getting on their next pay slip? There is also a point where if the employee has an issue with management, then the management will take their revenge by not giving the employee any work, and when they do they have to find the money to travel to their place of work. Then, if they borrow the money, they have to pay it back.

Even the Government are getting in on the act by telling those who are seeking work to take zero contract hours, even though they could be earning more by claiming benefits. We must fight to stop our employers using these contracts and to get the next Labour Government to outlaw them. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Paul. Birmingham, do you want priority in debate? *(Declined)* Okay. Does anyone wish to speak on these debates? *(No response)* No. You are too good. This won't last. I call Composite 6, to be moved by Midland Region, to be seconded by London Region with priority in debate to GMB Wales & South West and Birmingham Region.

ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS & EMPLOYMENT LAW COMPOSITE MOTION 6

C6. Covering Motions:

66. ZERO HOURS, CASUAL CONTRACTS *(Wales & South West Region)*
67. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS *(Wales & South West Region)*
70. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS *(Midland & East Coast Region)*
71. ZERO HOUR CONTRACTS *(Midland & East Coast Region)*
72. ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS *(London Region)*
73. EMPLOYMENT LAW *(Birmingham & West Midlands Region)*

ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS & EMPLOYMENT LAW

This Congress is outraged by the scandal due to extensive use of zero hours contracts being used by established employers. In a time of perpetual financial crisis, it is appalling that this government allows unscrupulous employers to allow profits to be gained at the expense of employment security.

This Conference supports Ed Miliband in his commitment to end the scandal of zero hour contracts within the first Parliament of the incoming new Labour Government or Labour led Coalition and agrees that the next labour government will introduce legislation preventing employers introducing zero hours contracts in the workplace.

This Conference agrees to mount a campaign with the Trade Union and Labour Movement with the objective of zero hours contracts being deemed unlawful, in the first term of office of the next Labour government.

This Conference calls on this government and our Labour MP's to end this era of Zero Hour contracts.

Congress calls to abolish zero hours/casual contracts, oppose zero hours contracts in place of permanent employment and to employ individuals on fair and decent contracts and calls on the CEC to ensure all GMB sponsored MPs vote and campaign in line with this motion and ensures that the full weight of the GMB campaign for the ending of zero hours contracts.

Midland & East Coast Region to Move

London Region to Second

Wales & South West Region, Birmingham & West Midlands Region Priority in debate

(Carried)

BRO. K. DUDDING (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker, moving Composite 6 – Zero Hours Contracts & Employment Law. *(Applause)*

President and Congress, when I was in my early teens, which is quite a few years ago, my uncles were originally in the Royal Navy and, after they were demobbed, they went to work on the docks. They found that life was hard because they did not know where the money was going to come from. They had to stand at the dock gates and wait to see if they were picked to do any work. At work they had to call the gaffer “Sir” and they had to keep their noses clean. In other words, they could not complain about the working conditions or complain about how they were treated, otherwise they were classified as troublemakers and did not get any more work.

Move forward 65 years or more and we’ve gone backwards. But instead of standing at some gates to get work, you now wait beside the telephone. You still have to keep your nose clean and not complain on any issues, otherwise you don’t get any work. Just like 65 years ago, you do not know where you are going to get your money from. So how do you pay the bills and how do you live?

The Government state that they have created 1.8 million jobs, but we know that there are 1.6 million people on zero hour contracts. Some institutions and unions reckon there are, approximately, five million workers on zero hour contracts. Where is the future? We have the sixth richest economy in the world. More millionaires live in the UK than anywhere else in the world. Never mind the millionaires, this country has the most billionaires per head of population than any other country. The 104 billionaires who live in this country have a combined wealth of more than £301 billion, yet some of our workers are forced to get vouchers to queue for food at food banks. I find that absolutely disgusting.

I live in Hull where my branch helps to collect food for one of these food banks, which is a church in the town centre. Just to give you an idea, since December 2011, 8,000 people have used the food banks in Hull. When you think that in England alone the stats state that there are 13 million people are living under the poverty line and, as I said, we are the sixth richest nation in the world. It’s unbelievable. These are figures coming from the Trussell Trust and other institutions, as well as the Union. Let me tell you that 50% of the youth in my home town are unemployed, so how are zero hour contracts going to help them to have a secure future? I don’t think so. People should be able to plan for their future, their family’s future and to help their children to have a future and a quality of life, which includes leisure time, not a future of poverty and uncertainty which leads to an early grave.

I move that the GMB actively campaigns to get rid of zero hour contracts and give people proper security with real jobs and contracts for a better future. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kev. Secunder.

BRO. S. FORREST (London): Congress, I second Composite 6. I think it is a pity that Ed Miliband is not in the Congress Hall to hear the debate and the anger that is being expressed against zero hour contracts. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Ed Miliband is watching this debate in the office.

BRO. FORREST: Excellent. We are very happy to hear that. We are eighth, or whatever figure you want to put on it, richest country in the world, and yet that is seemingly built on the exploitation of our workforce, none more so than zero hour contracts which, as the mover of the motion said, brings such anxiety and stress to our workforce who are on zero hour contracts, waiting by their telephone for an email, text or phone call. It is an utter blight and disgrace on our modern working Britain. This Congress

must demand that the next Labour Government ends zero hour contracts and brings in legislation to make this happen, not at some point in their employment but from day one and enshrined in the employment contract. We want permanent hours contracts with no loopholes. We want a campaign for dignity at work. I urge Ed Miliband to give this Congress today this pledge, enthuse Congress and inspire the hall. All delegates and visitors must speak outside the hall so that we can take this message to the British people. They must be able to tell people that the next Labour government will end the outrage of zero hour contracts with no loopholes in the law. If we take that message out, we can win the next election and we can inspire the British people that the next Labour government will be a real Labour government protecting and developing the lives of working people in Britain. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I call Birmingham Region.

BRO. D. PERRY-JONES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) It is estimated that there are more than one million zero hour contracts currently, with approximately 23% of all employers admitting to having this class of employees on such contracts. They are often used by employers to control and repress employees. If employees do not comply with their employer's requests, however outlandish it may seem, then they receive no work. It is a take-it-or-leave-it situation.

Previously, they were most commonly used in the security industry to, allegedly, allow for the volatility of the sector. They are now becoming more compliant in all sectors. They are also found, most commonly, among those who are on the minimum wage. This group of employees suffer a double hit, and are usually those people who can least afford to be without pay. What we have to remember is that these contracts are used as a tool to transfer business risk from employer to employee. The only employer risk is to increase the possibility that the employee will not be available, but it is a small risk that is easily overcome by employing more people than are actually required. This also gives the employer the added bonus of internal rivalry for work, which increases their hold and power over the workforce. It also leaves the workforce open to abuse. We must also be aware that to get round the stigma that zero hour contracts are attracting employers, and they are looking to engaging staff on smaller contracts of one or two hours. This means you can say that they do not use zero hour contracts, which is of little comfort if you receive two hours pay on the minimum wage.

Congress, we must stand against employers like Next who like to restrict employees to 16-hour contracts on low wages. It was voiced that the Queen's Speech would include the subject of zero hour contracts. It did not do so. It means that this Government think that they have little or no importance. This leaves the GMB trade union to ensure that the next Labour Government puts in place legislation to ensure that every employee in the country gets a full living wage, with enough hours to work, to mean that they can enjoy life and not to worry about where the next meal is coming from. Congress, we need your support in this motion and make the next Labour Government ban these contracts forever. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. I call Wales & South West.

SIS. S. MACARIAN (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, I am speaking in support of Composite Motion 6. President and Conference, I am going to give you a good example of when not to believe something that you read. Last November the Chartered Institute of Personal Development conducted a survey of employers and workers who were using, or being used by, more like, zero hour contracts. It's chief executive, Peter Cheese, concluded that the use of zero hour contracts in the UK economy has been underestimated, over simplified and, in some cases, unfairly demonised. The survey claimed that these contracts which, as we know, are being used increasingly in the catering, leisure, retail and public sector provide flexibility for both workers and employers alike. Workers on these contracts, it was stated, were

more likely to be happy with their work-life balance than any other group. What the survey played down was the darker side of the practice of zero hour contracts. For example, how almost half of workers have their scheduled changed or cancelled without any notice at all, how a fifth or so of them are given little or no notice of cancellation and a large number have their pay docked or some other penalty applied when they are not available for work. Zero hour practices are just another attack upon workers' rights and dignity. It has become the norm rather than the exception in too many workplaces. Let's campaign for tough legal protections which serve to prevent any further rise in the tide of insecurity that they cause to working people. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone else wish to come in on the debate? Come on, then.

BRO. A. STEVENSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am speaking on Composite 6. Firstly, as a first-time delegate, I would like to thank Congress for the welcome I have been given, the friends I have made and the information and education I have received. It has been great. (*Applause*) Thank you.

However, on a less positive note, considering we are having all these debates around the use and abolition of zero hour contracts, I am astonished to find out that the venue we are using now has staff on zero hour contracts. Could Congress look into this situation for the future to prevent any further conflict of interest, and was Congress aware of this when arranging the venue? As Paul has said, there is no place in society for these contracts. They are an abomination and we should ban them. Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. M. LANCASTER (London): Congress, I am speaking in support of both composites. The motions within these composites all call for the abolishment of zero hour contracts. London Region's motion, which is Motion 74 in your final agenda, calls on Congress to support the Zero Hours and Gangmasters Licensing Authority (Extension of Powers) Bills 2013-2014, which would have abolished these contracts. This was a Private Member's Bill, which was first heard in June 2013 and had its Second Reading in February of this year. It was submitted by the Corby MP, Andy Sawford. Unfortunately, the motion was withdrawn because, by the time we came to Congress, these Bills did not receive enough support in Parliament and the Bills were dropped. So, Congress, it must be our MPs who like these zero hour contracts. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Is there anyone else who wants to contribute? Thanks, Mick. Come on.

A DELEGATE (No name or region given): President, Congress and Ed, it's not just zero hour contracts that are the problem. It's getting sent home early from work and pressure being put on people at work to go home early that is the problem as well. We need to consider the fact that people on low hour contracts come under the remit of zero hour contracts as well. So it is a problem. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I am going to call Andy Worth, the Regional Secretary for Midland & East Coast, on the point that was made by that young delegate.

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am losing my voice because of the speaking and other things that we have been doing this week. On this serious matter, I am aware that there are, in every venue in the UK and in every hotel we stay in in the UK, people on zero hours contracts. I do not agree with them. I suggest from this rostrum that the best thing that the staff in this venue could do is join the GMB (*Applause*) and, if they become members rather than non members, I guarantee to fight to abolish zero hours contracts in this venue. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I now call Tim Roache to speak on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. T. ROACHE (Regional Secretary, Yorkshire and North Derbyshire): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC, requesting that you support Composites 5 and 6 and Motion 63 with a qualification. Andy, I am losing my voice as well, so it may turn out that I will be a first-time squeaker.

Congress, Motion 63, rightly, calls for the abolition of zero hours contracts, but it contains some detailed proposals on severance and on-call payments that, frankly, would be difficult to implement. We know of 2.5 million people work on zero hour contracts, and an equivalent number of people work on minimal hours contracts. To those poor workers, it means exactly the same thing. The whole issue of zero hour contracts can be summed up in one word, and that word is “abuse”. It is abuse of workers, whether you are an indigenous worker in an oil refinery in Lincoln or a Welsh person working in an hotel, an Irish person working in McDonald’s or a Polish worker in a chicken factory. It is abuse of all workers, and the criminal act here is that in 2014-Britain they are allowed to get away with it.

However, colleagues, you can’t just examine the issue of zero hours contracts without looking at the wider agenda. That is why the GMB this week has launched *this* document: *How Unions Can Make Work Pay*. Let’s look at pay, for example. The National Minimum Wage has become for most employers the national maximum wage, which is £6.30. If you are criminal enough to be a young person, you only get a fiver an hour. What good’s that if you’ve only got a few hours a week and you have to doff your cap to the employer just to get some work out of them? So is the Living Wage the answer -- £7.65? Already, the Joseph Rowntree Trust and the Living Wage Alliance have already said that getting the living wage would still trap 1.5 million in benefits that they have to claim just to put a roof over their heads and feed their kids. It is a crying shame, colleagues, that it is not going to change.

Then what happens? You have to claim benefits at work and Housing Benefit, Housing Benefit topping up your salary. The sum of £93 billion this Government has earmarked to pay Housing Benefit to people in work this year. Yet they have earmarked only £3 billion to build new houses. Congress, it should be the other way round. It’s gone made. It’s gone absolutely crazy! And who pays for all of this? It is working people. It’s us. It’s taxpayers. Let me tell you that 96% of all new claimants of Housing Benefit in the last 18 months are people in work, so what is happening is that they are claiming Housing Benefits, which are paid by the taxpayers and that is going to landlords, to private landlords because people can’t get a council house because they are only spending £3 billion on building council houses. It’s going to change, colleagues. The whole agenda has got to change. It doesn’t really matter if you haven’t got enough hours or you are on a zero hours contract. How do you get a mortgage? How do you get a tenancy agreement? What do you say when letter comes for the gas or the electricity? Do you say, “I’m sorry I can’t pay it this week because my employer hasn’t given me enough hours.” It’s wrong colleagues, and it is little wonder why Wonga make £1.5 million every week on the misery of our people, some of whom are our members.

We face today uncaring, greedy and unscrupulous employers, as well as shareholders who care nothing about working people. All they care about is the bottom line, their profits. Let’s talk about profits. Employers made £750 billion in profit in this country last year alone. Well, let’s start sharing it. Let’s start distributing it back to the people who make those profits, day in and day out, week in and week out, and that’s our members. (*Applause*) Colleagues, we are going to have to fight for it, because just like health and safety legislation and all the other things, employers won’t just wake up and think, “Do you know what? I’m going to be good to my employees today. I’m going to give them a 40-hour week or a pay rise.” We are going to have to fight like never before. We are going to have to fight for an end to zero hours contracts, fight for an end to casualisation in the workplace and fight for the right of an 8-hour a day contract and a decent salary to go with it.

Colleagues, when you look up at *that* sign saying “125 years”, this is where we started. We are right back where we started. Will Thorne, our great founder, fought for an 8-hour day, and I am standing *here* 125 years later speaking on behalf of our CEC saying that we are fighting again for an 8-hour day. In those days, it was about reducing the working day so you had a bit of time. Now it’s about giving people the dignity and respect that they want. (*Applause*)

I will finish on this on behalf of the CEC, colleagues. We keep hearing – I know that Ed is speaking in a minute – about the Labour Party needing to be bold and radical. Bold and radical! What, to put a roof over people’s head, to give them a decent day’s wage, a good salary and a contract that they know they can be secure in work? That’s not bold and radical. That’s what our members deserve. Please support. (*Applause and cheers*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. Does your region accept your qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I now put Motion 63, Composite Motion 5 and Composite Motion 6 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Is there anyone against? Carried.

Motion 63 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 5 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 6 was CARRIED.

POLITICAL: LABOUR PARTY

THE PRESIDENT: I now call Composite Motion 13, to be moved by Midland Region and seconded by Yorkshire Region. If I am able to, I will then call Composite 14, the Lobbying Bill, to be moved by Southern and seconded by Midland. As Midland doesn’t seem to want to answer, I will call Composite Motion 14 – Lobbying Bill. We will take Composite 13 later.

LOBBYING BILL

COMPOSITE MOTION 14

C14. Covering Motions:

143. OPPOSE GAGGING BILL (*Southern Region*)

144. LOBBYING BILL (*Midland & East Coast Region*)

LOBBYING BILL

Congress believes that the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill, also known as the Gagging Bill, represents a serious threat to democracy. Congress notes that even Jenny Watson of the Electoral Commission has described the bill as posing “real questions around free speech”.

The third part of the Bill is particularly damaging to trade unions where there are proposals to alter the regulations concerning trade union membership records. The particularly worrying aspect of this part of the Bill is the number of people who will be able to look at trade union membership data which will include the government and employers’ agents. This is a direct attack on trade unionists.

Congress resolves to oppose the provisions of the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill which require membership records to be disclosed.

This Conference calls on the Labour Party on its return to Government to repeal the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill forthwith.

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

(Carried)

BRO. C. WATTS (Southern): Congress, please oppose the Gagging Bill. The Gagging Bill or, to give it its proper name, the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill, poses real questions around free speech. Those are not my words. Those are the words of Jenny Watson from the Electoral Commission. Simply put, the Bill seeks to silence Government opposition from campaigning groups, non-government organisations and unions in the run-up to the general election. Last year this Union ran a fantastic national campaign in support of teaching assistants, the like of which would not be possible with this Bill in place. I say “not possible”, but I would like to see them try and stop us. Maybe that is why they bought the water cannons.

This motion homes in on section 3 of the Bill, which allows the Government and employers’ agencies access to our membership lists. This is, undoubtedly, a direct attack on trade unions, and in the wake of the unresolved blacklisting scandal, you can understand why we may be a little anxious.

I would like to say thank you to Paul Kenny, who gave me an update on this situation a couple of days ago. I did say that I had amended the motion. I told him that we have amended the motion to say: “This Congress supports the General Secretary’s right to be sent to jail before handing over our membership list to Tories.” *(Applause and cheers)* He didn’t laugh. He just turned round and said, “Yeah, I would support that as well.” Please support the composite and protect free speech. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I call the seconder.

BRO. J. CLARKE (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Composite Motion 14, the Lobbying Bill. This is a fantastic time. I would like to take this opportunity, because it has already been pledged that Ed is going to scrap this, but there is no reference to section 3 which mentions the trade unions. So if Ed is watching. Nice to see you. I hope you pledge to scrap this when you return when we get you the keys, hopefully, to No. 10 next year. Also, I would like you to make another pledge, which is start listening to the top table and everyone in this Congress Hall because we know what it is about. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR EMPLOYERS TO TAKE ON THE LONG-TERM
UNEMPLOYED AND MANDATORY LIVING WAGE
COMPOSITE MOTION 13**

C13. Covering Motions:

- 142. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR EMPLOYERS TO TAKE ON THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED *(Midland & East Coast Region)*
- 146. LIVING WAGE *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

**FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR EMPLOYERS TO TAKE ON THE LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED AND
MANDATORY LIVING WAGE**

This Conference calls on the CEC to campaign for the Labour Party to adopt the mandatory Living Wage as a policy and introduce into its 2015 Manifesto a policy which would give financial incentives in the form of tax concessions to

employers who take on the long-term unemployed into their employment for at least a 12 month period of work, paid at the Living Wage rate.

**Midland & East Coast Region to Move
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Second**

(Carried)

(The Composite was formally moved)

SIS. S. FORD (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Composite Motion 13. The GMB will continue to fight collectively for wage increases above the minimum wage. Employers must understand that our members' aspirations are clear. Congress, our members must be able to work enough hours and earn money per hour to be free of claiming benefits. This equates to £10 per hour in 2014. I don't think our members will take long to understand this message. However, it may take a little longer for the Labour Party to grasp it. Unless the living wage sees our members free from benefits, a future Labour Government will still be subsidising companies paying low pay. The logic is simple. If a future Labour Government wants money to spend on social policy and improving the lot of working class people, they must stop paying subsidies to employers.

There may be a case for tax incentives for the long-term unemployed to get back into the world of work, but the key issue is low pay. Congress, low pay is the real crime. Low pay blights many communities. Working people spend between 60p and 80p of every pound they earn locally. A living wage of £10 per hour would revitalise many communities. It is time that these economic facts were understood by our colleagues in the Labour Party. Colleagues, please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)*
In that case, we come to Motion 147.

**THE BILDERBERG GROUP AND LABOUR MPs
MOTION 147**

147. THE BILDERBERG GROUP AND LABOUR MP'S

This Conference is concerned about the shady Bilderberg Group and the involvement of past and present Labour MP's with it. This secretive organisation keeps no minutes and most attendees, which include businessmen, military and security personnel, politicians and royalty, tend to be kept secret. Past known British attendees include Margaret Thatcher and Prince Charles. At least one CIA front organisation, the Ford Foundation has given funds to the Bilderberg Group.

Conference believes involvement with such a shadowy, secretive organisation is incompatible with the aims and aspirations of the Labour Party, its members and supporters and should be proscribed. In this light, conference calls on the Labour Party NEC to investigate the links between any Labour MP's and the Bilderberg Group, if necessary, expelling MP's and members with links to it from the Party.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Referred)

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 147. Congress, if you look up "Bilderberg Group" on the internet and you will find claims that it's a new world order, even that they are aliens. In truth, it is an annual meeting of the rich and powerful of, mainly, those from Europe and North

America, with the occasional Asian and South American and Indian. They discuss and plan who knows what, because it is not linked to the media which keeps it secret. The group was set up in 1954 by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands with help from the CIA to counter anti-Americanism, a euphemism for left-wing or progressive ideas. From the off, it has received funds from the CIA via the Ford Foundation. Participants include politicians, royalty, businessmen and military officers. British participants have included Margaret Thatcher, Princes Charles and Phillip, Tony Blair and founder member, Dennis Healey, who said: "To say we are striving for a one-world government is exaggerated but not wholly unfair."

Last year, and possibly even this year, Ed Balls rubbed shoulders with Cameron, Osborne, the IMFs Christine Legard, Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon, and Henry Kissinger, amongst other bankers, business leaders and politicians. Now, Mr. Balls, I advise you to choose your friends a bit more carefully, because Bilderberg attendees, for all their wealth and power, tend not to be very honourable. Past participants have been involved in various scandals, while the present lot brought in austerity. In other words, taking from those with the least while protecting those with the most. Let's not forget either, Comrades, the blood on Henry Kissinger's hands. These are the ones who make the rules, break the rules and still want to act as referee. Should Labour MPs really be having secret meetings with those who oppose the aspirations of our members with those who organise coups, facilitated the deaths of countless trade unionists and, even now, are trying to destabilise the democratically elected government of the Bolivar Republic of Venezuela?

As a teenager, comrades, I moved a similar motion at my CLP. Thirty years later, nothing has changed. Senior Party members are still meeting with the world's exploiters and oppressors. It seems to me that the real participants from our party were not left-wing activists in smoke-filled rooms in back street pubs, but senior MPs in claret-soaked luxury hotels. No wonder we've got a party that accepts rather than challenges the status quo. This must end now. We can't have our representatives cosyng up to these people, and all paid for, comrades, by an organisation soaked in the blood of trade unions, socialists and others from the left.

Comrades, ignore the internet fantasists and the conspiracy theorists. The Bilderberg Group is not the new-world order. It is the capitalist old-world order, defending wealth and privilege against those who do want a new world order, a new world order based on economic, political and social justice for all. That's why participation in this organisation is incompatible with our Movement, our Party. It is the very antithesis of this great Movement of ours.

As far as I am concerned, Comrades, any Labour MP who attends these meetings is consorting with the enemy. Support Motion 147. Let the Labour Party and EC investigate the Bilderberg Group and, if necessary, expel those who prefer to talk to and conspire with the enemy rather than listen to and work with us who are supposed to be their allies. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder.

BRO. B. KIRKHAM (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Motion 147 – the Bilderberg Group and Labour MPs. The shadowy, secretive Bilderberg Group, unelected and unaccountable except to the ruling class, met for the first time in 1954. It's a group that does not publish the minutes of its meetings, nor divulge the nature or content of its discussions and conversations. Neither does it disclose why it is a registered charity that has funded the right-wing in our Movement for far too long. It's a cabal that is involved in decidedly dirty work, dedicated to the derailing of the socialist ideal. The Labour Party and the EC has previously investigated groups like Progress. Now, there's a name so ill-suited with the labour Movement.

Despite concerns over its finances, the NEC allowed it to continue. This was in stark contrast to the show trial of the militant editorial board in 1983, who were expelled despite comprehensively winning all the political arguments. If groups like the Bilderberg Group were simply the chatterati intent on furthering own personal interests we could safely ignore them, but we can't. The capitalist class has taken a great interest over the years in who leads the organisation of labour. The right wing will not give up their present possessions easily. The message is clear. The Labour Party is in dire need of being reclaimed by working class activists. In Parliament the middle-class careerists need to be turfed out and replaced by working class people. In the words of Rosa Luxemburg: "Those who do not move, do not notice their chains." Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I wondered why Midland & East Coast did not come up, because they are always movers and shakers. I am afraid that the mover was in with Ed Miliband, so we will forgive him.

BRO. H. SMITH (London): Congress, you have heard our two comrades echo, quite rightly, the relationship and the reference to the Bilderberg Group. This group of people, and I don't want to use the word lightly – "people" – are entities and their whole concept and programme is destabilising the planet, which means genocide and de-population of our society. They are nothing but a reptilian, non-human concept that should not be part of this human race. They are destructive, and they go far beyond the idea of the Bilderberg Group. They are in line with destruction from The Vatican, right through to monarchy. They are a disgrace to the human race, and I support the idea of getting rid of them from the planet. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) In that case, I will call Gerry Ferguson.

BRO. G. FERGUSON (CEC, Manufacturing): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is asking Congress to refer Motion 147. Many of you in the hall today will, probably, not have heard of the Bilderberg Group. As the motion and the speakers have said, it is a secret society so not a lot is known about it. It's an organisation that was founded in 1954 by some of the most powerful people in the world. Apparently, its members included many world leaders, prime ministers and presidents of all political parties have attended over the years, apparently by invitation only. Past attendees from the UK are thought to have included Gordon Brown, John Major, Mervyn King, the former governor of the Bank of England, so they are powerful people. Not a lot is known about them because at the annual meeting there is no agenda and there are certainly no minutes produced after. So we really don't know what we are up against.

Having said all that, the motion calls for the Labour Party and the EC to investigate links between the Bilderberg Group and Labour MPs. GMB members on the NEC can ask for this, but it would require a commitment from the NEC to undertake such an investigation. We do recognise the very real concern expressed in the motion about the purpose of this group. So the CEC is asking for the motion to be referred because we do not believe it would be in the NEC's gift to dictate what meetings people attend as individuals, but questions should be asked and will be asked by our representatives on the NEC. Congress, the CEC is asking you to refer Motion 147.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Yorkshire Region agree to refer? (*Agreed*) Does Congress accept that? All those in favour say "Yes". Anyone against?

Motion 147 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I now put Composite Motions 13 and 14 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Composite Motion 13 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 14 was CARRIED.

ADDRESS BY THE RT HON ED MILIBAND MP.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, as you see, our visitor has joined us on the stage this morning. It gives me great pleasure to welcome Ed Miliband here to Congress. After Ed has addressed Congress, there will be an opportunity to ask him questions. Ed, welcome. *(Applause)*

ED MILIBAND: Thank you very much. Friends, let me start by saying what a privilege and pleasure it is to be here today. I want to thank Mary Turner for the brilliant job she does as the President of your Union, and on the National Executive Committee. Mary, I want to thank you for your dedication, your passion and your commitment to the labour Movement, to the GMB and to the Labour Party. Let's hear it for Mary Turner, please, ladies and gentlemen. *(Applause)*

I also want to thank somebody else who is a powerful voice for working people, and that is your General Secretary, Paul Kenny. Let's hear it for Paul Kenny, ladies and gentlemen. *(Applause)*

Friends, I also want to pay tribute to you for the work that you do day in and day out at workplaces throughout this country, because the GMB takes a stand for the values of our Movement even when it is hard. We have seen that in the work you have done over the last year, leading the campaign against blacklisting in our construction industry, standing against tax avoidance by some of the world's most powerful firms, and doing all you can to make work pay with your campaign for the living wage. I also want to thank you for something else – for being willing to stand up and play your part in the fight to keep Scotland in the United Kingdom. The GMB has taken a stand and I am grateful to you for doing that. *(Applause)* Friends, while I am talking about Scotland and the debate about independence, let's also stand for this debate being conducted in a decent way. As you know, over the last 24 hours, we have seen the most unpleasant and unseemly attack on J.K. Rowling for speaking out against independence. Friends, that is wrong, and all leaders should say that this has no place in the debate around independence. *(Applause)*

I want to talk to you today about the country that we can begin to build in less than 11 months time after the next general election. I want to talk to you about Labour's cause between now and that election and, more importantly, the crucial cause for your country. You know how your members are feeling. They have been at the sharp end of the cost-of-living crisis, the worst cost-of-living crisis in living memory. As I was arriving here I met a young man from Boston who was talking to me about seeking to organise at Asda and what a struggle it was. He spoke about what a struggle it was for people who were not getting the wages and who were struggling to afford to rent or buy a home. You know that that is the reality of modern Britain up and down this country. More and more people are working all the hours that God sends and are still being left behind. One in five people are now working for poverty in the fourth richest country in the world. Millions more are struggling to make ends meet. You also know that there is a deep sense of unfairness about how Britain is run. Friends, it is not good enough for Britain and it is not good enough for the Labour Party I lead, and we are going to do something about it. *(Applause)*

You know also that these are not just problems for today. They are problems for our country's future as well. Do you know what gets me most about Britain today? It is that for the first time in generations many parents think that their kids are going to have a worse life than them. How do you measure the

progress of a country other than parents believing that their kids are going to do better? People don't believe that any more. We've seen young people unable to get the best start in life. The apprenticeships and secure jobs that people used to rely on do not exist any more. We've seen many many young people unable to afford to rent or buy a home. I call it "The Promise of Britain" that the next generation should do better than the last, and it is being broken. What does all of this tell you. It tells you that this country doesn't work for most working people. The vital link between working people's family finances and the wealth of the nation as a whole have been broken. It is the task of the next Labour Government to restore it. The bond between hard work and fair reward has snapped, and it is the task of the next Labour Government to mend it.

Friends, yes, also inequality has been on the rise year after year, and it is the task of the next Labour Government to turn that tide. (*Applause*) So those are our tasks. I will be clear with you. This requires big changes in the way that this country is run and who it is run for. That is what *One Nation Labour* is all about. But there is one thing that we can be certain of, friends. We are never going to see the kind of action that we need from David Cameron and George Osborne. The reason why they cannot be the solution to the cost-of-living crisis is because they are part of the problem. You know the way that they think a country succeeds. They believe in the old ideas that if a few at the top do okay, then everyone else will, maybe, get a few crumbs off the table. That's why they give the millionaires their tax cuts whilst shamefully imposing the bedroom tax on the most vulnerable people in our country, and the next Labour Government will abolish the bedroom tax because it is the right thing to do. (*Cheers, applause and whistling*)

Here is what they say not just to your members but to working people across the country. While those at the top do okay, they say to your members, "Keep your wages down. Put up with insecurity. Trade in your rights at work, accept the zero hours contract", which is a race to the bottom. Friends, you know and I know that Britain does not need a race to the bottom. It needs solidarity, it needs fairness and it needs a country that works for all.

Let me also say this. Don't let anyone tell you, and don't let any of your members believe, that UKIP has the answer. UKIP says that they want to be the champion of working people, but what do they stand for: charges to see your GP, attacking the minimum wage, bringing back the 11 Plus, tax cuts for those at the top, and what does Nigel Farage say? He wants to keep the flame of Thatcherism alive. Friends, these are not the values of working people and they are no solution to the problem of Britain. (*Applause*)

So, as it always has, it falls to Labour to rebuild our country and to make the big changes we need. I am not going to pretend to you that it is going to be easy. I know the pattern that we have seen in the past with Labour governments. Too often in the past politicians of all parties have made promises before an election and then they have had to admit after an election that it is going to be more difficult. I am going to be straight with you about what we can and can't do. We will face a tough economic situation. It is why we have said we won't borrow more for day-to-day spending in 2015 and 2015, and that we will balance the books in the next Parliament with a surplus in current spending and the debt falling, because it is important for Labour to be credible and credible in the public finances. But don't let anyone tell you and don't ever believe that it means we can't make a difference. We know from our past, we know from the 1945 Government, that even in the toughest times we were able to rebuild our country, and that is what the next Labour government is going to do.

I want to tell you what that means in practice. I want to tell you very specifically what it means, because I want you to know, I want your members to know and I want your friends and neighbours to know the difference a Labour government could make. First, wages. The next Labour government will write the next chapter in the battle against low pay. For the first time, friends, since records began most of the

people in poverty in Britain are in work, not out of work. That is a low-pay epidemic. Here is the thing. It hasn't happened overnight. It's been coming for generations and it shames us all. It is a basic view of the British people that if you work hard, if you put in the hours, you should not be in poverty. It is a basic view of the British people and it is my view as well. That is why a Labour government will take action on low pay.

I want to congratulate the 26 Labour councils which are already leading the way in moving to a living wage. A living wage is good for employees because it means that they can afford to bring up their families. It makes sense for Government by saving money on the costs of subsidising the billions of pounds that is spent on subsidising low pay. It also makes sense for businesses as well, because businesses that are already paying the living wage know it is better for productivity and reduces turnover of staff. That's why in government we will want to help more employers become living wage employers, and why for the first time we will give incentives to employers who do the right thing, because we know that the living wage is an idea whose time has come for Britain. *(Applause)* Working together we will strengthen the minimum wage as well. We all need to take action – government, trade unions and businesses – together to stop those who abuse the minimum wage.

I want to say something about immigration. Businesses that exploit workers who come here from abroad and drive down wages for everyone else is wrong, friends. I am the son of immigrants, and I believe that immigration has benefited our country, but it is part of a progressive Labour agenda, a trade union agenda, to say that it is right to tackle exploitation whoever it affects, including when it undercuts wages. You know that your members are concerned about immigration, not because they are prejudiced but because they are worried about what is happening in the world of work. You hear it in the workplace. I want you to tell them that Labour doesn't stand for cutting Britain off from the rest of the world, but we do stand for fair rules. We want to enforce the minimum wage in every workplace of this country, stopping employers putting 15 people in a house to sidestep the minimum wage and regulating the gangmasters operating in industry, to stop them abusing and exploiting workers. We want to do something else as well. We know it took far too long for the last Labour government to introduce rules on agency work. The next Labour government will not wait or delay. We will act on the loopholes in those rules, which mean that agency work can be used to undermine the pay of permanent employees and that is a clear pledge for the next Labour government. *(Applause)*

We are going to set our sights higher as a country, too. We want to change the way that the minimum wage works in this country. We want to set a clear ambition – a five-year ambition – at the start of each Parliament for the level of the minimum wage by the end of that Parliament, because we know the single, most important truth is that a country can only succeed if those who work hard and do the right things get a fair day's pay. That's why I guarantee today that the next Labour government will increase the minimum wage. We won't just increase it. We will narrow the gap between the minimum wage and average earnings so that we can make hard work pay in our country again. *(Applause)*

These are the values of the British people, that if you work hard you should get a decent reward, and they are the values of the next Labour government as well. Securing good wages for the working people of Britain is also about creating the jobs of the future. The principle of the next Labour government is not just our historic commitment to full employment – of course it is that – but it is also about decent jobs with decent wages. That means successful businesses making profits, creating wealth in a dynamic economy. After the next election, the route to social justice lies through the creation of these well-paying private sector jobs, jobs that help people build a career, a future for themselves and their families, secure and high skilled, like those you have been campaigning for in the construction industry, and getting Britain building homes again. In order to create those jobs, I believe in a simple idea as well. There should be a future for all of our young people, including the 50% who don't go to university. Decent

qualifications, apprenticeships and careers for every young person in Britain is a basic principle of our society and it is a basic principle of the next Labour government. *(Applause)*

Friends, I know that you have just been debating zero hour contracts. Let me just say this. We can't build the good quality jobs of the future when zero hours contracts are spreading like wildfire through our workplaces. That kind of action and exploitation is not part of the modern economy. There is no place for exploitative zero hour contracts in Britain today, because the next Labour government will have a simple rule. If week after week you do regular hours, you deserve a regular contract, not a zero hours contract, and we will legislate to make that happen. *(Applause)*

Friends, creating the jobs of the future means backing Britain's small businesses, too, the businesses that invest, invent, create and sell, that make the opportunities but so often don't get a break themselves. That is why we will cut and freeze business rates for Britain's small firms, and we will do something else, something we know is long overdue in this country, something that matters to workers and businesses alike. We will take on the big banks that still refuse to lend, breaking up the banks on the High Street, establishing a British Investment Bank to support our businesses, creating regional banks in every part of the country, so there are successful companies creating good quality jobs in every single part of Britain, and we don't have banks just gambling with people's money in the City of London. I believe in the same principle that you do. We don't want people and businesses serving our banks. We want banks that serve our people and our businesses. That is the right principle for the future. *(Applause)*

We have to tackle inequality and the cost-of-living crisis. The next Labour government will have a simple principle, and it is a principle that the GMB has talked about for a long time. We will take action on the broken markets that have held back our country for too long, driving prices too high and ripping people off. It starts with the energy companies. We have seen the problem this very week. The wholesale price goes up, your bill goes up; the wholesale price comes down, your bill still goes up. Not under a Labour government. We will freeze gas and electricity bills until 2017 to stop them rising, and we will give new powers to the Regulator to cut prices as well. *(Applause)* But it doesn't stop there.

I think it's time we had a government that faced up to one of the biggest causes of the cost-of-living crisis in our country – the price of renting or buying a home. Friends, there are nine million people renting their homes in the private sector in Britain. Think of the million families in this position, with kids starting school this September, who don't know whether they will be in their house in 12 months time. That is about the epidemic of modern Britain – insecurity! That insecurity is bad for those families and bad for our country. That's why we will give those who rent three-year security tenancies with rent rises that are stable and predictable. When we announced this policy, the Government said it reminded them of Venezuela. I think it is about something else. It is about the minimum sense of decency and fairness that the nine million people of Britain who rent their homes in the private sector have the right to expect, and that is why a Labour government will act.

We will also start building homes again in this country; council homes, housing association homes and homes in the private sector, too. We all know why house prices are out of reach for so many families. It is because there are fewer house completions in Britain today than at any time since the 1920s; that is for nearly a century! That is why the next Labour government have made a commitment that we will build 200,000 homes a year by the end of the Parliament. We will give local authorities the right to grow, and we will tackle the biggest problem we face in our housing market – the problem of developers buying up land, getting planning permission and then sitting on the land waiting for it to rise in value. Half-a-million homes is part of a land bank of this country. We won't let it continue. To those developers we will have a simple message: you either use the land or lose the land. That is the right way to get building again in Britain. *(Applause)*

Friends, we know that we can only make this country strong again, we can only tackle inequality and the cost-of-living crisis if we have strong public services. It is clear that over the last few years people have lost faith in so many of the institutions of Britain – politics, the press and the banks – but amidst all of that there is one public service and one institution that people still have the greatest of faith in, and that is our National Health Service. We created the National Health Service. We invested in it, we brought it back to health after 1997, and, friends, after the next election it will be our job to save it once again. Here is the truth. The NHS is going backwards under the Tories. We have the highest waiting times in A&E for a decade, longer waiting lists, longer waiting times to see your GP and creeping privatisation of our National Health Service. David Cameron said that the NHS was safe in his hands. Friends, he has betrayed the trust of the British people. It will be up to the next Labour government to protect and improve our NHS. Here is what we will do. We will stop the Tory privatisation and we will repeal their Health and Social Care Bill. *(Applause and cheers)*

So those are the things that I want to do in government, that I want to do as Prime Minister of this country. I am not pretending it is going to be easy, but I know what our challenge is. It is a generational challenge, a challenge that countries all round the world are facing. For years, for decades, we have had a country that works well for just a few, but that leaves most working people behind. We have got to turn that round. Here is what we know. We face the fight of our lives in less than a year's time. We know how the Tories will fight that election. We all know the tactics that they will use, how desperate they will be to cling to power. By any means necessary, they will try and win that election. Here is the rub. There is an even bigger opponent at these elections, bigger than the Tories, bigger than UKIP and certainly bigger than the Liberal Democrats. You know from your workplaces, from knocking on doors and the work you do for your trade union and the Labour Party, who the opponent is. It is a sense that nothing can be done, the sense that Britain's problems are too big and that our politics are too small. We all heard it during the recent election campaign. We heard what people said. They have been saying it for years. "You're all the same. You're in it for yourself. None of you keep your promises." We know that that is not right. We know we are different and we have to show it to people, and we can do it.

So I end by saying this. We must remind people that we came into this Party and this Movement for a reason. We came into it because we believe in a vision of a more just, a more equal and a more fair society. We will show people that we can change Britain, that we can rebuild our economy, that we can save our National Health Service, that we can make Britain a fairer, more prosperous and more equal place, and that we can do that even when times are hard because that is what previous generations did. That is what we did after 1945. We didn't let tough times make us lower our ambition. We raised our ambition. That is our mission. We want a fairer society, a more justice society and a more equal society. That is our cause. Together let's make it happen. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

THE PRESIDENT: Now we have another session. There will now be a question and answer session with Ed. There will be a standing mike in the centre of the aisle. I will call your name and region and then you will ask your question. I don't want too many questions on the same subject, even though it may be very important, but I want questions and not a long speech. Then many more people will be able to come into the session. I will now join Ed Miliband over on the side of the stage.

I ask Dean Gilligan from London Region to come to the mike, and then I will call Kevin Baker from Birmingham & West Midlands and then Colleen Harwood from Midland & East Coast. I will be taking the questions in blocks of three, Ed.

BRO. D. GILLIGAN (London): Ed, we know that if the Tories get in we will definitely have lost our NHS. Could you inform Congress on how you are going to persuade Britain – it’s okay talking to us because we’re on your side – that you are going to save the NHS and how you intend to get this over in the mind of the public. On top of that, are you also going to sponsor me for my walk from Jarrow to Parliament? If not, join me.

ED MILIBAND: Definitely. I will definitely sponsor you. You’re on. I’ll make sure that Paul Kenny sponsors you as well. (*Cheers*)

THE PRESIDENT: And I’ll collect it.

BRO. K. BAKER (Birmingham and West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Ed, zero hours contracts have been abused by unscrupulous employers to force their wages down and to exploit people. We heard from Rachel Reeves on Monday that Labour plans to introduce the right to request a permanent contract after a certain period of time. In the real world, the one we work in, we know that the same employers will just terminate their employment and employ another person on a zero hours contracts. What will a Labour government do to stop this exploitation? (*Applause*)

SIS. C. HARWOOD (Midlands & East Coast): Ed, can you confirm if Labour wins the 2015 General Election that you will make a firm commitment to ensure that the living wage is enshrined in law, replacing the minimum wage with the living wage, and stopping the taxpayer subsidising unscrupulous employers who refuse to pay their employees the living wage?

ED MILIBAND: Thank you, colleagues, for those questions. On the first question about the NHS, which was a really important question, so let me answer it in a bit of detail. What we know is going on in the NHS – you see it yourselves because you are at the sharp end of it – is, basically, the Bill that they passed and they said this in the notes to that Bill: “We want to bring the same model that we had for the privatised gas and electricity companies to the NHS.” The gas and electricity companies have been a great success, haven’t they, and now they want to apply their model to the NHS. What that means is fragmentation and privatisation. That is exactly the wrong thing in terms of what the NHS needs. I can tell you what it needs, and Andy Burnham has led the way on this, and that is integration. What is the biggest challenge that our NHS faces? It is an ageing population, which is a great thing for the country, but we know that the NHS is having to deal with people in their 80s and their 90s who don’t just have physical needs but care needs. So what is the answer to that problem? We want an integrated service, including mental health, which is incredibly important and is still undervalued in the NHS – in fact, it is massively undervalued – physical health and care for the elderly all brought together, and that’s what we are working on. But the only way you can do that is by putting the principles of co-operation, care and compassion back at the heart of the NHS, not the principle of privatisation, competition and markets, because that is not going to solve the problem of the NHS. I want to be clear about this. That is an absolutely firm commitment about repealing the Bill and putting the right principle back at the heart of the NHS. It is the right thing for the NHS and it is the only way to make the NHS work.

The other thing we have to do, and this is something that I have heard a lot of about hospitals recently, is to improve services in the community, because in the end a hospital is only as good as the services you get outside of the hospital. If your GP access isn’t there, if care for the elderly isn’t there and if the prevention is not there in the community your hospital is never going to be able to cope. That’s what’s happening in A&E and that’s what’s happening in lots of hospitals. It is about having a properly integrated services and decent standards.

Let me just say to the questioner and to all of you, the NHS will be an incredibly important issue at the next election. In the three TV debates at the last general election – maybe you won't believe this – there wasn't one question on the National Health Service. We cannot have that happen again at the next election because I really fear for the future of the NHS under David Cameron. Look at the mess they have made of it in the last four years. Think of the wreck they will make of it in the next five years, and we have to stop it happening. *(Applause)*

On this question about zero hours, this is one of the biggest issues that our country faces. Let's be clear about this. Politics and Westminster have been too slow to wake up to this issue. It has not been part of mainstream debate. We have put it on the agenda. You put it on the agenda before we did, but it is absolutely fundamental. I met a guy in Nottingham recently during the election campaign – this is the picture, which you know from your members and the people you are trying to organise – who, every morning, gets up at 5 am, rings up to find if there is work and more often than not there is no work. That is 21st century Britain and it is wrong. It is not the way that we are going to create a secure, stable and successful country. That is why we are going to legislate and it is a clear commitment that we are going to legislate on zero hours. We have looked at a lot of the evidence and we have listened to what people have said. Rachel set this out, and I will come to the specific question in a second, but this is really important because it is the core of our proposal. We will say that there will be an absolute right to a regular contract, not a zero hours contract. So if you are doing regular hours, your employer won't be able to say, "Just keep doing a few hours a week", month after month after month and then not get a regular contract and you have to stay on a zero hours contract. You then come to the question of how do you stop employers just churning people round after a few months, 11 months or whatever it is? You do so through legal provision. We are absolutely committed to making sure that this is part of the legislation, and we want to work with you to stop that happening because we are determined to make sure that we change the business model of employers – we know there are some employers who do this – who just rely almost exclusively on zero hours contracts. We have got to change it and we are determined to do it. We will do whatever it takes to stop this scourge of zero hours contracts spreading, as it is doing, like wildfire through our economy, and we want to work with you to make that happen.

On the issue of the minimum wage – this is, again, a really important question – we are committing to, Colleen. We are committing to raising the level of the minimum wage. This is a really significant commitment that we have made. At the moment the Low Pay Commission, which does good work, sets the minimum wage year by year. I don't think that is good enough any more to tackle the problem of low pay because 21% of people in this country are being paid less than the living wage. We can't carry on like that. We just can't carry on like that as a society. That is why we say that a Labour government will set a target for the minimum wage at the beginning of each Parliament and it will be the job of the Low Pay Commission to meet that target. We haven't just said, "We'll have a target." We have said that we've got to get closer to average earnings. At the moment the minimum wage is about half of average earnings, but we want to get closer to average earnings, and we are going to consult with trade union colleagues and others to work out what that figure should be. So it is a clear commitment to raise the minimum wage over the course of the Parliament closer to average earnings.

In addition to that commitment, we will encourage more employers to pay the living wage. As I said in my speech, the lunacy of low pay in this country is that the Government are doling out billions of pounds of subsidies to employers so that they can pay the minimum wage and not the living wage. Why don't we change that situation around, because the Government are going to make lots of savings – about 50 pence for every pound that an employer spends – and give a small subsidy to employers to get them over the line, to get them to be a living wage employer, and then change things. It is a higher minimum wage closer to average earnings and it is about a living wage. It will at the absolute core of my government that we tackle the scourge of low pay in Britain. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Next, I call GMB Scotland, Yorkshire and GMB Wales and South West.

BRO. M. McCULLOCH (GMB Scotland): President, Congress and future Prime Minister, Ed, what is your message to the people of Scotland in the rundown to the Referendum to convince them to vote “No” to independence on 18th September?

BRO. W. GASKELL (GMB Wales and South West): Ed, now that the matter of the affiliation process has been resolved, what is your current view regarding the link between the Labour Party and trade unions?

SIS. C. GAVIN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Ed, the free movement of labour in the European Union has had a very negative effect on many working people, especially in the Labour heartlands. Employers are using this to allow them to push down wages and terms and conditions. We want to know where does the Labour Party stand on this?

ED MILIBAND: Let me ask you a question. Tell me about your experience during the election campaign on immigration.

SIS. GAVIN: It’s UKIP all the way. All we’ve heard is UKIP, UKIP and UKIP. We are fed up with hearing about UKIP coming out with all of these comments like, “We don’t want immigrants.” We want to know what Labour will do about it. *(Applause)*

ED MILIBAND: Okay. Good question. Let me answer those questions. On Scotland – this is really, really important – I want to spend some time on this issue because it is so important. First of all, I want to thank all of those trade unionists who are standing up and saying, “We’ve got to stay together.” I really want to pay tribute to the GMB for this because, let’s be honest, there’s been a debate in the union movement about how much to come out and take a position on this, and you’ve had the courage to take a stand, which I think is the right thing to do. Here is my explanation for this, and I think it is about the cause that we believe in, which is social justice.

If you have two countries – Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom – competing against each other, what is that going to do for businesses that say, “We want to drive down wages”, and for businesses that say, “We want to drive down tax rates. We want to make terms and conditions worse”? You are going to have two countries competing against each other and businesses will try to play them off against each other. Don’t believe me when I say that, but just think about what Alex Salmond has committed to. What has he committed to doing in an independent Scotland. It is not about putting more money in the NHS and it is not about investing in education. His first priority is a 3 pence cut in corporation tax. That is billions of pounds that are going to go to the large corporations and will not go to working people. So you think, “Hang on a minute, there’s something up here.” This guy claims to be a great left-winger and his first priority, with all of the problems we’ve got around us, is cuts in corporation tax! Then you come to the 50p tax rate. We are going to restore the 50p tax rate. You would think that Alex Salmond, who claims to be a great left winger, is he going to bring in the 50p tax rate? No. He hasn’t committed on the 50p tax rate. When he was asked about this, he said, “I don’t want to put Scotland at a disadvantage to the rest of the UK when it comes to the high earners.” So what he was actually saying is that the top rate of tax will be set by the Government for the rest of the UK and not the Government in Scotland, because he doesn’t want the high earners crossing the border. Then you think, “Well, actually, think about the history of Britain; the National Health Service, workers’ rights, the minimum wage.” We did those in a united Kingdom, not in separate countries. That is the argument. It is a social justice argument. Lots of our colleagues, including Gordon Brown, John Reid and others have been taking this argument forward.

How do we create social justice across the United Kingdom? How do we create it in Scotland? We are much better off together, and we are going to keep making this argument because it is an argument that we must win.

On the question about the link, I am absolutely clear, the link is a vital part of Labour's future. The trade unions didn't just found Labour but they are vital to its future. The reason why you are vital to its future is because of your members and who you are. The collective voice is important but your individual members are also incredibly important, but what is the problem about politics? The problem about politics is that it seems out of touch with working people. So why on earth would you break the unique link that the Labour Party has with working people at a time when politics is felt not to be in touch with working people. We have had our debates, like we always have in the Labour Party whenever we make changes, and I am grateful to Paul for making those changes possible, but the task begins now, because we have agreed the changes. The real task is, over the next five years, for me – this point has been lost in this debate but it is really important – to persuade people to persuade your members, and you as well, I hope, that it is worth them being part of the Labour Party.

The old system was that it took the trade union link for granted and the affiliation. Now we are going to have to prove to your members that we are different, that we can make a difference, and I think that that is what is exciting about this. I am determined we do it. So whether it is on zero hours, the minimum wage, the living wage, what's happening in the workplace and skills, we are going to have to show to your members that it is worth being part of the Labour Party.

By the way, let me say one other thing on this. We need more people from diverse backgrounds in Parliament, and that includes people with working class backgrounds. That is incredibly important to me. *(Applause)* We do need to change that. Again, let's be honest about this. Over successive generations Parliament has become less and less like that but it has to become more like that.

On the question about free movement – the reason why I asked you about it was to get your sense of the experience on this – I am pleased that you asked this question because it is very, very important that we talk about immigration as a Party and as a Movement. By the way, there is a real role for the trade unions in this. There is a right-wing position on immigration which says – this is the Farage position – “We've got to pull up the drawbridge, close our borders and then we will succeed as a country.” I am the son of immigrants, but I believe that immigration has benefited our country. It has made our country richer economically, culturally and socially. But here is the rub. You've got to open but you've got to have solidarity as well. This is about exploitation. There are concerns about the pace of change and we have got to deal with those, and I will come to those in a second. Regarding this point about exploitation, no party in Britain is going to stand up for taking action against exploitation other than the Labour Party. UKIP is not going to do it because they believe in the free market. The Tories aren't going to do it because they believe in the free market, and goodness knows where the Lib-Dems stand. It is only Labour that is actually going to take action on this. This has got to be our cause and your cause: enforcing the minimum wage, including local authorities having a role for enforcing the minimum wage, not just a few people in the HMRC. We must stop the rogue landlords, dealing with gangmasters and dealing with the loopholes in agency work. That's the first thing.

Secondly, on this free movement question. We have said that when new countries come into the European Union significantly longer controls are needed. We know the problems that were created in 2004, and the pace of change has been too fast. Thirdly, the issue of benefits and entitlements is important. So you should have a longer time before you get your Jobseeker's Allowance if you come over here. So we have to deal with entitlements, exploitation and the pace of change. I think we can do all of those things.

The last point – this is important – is this. I was in Thurrock just after the European elections, because Thurrock wasn't a place where we did well, but I thought it was right after the elections to go to Thurrock and talk to people there. There is definitely concern about immigration in Thurrock, but there is also equal concern about all of the things we have talked about today as well: wages, housing and all of those issues. You have got to deal with those underlying issues as well. You can't deal with the problem of immigration only by tackling the rules on immigration. You have got to tackle those rules, you've got to have fair rules but you've also got to get people a decent job, a decent home and a decent place in their community. If you do that, you can take on UKIP.

The final point I want to say is that we've got to pull it out where UKIP stands. We really do. Farage dumped a lot of his policies after the election and he came out with two policies: to cut the top rate of tax for millionaires from 45p to 40p, so that is going even further than the Tories, and bring back grammar schools or, rather, I should say, bring back secondary modern schools throughout Britain. That is not a Labour agenda and that is not an agenda for working people. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, we have run out of time. I know that Ed has other appointments. (*Calls of "No"*) Ed has to be at the television studios and he has already run over by 20 minutes.

ED MILIBAND: I don't mind carrying on. (*Applause and cheers*)

THE PRESIDENT: Bloody hell, it's hard enough for the BBC to bring Labour on to the telly. Okay, Ed. We want short questions and short answers.

The first speaker's name I have is Barbara Plant from Southern, and Ian Lowes from North West & Irish Region, and finally in this group Etain Stobbart.

SIS. B. PLANT (Southern): Ed, the Academy programme is privatisation of our education system. The Labour Party is committed to defending the NHS from privatisation and the free market, so why won't it made the same commitment for education?

BRO. I. LOWES (North West & Irish): Ed, local government workers are currently balloting from strike action in opposition to the employers' miserly 1% offer. When these strikes take place, will the Labour leadership declare support for low-paid workers or will the Party leadership repeat the disgraceful comments of condemning the strikes like we heard during the fight to save our pensions? Labour needs to decide whose side they are on. It is either on the side of the workers or the side of the bosses. You can't ride two horses with one arse. (*Applause*)

SIS. E. STOBART (Northern): Ed, our members tell us that they would like to see more radical policies from you, one such policy being the re-nationalisation of the railways and, indeed, power and utilities. Would you comment, please?

ED MILIBAND: Let me deal with those questions. I will go in the order that the questions were asked. On the first question about education – I am really pleased that you asked this question because it is important – we have had this debate about schools in Birmingham, and it is a really interesting debate. All of us will have been concerned about some of the things that we have heard about what has been happening at those schools. As I was saying in the House of Commons yesterday, and Congress may not have seen this, what this fundamentally comes down to is the question of is there proper accountability of schools? At the moment we have a total mess in the schools system. You've got academies, you've got free schools, you've got community schools, you've got foundation schools and a whole range of other types of school. I said to David Cameron: "Tell me, who does a parent go to if they are worried about

what is happening at their school?" In reality, there is no answer to that question because there are about seven different answers and it is not clear that they work. We have said that you have to have over all schools, whether they are academies or whatever type of school they are, proper accountability at local level. That make sense because there is only Michael Gove, I think, who thinks you can run 20,000 schools in England from Whitehall. It is totally unbelievable. What is happening is that the more time goes on in Birmingham and elsewhere, the more it is so obvious that you can't run schools in that way.

In answer to Barbara, who asked the question, we are going to have proper accountability of the whole school system, including academies. That is absolutely the right thing to do and it is right thing to do for our kids.

On the second question, I am really pleased that I took extra time in questions. As you can imagine. Paul Kenny always says that strikes are a sign of failure. The reality is that it is Labour who is in local government. I see it in my own area. I've got to be straight with you about you. In Doncaster we've got £109 million worth of cuts being handed down by central Government. That is what the Mayor of Doncaster, Ros Jones, is having to deal with. So when you talk about the bosses, one of them is Ros Jones, who is the Labour Mayor of Doncaster, who your members and others helped to elect against an independent Mayor, Peter Davies. The answer to this, because we all believe in protecting low-paid workers, has got to be to carry on the discussion between the LGA, the councils and the workforce. That is the only answer because you've got Labour councils and other councils facing these cuts from Westminster and you've got low-paid workers who are in incredible difficulties that we all understand. We've got to see what we can do to protect low-paid workers and we've got to keep those discussions going.

Let me come to the last question on rail, because it is an important question. At the moment, we've got the Government trying to privatise East Coast, and that is completely wrong. East Coast should remain in public hands because it has done a good job in public hands, and it is incredibly important for us to say that. That's why we are looking – this is part of our policy discussions – about what is the right way forward for the railways. You have seen from the position we have taken on East Coast that we reject the old dogma that says private is automatically better, because that is not the case on East Coast and the public has done better when it comes to the East Coast line.

President, let say a couple of things by way of conclusion. First of all, thank you for the kind welcome that you have given me today but, secondly, I really want to emphasise the point that I made at the end of my speech. This is going to be a massive fight between now and the General Election. It is going to be a fight the like of which we can't remember in British politics, probably, for 30 or 40 years, because this is going to be the closest election there has been for generations. I know that you don't agree with everything I say or that you don't agree with everything that the Labour Party does. But what I hope I have shown you today is that there is a common cause and there is a common agenda about the workplace, low pay, housing, fairness, inequality, the cost-of-living crisis and all of those things that your members are going through. I believe that we can put that common agenda into practise in Government, but we can only do it if you carry on doing the work that you are doing. I want to thank you for the work that you did at the recent election. I want to thank you even more for the work you are going to do over the next 11 months, because I think we can change this country for the better. The stakes are incredibly high at the next election, and we've got to make sure we elect a Labour Government. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Ed, would you accept this book from Congress by James Connolly and the trade unions. You can have a little tippie, and every time I shout at you, you can go home and have one. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we will continue with the motions. We move on to item 7 which covers Social Policy: Justice. I will call Motions 198 and 201.

**SOCIAL POLICY: JUSTICE
THE LAW IN PLAIN ENGLISH
MOTION 198**

198. THE LAW IN PLAIN ENGLISH

This Conference believes the justice system is in urgent need of reform to make access simpler, easier, cheaper and, more importantly fairer. Everyone has a sense of right and wrong yet, in law courts, justice is not necessarily about fairness. One of the reasons for this is the way the law is written, full of technicalities and jargon that cause confusion, create loopholes and lead to legal arguments about seemingly obscure points.

In order to redress the balance and to kick-start the much needed reform of the justice system, conference calls for laws to be written in plain English and for the interpretation of the law to be left for juries not judges to decide. This will de-mystify the law making access to justice cheaper and easier for all.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SIS. F. JUMMA (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Colleagues, I am a first-time delegate and speaker. *(Applause)* Ignorance of the law is not a defence, but have you actually seen the wording of any legislation? It's not exactly the most understandable of languages, is it? Who decides what those words mean? Certainly not a jury, supposedly the bedrock of the British justice system. The Plain English Campaign has been fighting for crystal-clear communication since 1979. We want our laws and regulations to be free from gobbledegook and jargon. All this does is further bring up class barriers in our society. This jargon is merely an indication of a failure to think clearly by those speaking it. Everyone should have access to clear and concise information. We all have a sense of what is right and wrong, yet it is judges, not the jurors, who have the power to decide what the law actually means. This problem of incoherent law and obscure legal argument is nothing new. With the number of solicitors and barristers who are MPs, it seems as if they are deliberately making laws difficult to interpret in order to make extra money for their profession.

So how do we resolve this problem of making the law easier to interpret and make access to justice easier for all? By simply making it in plain English, colleagues. We must let juries decide on the interpretation of laws rather than judges. Just a small example of how this can work in practice is our very own rule book. Prior to 2008 the GMB Rule Book was written by a solicitor and it certainly looked like it. Now our Rule Book is in plain English, and whilst it is not the most entertaining piece of literature, it is certainly readable and easy to understand. It is high time that the same principles applied to the laws of the land. With law in plain English it would make access to justice cheaper. It's a win-win.

All of us should be able to understand the law and the justice process should be in the hands of the people, not just the judiciary. In the words of Bob Marley: "Let's get up, stand up and don't give up the fight." Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder.

SIS. M. HILL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)* The law is for the people, that is, us, not just the rich who can afford the best legal representation. The only

way to address this is for the laws to be written in plain and simple English so that all of us can understand it, like me, my speech, clear, simple, but straight to the point. I second this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Maria. I call Motion 201.

**VICTIM PROTECTION SLAVERY LEGISLATION BILL
MOTION 201**

201. VICTIM PROTECTION SLAVERY LEGISLATION BILL

This Conference is called upon to campaign for the inclusion of victim protection in the new modern slavery legislation. As it stands, this Bill clearly fails to address the protection of victims. We need to exclude a person's immigration status when considering whether they are a victim of slavery.

A15 ASDA BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, we should refer to human trafficking by its real name, modern slavery, and we should commit ourselves to lobbying for a new Bill which recognises trafficked and exploited people as victims and not illegal immigrants. In the modern world slavery is hidden underground and is very difficult to detect. We need to raise public awareness of the nature and full extent of this atrocity, committed against some of the most economically marginalised people from Britain as well as the rest of the world. Massive corporations want to make massive profits. Let us not be in any doubt that this is a fundamental cause of forced labour, exploitation, and trafficking, yet this Government looks to blame the victims.

Trafficking victims are all too often treated as immigration cases rather than victims of human and labour rights abuse. This is why charities like the Puppy Project work who with trafficked women report that 28% of referrals to their service are from immigration detention centres or prison. Victims are being falsely identified by the Home Office as criminals and imprisoned or deported only to be re-trafficked and abused all over again.

Congress, this Government are resistant in meeting their obligations in their responses to this issue and they all too often do not appear to address the real problems. The anti-slavery bill is intended to consolidate and toughen existing anti-trafficking legislation but it does very little to protect those who have experienced it. There are serious concerns that vulnerable victims of modern slavery are being denied crucial means of support when they need it because they do not satisfy the new eligibility criteria.

Congress, now is the time for action. This is not the time to turn a blind eye. These people, these workers, need our help. They need compassion from fellow human beings who want to see them live without exploitation. They need independent legal advice at the earliest opportunity and they need more resources for women, including shelters, counselling, and agencies dedicated to helping them to build new lives. Congress, I ask you to support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret. Secunder.

SIS. J. INGLEBY (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, victims of modern slavery are victims of serious crime. They find themselves in this position because all too often they have been caught undertaking illegal activities at the behest of their controller. This could be for many reasons, such as false immigration documents that were given to them by their perpetrator. Once liberated from their

conditions of slavery, it is an affront to the dignity of victims of modern slavery that they find themselves subject to the criminal justice system, not as a witness but as defendants being detained or imprisoned. Congress, this adds greatly to their stress and trauma. We need to act. We need to do everything we possibly can to ensure that the inclusion of victim protection is the new modern slavery legislation. I second this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jackie. Anyone like to come in on the debate? No? Thank you. I now call on Brian Farr to speak on Motion 198.

BRO. B. FARR (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, the CEC is asking you to support Motion 198 with a qualification. The motion is calling for laws to be written in plain English and for interpretations to be left to juries, not to judges. The motion is calling for a wide-ranging change across a whole legal system. Congress, naturally, we support the general principles of the law, it should be more readable to ordinary working class persons. In our own field the GMB book has been written in plain English. I presume you have all read it from cover to cover! It took a lot of hard work and a lot of soul searching to write this.

Employment laws and the original idea behind employment tribunals were for the tribunal to act as an industrial jury but over the years with the law becoming more and more complex, with tests in unfair dismissal, and the reduced role of lay members, tribunals have come to look more and more like courts. But the qualification relates to the fact that there are practical areas, such as tax legislation and complex fraud cases, where the general principle becomes more and more difficult, more difficult to apply. These cases are way beyond a lot of people. For the average person, the complexities involved in such cases can sometimes be difficult to deal with. For example, unless a person is familiar with tax law, they may not recognise the outwardly innocent looking employment arrangement for being the scam that it is, to deny workers the right and to defraud the Revenue. There is no easy answer to this because once juries are removed from some types of cases, where might the line be drawn? Juries have an important role in safeguarding freedom in the legal process and the GMB naturally supports this. Therefore, the qualification recognises that there may be areas where the general principle of plain English will be difficult to apply. Congress, the CEC is asking you to support Motion 198 with the qualification I have just outlined. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brian. Does Yorkshire Region agree to accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Colleagues, the CEC is recommending support for both these motions. I will put it to the vote now. All those in favour of Motions 198 and 201, please show. Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 198 was CARRIED.

Motion 201 was CARRIED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I ask the movers and seconders of Motions 207, the Midland Region, 208, London Region, and 209, London Region, to come to the front, please.

LACK OF PROVISION PROVIDED TO FEMALE YOUNG OFFENDERS WITHIN THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM MOTION 207

207. LACK OF PROVISION PROVIDED TO FEMALE YOUNG OFFENDERS WITHIN THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM

Young women make up approximately 25% of all young offenders yet there are no provisions, interventions or support provided by the authorities as standard practice nationally. This needs to be addressed if we are to reduce reoffending of young women and prevent further criminalisation due to the current practices not best meeting their needs.

This Conference therefore asks Congress to support a campaign to lobby MP's and the Youth Justice Board to address this failing to young women.

GMB NOTTS POLICE STAFF BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. K. HUMPHREYS (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, I have worked in the justice system for eight years and with young offenders for the last four. I have seen a lot of good practice across the system and there are a lot of dedicated people going beyond the call of duty to deliver a good service to young women, but the reality is they have to go beyond the call of duty because the standard provision is not meeting their needs.

There are only a handful of youth offending teams and services nationally that offer a service tailored to the needs of young women. Too many girls and young women are being let down by the system. Girls like T, she has just turned 13 and she was first brought to the attention of the services because of her risky sexual behaviour when she reported being raped by her 20-year old boyfriend. She later retracted this allegation and said that she had consented. She then came under the youth offending system when she was arrested for an assault charge. Part of the conditions was that she should report to an attendance centre every week. Her mother stopped her from attending as apparently she had been forwarded photos of her semi-naked daughter taken by males that she had met at the centre. This resulted in a breach of her order and T being returned to court and further criminalised. Girls like T live in every town and city in this country. Many young women commit crime as a cry for help or to try and access services they would not normally have access to. They are clearly offenders but also a victims, abused and falling foul of predatory sex offenders.

A decade ago Baroness Jean Corston was asked by the Home Secretary to conduct a review of vulnerable women in the criminal justice system. The Corston Report was published in 2007 with a number of recommendations. One of the key recommendations was the need for gender specific interventions in the youth justice system. Baroness Corston recognised that the reasons boys and girls offend are different. Young men tend to commit crime in a group and usually as a result of peer pressure whereas young women commit crime out of need because they are being exploited by partners or as a cry for help.

Gender specific interventions are not about there being a nice justice system for women just because it makes us feel good. This is about recognising that the vast majority of young women who find themselves in the criminal justice system are there because they are being exploited by abusive and manipulative young men. So to try and address their issues by forcing them to turn up once a week to a room full of, in their mind, manipulative young men, can only ever be counterproductive. Young women make up 25% of all young offenders. This means that a quarter of all young offenders are not having the appropriate level of intervention and work done with them to address their offending behaviour. We are now seven years since these recommendations were made and in the youth justice system not one has been met. We are still operating a youth justice system that treats its female young offenders as male offenders, working with them as male offenders.

We, the GMB Union, need to lobby the MPs in Parliament now and take it to the next Labour government to ensure that this level of inequality is eradicated from the youth justice system and to ensure that these

young women get the tools, knowledge, and support, and intervention to help them into a crime-free life as valued members of society. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Secunder.

BRO. J. EVANS (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, this motion is about ensuring that these young women have the tools they need to succeed and to live an offending-free life. It is not about treating them different to young men. It is not about treating them the same as young men. It is about treating them fairly and equally in accordance with their needs. This is what equality means. The youth justice system should not be exempt from equality. I urge you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done. Motion 208.

DEATHS IN CUSTODY MOTION 208

208. DEATHS IN CUSTODY

This Congress notes that since 1990, over 2,200 people have died in police custody, in prison and in secure psychiatric care. Even in the most controversial deaths, it is exceptionally rare for police or prison officers or psychiatric hospital staff to face prosecution.

INQUEST, the organisation that supports bereaved people following a death in custody, has found that a disproportionate number of those who die in all forms of detention or following contact with the police following the use of force or serious neglect are from black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. INQUEST is concerned that institutional racism has been a contributory factor.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission's (IPCC) published statistics on deaths in police custody for both 2011/12 and 2012/13 revealed that nearly half (7 out of 15) of those who died in or following police custody were identified as having mental health problems.

The United Friends and Family Campaign was formed in 1997 to stop deaths in custody and to ensure that when death do occur, the whole truth as to how they were killed, by whom and why emerges. Since being established UFFC's consistent challenges to the Police Complaints Authority, its successor the Independent Police Complaints Commission, the Crown Prosecution Service, and the Government have made an impact.

This Congress resolves to give practical support to the United Families and Friends Campaign, and actively campaign to raise awareness of the issue in wider society.

HOLBORN BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London): Right now some people are seemingly getting away with murder and they do so knowing that very little is being done to stop them. Since 2004, over 800 people have died during or soon after contact with the police. People from an Afro-Caribbean background account for about 3% of the population of the country but make up 20% of all deaths. Take one example, Sean Rigg, a musician who suffered from schizophrenia. Following deterioration in his mental health Sean was arrested by four police officers. He was handcuffed face down as officers leant on him for eight minutes. He was then placed face down with his legs bent behind him in the back of a police van and transported to Brixton Police Station. During the journey his mental and physical health deteriorated. Despite this he was left handcuffed alone for 10 minutes in the back of the van outside the police station. When he was

taken out he was extremely unwell and not fully conscious. He was carried to the station custody suite where he was left placed on the floor handcuffed and unresponsive. Only after 25 minutes passed was a doctor called to examine Sean. One of the arresting officers was captured on the station CCTV telling the doctor that he was faking it. When the doctor did examine him he found that his heart had stopped and he was not breathing. Sean Rigg was officially pronounced dead.

The IPCC launched an investigation into Sean's death. After 18 months it concluded that there was no evidence of wrongdoing and that the police had acted reasonably and proportionately. However, an inquest jury concluded that the police had used unsuitable and unnecessary force on Sean and that the failings of the police contributed to his death. The IPCC had actually completely failed properly to examine the most basic evidence in its possession, including police incident records, photographs of the restraints, and CCTV footage. Time and again this organisation has shown itself not to be on the side of the victims but on the side of the officers it is supposed to investigate. Maybe the fact that the majority of senior investigators in the IPCC are ex-police officers has something to do with it. It could be because it cannot even compel serving police officers to answer any of its questions, which is absurd. Imagine you are in a disciplinary situation at work where you refuse to answer questions. Would you be able to keep your job?

A review was carried out in 2012 and concluded the IPCC had committed blunder after blunder and there had been inappropriate conduct by the Police Federation. A commission on mental health and policing was also established to examine the conduct of the police in dealing with people with mental health issues. It highlighted many shortcomings in the performance of the police, including its disproportionate use of force and restraints. Astonishingly, this case has faced another more recent scandal, the officer involved with Sean's case, PC Andrew Birks, resigned from the police before any misconduct claims could be brought against him and the police accepted his resignation. But two weeks ago, following public outcry, the Metropolitan Police were forced to rescind his resignation and he is back under investigation by the IPCC. You would have thought they would have learnt something, wouldn't you?

The United Friends and Family Campaign was formed to stop deaths in custody and to ensure that when deaths do occur the whole truth as to how they were killed emerges. The campaign's consistent challenges have made an impact and changes have been promised but the campaign believes that nothing less than the prosecution of the killers will do. This is not just a community issue but also a trade union one as such a tragedy can strike anybody. Take, for example, Roger Sylvester, a popular union member, who died in custody in Tottenham after being restrained by police. Whilst promises have been made to improve the system, deaths in custody still continue and to date no police officer has ever been convicted, even when unlawful killing verdicts have been returned at inquests. We can never forget those that have been lost and as trade unionists who believe in social justice we must not allow the Government to do so either.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Matt.

SIS. J. PARSONS (London): President, Congress, I would like to tell you about someone I worked with. Billy had a long history of self-harm and suicide attempts. He was an alcoholic drinking about 500 units a week. That is two bottles of vodka a day washed down with some strong lager. He was polite and charming when he was sober but when he was drunk he changed; he went out and committed crimes and offences. He did not really remember what he had done but he always pleaded guilty and took responsibility. Billy was 14 years old. By the time he was 18 Billy had been to rehab. He had had a community detox package. He had been through medical withdrawal in a young offenders' institution. A month after his 18th birthday Billy had a row with his mum, not surprising, she was quite vulnerable too. Billy got drunk. Billy stole a TV and Billy got caught. I went to see Billy in the court cells. He was in a

good mood. It was the first time I had ever seen him in the cells when he had not self-harmed. He gave me some messages to pass to his sister, who was his guardian. I left the cells, passed on the messages, and then I phoned my manager and said, "Billy's going to kill himself." We called the prison. We could not speak to anyone because he had not been booked in. We left messages. We called the mental health team. We spoke to the duty governor. He wrote his name down wrong. Less than 72 hours later Billy was dead. He hung himself. I remember the call from his sister. It was like listening to a wounded animal howling in pain. She never got her answers. His suicide note disappeared and the officers had left the service. A pointless waste of a young life. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 209.

POLICE SHOOTINGS MOTION 209

209. POLICE SHOOTINGS

Congress notes the recent events in Tottenham, London in which a police marksman shot and killed a young man, called Mark Duggan who they were following.

Over the past 15 years there have been a number of police shootings in which doubt has been cast at the police version of events. Congress further notes that when such events are investigated by the Police Complaints Commission, Police Officers do not answer questions about those events in an open manner. The Law gives the power to compel officers to come to an interview, but the officers can refuse to answer questions verbally at that interview.

This cannot be in the interests of justice, further it denies the relatives of the dead, faith in the police and the Complaints Commission to reach the truth of such events. The Police and their Masters should not be beyond the Law.

We would therefore call upon the next Labour Government to commit themselves to look again at the whole question of arming the Police and issues such as the training of Armed Response Teams and ask the question is it necessary to shoot to kill these individuals.

EDMONTON/ENFIELD BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. H. MEHMET (London): Congress, we've all heard about and seen the recent events in Tottenham, London, in which police marksmen shot and killed a young man called Mark Duggan. Already in the past 15 years police officers have been involved in 33 shootings that have been made public, so that means the number is higher? Since 1995 a total of 55 officers have fired on and killed members of the public but in only two cases have their names been revealed. In July 2005, Jean Charles de Menezes, a Brazilian national living in London, was shot dead on a Tube train in Stockwell by a Metropolitan Police Officer who thought he was a suicide bomber; two officers fired a shot and neither was identified. In April 1995, James Brady, 21 years old, was killed by the police in an ambush at Westerhope, near Newcastle. The officer mistook a torch he was carrying for a gun; one officer opened fire and one officer again was not identified. The list goes on and on.

At the moment the odds are stacked in favour of the police. It is likely that not only the individual officer will be represented by the lawyer but lawyers at the hearing are also there force, and sometimes the local police authority. The law gives the power to compel officers to be interviewed but the officer can refuse to answer questions verbally at that interview. This cannot be in the interests of justice. Further, it denies

the relatives of the dead faith in the police and the Independent Police Complaints Commission to reach the truth of the events on the day their loved ones were gunned down. The police and their masters should not be beyond the law. There is a tendency for the coroners to be outweighed by the sheer number of lawyers making the application for anonymity. All these legal representatives will have been paid for by the taxpayer.

We call upon the next Labour government to commit themselves to look again at the whole question of arming the police and issues such as the training of an armed response team, and ask the question, is it necessary to shoot and kill this individual. Congress, I ask you to support this motion. I move.
(*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder.

SIS. M. BOWMAN (London): You have just heard from Bro. Hasan Mehmet about the people who have been murdered, gunned down by police who thought they were some sort of terrorists or did they actually mistake something else for a gun? I think that if the police had thought a bit harder, maybe, just maybe, they would not have unlawfully shot these people. My heart goes out to the families who will be without their loved ones at family events and wondering on these special days, "Why? Why did this happen to us?" They may never ever get closure on what really happened on the day their loved ones were murdered, gunned down by people that should be there to protect us, to protect our children and family members. The police are trigger-happy; even officers have said that they need more training. Two weeks firearms training is not enough and one thing they should be taught on these courses is not to place their finger on the trigger unless they are ready to shoot. This will at least lessen the accidental shootings of people that did not deserve to be shot. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

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

SIS. K. HUMPHREYS (Midland & East Coast): I just want to speak about the deaths in custody. Whilst deaths in custody are a very tragic time, they are also a traumatic time for the members of staff and the members of staff are members of the GMB. We have GMB members working in our custody suites day and night trying their best to make sure their prisoners are safe. When there is a death in custody I know of one D. O. that was there for an hour-and-a-half trying to revive that young man. Please, whilst we do have sympathy for the families, do not forget your brothers and sisters at the coalface. Thank you.
(*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SIS. T. CHANA (London): President, Congress, I am supporting Motion 208. Aslam Khan, 29, Delroy McKnight, 29, Vandana Patel, 21, Azamara Sambamba, 32, Jekenda Singh, 37 and Liang He 23. Who are these people, Congress? These are people from the BEM community who have died in police custody in what is called a place of safety. Vandana Patel was only 21 when she was in the police station after being a victim of domestic violence. Her perpetrator was in the same police station. He was allowed by the police to stab her to death. This must stop, Congress. No one was brought to account for this attack. Congress, we need to remember our forgotten brothers and sisters who have died in custody and we need to show solidarity with the organisations that continue the fight. Support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Anyone else? Can I call Evelyn Martin on Motion 208. Evelyn?

SIS. E. MARTIN (CEC, Public Services): The CEC is supporting motion 208 with the following qualification. The United Friends and Family Campaign in question was initially set up 17 years ago as a

network of black families. Over recent years it has become one of many other families-led campaign group formed as a tragic result of those who have died whilst in custody. GMB would be happy to assist in raising awareness of this and other such worthy campaigns through our national and regional equality network and through communications via social media, magazines, or websites. Our qualification is that the CEC would have reservations as to practical support and in relation to the resource that might involve, and how it will sit in with our political campaign. With this qualification please support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Evelyn. Good to see you back, Evelyn. Does London accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you, Matt. I now put 207, 208, and 209 to the vote. All those in favour, please show. Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 207 was CARRIED.

Motion 208 was CARRIED.

Motion 209 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I have two announcements before we move to the next block. Number one, the winner of the iPad is Rosemary Wilkinson, Northern Region. Will you collect that from the Midland regional stall? Number two, the bucket collection for Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund, Midland Region raised £423.32. The CEC have raised that now to £1,000. (*Applause*) I did not read out the second bit, I read the third. Andy, I know you said you doubled the collection but the collection is now £1,000. Remember little George? Do you remember little George when he was at Congress. Thank you all.

The other point is, colleagues, we are running behind and as you know Ed stayed much longer than we thought he would, which I am pleased about. It is your decision. If you would like a break and lunch – hang on, hang on – if not, I think if we went through we could finish between 2 and a quarter past. (*Cheering*) What is your decision? I think I know it. Carry on. We have to realise that we have some members in this hall who may be suffering from diabetes and they must have some food, so I do not mind excusing them, providing they are not coming to the rostrum, so they can get something to eat and bring it in. Is that okay? (*Agreed*) We will push on.

SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL

THE PRESIDENT: Now can I call 174, to be moved by Birmingham, 176 to be moved by London, and then Composite 17, GMB Scotland to move, GMB Wales & South West Region to second. Movers and seconders? Movers and shakers down the front.

CUTS TO CHILDREN'S CENTRES MOTION 174

174. CUTS TO CHILDREN'S CENTRES

This Conference notes with disgust that up and down the country groups of parents many of them groups of mothers have been forced into having to campaign to keep children's centres from closure.

While we welcome that some of the councils responsible for these proposed closures have now backtracked following campaigns to stop the closures of their children's centres and early intervention hubs, other councils have postponed closures for the time being.

It must be highlighted that Cameron had broken his promise to be the family-friendly Government. Despite pre-election lies where he said he would protect Sure Start. We have seen centres shut down and the services they

provide cut. With reorganisation and merger becoming the order of the day many have abandoned onsite childcare, and are now charging for services that were formerly free. They are slashing the number of qualified teachers and childcare staff and asking for volunteers, in effect reducing and cutting the services provided and ultimately attacking the centres bit by bit without having to make the unpopular closure, for now.

We call on the GMB to support and join with any local or national campaign groups up and down the country in fighting and exposing the attacks on these important services, parents and our children's future.

B10 BANBURY NO.1 BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. MACDONALD (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, first time delegate, last year on the big stage. *(Applause)* When the Conservatives came into power one of David Cameron's broken promises – and I had better remind you, he made a few of them, didn't he; bloody hell – was that the Conservative Government was this big family friendly government. Maybe it is me, maybe I am a bit clever this week because I am wearing this shirt and tie, but I thought families meant children but that does not seem to be the case. Under his leadership local councils all over Britain have been trying to close down children's centres because of the Conservative cuts to the local councils. I am sure we are all aware that the results of these centres closing down will be young children turning to drugs and crime and with nowhere to go they are more likely to end up in trouble with the police in our local areas, such as local parks and outside shops. All these young children are the grassroots of our future. Many of them have difficult home lives in these current times and rely on these centres to feel they have a place to go and to feel wanted somewhere. When these attacks have happened campaign groups up and down the country, credit to them, have sometimes been successful in stopping closures and shaming these councils into thinking again. We the GMB need to support, highlight, and join with any local/national campaign in fighting and exposing these attacks on these important services for the sake of the future of our children.

One message to you, Boris Johnson, you Tory bastard, bring on your water canons because I'll be in my swimming trunks. Please support. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: We will all come to watch! Seconder. Formally? Thank you.

Motion 174 was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 176, Free Childcare for All, London to move.

FREE CHILDCARE FOR ALL MOTION 176

176. FREE CHILDCARE FOR ALL

This Congress calls on the next Labour Government to introduce Free Child Care for all young adults, single-parents, apprentices and those on low incomes who are in re-training programmes, studying to acquire new skills to equip them for the employment market.

HOUNSLOW BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. E. HUGHES (London): The Hounslow Branch has brought this motion forward to Congress because we are strongly in support of young unemployed and under-employed working class people being given good opportunities to train, retrain, and gain skills enhancing their employment prospects and life skills

for the future. We believe strongly that having a sound education and a broad skill set gives a person the confidence and the aptitude to go for work opportunities that they would otherwise not consider. It gives them a future in work. For people who really need training opportunities just to get started in employment we believe that full childcare provision that is free for the full duration of any training is essential to ensure that young people can complete their course successfully. Competition to get onto good courses is very stiff in our area and I am sure it is in yours as well. For a full class to complete a course is very unusual and the main reason is inadequate childcare provision. Mums and dads just cannot complete the courses without full childcare provision and the help of their families.

Childcare in the UK, as we all know, is probably the most expensive in Europe and again I am sure it is the same in your regions but in London £1,000 per month per child is cheap for a fulltime childcare place. For a young parent getting help with childcare is the make or break decision that allows them to take up an opportunity to train. They cannot do it on their own and they have to rely on their friends and family for support. They are not being treated as adults.

We believe that younger people who are in poverty or unemployed should have the opportunity to catch up on getting skills and additional education they need for the workforce, further education. This motion is in support for all of them, whether they are on a foundation course, an NVQ course, a college foundation course if they are learning basic maths and English, or when they start an apprenticeship.

Congress, we ask you to support this motion to urge government to provide fulltime state provided childcare for all parents of young children who are in training and vocational training but, particularly, Congress, we urge you to adopt this motion as GMB policy so as to encourage GMB councillors to support fulltime childcare provision for all new apprenticeships in Labour councils. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Elizabeth.

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): I agree with the spirit of the motion saying free childcare for all young adults, single parents, apprentices, and those on low income but, believe me, people even on £20,000 income a year are struggling with the price of childcare. I think we should have free childcare for all but the very high earners. I second this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Anyone wish to come in and speak? No? Thank you. We have no CEC speaker. Sorry, I am trying to get you home early. I now move to Composite 17, GMB Scotland to move.

THE COST OF AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE COMPOSITE MOTION 17

C17. Covering Motions:

- 175. INCREASE IN CHILD CARE COSTS *(Wales & South West Region)*
- 177. AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE *(GMB Scotland)*

THE COST OF AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE

This Conference recognises the fact that the cost of child care in the UK has risen considerably under this Coalition Government.

Congress further recognises that if we truly going to have an impact upon the scandalous poverty trap that many families find themselves in we must act now to provide consistent good quality affordable childcare across the UK. Affordable childcare is good for children, parents, and grandparents and generates socially useful jobs.

Congress notes that the Scottish Government has called for a “childcare revolution” after independence. This is a crude attempt to bribe women voters in the forthcoming referendum. We believe women should not have to wait for an Independent Scotland for this social advance and calls for major new investment in publicly owned and operated childcare right across the UK.

We therefore call upon the next Labour Government to commit to a complete review of the provision and cost of childcare to ensure that a childcare strategy action plan can be implemented as part of an anti-poverty campaign that will allow those who wish to work to do so.

This Conference calls on the GMB to campaign for affordable childcare now.

GMB Scotland to Move Wales & South West Region to Second

(Carried)

SIS. B. CARSON (GMB Scotland): Congress, the February report by the Institute for Public Policy Research said childcare costs in the UK has risen by 77% over the past decade with a part-time nursery place costing £100 per week. The Scottish Government have called for a childcare resolution only after a Yes vote for independence, a crude and cynical play to bribe women voters in the referendum. The reality with the SMP is that they have the power to deliver free childcare now and have had the power since they formed the Government of Scotland. They claim their promise to provide the policy will create 35,000 jobs in the childcare sector and thousands more for women in Scotland. The only thing they have not told us is where these jobs will be created when the big issue for working women in Scotland is under-employment either through zero-hours contracts or minimum hours of working.

Affordable childcare plays a key role in supporting mothers who want to get back into work and assisting the mothers in work to keep their vital jobs. The evidence is clear that where parents are working children have a lower risk of being raised in poverty due to inadequate family income. We have heard a lot of motions and debates on equality and the role that women can play within the Union politics and civic society. Congress, affordable childcare for women should not be a demand but should be a right for all mothers, not after a Yes vote for independence for Scotland or the general election in 2015.

Congress, support the composite, support working mothers and those mothers who want to return to work but cannot afford childcare at today’s costs, and last but not least, take the children out of poverty. I move. *(Applause)*

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

Composite Motion 17 was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Anyone wish to come in on the debate? No? Thank you very much. I now put 174, 176, and Composite 17 to the vote. All those in favour, please show. Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 174 was CARRIED.

Motion 176 was CARRIED.

Composition Motion 17 was CARRIED.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now ask the mover of 93, Midland, Composite 8 to be moved by Yorkshire Region, Wales and South West to second, and priority in debate Midland. Then I will call James Stribley.

TERMINAL ILLNESS MOTION 93

93. TERMINAL ILLNESS

This Conference calls on the GMB to campaign for a change in legislation to the Equality Act (2010).

This campaign calls for the protection and an inclusion of a clause for absolute protection of employment status and rights for anyone diagnosed with a terminal illness.

MIDLAND HEALTHCARE BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Referred)

BRO. B. HELEY (Midland & East Coast): Congress, we all hope to live a long and fruitful life and eventually die of old age – take me, for example – but for the unfortunate few this is not the case. Can you imagine receiving the news that you have a terminal illness and that you are going to die sooner rather than later and the effect that this will have not only on you but also the effect it will have on your family and friends? How would you cope? How would I cope? I honestly do not know.

We all cope in different ways, some may wish to try and live life as normal as possible and carry on working, but under the current Equality Act legislation they may not be allowed to do that. The law as it stands does not prevent employers dismissing terminally ill employees if their condition means they are no longer able to carry out their jobs with reasonable adjustment. As long as the employer has followed a fair capability process, requested access to the medical records, and carried out all reasonable adjustments, they can terminate that employment and say they have complied with the law as it stands.

What we believe in the GMB is being reasonable and what the employer deems to be reasonable, unfortunately, are miles apart. What I would say to those employers – unfortunately, we are being televised so I cannot say it. However, we recognise there are good employers out there and employers who would not take any action against an employee with only a few months to live; in fact some offer whatever assistance they can and are a credit to the human race. What I class as the bad employer, they can make the terminally ill jump through hoops, attend stressful medical assessment processes, and then sack them. They lose all hope at a time when they need support the most. They lose the stimulation and dignity in being able to carry on as normal a life as possible.

On a fiscal note we need to look at the added loss to the families, the loss of in-service benefits that have been acquired through a lifetime of hard and loyal work. How will this affect those left behind? What will the added worry do to the sufferer? Don't you think they have enough to worry about without having to worry about money?

This Congress calls on the GMB to campaign for a change in legislation to the Equality Act 2010. This campaign calls for the protection and inclusion of a clause for absolute protection of employment status and rights for anyone with a terminal illness. Please support. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bill.

BRO. K. DUDDING (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, there is not a lot that I can say after Bill there. I wrote a script out but most of it is going to go out of the window because Bill has already covered it. All I can say is that from personal experience I have had to fight where members have been put down the sickness road when they have had cancer, recuperating from cancer, where they have been told that their jobs were at risk. It is not a good thing. I have had friends, family, with a brain tumour/cancer, and watching them put a brave face on while trying to lead a life and sort out financial problems, and everything else so when they have gone the family can move on, and knowing that they are going to be safe financially. Some of the employers have been quite good, like Bill said, and with prompts from the Union have actually helped them and helped the families out. Unfortunately, other employers, as I have said, have taken them down the sickness route. Again, can you imagine the stress to those people, to those families, to find out that their jobs are threatened and they are going to be finished on capability. Bill has already mentioned what losses they can have when they go down this road. Like Bill, I think all terminally ill people should have support, not just from their families and friends but also from their employers and if that means bringing in legislation to make sure of the protection they need, then support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kev. Can I now move to Composite 8, Statutory Bereavement Leave, to be moved by Yorkshire, seconded by GMB Wales & South West Region, and priority in debate to Midland Region.

STATUTORY BEREAVEMENT LEAVE COMPOSITE MOTION 8

C8. Covering Motions:

94. STATUTORY BEREAVEMENT LEAVE *(Wales & South West Region)*
95. STATUTORY BEREAVEMENT LEAVE *(Midland & East Coast Region)*
96. CHANGE BEREAVEMENT LEAVE CAMPAIGN *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

STATUTORY BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

At the present time the majority of bereaved workers are failing to receive the compassionate support from their employer at this very emotional and stressful time, the introduction of Statutory Bereavement Leave would be a step in the provision of compassionate support for them.

Statutory Bereavement Leave should be given as a right when the death occurs of a parent, adopted parent, partner, son or daughter

Currently workers have the right to a "Reasonable" amount of time off work following an emergency that involves a dependent. The length of time an employee is allowed to take as leave depends on their contract of employment & is at the discretion of the employer. Typically, compassionate leave is between three & five days. Grieving workers then need to use their holiday entitlement or be signed off sick!

This Conference asks GMB Congress to support Change Bereavement Leave Campaign. While many good employers offer compassionate leave, there is no statutory right to leave & this campaign aims to introduce four weeks paid bereavement leave for parents.

Change Bereavement Leave Campaign & Gone Too Soon Website believes that with lack of clear legislation leaves bereaved employees at the mercy of their bosses. This campaign is championing the work of Lucy Herd who lost her 23 month old son Jack in August 2010 & although Lucy was not working at the time, her then partner was only given five days leave. Lucy Herd's Campaign is called Jacks Rainbow.

While supporting this campaign, GMB could also introduce that this campaign needs to recognise that other bereaved relatives should also be entitled to paid time off at times of bereavement. Frances O'Grady TUC'S General Secretary Quoted coping with the sudden loss of a loved one is traumatic enough without having to worry about work too. The government should do the right thing & give people a legal right to paid time away from their jobs after someone close to them has died.

This Conference believes that there should be a statutory entitlement to bereavement leave for all employees and calls upon the GMB to conduct a national campaign and lobby Government to introduce Statutory Bereavement Leave, with pay, paid at average earnings, for four weeks, when a loved one dies.

**Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to Move
Wales & South West Region to Second
Midland & East Coast Region Priority in debate**

(Carried)

SIS. A. BURLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I call upon GMB, Congress, to support a statutory bereavement leave campaign. At the present time, the majority of bereaved workers are not receiving compassionate leave when a loved one has passed away. Unfortunately, there are no clear laws regarding bereavement leave. Currently, hardworking colleagues have the right to a reasonable amount of time off work following an emergency involving a dependant. Three to five days compassionate leave is usually normal. Grieving workers then either have to take their annual leave or be signed off sick by their GP. The amount of compassionate leave a worker is entitled to depends upon their contract of employment and at the discretion of their employer.

The Change Bereavement Leave Campaign and the Gone Too Soon website believes that the lack of clear law leaves bereaved employees at the mercy of their bosses. This campaign is championing the work of Lucy Erd who lost her 23-month old son, Jack, in August 2010 and although Lucy was not working at the time her partner was only given five days' leave. Lucy Erd's campaign is called Jack's Rainbow. Whilst supporting the Change Bereavement Leave Campaign and its good work, let's not forget it is not just parents who need time to grieve; it is also sons, daughters, spouses, siblings, and partners. Anyone who has lost a loved one knows how hard, emotional and stressful, it is coming to terms with such a loss and this, of course, takes time to heal. Three to five days is just not enough.

In recent times maternity/paternity and grandparents' leave have become accepted as a normal part of working life. I am aware there are colleagues who have received ten days paid grandparents' leave when their children have given birth to their firstborn and yet other colleagues who have lost parents or spouses have only received three days compassionate paid leave. This can result in employees using their annual leave or raising their personal sickness levels by being signed off work by their GP, with a sick note, stating the reason for absence is bereavement. We should stand together to ensure laws are put in place to change this unfair practice. We all grieve in our own way and at our own pace. We believe 14-28 days would be more acceptable at these sad and emotional times. I also believe that given this time frame sickness levels could be lowered as there will be no need for an employee to get a sick note from their GP or use their annual leave, and this could be used for what it is actually intended.

Frances O'Grady, TUC General Secretary, said: "Coping with the sudden loss of a loved one is traumatic enough without having to worry about work too. This Government should do the right thing and give people a legal right to paid time away from their jobs after someone close to them has died." I call upon GMB to conduct a national campaign and lobby Government to introduce statutory bereavement leave with pay when a loved one has died. I move this motion to Congress. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

BRO. R. HUNT (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, the time has come for the very distressing nature of bereavement to be recognised and reflected by statutory underpinning. Grief is not an illness; it is an instinctive human emotion. The death of a loved one is an overwhelming emotional experience that requires compassion, support, and understanding. Each death triggers a different response from the bereaved. No one can predict how they will react or cope emotionally. I can speak from personal experience, the deaths of my grandparents and parents were emotionally bearable but when my eldest son took his own life my world and that of my family was devastated. Five days off work and then return -- impossible.

The law as it currently stands does not afford enough protection for bereaved workers from unfair treatment by employers. This Government constantly trots out the same old arguments every time a proposal is made to improve workers' rights, that it is an unnecessary burden on business. Congress, bereaved workers ask to be treated with compassion and given time away from work to grieve. The case has been made. It has public support. A legal right is now due. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Midland Region.

SIS. L. GUBB (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, we are now in the 14th year of the 21st century but it seems to me we are going backwards in time. I have to keep reminding myself which queen is on the throne. It does seem more like Victorian times rather than the new Elizabethan age. No doubt the majority of you here in this hall today have lost someone close to you and have been placed in the dilemma of asking for time off work, more often than not without pay which places even more worry and stress on you and your family when you just do not need it. We should have the minimum of two weeks paid bereavement leave. We need time to make arrangements. I speak from experience.

When I lost my father I worked in a factory on piece rate so no work, no pay. It took at least two days to arrange his funeral as you need to have an appointment to go and register the death and an appointment to see the undertaker, and an appointment to see the vicar. It was a very stressful time and two years later I had a repeat of this experience when my mum died. This did not happen recently. This was over 30 years ago. We know this ConDem government have no empathy with the working people. Caring Mr. Cameron went back to work two days after losing his son. He said it helps to keep busy. Yes, it does help to keep busy but he could afford to pay someone else to do his running about. We are not asking for the world, just a helping hand in a time of need. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Colleagues, time is moving on and I do think all has been said. Can I just ask are there any who oppose? No? Can I now call James Sibley. Hello, James.

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, James Sibley, former Remploy worker still here, still fighting, speaking on behalf of the CEC. (*Applause*) We are asking you to refer Motion 93 and support Composite 8 with a qualification. First on Motion 93, the motion calls for a change in the Equality Act for protection for terminal illness. This is a difficult and sensitive subject for all concerned. Terminal illness would normally be protected as in most cases it falls within the definition of disability. Under law a person is protected if they have a physical or mental condition which has a long-term and adverse effect on their ability to carry out their job. Long-term means at least 12 months or the rest of a person's life. The CEC is sympathetic to the request and the move to adopt broader model to classify some conditions as protected, such as cancer, HIV, and MS.

We are asking for the motion to be referred so that research can be done to understand the nature of the problem, and its implications, before considering a campaign or adopting formal policy.

In the main, the best people to advise on disability are disabled people or people who care for disabled people and know what the challenges are, apart from one exception, the disabled and the advice given on 54 Remploy factories.

Finally, Composite 8 on statutory bereavement leave. We support the call for a change in the law for a statutory right to paid leave and not left to the employer's discretion. We welcome this being paid at average earnings. The motion goes further than our policy carried out at Congress 2010 which asks for minimum entitlement leave of two weeks for close family and one week for others.

We appreciate that relationships and lifestyles have changed and that there needs to be more flexibility in the definitions of who is covered. The qualification is that we need to look at best practice as to who is entitled to leave and how long the leave should be as four weeks may be difficult for small companies. Congress, please refer Motion 93 and support Composite 8 with this qualification. Thank you.

(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, James. Does Midland accept the reference back? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much. Does Congress? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Does Yorkshire, Wales, and Midland Region accept the qualification? *(Agreed)* Can I now put Composite 8 to the vote, please? All those in favour, please show. Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 93 was REFERRED.

Composite Motion 8 was CARRIED.

CONGRESS LOCAL GIFT: ST. MARY'S HOSPICE

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I now move to the next part of the business, a very sad part but also a very pleasant one. Congress local gift to St. Mary's Hospice is for £2,000 this year. It is for Birmingham & West Midlands Region. The hospice provides palliative care to patients with life-threatening illness and support to families living across Birmingham and Sandwell. I will ask Joe Morgan to say a few words while a slide is being shown. Thank you, Joe.

BRO. J. MORGAN (Regional Secretary, Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, comrades, very pleased although, as the President said, there is a sad issue but very pleased briefly to address you to inform you of the recipients of this year's Congress local gift, Birmingham St. Mary's Hospice. Comrades, the money that we get for them from Congress this week will be a tremendous help to the services that the hospice provides. As you will see from the slide overhead, the hospice cares for over 1,000 people each year within Birmingham and Sandwell and the hospice has just been spoken about very eloquently in previous motions. The hospice not only looks after those who are stricken with a terminal illness but also their families and loved ones. Any of you in this hall who are unfortunate enough to have a loved one with a terminal illness will know it has a devastating effect not only on the patient but also on the family and the friends as well.

Birmingham St. Mary's Hospice provides a much needed service to all those affected and simply could not function without donations from people and organisations that care. In my opinion, comrades, no one cares more about individuals, communities, and the vulnerable than trade unionists, and that is what we are. So, a big heartfelt thank you on behalf of Birmingham St. Mary's Hospice and the Birmingham & West Midlands Region for the Congress local gift of £2,000. Also, comrades, our raffle at our function on Tuesday night raised £405 and we have decided within the region to up that to £500. Also, comrades, if any individual branches or individuals wish to make a donation, please do send cheques or pass them to

me and I will ensure that they are given to Birmingham St. Mary's Hospice on your behalf so that they can carry out this very important work. Congress, comrades, thank you once again.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Joe. We do not have the cheque here but it will be sent to Birmingham, Joe.

SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, can we now move to the next point, and we call 183, 185, 186, and 193, London, London, Wales & South West, and Southern.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 183.

REGULATING THE PRESS FOR BALANCED REPORTING MOTION 183

183. REGULATING THE PRESS FOR BALANCED REPORTING

Congress is requested to campaign and lobby to have increased regulation of the press in similar form to the BBC to facilitate more balance in the press and to separate ownership from biased control.

NORFOLK PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): Congress, we voted positively yesterday on Composite 18 which was for greater regulation of the food industry. That was about food for the body. This motion is about food for the mind, which is every bit as important as the public being peddled material that is just as toxic for a well balanced, diverse, and cohesive community. As soon as you start your day it sometimes is impossible to avoid free newspapers from the *Metro* in the morning to the *Evening Standard* at night, that is if you are a London commuter, and sandwiched between these during the day are a plethora of other newspapers for purchase, most being right-wing propaganda sheets. Not all; I happily plug *The Morning Star* and *The Daily Mirror* here, examples of a good read for right thinking people as opposed to right-wing propaganda.

It is not that I am just heartily sick of seeing toxic headlines targeting benefit claimants and migrants. I am a welfare rights worker. I have helped people from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe to claim benefits, benefits that they are entitled to, that they are entitled to. It is more than just a personal thing, though. These toxic headlines and articles that go unchallenged – we do not own the newspapers – influence the public in the most blatant way, and in their constant drip-feed of xenophobia in the most insidious way that is every bit as powerful as being punched in the face. Its influence is too great to be left unregulated at the whim of Rupert Murdoch and the like.

I have good friends, dyed-in-the-wool socialists, telling me now that it is not racist to talk about immigration. I hear Labour politicians say much the same. Congress, every country on this planet has rules, regulations, and legislation relating to immigration, including ours, but – and it is a big “but” – if all you want to talk about is immigration, if all you want to do is target immigrants, if you think all our ills are down to immigrants, then, yes, it is racist. *(Applause)*

That is what the right-wing press is feeding the public day in, day out, the racist *Daily Express* being a prime example. Why else do you think UKIP did so well in the European election, helped by a compliant media that gave Nigel Farage a disproportionate amount of media exposure? We need a balanced press.

This is not censorship, just the opposite. Regulating the press to facilitate an equal amount of space to an opposing view is not to restrict any view but restrict just one view, which at the moment is predominantly right-wing, anti-immigrant, a view that vilifies the most vulnerable who are forced to claim benefits. Congress, I move. *Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Secunder. Formally, thank you.

Motion 183 was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The mover of 185.

THE NO MORE PAGE 3 CAMPAIGN MOTION 185

185. THE NO MORE PAGE 3 CAMPAIGN

This Congress notes that “Page 3” considered a “British Institution” by some, is the most visible picture of a woman in the most read newspaper in Britain. This picture is of a highly sexualised, objectified, voiceless woman. Many women up and down the country work in places where this image is delivered, daily to their office, where it is pinned up in staff rooms, where it is deliberately used to harass women. The NUT and dozens of branches of Student Unions have backed the campaign asking The Sun to remove page 3 from the paper.

We call on the GMB to publicly back the campaign, and therefore to oppose the widespread objectification of women within the mainstream media.

HOLBORN BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. R. WINSON (London): First time delegate, quite nervous second time speaker. *(Applause)* Thanks. Congress, President, I move Motion 185, that we as a union should publicly back the No More Page 3 Campaign. For those of you who do not know, the campaign is seeking to put an end to *The Sun* sexist, dated, and demeaning third page. Over 190,000 people have already signed that petition, which has been backed by a number of teaching unions and student unions. We would be the first general union to do so as well as the biggest.

Before I go any further two things about the campaign to make clear, one, No More Page 3 is not seeking to impose a ban through legislation. It is simply asking the editor of *The Sun* to make the decision that he should not be publishing daily pictures of naked tits in his newspaper. *(Applause)* Two, No More Page 3 does not find those naked tits in and of themselves offensive; and neither do I. If I had a problem with boobs, I would be making life a bit difficult for myself. This is not some puritanical crusade which is going to end with us all screaming at bare ankles, this is about context. Page 3 is this, an image of a submissively posed slim able-bodied and probably white woman with her boobs out. Whether or not your response to that is *Phwoar!* or *Ugh*, most of you here will agree that images like that have their place but that place is not in *The Sun*. Despite the recent efforts of my Liverpool comrades *The Sun* is the most read paper in Britain and when the biggest image of a woman in that paper is the one I have just described, it is a problem however much you like boobs. It sends a clear message, women are here to please men and that’s just how it is. That message does not just undermine ideas of equality generally but in everyday situations up and down the country.

When I Tweeted that I was due to speak on this to Congress, within minutes someone else had responded to me with a story about her colleagues using Page 3 to sexually harass her. They open it, shove it in her face, and make her look at it. She went to her boss about it and his response, “A bit of harmless fun, luv.”

The No More Page 3 Campaign has gathered loads of stories like this, each more disturbing than the last. Page 3 ceasing to exist would not end sexual harassment at once but it would remove something which triggers harassment from schools, homes, and workplaces. It going away would send the message that having your arse pinched, your top stared down, your personality and your talents overlooked, is not just “a bit of fun, luv” but an attitude which makes work uncomfortable and even frightening for thousands of women. I firmly believe that Page 3 creates situations and encourages ideas that the GMB exist to prevent. It is sexist, objectifying, and demeaning, and its prevalence makes those things seem acceptable. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Becky. Secunder.

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London) seconding Motion 185, said: During the Miners’ Strike workers quickly realised they needed the solidarity of women in their struggle. Women played a crucial role supporting the striking miners and their active participation in their dispute quickly changed ingrained and sexist attitudes that saw no issues with objectifying women. Publications such as *The Miner* had a page 3 type pin-up. What did this say to the women who were standing side-by-side with these workers? It quickly became apparent that such sexist imagery and attitudes would only seek to divide them and make them weaker. The miners became an inspiration for workers everywhere.

What lessons can we draw from that? In these times of austerity, job cuts and corporate greed, we need to be a lean, mean, fighting machine. If we are to overcome the Government and turn back the tide of cuts we are facing, we need maximum unity on our side. We need to look to examples such as the miners and say that sexist attitudes will not only divide us, it will play into the hands of bosses and those that will seek to divide us. We need the women we work with to feel confident that sexist attitudes have no home in the trades union Movement. We need to reach out to the amazing young women we have not just here at Congress but back at the workplaces who are making a stand for women’s rights. Support for this campaign will send a strong message to all women that the trades union Movement abhors the sexism we see in *The Sun* on a daily basis and that to achieve full emancipation we need to all come together and fight for our demands. Publicly supporting a feminist campaign would bring us to the attention of hundreds of young left-wing women that would show we are relevant to them. It would show the trades union Movement is where we all should be, together, fighting not only for this issue but all issues that serve to make our lives harder and bosses lives easier. If you are a trade unionist who is serious about fighting to win, you must support this motion and actively encourage your members not to buy *The Sun*, and reject those sexist images that we increasingly see.

I just want to congratulate those CWU members who are refusing to deliver free copies of *The Sun*. This is the front page of the *Liverpool Echo*. They are refusing to deliver that rag. They have justification. It is illegal to put excrement in the post. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. The mover of 186.

IMAGES/SEXUALISATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE MOTION 186

186. IMAGES/SEXUALISATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This Conference recognises that the sexualisation of children is an ongoing and developing issue, particularly for parents, and that we now live in an increasingly sexual and sexualised culture.

The GMB welcomes the recommendations of the Government's Bailey Review: Letting Children be Children report and remains committed to ensuring that all children grow up in a safe environment, which includes children not being exposed to sexualised imagery in public places.

PLYMOUTH & DISTRICT BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. DENT (GMB Wales & South West): First time speaker. *(Applause)* Image sexualisation of children and young people; commercialisation and sexualisation are issues where today the media have often been leading the debate. Academies, including through the Government reviews, have collected the evidence and investigated the complex issues, and presented a range of views in a considered way. However, the Department of Children Schools and Families, and the Department of Culture review, led by Prof. David Buckingham, made clear this is an area where the evidence of harm is not conclusive and views polarised. Parents recognise that they should be the ones to set the standards that their children live by but in some things they need more support, in particular, parents need businesses and others to work with them, not organise them.

Strong and stable families of all kinds are the bedrock of a strong and stable society. That is why we need to make our society more family friendly and to take action to protect our children and young people from excessive commercialisation and premature sexualisation. The Government made a commitment in 2010 to crack down on irresponsible advertising and marketing, especially to the children. The Government are also committed to take steps to tackle the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood.

In order to fulfil this commitment Reg Bailey, Chief Executive of the Mothers' Union, was appointed by the Secretary of State for Education to lead an independent review. The remit for the revision was deliberately wide to give Reg Bailey the freedom to focus on the aspects of concern he would identify through his research and discussions with parents and others. Research from the Bailey Review confirmed that parents feel they cannot make their voices heard. They often lack the confidence to speak out on sexualisation and commercialisation issues for fear of being labelled a prude or out of touch.

Business and industry sectors, and the regulators, need to make clear that they welcome and take seriously feedback on these subjects. Given the technology available regulators and businesses should be able to find more effective ways to encourage parents to tell them what they think quickly and easily, and to be transparent in telling parents how they are responding to that feedback. Once parents know that their views are taken seriously, we would expect them to respond positively to those companies that listen to their concerns.

The recommendations of the Bailey Review concluded that magazines and newspapers with sexualised images on their covers should not be in easy sight of children. The retail association in the news industry should do more to encourage observance of the voluntary code of practice on the display of magazines and newspapers, and sexualised images on their covers. The review has also recommended reducing the amount of on-street advertising containing sexualised imagery at locations where children are likely to see it. The advertising industry should also take into account the social responsibility clause of the Committee of Advertising Practice Codes when considering placements of advertisements with sexualised imagery near schools in the same way as they already do for alcohol advertisements.

This motion welcomes the recommendation of the Government's Bailey Review and remains committed to ensuring that all children grow up in a safe environment. Congress, please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Secunder.

SIS. J. BRADY (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, President, we are all living in an increasingly sexual and sexualised culture although it is far from clear how we arrived at this point. Many parents feel that this culture is often inappropriate for their children. They want more power to say no. Some parts of the business world and sections of the media seem to have lost their connections to parents and this is compounded in some of the new social media where there is limited regulation. Where regulations do exist regulators need to connect better with parents and encourage businesses to comply. Where regulation does not exist, businesses need to behave more responsibly.

Sexualising gender stereotype clothing, products and services for children, are the biggest areas of concern for parents and many non-commercial organisations contributing to the Bailey Review. We all live in a commercial world and children are under pressure from a range of sources to act as consumers. We do not want to cut children off from the commercial world completely and believe that it brings benefits, and parents tell us that they want to manage the issue themselves supported by proportionate regulation and responsible businesses.

While adults may understand that companies might look to extend the boundaries when advertising to them, children are especially vulnerable and need to be given special consideration. Special measures already exist in advertising and marketing regulations to protect children but some gaps do exist. Regulators cannot be expected to anticipate detailed developments in the new media. However, an absence of regulations does not absolve businesses from acting responsibly by themselves. The Bailey Review recommends that the regulation of advertising reflects more closely parents and children's views, prohibits the employment of children as brand ambassadors and in peer to peer marketing, and also defining as children those under the age of 16 in all types of advertising regulations. Congress, I support this motion and the Bailey Review. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motion 193.

CHILD LABOUR – BRITAIN'S INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION & VICTORIAN PERIODS MOTION 193

193. CHILD LABOUR – BRITAIN'S INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION & VICTORIAN PERIODS

Congress requests that the CEC give urgent consideration to launching a campaign to achieve national recognition and acknowledgement of the terrible suffering, maiming and death countless children endured in Britain's Industrial past. This to include a fitting memorial to be a tangible reminder to the Nation of the shameful exploitation of the vulnerable in pursuit of private profit.

GMB should spearhead this campaign; involve sister Trades Unions, the Labour Party, Children's welfare charities and other interested parties such as the National Trust to ensure adequate funding for the memorial project.

X96 SOUTH LONDON UNIVERSITIES BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. DOLAN (Southern): This motion is asking for a permanent memorial to remind everyone of the disgraceful treatment of children in years gone by. In every city you go through in this country there are already memorials there for sports stars, warmongers. We were only reminded on Monday of Michael Jackson being outside the Fulham football ground. There have even been plans to remember the witch herself with a permanent memorial. If that ever happens, I will guarantee you this, it will be the most visited urinal in this country. We need to get our priorities right. I propose. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder.

SIS. B. PLANT (Southern): This country is littered with tributes to the undeserving, exploiters, slave traders, warmongers. The National Trust shows off the former homes of the wealthy and unworthy and locks away the servants' quarters. This motion calls for well needed recognition and a memorial for an overlooked group, the children whose liberty was stolen and backs broken fuelling the Industrial Revolution.

A typical tale comes from the memoirs of orphan Robert Blincoe, who lived in a London workhouse. In 1796, at the age of six, he was sold to the owner of Linton Mill in Derbyshire. He recalls how irons were riveted on their ankles with long links and rings up to their hips. In these they walked, worked, and slept. Blincoe recalls how an overlooker beat him until he was covered with wealds and bruises. He was then taken to the mill owner who used a stick to beat him further, laughing as he did it.

Congress, all this left a legacy of malnutrition, injury, and death. It is high time that the suffering is recognised and let's not leave it to the descendants of the mill owners, let the campaign be led by our Movement, let's have a prominent memorial commissioned to commemorate the memory of the child slaves of the Industrial Revolution. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to speak against these resolutions? No? Thank you. I call Margaret Gregg on Motions 183 and 193.

SIS. M. GREGG (CEC, Commercial Services): President, Congress, the CEC is seeking referral on Motion 183 and is supporting Motion 193 with a qualification. Motion 183 on regulating a balanced press is requesting the Union campaign and lobby for increased regulation of the press in similar form to the BBC to facilitate more balance in the press and to separate ownership from bias control. In November 2012, Lord Leveson reported on the balance between a free press and fairness and objective coverage. This followed the phone hacking scandal that led to his inquiry being set up. He recommended a much enhanced press complaints system with an independent body responsible for appointing members of a committee to oversee the new system of regulation. Parliament agreed that the new independent appointments body should be set up with royal charter. That body has now been set up by the Privy Council. However, many newspapers and internet groups have refused to cooperate with this new system; instead, they have set up a rival body which is currently in the process of replacing the toothless Press Complaints Commission, the PCC. As things stand there is a standoff between the system legislated by Parliament and the system the press want. GMB is supporting the Labour Party in trying to get the system legislated by Parliament off the ground. To change GMB policy on press regulation at this point may not be helpful and the CEC recommends that this motion be referred.

Motion 193 points out that child labour still exists today although probably not in the same forms as Victorian times, as we have heard, and GMB continues to expose this where possible. The CEC is supporting this motion with a qualification. The qualification is that we are not sure what form this fitting memorial would be or what the take off might be for this. Children's welfare charities that fight child labour would consider that money could be better spent on improving conditions for children and families rather than a fixed monument. Therefore, we ask Congress to refer Motion 183 and support Motion 193 with that qualification. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret. Will London Region accept reference back? (*Agreed*) Will Southern Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. With that, let me put 185, 186, and 193 to the vote. All those in favour, please show. They are carried. Thank you.

Motion 183 was REFERRED
Motion 185 was CARRIED.
Motion 186 was CARRIED.
Motion 193 was CARRIED.

INTERNATIONAL

THE PRESIDENT: We now move towards the end, to 280 to be moved by Midland, 282 London Region, 283 International Nicaragua, London, 284 Yorkshire, 285 London, 290 Southern, 291 Yorkshire, and 292 Wales & South West Region. Will you all come to the front, please?

THE IMPACT OF THE GREEK CRISIS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN MOTION 280

280. THE IMPACT OF THE GREEK CRISIS ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Congress notes the impact of the continued austerity programme carried out by the Greek Government, backed by the international finance institutions and other European Governments. These attacks include sacking public sector workers, decimating public services, slashing salaries and pensions, worsening contracts of employment and cutting benefits.

Congress notes the TUCs Motion "Solidarity with Greek Workers" adopted in September 2013, in support of the Labour movement resistance to the continued austerity programme carried out by the Greek Government.

Congress acknowledges that whilst austerity cuts have hit all areas of Greek society including workers, the unemployed, pensioners, the young and poor in Greece are at the sharp end of attacks. It is women (and as a direct consequence, children) who have been particularly hardest hit.

Congress notes that whilst unemployment has risen in all areas of Greek society, women have been hardest hit with unemployment for women currently standing at 26% compared to men at 19%.

Congress condemns the increasing introduction of legislation designed to reverse the hard-won equality rights for women, and condemns the Greek Government in doing little or nothing to stop the increase in discrimination by employers towards women, particularly those of child-bearing age, forcing them to give their word of honour that they will not get pregnant.

Congress condemns the ever-widening gender pay gap which currently stands at 20% in the private-sector and 7% in the public sector.

Congress acknowledges that women face what experts call the "double burden", whereby they are not only being disproportionately hit by cuts to public services, but they also often have to take on the lion's share of care work.

Congress condemns the steep rise in gender-based violence (including domestic abuse, rape, sexual harassment and human trafficking).

Congress calls on the Greek Health Ministry to do more to support women to enable them to keep their children and stem the sharp rise in children being given up for adoption because their families can no longer afford to keep them. In 2012, 20% of all cases where children were being offered up for adoption were from single-parent families, all of whom were single mothers.

Congress supports the Labour movement resistance to these attacks and encourages all members to forge direct links with our sisters, women aid workers and their representative / affiliate organisations in Greece.

(Carried)

BRO. D. JOBSON (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, brothers and sisters, this motion calls for solidarity with the women and workers in Greece, those in public services and the people who rely on those very same services. I was going to say a few things about the Greek government but I think the words of the motion itself say more than enough about them and what they are doing. What I want to say, though, is that we often talk about solidarity with workers, with our brothers and sisters in fellow unions, standing together shoulder to shoulder with our co-workers, with all workers, whether they be public sector or private sector, in Britain, Europe, or anywhere in the world, anywhere where workers are or could be exploited by unscrupulous capitalistic employers and governments.

Colleagues, we are what makes this great Union of ours great. We have, are, and will continue to lead the way on a range of issues and undoubtedly will find further things to drive forward with. We are not sheep, we are the shepherds. When it falls to us to lead the way we should do so and when we falter we will pick ourselves up, we will keep carrying on to a just and right outcome. Let us forge links with our comrades around the world and not just make a decent society for us here at home but a decent global society. In solidarity I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. Secunder.

SIS. Z. WARREN (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, trade unionism is a concept known around the world and is a global community of workers irrelevant of which trade union they may belong to. We all know how bad things are for workers and their families here at home but let us spare a thought for our colleagues in other countries and the struggles they are going through. Looking at Greece and the impact of austerity measures over there on public services, benefits, and employment, we can see a possible shape of things to come for us if we do not get the Tories out. We should stand shoulder to shoulder with workers around the world and let them know they are not alone in their struggles but have solidarity with brothers and sisters elsewhere in Europe and perhaps eventually around the world starting with ourselves here in Britain. I ask you to support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Zillah. Motion 282.

SOLIDARITY WITH PROGRESS IN LATIN AMERICA

Motion 282

282. SOLIDARITY WITH PROGRESS IN LATIN AMERICA

Congress notes:

There have been significant advances for working people in Latin America.

For example:

- Cuba's healthcare system is impressive, with one of the world's lowest infant mortality rates – just slightly lower than that of the US. Life expectancy is 77.5 years, one of the world's highest. Cuba leads the world with the lowest patient to doctor ratio, 155:1 and per capita Cuba graduates roughly three times the number of doctors as the US.
- Venezuela has recently increased the minimum wage by 10% to bring wages above inflation levels. Venezuela has continued to substantially reduce poverty, increase equality and reduce unemployment throughout the economic crisis. Venezuelans also benefit from free health, education, and other services,

and workers can buy highly subsidised food through a government programme and all these services have been defended despite slowdown in its economy.

Congress believes:

In many cases these gains have been made despite economic, legal and political sanctions from the US.

These benefits are going beyond the two countries mentioned and benefiting the whole region. For example, the strong economic growth in Ecuador as a result of stimulating the public sector and introducing a living wage for all have been more effective in tackling the economic crisis than austerity policies and are a model in our campaign against austerity.

The outstanding achievements in Latin America can be held up as a good example of those of us in Britain that want to achieve a more equal society.

Congress resolves:

- That the GMB resolves to write to regions and branches to encourage them to affiliate to the campaigns Cuba Solidarity Campaign and Venezuela Solidarity Campaign and to invite speakers to attend meetings.
- To publicise through local branches the establishment of the *International Commission of Inquiry into the case of the Cuban (Miami) Five*.
- To distribute the Venezuelan Labour Law pamphlet written by the Institute of Employment Rights and the VSC.
- To raise awareness of Ecuador's significant legal challenge against multi-national Chevron for vast social and environmental damage caused in the country – a clear example of corporate abuse of power.
- Write to GMB sponsored MPs and MEPs to request that they challenge the economic embargo on Cuba.

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. K. ABEL (London): President, Congress, I only have a short time and this is a motion about progress across the continent over 10 years, a continent that we do not hear very much about in our news media. In the motion we gave quite specific examples when we were writing it and I understand the CEC has some qualifications but, essentially, the points raised about progress in Latin America are the threat of a good example to Europe and America. We are in the top 10 richest countries of the world and we are told there is not enough money for a decent health system, we are told that we cannot have free higher education, and we are told that there is not enough money to tackle climate change in a decent way; instead we must suffer austerity that attacks disabled people, and scapegoats the unemployed. It ignores the crimes of the bankers that broke our system.

However, in Latin America countries like Venezuela, Cuba, and Ecuador are standing up to the International Monetary Fund and demonstrating that another world is possible, and the backlash has been fierce. In Venezuela there have been several coup attempts despite 14 public elections in 16 years. The latest violence on the streets of Caracas should be looked at closely. Who are the people and why are they trashing hospital clinics and raiding food stores aimed at the poor. The US was behind the plot to get rid of Chavez in 2002 and they are trying now because they cannot abide the policy of putting people before profit.

In Ecuador, where the government has given rights in the constitution to nature as well as people, they finally have taken on the multinational company that leaked oil through shoddy practices they used in Ecuador but did not use at home in America, into the Amazon over a piece of land the size of Wales;

instead of making amends, Chevron is spending millions of dollars in international courts trying to avoid responsibility. If we are serious about a better society for all, not just for the rich, we must show solidarity with these countries in Latin America. They show us that there is an alternative to European style austerity and racism. In Latin America women and black people and working class are taking control of their own lives and I want a bit of that. It is inspiring but it is under threat. This motion sets out ideas to offer solidarity. Please support it. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder.

SIS. K. HENDRY (London): President, Congress, I want to start by echoing what a comrade said this morning when he said solidarity with the striking fire-fighters across the country today because in defending pensions and fighting austerity what they show is that they are fighting for better rights, and that is what this motion shows, the links between their struggles and struggles around the world.

Congress, GMB, like other trade unions we have a proud tradition of showing solidarity to our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. In the 1980s, solidarity was mainly with Nicaragua in Latin America. Over the past two decades socialist governments have sprung up and come to power across Latin America, in Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and they have joined the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions. Congress, twice this week the example of Venezuela has been used as a reference point for extreme social or economic policies. Apparently the Tories have described Labour's housing proposals giving three-year secure tenancies to private sector tenants as being like Venezuela. Congress, if only the Labour Party's policies were more like Venezuela because under the governments of Hugo Chavez, and now Nicolas Maduro, they have introduced a free NHS giving millions access to a doctor for the first time, lift four million Venezuelans out of poverty, guarantee access to high quality food, slashed unemployment, and ended privatisation. They have also regularly raised the minimum wage to one of the highest in Latin America. All has been achieved during an economic downturn and with the illegal intervention of the US. Venezuela is a beacon for progressives and socialists throughout the world showing, as Kerry says, that there is a successful alternative to austerity cuts and privatisation. This motion sets out a comprehensive approach to further developing solidarity with our Latin American brothers and sisters. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kerry.

INTERNATIONAL NICARAGUA MOTION 283

283. INTERNATIONAL NICARAGUA

This Congress applauds the progress made by the Sandinista since being elected in 2007 towards social and economic justice in Nicaragua. In the present harsh climate for Trade Unions in the UK, it is heartening to hear of, for example, an increase in the minimum wage and a range of new laws designed to protect Nicaraguan workers. Rights including in particular collective bargaining.

Illiteracy has been cut from 36% to 3% and education and health are now free. In addition a range of social programmes, primarily to support women, have been introduced to reduce poverty and hunger and Nicaragua has been ranked 10th in the world in terms of gender equality.

We consider that these advances provide golden opportunities for the GMB and the Nicaraguan Trade Union Movement to work together to the mutual benefit at a time when Trade Unions in the UK are under constant attack whilst in Nicaragua Trade Union membership, particularly amongst young people is growing.

In spite of the advances made in Nicaragua it remains the second poorest country in the Western hemisphere and continual support and solidarity remain vital.

We also recognise the pivotal role that the Nicaraguan Trade Union campaign has played in maintaining an awareness of Nicaraguan progress both amongst Trade Unions and the general public and in facilitating the deepening of the relationship between Trade Unions in the UK and Nicaragua.

With this in mind Congress agrees:

- 1) To affiliate to the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign
- 2) To encourage all branches and regions to affiliate to NSCAG and to promote NSCAG events and campaigns.
- 3) To work closely and to explore how relations with sister unions relevant to GMB can be developed.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

SIS. K. HENDRY (London): Moving Motion 283, affiliation to the Nicaraguan solidarity campaign, or NSC. Congress, this motion is very similar to the previous motion in that it calls for increased solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Latin America, in this case the people of Nicaragua.

In the 1980s, the Nicaraguan revolution of the Sandinista government was a focal point for solidarity and support from socialists and progressives around the world. This tiny country in Central America was a David standing up to the Goliath of illegal US intervention and terrorism. The Sandinista overthrew the hated Somoza regime in 1979 and ruled for 11 years. During that period they introduced a whole raft of radical social, economic, and political policies which transformed the country. They achieved this despite the illegal interventions and terrorist actions of the United States, which yet again showed its hostility to genuine democracy and progress because its interests were threatened and the interests of the American multinationals who controlled so much of the resources and the land across Latin America before these revolutionary governments came to power and nationalised land and redistributed wealth.

The US funded and trained the contra terrorists who carried out terrible atrocities in an attempt to destroy the socialist revolution. They did not succeed but they did help damage that revolution and as well as internal difficulties in 1999 the results of that were that the Sandinista were defeated by right-wing opponents and for 17 years neo-liberal austerity policies were reintroduced into Nicaragua reversing many of the achievements of the revolution.

The legacy of these 17 years is that Nicaragua remains the second poorest country in the Americas after Haiti. Successive neo-liberal governments imposed social and economic reforms resulting in 66% of public sector workers losing their job. In 2007, however, the Sandinista national liberation front returned to power and today the unions are once again growing and have seen their rights restored. Recent successes of both the government and the trade union movement include a 10% increase in the national minimum wage, maternal mortality and malnutrition rates have been reduced by up to 50%, illiteracy has been virtually eliminated, they have introduced an affordable housing programme, and they have introduced solidarity bonuses for low-paid workers.

Of course, you can go on and on but just one final quote from those statistics, the World Economic Forum's gender equality index recently ranked Nicaragua as 10th in the world for gender equality. Where does the UK come within that list of countries, we are 18th and the US is 23rd, so a tiny little country, the second poorest in the western hemisphere, is doing better than us when it comes to gender equality and a

whole range of other progressive social and economic policies. Congress, this motion asks the GMB formally to affiliate to the National Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign and to ask branches and regions to affiliate as well.

I am going to end by quoting Carlos Fonseca Teran, a leading politician within the Sandinista ruling government. He visited Britain last December and in an interview with the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign was asked why international solidarity was so important to him. He answered: “International solidarity is not only an economic issue, i.e. raising funds, sending people to projects, it is also about moral and political solidarity, that revolutionary support from around the world from people who identify with our ideals.” He identified the fact that they have a very welcome problem in Nicaragua with Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Cuba, all having revolutionary governments and this has resulted in Nicaragua being overlooked. So, I would end by asking Congress to show the Nicaraguan people that we support their revolution, we are not overlooking what they are doing, and support this motion, please.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kim. Secunder.

BRO. S. FORREST (London): We have all enjoyed the World Cup so I think we should have a moment of solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Brazil fighting austerity, in particular the metro workers of Sao Paulo. *(Applause)* Thank you.

Congress, this motion was brought before our branch, London Central General, and we are proud that it got to Congress with the support of the London Region. There is a tremendous job of solidarity. You have heard all the figures from Kim. There is a tremendous job of solidarity that we as the GMB can do working alongside the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign. For example, there are women and youth training programmes run by unions that could become sister and partner unions of the GMB in order to grow and develop the solidarity work. It is vital, and we have a proud tradition within the GMB, therefore I would ask Congress to support this motion so that we can begin this very important solidarity work.

I would just like to end by saying that I think we have had a marvellous Congress, great spirit, and for myself personally it has been a great privilege to be a delegate. Thank you very much, Congress.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Steve. Yorkshire to move 284.

GMB SUPPORT FOR THE WESTERN SAHARA CAMPAIGN MOTION 284

284. GMB SUPPORT FOR THE WESTERN SAHARA CAMPAIGN

This Conference notes the struggles of the Saharawi people to assert their rights to self-determination and independence in their own homeland of Western Sahara. Since 1979, Western Sahara has been occupied, its natural resources plundered and its people brutally repressed by Morocco, who lay claim to the territory. Rather than putting pressure on Morocco to comply with UN resolutions, the major world powers condone Morocco's occupation, for example, by allowing the importation of goods from the occupied territory marked as being produce of Morocco. In addition, the EU has chosen to approve a fisheries agreement that pays them for European vessels to fish in the waters of occupied Western Sahara.

Conference calls on the GMB to formalise its existing relationship with the Western Sahara Campaign (WSC), who work in solidarity with the Saharawi people, by affiliating the union to the WSC on a national basis and to encourage regions and branches to do the same.

Conference also agrees that, when considered appropriate, the GMB should work with the WSC on their campaigning strategy.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Referred)

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Ian Kemp, still in the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region, moving Motion 284, and still kissing the badge! President, Congress, when you think of Morocco what springs to mind; maybe it is sun, sea, sand, with a touch of the exotic not too far away either. To those of a certain age like me and Tim Roache, maybe it is Crosby, Stills and Nash, riding on the Marrakesh Express, or maybe if you are of another certain age, it is Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in Casablanca.

How about brutal exploitative occupiers of another country, maybe not, but that is the reality of the situation in Moroccan controlled Western Sahara. Whilst not receiving the same amount of publicity, the situation in Western Sahara is comparable to that in Palestine, land occupied, other land under siege, dissent repressed, human rights abused, the Diaspora of the indigenous population, UN resolutions ignored, and even, comrades, a wall. After Spanish rule ended, despite the declaration of an independent Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Western Sahara was occupied by both Morocco and Mauritania. While Mauritania withdrew not least because of resistance led by the Polisario Front, Morocco is still there in defiance of UN resolutions. Western Sahara has become a Moroccan cash cow.

It appears as though there may be oil offshore with potentially billions of oil dollars going to both Morocco and the oil companies. It has fertile fishing grounds which the EU is paying Morocco to fish. Mushrooms and strawberries, and I can certainly verify for the tastiness of the strawberries, are grown there and exported. An independent Western Sahara can be an economically viable country. These revenues went into the exchequer of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic rather than into the coffers of the Kingdom of Morocco.

The GMB has a history of internationalism, fighting exploitation throughout the world. Let's turn our attention to the Western Sahara and work with the Western Sahara campaign to fight against oppression and for freedom and justice in that part of Africa. It might not be newsworthy, it might not be a well-known cause, but it certainly is a just cause. Let's fight Moroccan colonialism, exploitation, and oppression. Let's show our commitment to the fight by affiliating to the Western Sahara campaign. Comrades, support Motion 284. Support the Sahrawi. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian.

SIS. A. MORRELL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, I want to thank you all for the help and support, and the education I have received from our Union. For years I walked in the wilderness with my head in the sand but due to the education I have received here with the GMB my eyes have been opened to the international, social, and political injustices of others. We hear of many today, Cuba, Colombia, Palestine, to mention but a few. Now Ian has told us about the Western Sahara.

Under the rule of Morocco we all know it has the world's attention on its poor human rights, and the abuse, and nothing seems to be done. We have now heard about the EU. We fish there. Norway takes oil from there. Morocco takes the money and pays America to influence political decisions. The people of the Western Sahara are exploited in so many ways, not stood up for, and not understood, so I am asking you today, brothers and sisters, in the words of Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott, "Are you ready to stand

up and fight?" Are you ready to stand up, join the Western Sahara and the caravan of love to the GMB. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Allison. Motion 285.

**THE AMRITSAR MASSACRE
MOTION 285**

285. THE AMRITSAR MASSACRE

Congress was deeply concerned to learn that the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and an unnamed officer of the SAS, could have been involved with the Indian Government's assault on Amritsar in 1984 as disclosed under the 30 Year Rule.

Giving further concern in respect of the length of time that some of these vital decisions are kept from the General Public.

HENDON BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. T. DUDHAIYA (London): We, the British people, are very disappointed with the Conservative Government, especially the legacy of British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, who kept the massacre secret over 30 years. We all know the Golden Temple in India is in Amritsar but do you know what happened there. There was an oppression where many innocent people became sick and died that the British Government was involved with. Why is this question arising in Congress today? We want to know why the British Prime Minister kept it a secret. We need to know the reason. We need to know the truth. Why has it been kept a secret for over 30 years? The Government need to justify this. Colleagues, it is now time under the 30 years rule to expose the Tories, Thatcher and later Jeffrey Howe, and Leon Brittan, involved in the SAS with the Indian Government's attempt to retake the Golden Temple by force. Once again by the disclosure under the 30 years' rule we learn about the details of the mass killing which should have been common knowledge years earlier. In fact, we should know about such incidents when they are happening. The Government should not keep secret to protect their personal interest. I urge Congress and entire delegates, please, to support this motion. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Thank you. Secunder.

Motion 285 was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 290, Southern Region to move.

**HOLDING UK BUSINESSES ACCOUNTABLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES OVERSEAS
MOTION 290**

290. HOLDING UK BUSINESSES ACCOUNTABLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES OVERSEAS.

Congress notes that In 2011, the UK Government endorsed the ten basic principles of the UN Global Compact for ethical business practices and, in 2013, released its action plan on business and human rights, in line with OECD guidelines that have been widely criticised for being ineffective. Congress further notes that the by failing to develop enforceable policies on corporate conduct the Government could be considered to be in violation of articles 1, 3 and 56 of the UN Charter of Human Rights and also the International Covenant on economic , social and cultural rights.

Congress agrees that:

a) GMB should join the United Nations Global Compact and affiliate to the LCID (Labour Campaign for International Development), an independent organisation affiliated to the Labour Party and use our influence to pressure Labour politicians into taking action that will contribute to the eradication of global poverty.

b) GMB should encourage the Labour Party to endorse the Global Compact and commit to establishing an action plan that will work towards holding UK-based companies accountable for their behaviour overseas.

c) GMB should lobby the UK Government and Opposition to appoint a suitably qualified official, preferably with a trade union background, to represent the UK at the UN Global Compact International; establish a legal framework whereby victims of negligence or misconduct by multinational companies domiciled in the UK can seek redress; and to ensure that corporations breaching accepted standards of human rights, are excluded from procuring public services.

G36 SECURITY BRANCH
Southern Region

(Referred)

BRO. A. ACHI (Southern): My little child likes jelly and every time I tell her, “Do you like chocolate,” she say, “Yes, I like chocolate,” and she does her dance, “*Jelly in my tummy.*” It is great. That is what she does when I talk about chocolate. Chocolate is really sweet but the story behind is not that sweet. Thirty-eight years ago a little child I know was walking two hours to go to field to cook the cocoa beans and the cocoa beans turn into chocolate. I am pretty sure that you love chocolate but you do not remember the first time you ate chocolate. I remember the first time I ate chocolate because this little boy who was walking in two hours to go to field to cook the cocoa bean, it’s me. This is called child labour.

In 2006, a UK-based company called Trafigura dumped toxic waste in my country. As a result of that 30,000 people went sick. Some of them died. They hired a lawyer in the UK. It took the company to court and they received 30 million compensation. It is good. Last year the law changed. When this tragedy happened the law was in place so when they took the company to court they won the case and the law firm was able to claim from the other side, from the company. Now, since the law has changed, the victim can no longer take the company to court because they cannot bear the cost of the law firm.

This is the reality. In this case, like I say the compensation was 30 million. The law firm fee was 105 million. Now with this new law they have to claim 25% from the victim. How can you claim 25% of 105 million from 30 million? It is impossible, therefore victims are not going to be able to take this company to court, and therefore they have a free permit to violate human rights overseas. We saw in Rana Plaza over 1,000 people died. It is not right.

This is why I am asking GMB to join the United Nations global compact because it is a led organisation under the supervision of the United Nations to promote labour and trade union rights overseas. Since when do businesses promote labour and trade union rights? If that was the case, Paul would not be here. Mary would not be here. We would not be here. One great man said, “To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity.” To impose on them a wretched life of deprivation is to dehumanise them. This is what these big companies are doing. Today I am moving this motion because human rights are not negotiable. That is the message I want to send to these big companies, human rights are not negotiable. I move this motion. *(Applause)*

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

Motion 290 was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 291, Yorkshire.

GLOBAL WORKERS' PROTECTION MOTION 291

291. GLOBAL WORKERS' PROTECTION

This Conference notes the secrecy around the proposed EU/US Free Trade Deal and fears the effects on UK employment, employment rights and UK standards. This conference calls on the GMB, through the TUC, to work with US unions on a joint position to protect both EU and US workers.

SHEFFIELD MCP & LIGHT BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. EQUINO (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)*
The European Union and the United States are in talks to create a free trade agreement also known as the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership). These negotiations between the governing bodies are done in secret creating guidelines and policies that will not be seen for public scrutiny. The secrecy surrounding its content is so great that not even the government officials of an EU member state are allowed to see these documents which have been drawn up. Once these documents are released it will be imposed on the citizens of the EU member states and also the US. This agreement will become the biggest trade deal between the US and the EU which will allow companies to make vast amounts of money.

NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) which was between Canada, Mexico, and the US, caused great concerns about the TTIP. NAFTA resulted in job losses and a race to the bottom as US farm exports flood America and US companies transfer operations to the foreign neighbours to exploit lower wage rates. The initial promise of NAFTA agreement was to create millions of jobs. Backers of the EU/US free trade agreement are claiming an economic growth will be increased by 0.5 a year by 2027 but there is no evidence to back these figures.

It is reported that the US has refused to sign most International Labour Organisation Conventions on standards, including freedom of association and rights to organise. Rights to work, working time directive, health and safety legislation, redundancy payments, and employment protection that the unions have fought hard and long for are under extreme threat. We believe the TTIP is an attack on trade union standards. The freedom for capital to move outside the purview of a single authority has a harmful effect where it is not invested in the real economy. The following are common abuses of free trade in capital, tax avoidance, money laundering, and obfuscation of corporate accounts.

Congress, these issues need to be raised: asking MPs and MEPs what they are doing and know, oppose this agreement, join with non governmental organisations in lobbying for change, work with US trade unions on joint objectives and standards, any agreement must be recognised to increase trade union rights and International Labour Organisation standards, GMB should publicise to increase public knowledge and promote transparency and the CEC statement on GMB position and intent. Congress, I move this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done.

BRO. M. LISTER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, first time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)* I want to tell you about the workers protection but I cannot because it's a secret. The negotiations in the EU trade agreement will not allow this. This Government does not even know the

content of the agreement. That is not hard, really. They don't know their arse from their elbow. This is supposed to be a free trade agreement but how can we call it free, they will not even sign up to the rights of freedom of association and the rights to organise. The GMB is fighting to break down the walls of inequality. Why should we bolster the ever growing pockets of the American fat cats that will come and decimate our country like a plague of locusts. I will finish on this. I have only discovered true freedom, the freedom of speech, the freedom to express the wrongdoings of this Government, the injustice of this Government, through you, the passionate and inspirational speakers of the GMB. I second Motion 291. Thank you.*(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Matthew. Motion 292, to be moved by Wales & South West Region.

CALL FOR GLOBAL PEACE, EQUALITY AND PROSPERITY MOTION 292

292. CALL FOR GLOBAL PEACE, EQUALITY AND PROSPERITY

This Conference recognises that in the pursuit of peace and civil liberties we sometimes have to engage in dialogue with those we would not normally want to be associated with or have discussions with. This Conference empowers the National Executive to speak to whoever it deems necessary to help bring peace and reconciliation around the globe. This Conference trusts the National Executive's judgment and supports any dialogue it undertakes in its endeavour to bring peace, equality and prosperity to troubled nations of the world.

BRISTOL PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. SUTTON (GMB Wales & South West): I have lived and worked in some amazing places and met fantastic people. I have seen that peace can bring prosperity and equality. However, I am sure that many ordinary people are far from achieving the peace, equality, and prosperity that they deserve, that they as human beings should expect that we have come to take for granted. Governments of different persuasions attempt to act as peace brokers waving carrots of different descriptions, loans, arms, troops, advisers, often they are not concerned which faction they broker a deal with as long as they get their share of government contracts, mineral rights, and political alignment.

We as trade unionists are concerned with tackling poverty, oppression, and inequality, not only in this country but around the wider world, a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, the ability to put food on the table, to provide clothing and shelter for your family, to be able to live the life you choose and equality between men and women. Congress, do not forget our trade union colleagues thrown in jail by their governments, the hundreds of millions of people denied the right of a free vote, and many of them living in poverty, the tens of millions whose countries are ravaged by war, and who have lost all hope. Congress, let us not forget it was trade union movements that was at the forefront of the fight for equality for women's rights, universal suffrage, workers' rights, fair pay, and always by peaceful protest.

The GMB stood shoulder to shoulder with our trade union colleagues over these issues and the GMB is still fighting for workers' rights around the globe. Colleagues, I am sure you are proud of our past achievements but you only have to look around at the news or read the papers to know there is still much left to fight for, still people who need help to attain those things we take for granted. This is why this motion asks Congress to empower the National Executive to speak to whoever it deems necessary to help bring peace and reconciliation around the globe. A bit of a tall order I know, to boldly go where no man has gone before. I am sure Paul can play Capt. Kirk to Mary's Lt. Uhura. There are times when we all as GMB officials have had to negotiate with people we would not normally share a table with. Sometimes

we have to talk to those whose actions and beliefs we find abhorrent, those who we know are of different political persuasions, who are not democrats, who have no moral standing in a civilised world.

Congress, we cannot just ignore these people, we owe it to those they oppress to enter into dialogue wherever possible with them. A colleague of mine once said, "I would sit down with the devil if I thought I could get a better deal for my members." Sometimes we have to reach out a hand and take a chance. This, Congress, is why we have to trust the National Executive's judgment and support any dialogue it undertakes, in an endeavour to bring, peace, equality and prosperity to troubled nations of the world. Peace, equality and prosperity for all. What better trade union objectives could there be. Comrades, I move. *(Applause)*

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

BRO. P. STAFF (GMB Wales & South West): President, Congress, first time delegate and second time speaker. *(Applause)* I am going to be a little different, I am going to give you "imagine". Imagine there is no heaven, it is easy if you try, no hell below us, above us only sky. Imagine all the people living for today, imagine there's no countries just for a day. It isn't hard to do, nothing to kill or die for. Imagine all the people living in peace. You may say I'm a bit of a dreamer but I'm not the only one. I hope some day you'll join us. I call on every one to give peace a chance. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Does anyone wish to speak against?

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London): Speaking against 292. Apologies, Congress. I know it is late and we all want to go but ----

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. I will take a separate vote on it. Okay.

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London): I recognise the sentiment in your motion but I do feel that opening up any discussions with anybody is not something we would want to do, for instance, the far right fascist Nazis. These are not the types of people that we can negotiate or deal with because their beliefs are just too far gone. We must encourage those who are oppressed and campaign against the oppressor. Whilst I recognise the sentiment of this motion, I do not feel it is worth supporting. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Matt. Anyone else? No? Okay, Wales & South West, right to reply? No? I now call Ron Waugh on Motions 280, 282, 283, 284, and 291.

BRO. R. WAUGH (CEC, Manufacturing): Before I move on to the CEC response, I think it would be remiss not to mention what is all over the news channels this morning, the fact that Iraq is on the brink of war again, an international event; already 100,000 dead; 100,000 men, women and children. God knows what is going to happen now. Congress, in my opinion, if ever there was a case for indictment to the Hague this is it; Blair and Bush should be sent there forthwith to answer for their crimes. It might stop other leaders. It might make them stop and think twice.

Anyway, back to the script. The CEC is asking you to support Motions 280, 282 and 291, with qualification, and asking for referral of 283, 284, and 290. Motion 280, the impact of the Greek crisis, the qualification is that, although CEC support the general thrust of the motion, we have no influence over Greek government departments and therefore are not in a position to ask the health ministry to offer more support to mothers who cannot afford to look after their children.

Motion 282, Latin America, apart from the specific request on Ecuador and Chevron, the rest of the motion is broadly in line with existing GMB policy. The minor qualification is that the Miami Five Commission has already taken place.

Motion 291 asks us to work with the US unions on a joint position to protect workers on both sides of the Atlantic, something we are already working towards. The qualification is that we will not be able to do it with the TUC as we have been unable to reach agreement with them on our position with the EU/US free trade deal.

The CEC is in general support of Motion 283 on Nicaragua, and Motion 284 on the Western Sahara but as they both call for financial commitments the CEC is asking for referral to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration.

Motion 290 is multifaceted calling the GMB to endorse a mixture of voluntary initiatives and legal enforcements on corporate behaviour. In order properly to consider the merits of the various parts of the motion, the CEC is asking for it to be referred for further investigation and research.

In conclusion, please support Motions 280, 282, and 291 with the qualifications, and accept referral on Motions 283, 284, and 290. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ron. Does Midland and London Region accept the qualification on Motion 280? (*Agreed*) Does London accept the qualification on Motion 282? (*Agreed*) And reference on Motion 283? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Southern Region accept reference on Motion 290? You are accepting reference? Yes? Okay. (*Agreed*) Does Yorkshire Region accept reference on Motion 284? (*Agreed*) And the qualification on Motion 291? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much.

Can I now put Motion 283, London Region has accepted reference. Does Congress agree? (*Agreed*) Okay. Yorkshire Region has accepted reference on Motion 284. Is that agreed? (*Agreed*) Southern Region half-heartedly has accepted reference. Is that agreed? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

I now move to Motions 280, 282, 285, and 291. All those in favour, please show. Anyone against? Those are carried.

Can I now call a separate vote on Motion 292? The CEC is supporting. All those in favour, please show. All those against? That is carried.

Motion 280 was CARRIED.

Motion 282 was CARRIED.

Motion 283 was REFERRED.

Motion 284 was REFERRED.

Motion 285 was CARRIED.

Motion 290 was REFERRED.

Motion 291 was CARRIED.

Motion 292 was CARRIED.

ANY OTHER CONGRESS BUSINESS

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. I have just a couple of announcements here. Winner of the iPad, Michael Clark, North West & Irish Region. (*Cheers*) Will you collect it from Andy Worth? Thank you.

Can people please pick up their prize for the raffle from York DWC?

Colleagues, please can regional secretaries ensure that card voting booklets are left in the regional red trays at the end of Congress so we can re-use them next year.

Could all regions please collect their regional banners, where possible; any hanging ones will be returned in due course.

CLOSING PROCEDURE OF CONGRESS

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, we are now commencing the closing procedure of Congress, which begins with the Omnibus Vote of Thanks, this year to be given by Jean Foster, Southern Region. Could I say personally before I call Jean, and I know she is there, I would like to thank all of you for being so patient this week. We have had a busy agenda which reflects the issues that are going on outside in the real world. I would like to thank Malcolm, my right hand here, Kathleen, Ida, and all the staff, believe you me, they have worked damned hard this week. You do not see them, they are at the back. This is from me personally. Okay? Most of all, I would like to thank my region, and Paul Hayes, for the support they give me and, of course, not forgetting the man on my left, where he usually is, Paul Kenny, and also his wife Pat, and his family. Thank you. Thank you all. (*Applause*) I know Jean is going to deal with the rest. I call Jean Foster from the Southern Region.

OMNIBUS VOTE OF THANKS

SIS. J. FOSTER (CEC, Southern Region): Thank you, President. Congress, I am proud and honoured to be asked to give the omnibus vote of thanks on behalf of the CEC, especially in this special year as we celebrate 125 years. Congress, when we arrived here we were greeted with a Hucknall and Linby Mining Community Brass Band. Your music was superb and we thank you for that. (*Applause*)

At the start of Congress, we saw a fine parade of banners. The new modern national banner was proudly carried by GMB Scotland in their fine tartans. You did a great job. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Well done, also, to the winner who designed the new banner. He said he hoped it would appeal to the youth and I think it will.

We had a moving tribute to the late John Toomey. The background music said it all. He was a true union man and will be sadly missed by all. (*Applause*)

The President's address, as always, was passionate. Mary, you said you do not want to go back to the 60s, 70s, and 80s, and spoke passionately about the National Health Service. Yes, Mary, we need to keep those, excuse my language, Tory bastards out. The Count Dracula Cameron is sucking the life blood out of your National Health Service. Mary asked Congress to revitalise our fighting spirit and that we have done this week here. Mary, Sheila called you a legend and you truly are, and we cannot fail with you at our helm.

Now for the shock of Congress, it was in the first session when the Yorkshire Region overturned the CEC. (*Cheers*) We are all now going to be YouTube stars; that is what you call democracy. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Motion 44, and I am going to go through a couple of motions that I picked out, the North West & Irish Region brought Congress the problems of stress and the need for stewards to be trained. Congress, stress is one of the biggest problems that are hitting our members and the motion is right, our stewards do need more training. Thank you for that. *(Applause)*

In Composite 20, I think I have his name right, Charlie, well, did he move or did he second, but the message was sent to Iain Duncan Smith, there is a cattle prod awaiting for you. It won't hurt much, well, not as much as you are hurting our members with the work capability assessment. *(Applause)*

Motion 172 heard Kevin Flanagan call on Congress to take the leaflets home on the Thorne Credit Union. Have you got yours? If you haven't, make sure you take them home with you. Help our members.

Our Billy Hughes was presented with a long service badge for the commitment to this rostrum. Billy, we love you and love to hear you speak at Congress, and long may it continue. *(Applause)*

That was just a few motions I have picked out. There were so many good motions and first time delegates to the rostrum. Thank you all for your contributions.

There were many special reports at Congress all carried, reports like branches, Paul said, "We do not do shrugging shoulders," and we certainly do not. There was the Women's Project Interim Report to encourage and to empower women. I am here to represent the lay members and we would like to see more women coming up through the ranks of the lay membership. *(Applause)* Paul said this was an historic moment. Thank you all for the hard work that you put into these reports to make our great Union a better and more progressive union.

Then we go on to speakers. Maria Ludkin spoke about UnionLine, the new legal service for our members. Did you take the leaflets? Did you take down the number? If not, here we go again: 0300 333 0303. Put it on your phone.

Now to thank Glenis Willmott, a welcome speaker to our Congress; Glenis spoke of putting back a social Europe that will benefit the many, not just the few.

Thank you to Cath Speight, who talked about the need to get a Yes vote for the Political Fund. Cath's plea to you all was to make sure we get that Yes vote. We are a campaigning union and we need to keep campaigning.

Thank you to Margaret Curran, MP who also made a plea to get a No vote in Scotland on September 18th for the best interests of the working people.

That brings me to Rachel Reeves, MP, who was in the question time asked about what they could do for zero-hours. What was the answer, ban it? No, her answer was, "Some like it." Shame on you. *(Applause)* Ed Miliband, did he say he would ban it? No. Shame on you and kiss our badge. *(Applause)* Thank you to Kevin Maguire for chairing the question time.

Congress, that leaves me one more speaker here I would like to thank, Ricky Tomlinson; a big thank you for the presentation of the Daniel Dennis Health & Safety Award to the winner, Shani Hocking (I apologise if I said that wrong) of Midland & East Coast Region, and the runner up, Amanda Burley, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. *(Applause)*

After the presentation he addressed Congress. The emotion of his address was felt throughout Congress. Ricky, we are with you all the way and we will get those shites. (*Applause*)

Congress, there are a lot of people who work tirelessly to make sure Congress goes smoothly and here are a few people I am going to thank.

Bob Badlan, who organises the sponsorship and the exhibits, thank you for the coffees and teas, most welcome.

All the Head Office and regional staff, as Mary said, you don't always see them but they are there busily working away.

The stewards that greet us with smiles in the morning and say goodbye in the evening, thank you very much for the work you did this week (*Applause*)

The shorthand writers, they are quietly beavering away in the corner here at the side of the stage. Thank you very much indeed. (*Applause*)

The tellers who have to remain in hall at all times; they don't drink too much because they have to remain here all the time. (*Cheers*)

The Standing Orders Committee, who are over there now, thank you very much for making sure we do it right. (*Applause*)

Kathleen Walker Shaw, thank you again for all you do, all the time, for us in the GMB. (*Applause*)

Steve Short, you don't see him a lot but he is working away behind continuously, he works so very hard, and all his team. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

Our Ida Clemo here, and the team, who make Congress run smoothly, in spite of twisting her ankle. That will teach her. I am told that she threw herself at Paul Maloney's feet! (*Applause*)

There is our fantastic press team, Rose Conroy and Steve Pryle, and the team. The best team ever you could want on your side. Thank you. (*Applause*)

To our Malcolm Sage, Vice President, thank you for the vital support you give and the support you always give to Mary, and all of us. (*Applause*)

Once again, Mary, thank you for being you, kind, smiling, a true friend. We love you all. We all love you. Sorry. Well, we love all of you. (*Applause*)

Paul mentioned 10 years of steady membership growth and this has been supported – I am sorry I have to do this – by our own region, Southern, who are currently showing 5.4% growth under Paul Maloney's leadership. We are proud of the contribution, Paul. (*Cheers*)

Our General Secretary, Paul, has turned this Union round. You gave a commitment to take on the companies, starting with A, Asda and AA. You took them on and fulfilled your promise. So, on behalf of those workers who will benefit from this we give a big thank you to you. We thank you for the hard work that you keep continuing to do for our great Union, the best union, and your message to the Labour Party, kiss the badge. There it is.

This brings me to you, the delegates. Thank you for all your hard work and continue to do so. Please take home to your families that they are so important because they support you all the time. Have a safe journey home. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jean. Congress, the brass band, as you know, will be outside. We are making a donation to them and we will do that later off stage.

Following the General Secretary's closing speech, I will then move on to the agenda again. Mr. Paul Kenny.

GENERAL SECRETARY'S CLOSING SPEECH

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you. Can I just say Mary and drop the formality for once. Thank you, Mary. I think it has been a really good Congress, I really do. From where we have been sitting, we have been watching, it is a fantastic attendance, the passion, the bits and bobs of people's arguments, there is such a desire to want to do right. This Congress is a huge amount of work and the GMB Congress is a joy, but you can certainly go home and say with some conviction it is certainly not a jolly. Thank you for your dedication. First time delegates, with the changes we made a few years ago to be more inclusive, show the Union is growing and the future looks pretty secure. I can tell you there were 73 first time speakers at this Congress. (*Applause*) That is absolutely fantastic. That is a credit to the activists in the branches who have encouraged people, to officers and to the regions, and the regional committees who have encouraged people to come, 73 first time speakers.

I would like Congress in the same way that Mary and Jean did to ask for your appreciation for the National Office and the NAU staff, and for T5, our stage group, and before you clap I just want to pick a few random names.

People have been watching some of the technology on the screen, the names, the motions, and I would like to say that we had all technology under control but we don't always as was evident in the Public Services Section when it came up as being "the Pubic Services Section". (*Laughter*) That's true. I certainly learnt something this week! When Brian Strutton grabbed all the ginger nuts, I really began to worry about it, I can tell you. (*Laughter*) Not a biscuit in sight. What did you think I was talking about!

Can I just run through people who have made all this work: Heidi Benzing and Gary Doolan, Lisa Johnson, Hilary Perrin and Cath Speight, and John Callow, from the political team.

The media and campaigns team, as Jean said, absolutely I think the best in the Movement, Rose Conroy, Charlotte Gregory, Steve Pryle, and Laura Jagdev; absolutely brilliant.

Barry Smith and the Standing Orders team, just put your hands up. Just wave. (*Applause*). I know that sometimes people go, "Oh, that Standing Orders." I have said it before and I will say it again, they are actually the guardians of the lay member democracy while this Congress sits and they are a pretty difficult bunch to go in front of if you want to tamper with the rules.

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Less of the "old".

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Some of your colleagues are the old guardians, is that all right, Helen? (*Laughter*)

We have had John McClean and Danny Shears from the Health & Safety Department talking to people during the week and that has been useful.

Phil McEvoy and Mick Balfour have been counting all the numbers and giving me the statistical information about speakers and helping us to make sure that we do not miss any of the votes.

Robbie Badlan, he has done a fantastic job. Since we started to seek more positive contributions from some of our contributors we reckon during that 10 years we probably, with Robert's help, have raised about a million pounds to offset the cost of Congress and the cost to delegates with free tea and coffee. Robert has done a pretty good job. (*Applause*)

We have had Paula Keane, Emma Golding, Stevie Short, the Executive Officer in the Union, and I echo what Jean said. Honestly, the work this guy does, his only failing is that he is a Charlton Athletic supporter; apart from that he is a pretty good bloke. (*Laughter*)

Kerry Smith, she joined us during the year and this is her first Congress and she just could not believe it. She had never experienced anything like it. I think she is going to be a great asset to the Union in years to come.

Kevin Panton, who has been working and carrying on working, even after he retired, for the GMB for, what is it, 162 years now? It is a long time, anyway.

We have had Bob Crosby helping out the team and working with the stewards.

We have had a couple of willing volunteers who are relatives of colleagues who work for the GMB. We have had Hannah Shoemith, who is Sharon Holder's daughter, she has been here helping out all week; you may have seen her occasionally coming out on the stage. Leila Williams, who is actually Ida Clemo's daughter and she has been helping on the Ethical Threads and generally helping. They just want to be at Congress. (*Applause*)

We have had Pat Gannon and Marion Healy and Anna Barnes, trying to work the numbers up on the screen and, as I say, occasionally making an odd mistake but generally getting it right.

The NAU staff, who have been really good, John McCargo, Bob Robinson, and Kevin Sweeney, and they have done a fair amount of work in making sure that we communicate with the outside world.

Andrew Wiard, who is down here, has covered just about every GMB event and almost every Congress since I can go back as the official photographer. He is the one who takes your photographs, the one that stands up on the chairs and on the tables, ignoring every bit of health and safety advice we have ever given anybody, and nobody says a word. Thank you, Andrew, we are really pleased that you are one of us. (*Applause*)

I am just looking, did I miss anybody because there will be hell to pay if I do. No, I think that's it.

The other thing was our stewards from the Midlands & East Coast Region who have done the stewarding. They have run short all week and I have to say that they have been a real credit, they have been a credit to the Union and also a credit to the region; they have been so helpful. I cannot remember the last time at Congress where I did not have a single complaint. Maybe people channelled them in a different way. As I said to you before, people do have a habit of popping up to me at 11 o'clock at night when I am having a pint, or something, and telling me that their mattress is too hard or the hot water is not right, or whatever.

I never got any of that. The stewards helped everybody and it was not exactly the easiest access we have ever had. People were very patient and the stewards were brilliant. Thank you again to the stewards who did a fantastic job. (*Applause*)

I have just a few things to say. I have to talk about Billy Hughes. You will remember Billy's plea during the Finance Debate yesterday about the retired members' lifetime subscription. Billy, I am going to call you in future Billy Viagra because you have had me up all night! (*Laughter/Applause*) Billy made a heartfelt plea and I have been thinking how perhaps we should be dealing with that. It is not possible for me just to swivel quickly when a whole process has taken place in the Union, but I want to suggest something, Billy, if you will agree. I will ask the CEC, through the Finance Committee, not just to monitor the impact of the increase which I suggested yesterday but I think maybe we can go a bit further, I will ask the CEC to consider changing the qualifying criteria for lifetime membership and if a member reaches retirement with only the meagre state pension, then perhaps life membership should be free, Billy. (*Applause/Cheers*) Maybe that is the difference between us and lots of other people because you listen, you think about the argument, then you think about what maybe is right, and I think that there is not a member in this Union who would not say that is right. Thank you, Billy.

Billy, also the President and I have had a chat, or should I say she told me (*Laughter*) and we wish to recommend to the CEC that Billy gets the Gold Badge of this Union. (*Applause/Cheers*) This is going to be a very special award, really. It involves cold baths, loafers!

BRO. B. HUGHES (Northern): Can I just say, Paul ----

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Yes, why not. I wouldn't stop you!

BRO. B. HUGHES (Northern): I am pleased to accept the reference back! (*Laughter*)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Sort of. We are also going to have it specially made, Billy, a conical shaped cup so you don't have to worry about your hanky in future, you just put it straight over the light, all right? (*Applause/Laughter*)

THE PRESIDENT: Billy, can I say this is not for the antics you got up to this week. This is for what you have done and been committed to all your life. From a 16-year old in this Congress, and every other Congress, to whatever age, they hold the greatest respect for you and the work you do. We are very proud of you, Billy. Billy, for me, Worthy President, when we were going through a hard time in this Union you from the North East stood back to back with us. Thank you very much for that. (*Applause*)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Well done, son. I tell you, I learnt a few things. As I said, we had a Public Services Section. I also learnt that Martin Smith has actually got a wallet. (*Laughter*) I can see people in London Region passing out, and the National Office. Yes, he has one. I still don't know what's in it, but I know he's got one.

THE PRESIDENT: I bet it don't come out.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: I have seen it, Mary, but I never saw it open!

We have had some really wonderful speakers and we would be here until tomorrow to catalogue them all, so I apologise if I do not pick you out. It has been a fantastic knock-out Congress and you could not help but be moved by a few people, like Robert Devine, Southern Region, from the AA. You could not help it. It was not just courage and emotion. I know, and Paul Maloney knows the courage it has taken to carry

on building and fighting for the Union inside an employer that set about with all their might and power to destroy trade union organisation. It takes a specific type of dedication and courage, and we honour you, Robert; we honour you. *(Applause)*

There is a young man who has been up a couple of times, Ryan Ward, from the Democratic Republic of Yorkshire. *(Laughter/Applause)* I sit there and think, we ain't got no problems about this Union's future when you have delegates like that and I know that when it comes to setting up and negotiating to get a fair day's pay out of Asda, Ryan, you're going to be right at the front of the queue. Thank you, mate, you made a great contribution. *(Applause)*

Ake, you had a dream. I have a dream. I have a dream that this Union and this Movement, and this Congress, will always have room for people to express serious points of view but in the most powerful ways possible and what you did was not just do that but you did it in a way that actually communicates with a lot of working people. You used humour, sometimes in very serious subjects, but you got people's attention, and I have to say that every time you came up to speak, and you made a bit of a show so we knew you were coming, Mary said, "Oh, we're in for a good 'un here, he's coming again." Listen, it was a real privilege and I hope you enjoyed Congress.

Carol Clarkson, from the Midlands Region, Carol is recovering from a stroke and came to speak at the rostrum. What I saw, because I was working at the platform when people had gone for their lunch, I saw Carol coming up and practising to come up to that rostrum. I said, "Look, it's no problem, we can get the wheelchair up," and she said, "No, I'm walking to that rostrum." *(Applause)* She did when the time came; she did. Do you know, Carol, with that sort of determination, I just have to tell you it is an absolute honour to share the same union as you. Thank you, Carol. That sort of determination inspires everybody. *(Applause)*

A little story that I know, Tony Cholerton, he's going to go, "Who? Did he say me?" He is from the London Region and works at London Zoo. They wanted to film down at London Zoo. Tony had his union badge on. They said, "Oh, can you take your union badge off?" He said, "No." They said, "Well, you won't be in the film." He said, "I don't care, I'm not taking my union badge off for you or anybody else." He stuck to his guns and he was in the film, and he kept his union badge on. That's pride. Well done, Tony. *(Applause)*

We did some really serious stuff this week. We really did, honestly. Women in the Union, we did the Women in the Union stuff. I think the branches stuff is important. I think the housing report is the most serious bit of work the Union has done for a long time. That would echo, if people get hold of that, and it is already beginning to echo with some of the commentators saying, "This is a serious bit of work." I spoke to Ed behind the scenes and I said, "There's one thing in there that really is the start point, and that is you should be saying you will have a special government department only dealing with housing because you will not cut through all of the red tape unless you take direct action to deal with this problem." I think he is going to go away and think about that. I hope he does. *(Applause)*

Then 125 years, we were really lucky, we got Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott, the Beautiful South. For those of you who braved the nightclub, and the £5 a pint, you will have heard a really, really great celebration of our 125th. I want to thank Paul and Jacqui, they have been touring the country, they have been going out with different regions, and they have been going and demonstrating outside Next stores who make huge amounts of money despite their public denials, we have the evidence that they did not in all places pay what they say, and they have certainly not been the most enjoyable employers for many of our members, particularly when it came to the issue of hours.

I am struck by the story of Jacqui Abbott, a fantastic voice, and Paul, who is very committed to the trades union Movement, and I think it was in Glasgow, I am not sure, they were hitting the Next store and giving them the ASBO and Jacqui was across the road handing out leaflets. She was saying to people, "Hello, Hi, I'm Jacqui Abbott. I don't buy my clothes in Next because they don't pay their workers a decent wage. You shouldn't buy your clothes in Next either." I compare that sort of commitment, people who understand where their roots are, to pop stars who want to offshore their ill-gotten gains in order to avoid paying to support the NHS. *(Applause)* Thank you to Paul and Jacqui, and to the musicians. I thought it was a really good show.

Ed, I hope people left actually thinking we saw a bit of that passion that we have been talking about, it was there. Were all the questions answered? No, they were not but give him credit he did not dodge them either. He did try. I liked actually some of the things he said. I think the passion is there. I think you will be surprised in the months ahead in terms of what Labour will announce. It would be foolish to expect that all of that will come out in the next few weeks. I think there is going to be a bit more radicalism than we have seen from any Labour administration for many, many a year.

Talking about passion, you can't pass that by without talking about Harry Donaldson. That was a joke, Harry. Are you all right? *(Laughter)* He's just thinking, he's looking round to see whose coming in! Harry, thank you for the excellent whisky that you provided to everybody and in future perhaps we will hand it out at the end of the day because I got the distinct impression at least one delegate may have been sampling it before he came to the rostrum. *(Laughter)*

Thank you GMB Scotland for having the courage to take a lead. We said in the Union that it was a matter for GMB Scotland. It should not be that London told our members in Scotland how they should think or what they should do, and we said we trust GMB Scotland, we pass the responsibility and, as you heard, the GMB is actually the only major union that has been through that process, took a decision, and has gone out on a stump. Thank you for leading GMB Scotland and thank you for all the work you have done. *(Applause)*

Jean talked about Kathleen. Year after year I just keep saying she is tremendous and all of us, all the SMT, we all know how much work Kathleen does. She does a brilliant job for us in Brussels but she does a whole range of other things now. I just want to say to you, and your colleagues in Brussels, it was a really great day when we found you and I hope that we hang on to you for a very long time to come. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

Malcolm, I don't really know what to say. Every year. I don't know what to say about him. He is so consistent. He is decent. He is honest. He is straight. He really is. He won't borrow you any money but other than that he's all right. *(Laughter)* He is an absolute rock. He runs lots of stuff internally and makes sure when he runs the senior management team meetings that nobody gets out of hand. He looks at all times after the interests of the lay members and all of those issues. Thank you, Malcolm. You are truly a great friend. *(Applause)*

Ida Clemo, I suppose it is difficult to describe somebody you work with all the time but I can assure you that Ida is not the person she was a few years ago. She really is not. It just shows you how people can blossom. She has grown into a much more confident person, a person who is so passionate about the trades union Movement, believe me, she gets angry just writing the resolutions up. To be absolutely honest with you, I couldn't see how this Congress could function without Ida. It could function without me but without Ida, I think you would have a big, big problem. Ida, from everyone, thank you very much indeed. *(Applause)*

Now to the two great women in my life and not in any particular order. Mary, you are just an amazing person. You are just an incredibly amazing person. I know what maybe a lot of the delegates do not know about your own particular circumstances and battles which you have fought and won. I never ever underestimate what your capability is. I have seen you produce miracles when I don't think anybody else in the world even thought there was a possible solution. You have been an inspiration to so many people, the way that people in this Union identify with you, as just being warm, helpful, always listening.

I will tell you the great mark of a person, when Mary thinks there has been a mistake, she does not care about what the imagery is, she will go back and apologise. She will go and see a delegate and she will say, "I'm sorry about that, I got it wrong." You have seen it once this week where she has done that. I see the way that she interacts with people and I see the way that people interact with her, and she is real, by the way. This is still somebody who gets the phone calls at 6 o'clock in the morning from a member, or 12 o'clock at night, or Christmas Day. She is not a plastic president, let me absolutely assure you of that. She works for the members 365 days a year.

Mary, from everybody in this Congress, please, please, understand we love you and we want you just to remember at all times that we are here for you, whatever happens, whatever comes, you will always be able to rely 100% on every single member in this Union. We love you, Mary. (*Applause*)

My wife, Pat, whom I love dearly. There you go, darl'. (*Applause*) Old hands have heard me say it but I will say it again, when our children were growing up Pat took a completely disproportionate amount of responsibility for making sure our kids turned out right, and they both have, they are good trade unionists. When the children got older – I was out at meetings most nights for the union as a steward or a branch secretary – she became active once she was able to go back to work. She quickly discovered the GMB was not actually recognised in her workplace so she set about firstly getting check-off, and then about recruiting members into the Union, which she did very successfully. She had an advantage over me; she actually attended this Congress as a delegate. I could never make it. I kept getting knocked out by a bloke who slept through most of it. In those days, that's the way it worked. She spoke at Congress quite a few times, for those of you who have the handbooks, and had a pretty, I think, good career in the Union fighting for the members at local level, as a branch secretary, as a regional council member, and a Congress delegate.

I know that the values that run through our family are absolutely pushed and held by Pat. I always want to take the chance when I get it to make a public set of thanks, one for putting up with me, two, for allowing me to eat curry. (*Laughter*) Yes, you know, don't you! Three, just being a really wonderful, warm, loving wife, mum, and grandmum. We all love you, love, and I promise I will take you out tonight. (*Applause*)

That just about sums up this Congress, it is about us trying to fight for a better world and a better society. It is not about us asking for much for ourselves. The delegates who came to this rostrum did not say, "Give me the winning numbers for the Lottery," or "Make me a millionaire," or "How can I cheat the state," they did not say that. They were arguing and fighting for working people, families, pensioners, children, for our Health Service. They were arguing for our society. I think that is pretty noble. I think that is the purpose and function of the Union. I say we have a fantastic future in this Union. I can see it in front of me. I say to you this, never, ever, ever, let anybody suggest that what you do is not a wonderful thing because it is. You save lives. You save families. You put roofs over people's heads. You get decent pay. You do a whole range of things to get people respect at work and there is a fair chance that even those people who are not in the Union who moan about trade unions are enjoying what they are enjoying from the backs and the shoulders of trade unionists who went before them. Occasionally, it might be a good idea if we remind them. Thank you so much for what you do for the members. (*Standing ovation*)

CLOSING CEREMONY

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, can I say thank you and thank you, Paul. You know it is commitment and you have plenty of that, and you do care very deeply, I know that. We now come to the closing ceremony, Congress, you will be pleased to know, which is in two parts. We will now have a short slide show with some highlights of Congress. I hope nobody has been caught asleep. The music this year is “Proud” by M People. Then we will stand to sing *The Red Flag*.

Video shown to Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleague, can we now stand for *The Red Flag*.

Congress sang The Red Flag.

FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PRESIDENT: You will be pleased to know we have now come nearly to the end. Could I on behalf of everyone up here and everybody else, wish all of you a safe journey, and your families. Hope to see you all at the march on 18th October – oh, all right, then, we are going two days later! Anyway, sincerely, thank you all so, so much and hope to see you in Ireland, all being well, next year. Thank you, Jean, for everything. All of you, a safe journey. You can now relax and say, “Thank bleeding god she’s finished that.” Safe journey home. (*Applause*)
