

GMB

CONGRESS 2017

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

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Held in:

Plymouth Pavilions  
Plymouth

on:

Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2017  
Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017  
and  
Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017

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PROCEEDINGS  
DAY THREE  
(Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2017)

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## **THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS**

**TUESDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017**

### **MORNING SESSION**

*(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can Congress come to order, please? I just want to make an announcement before we start. The GMB Credit Union prize draw, the winners, and the first is Keith Parks, Midland & East Coast Region, £150, second is Mrs. K. Sanders of Wales & South West, £100, and the third is Mr. John Kitchen of the Yorkshire Region, £75. Could the winners go over to stand 21 as soon as they are able, and thank you again for taking part. Please encourage your members to participate in the GMB Credit Union. Remember, it is your credit union.

We will now start with Standing Orders Committee Report No.5. I call on Helen Johnson to move the SOC Report. Helen.

### **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO.5**

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President, Congress, Withdrawn Motions and Rule Amendments. I confirm that the following Rule Amendments were withdrawn from the floor of Congress yesterday: Southern Region withdrew RA386, and London Region withdrew RA390.

The SOC has also been advised that the following motions have been withdrawn by the regions concerned:

Birmingham & West Midland have withdrawn 254 and 258;  
Southern Region have withdrawn 248, 259, 271, and 272.

Bucket collections. Yesterday's bucket collection by GMB Scotland for Guide Dogs for the Blind raised the sum of £608.49. *(Applause)*

President, Congress, I move SOC Report No.5. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. All in favour of the report please show. Thank you.

*Standing Orders Committee Report No.5 was ADOPTED.*

### **CEC SPECIAL REPORT: BREXIT AND BEYOND – PROTECTING GMB MEMBERS' FUTURES**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move into the last of our CEC Special Reports and can I ask Andy Newman of the CEC, Southern Region, to move the Special Report on Brexit.

### **CEC SPECIAL REPORT: BREXIT AND BEYOND – PROTECTING GMB MEMBERS' FUTURES**

#### **1. Introduction**

1. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2016 the UK voted to leave the EU.

2. Throughout the referendum campaign, GMB advocated a position of an "angry remain", a position that was formally adopted by our congress. Our position was based on the reality of GMB members' jobs, livelihoods and communities. We argued that the EU was far from perfect and needed to change, but that on balance we were better off in than out.
3. The public did not agree.
4. In recent years, no issue has divided the UK more. Even though the result was decisive, there were great regional and national disparities in how the electorate – and GMB members – voted. Many working class communities, frustrated with a political and economic system that, for too long, as not worked for them, vented their frustrations at the ballot box.
5. Working class voters in towns were more likely to vote to Leave, younger city dwellers wanted to Remain. London, Scotland and Northern Ireland were the only regions and nations to vote as a whole to Remain in the EU, but voting so by large margins.
6. There is much work to be done on what a post-Brexit UK looks like, and on uniting a country where different parts of the electorate have diametrically opposed views. That work must be done, because Brexit will be a reality.
7. Now the decision has been made, GMB must work not just to protect our members' jobs, livelihoods, communities and industries but to advance our members' interests throughout this process.
8. On 23<sup>rd</sup> June people voted to leave the EU, they did not vote for their rights to be eroded, their public services sold off (quite the converse, they were promised £350 million a week for the NHS) or their jobs to be sold down the river.
9. GMB must fight on behalf of our members for a Workers' Brexit, not one for bosses and big business.

## **2. Where we are now**

- 2.1.**GMB accepts the outcome of the referendum. Our focus now is on ensuring GMB members do not pay the price for EU Exit.
- 2.2.**In September 2016, the CEC adopted a statement on EU Exit, committing our union to working across all our sectors and at every level - regionally, nationally and internationally - to protect the jobs, interests and employment rights of our members and their families.
- 2.3.**We are already working on meeting the challenges and grasping any opportunities that the EU exit negotiations and our future relationship with the EU and wider world could bring. The process of monitoring and mapping our sectors in relation to threats of restructuring or withdrawal of investment is already underway and we are developing networks for our members who are reporting any changes from their workplaces/sectors.
- 2.4.** A working group of the CEC Political, European and International (PEI) sub-committee has been established to give direction to our work on campaigning for a Workers' Brexit.

- 2.5. It is already clear that the negotiating process, which was formally triggered by the Prime Minister on 29th March 2017, will be neither inclusive nor transparent from the side of a Conservative Government.
- 2.6. A General Election will take place on 8<sup>th</sup> June on which the Government is seeking to gain a mandate for Brexit policies they are unwilling to share with the electorate. GMB has continuously called for impact assessments to be shared with the public, so we can see what the Government itself believes the impact will be on jobs and our economy.

### **3. The EU divorce settlement and future relationships**

- 3.1. The EU negotiators have confirmed that the financial divorce settlement must be agreed before discussing any future relationship/trade with the UK. There is a major difference in opinion of what the UK Government believes it should be paying for the exit settlement (nothing) and the figure calculated by the EU (€100 billion). It is clear this will cause tensions in the negotiations.
- 3.2. Furthermore, the Conservative Government has already ruled out continued membership of the EU Single Market and the Customs Union in its current arrangement. This means the Government will be seeking a new trade agreement with the EU, which could take time.
- 3.3. An early decision on the position and rights of EU citizens currently working and living in the EU and, of UK citizens currently living and working in the EU, is considered a priority on both sides to end further insecurity. The impact of any policy on this matter needs careful consideration.
- 3.4. The future involvement of the UK in research and innovation, training and student mobility programmes would require the UK to pay into EU budgets. Withdrawing completely could have a major impact on our industries and the quality and funding of our higher education system. Transitional arrangements are already being considered in some areas of funding.
- 3.5. The Conservative Government has already confirmed in legislation it will withdraw from EURATOM (European Atomic Energy Community) which is a major concern to GMB and the industry in the UK. GMB urges the Government to give urgent clarification and reassurances, in this new context, on the future of low carbon nuclear new build and the related jobs and sustainability of communities concerned.

### **4. Government needs a clear plan for EU Exit that protects and promotes jobs across the economy**

1. GMB has major concerns that the Conservative Government is not in control of the complex task of ensuring that our jobs, living standards and economy are safe as we withdraw from the EU. There appears to be no strategy for protecting and promoting British industry and jobs. If impact assessments have been done across sectors, they are not being shared with either industry or trade unions. If impact assessments have not been done, the Government is negligent and going into Brexit negotiations blind.

2. It is time to turn the hollow “take control” mantra of the referendum campaign into, not only ensuring the UK economy and our members' jobs are safe and sustainable, but in finding opportunities to grow and expand UK industry. The Government's recently launched Industrial strategy is a poor beginning – detached from the realities of Brexit and failing to mention trade unions at all in its narrative. Having a strong and inclusive industrial strategy that gives an equal voice to employers and unions is vital. The Government must also ensure industrial and trade strategies are linked – it is basic common sense that this needs to happen in order to protect and promote manufacturing, services and public service jobs.
3. GMB wants to see clear commitments from the Government to protect jobs and industries, not on an ad hoc basis, as company bosses visit Number 10, as with Nissan, but on a sector-by-sector, region by region basis, putting the building blocks in place to ensure stability as we withdraw from the EU.
4. GMB is clear that Brexit is not just a threat to the private sector. Public service jobs are the life-blood of the economy in many areas of the UK. There is now not even a whisper of the mythical £350 million a week funding that was promised during the referendum campaign. Any economic downturn risks further cuts to public services if the government refuses to borrow in order to invest. GMB must be strident in protecting public services and public sector workers from the impact of Brexit. With around one in 20 public sector workers coming from the EU as well as a pre-existing recruitment crisis in industries like healthcare, the Government will have to address shortages across the public sector, investing in skills and training.
5. Trends are already emerging of multinational companies making restructuring decisions on the back of Brexit. Whether they are using Brexit as an excuse for cuts or have genuine concerns about the sustainability of their UK base may differ from case to case, but recent redundancies announced in Diageo and Nestle already show that we will not be immune to job losses. GMB had already raised concerns for the future of our whisky industry and wider manufacturing, but has received no answer from the Government to the legitimate questions we have raised. Furthermore, management are not consulting upstream of any proposed changes. Such practices are not acceptable, and both Government and employers must understand that GMB is part of the solution, not the problem.

## **5. Protecting our employment and social rights**

- 5.1. GMB does not believe that people voted to leave the EU to give away their employment rights. We have major concerns that the Conservative Government may deregulate or repeal important employment and social rights we fought hard to win from the EU. Theresa May's promises that she would maintain and even improve these rights seem thin when her party disgracefully talked out Melanie Onn's Private Members' Bill on that very issue. This is the party which has had the deregulation of Working Time rights as a manifesto commitment at the last two elections. Furthermore, we have a copy of a wish list from the Department of Work and Pensions dating back to 2014 detailing which Health & Safety rights they wish to

see removed. We can be forgiven for being sceptical about these promises and must remain vigilant in defence of these rights.

- 5.2.** A bonfire of rights following legal removal from EU jurisdiction could include a raft of health and safety protections, wide-ranging equality and anti-discrimination rights, fixed term, part-time and agency workers' rights, TUPE, collective redundancy rights and consultation rights – the list is long. We are also critically aware that the Human Rights Act remains under threat of repeal.
- 5.3.** Chancellor of the Exchequer, Phillip Hammond, has already threatened that he will use all competitive means if the UK gets a bad deal in Brexit. By that, he means any method at his disposal to encourage businesses to operate and invest here. The Conservatives have already committed to lowering corporation tax again, to the lowest levels in the G20, but we know big businesses will lobby to dilute employment rights too. We cannot allow a race to the bottom in employment rights and for Britain to be reduced to a bargain basement tax haven.
- 5.4.** In light of this, GMB believes UK Government should commit to ensuring that UK legislation on workers' rights never falls behind those of EU member states and commits to matching progress made to protect workers.
- 5.5.** GMB is concerned about the potential impact of the Henry VIII clauses. Such clauses 'enable primary legislation to be amended or repealed by subordinate legislation with or without further parliamentary scrutiny'. That means the Government could potentially make changes to employment and social protections without any Parliamentary debate. We are already raising these concerns with Parliament and the devolved governments, and must be vigilant in monitoring the Government and ensuring full transparency in protecting these rights.
- 5.6.** Throughout the process, we must remember that these rights are still currently on our statute books – they are ours to win or lose. Leaving the EU in itself will not remove them. It would involve an act of political will by the Government at UK level to remove or weaken them.
- 5.7.** The threat of national government deregulating these rights strengthens pressure for these rights to become devolved powers. Theresa May said in the early stages of the Referendum debate that certain powers returned from the EU would be devolved within the UK. Though not specific about what these would be, Scotland in particular has made an early bid for these rights to be transferred, a position supported by STUC.
- 5.8.** If the Conservative Government are in power come 9<sup>th</sup> June and are serious about their rhetoric about standing up for hard working people, they can put their money where their mouth is by not only protecting the rights we currently have, but by working with trade unions to ensure we have workplace rights fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century - addressing emerging risks and the realities of new forms of work.

## **6. Economic Migration**

- 6.1.** It was clear throughout the referendum campaign that the issue of immigration – the catch all term used by most voters to encompass issues

around economic migration - was the reason why many people were voting to leave the EU.

- 6.2.** GMB knows that economic migrants come to the UK seeking a better life for themselves and their families. Too often, they are exploited to undercut the pay, terms, conditions and job security of British workers. Time and again we hear from GMB members that they have been told by their bosses 'if you don't want to do this job exactly as I say, there are 20 EU workers who will' – which is a basic issue of supply and demand and the ability of the employer to exploit the oversupply of low skilled labour. Time and again, we hear from workers in construction who talk about umbrella companies using migrant workers to undercut national pay rates. Time and again, we hear of EU agency workers being recruited abroad to act as a replacement for what should be permanent jobs. That is not good for any worker, from anywhere and the GMB General Secretary made these exact points to a recent BEIS Select Committee of MPs.
- 6.3.** An overreliance by employers on agency work is an intrinsic part of the problem. Large companies keep what is essentially a permanent workforce in constant insecurity by relying heavily on agency workers instead of permanent contracts. There is no excuse for any company to keep 50%, 60% - or 90% as at Sports Direct - on agency contracts. It is either poor workforce planning or a deliberate strategy to maximise profit and evade workplace protections for workers. Often it is the latter.
- 6.4.** GMB stands firmly in solidarity with all workers, no matter where they come from. We will not stand by while any worker is scapegoated. However, it is clear that the status quo is not an option. Public opinion is in favour of an end to free movement of labour, and the Labour Party has committed to this in its manifesto. No issue was raised more vociferously or consistently during the GMB's own "angry remain" referendum campaign than immigration. It is unlikely that a Tory Government will sign up to any Brexit deal that does not seek to limit immigration and any trade deal will inevitably have to tackle this issue. GMB must seek to ensure that any deal which includes immigration is the fairest possible deal for GMB members, whilst also protecting our public services. As such, GMB calls for:
- i) Urgent agreement that UK workers who are working elsewhere in the EU are able to continue doing so; that EU workers currently working in the UK will have the right to continue doing so.
  - ii) Public services and public sector workers – no matter where they are from – will be protected.
  - iii) An end to migrant workers being used as a direct replacement for UK workers, which is a commonly accepted principle with non-EU migration. Where migrant workers are needed to meet a genuine skills need, companies and the Government must be required to invest in education and training to ensure that local young people (or those who need to retrain) have the opportunity to compete in their local economies.

- iv) UK Government to invest in UK skills. It is short-sighted and foolish to say migration will be cut, no matter the cost, when the Government refuses to invest in the skills and future of UK workers. Cutting bursaries to nurses makes absolutely no sense when the natural outcome will be to advertise for nurses abroad.
- v) Make agreed national pay rates legally enforceable and strengthen collective bargaining to ensure that undercutting is not possible.

6.5 The result of the EU referendum was treated by some as a green light to engage in racism and hate. GMB condemns the growth in hate crime and intolerance, which manifested itself in the referendum campaign and after, and calls on the Government to address this issue in communities across the country. GMB also notes, with concern, the growth of populist and extreme right parties across Europe and urges governments to work together with trade unions and communities to find solutions to the fears and concerns, which are being used by extremists to stoke support. GMB continues to build on its strong reputation for promoting equalities, respectful workplaces and unified communities.

## **7. Trade policy for people not profit**

1. GMB believes that the UK should seek the most advantageous terms of trade with the European single market. We do not know what the impact of this will be on UK jobs and industry, but this is one area where there is also potential for growth in GMB sectors in regards to inspections for freight at ports and airports, and the possible reintroduction of duty free.
2. It is clear that the Government wants a single trade agreement with the entire EU, though achieving this is far from certain. Growing tensions between the negotiators on both sides shows that agreement will not be easy, and leaving the EU without a deal cannot be ruled out.
3. GMB has long been opposed to the direction of EU trade policy, and does not want to see current deals such as EU/Canada (CETA) and EU/US (TTIP) become the benchmark for any future UK trade policy. Brexit presents an opportunity for a new start on trade policy that puts people before profit.
4. However, we are under no illusion of the challenge we face given the potential for a Conservative Government that has been the cheerleader for unfettered free trade at EU and global level. GMB will be working across the country and internationally to fight for trade agreement principles that benefit working people, not big business. Trade deals must:
  - i) Include legally enforceable labour and employment standards that, at the very minimum, are comparable to current protections built into EU legislation.
  - ii) Have high levels of product and environmental standards benchmarked to - and going beyond - current EU standards.

- iii) Ensure that public services are safeguarded, with an absolute right for democratically elected governments/authorities to make public interest policy decisions without threat of litigation, including where they choose to bring public services back in house.
  - iv) Protect UK industries from the dumping of goods from other countries through effective trade defence instruments and remedies. The recent crisis in the UK and EU steel industry caused by the dumping of Chinese Steel cannot be repeated.
5. GMB is already working with a number of industry federations on these issues, and has been influential in shaping the campaigns focusing on protecting and promoting good quality jobs and skills in Britain. Transparency in trade negotiations and the formal involvement and influence of unions as well as business will be vital.
  6. There is no doubt that it will be a difficult balancing act to get a positive outcome on future trade arrangements that protect UK production, whilst allowing tariff and duty free market access for our key export products. It is becoming increasingly clear that EU negotiators will not allow the UK 'to have its cake and eat it' as Boris Johnson arrogantly pronounced. This issue will be key in defining the future prospects for many of our manufacturing industries as well as services.
  7. Though the UK Government appears confident that the City of London will not come under challenge, other EU member states are already showing enthusiasm for taking the crown as the financial centre of Europe. Frankfurt – home of the EU Central Bank - being a front-runner. The current tone of the negotiations will not guarantee passporting rights for financial services, which will be vital to the sector and the economy.

## **8. Public procurement**

- 8.1. Leaving the EU and Single Market opens opportunities for the UK Government and devolved governments to take a proactive stance on better standards in public contracts. Public authorities would be able to encourage adherence to collective agreements, ensure contracts have a proper living wage, and promote jobs, training and apprenticeships. GMB wants to see future UK public contracting legislation develop in this way, so that elected bodies are able to target public funding for the benefit of UK taxpayers. This has the potential to at least stem the tide of the off-shoring of jobs in some sectors.
- 8.2. We have a well established reputation for quality across the world and this new context also offers scope to promote and support the use of UK products and services.
- 8.3. As the devolved governments have power and influence in this area, it is important we argue at all levels for improvements in public contracting policy that puts people, communities and quality services before the lowest price.

## **9. Recognising and meeting the challenges in relation to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Gibraltar**

1. Leaving the EU poses particular concerns for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Gibraltar, who voted with a majority to remain in the EU. The devolved governments do not feel adequately involved in this Government's discussions on plans for Exiting the EU, despite promises to the contrary. This has been further compounded by the Supreme Court ruling, which found against the devolved Governments having to agree the terms of Brexit.
2. The joint devolved powers group established by Government is being criticised as window dressing and appears to have been sidelined on all the key decisions related to Brexit made to date. This cannot continue, and the Government must be inclusive in finding practical and workable solutions if it is to avoid further tensions within the UK. Involvement of trade unions at every level is vital to this process.
3. In Scotland, this frustration has led to the Scottish Government beginning the process for calling a second referendum on independence, though to date this does not have Westminster Parliament agreement.
4. Northern Ireland faces particular challenges, having a common border with the EU through the Republic of Ireland and a high level of economic inter-dependency on goods, services and movement of workers. With the Government signaling that it will not be part of the EU Single Market or current Customs Union, it is vital that there is early agreement on future border arrangements for Northern Ireland and the Republic by establishing a common travel area or other means to guarantee an open border. The Government must also work with all relevant parties to ensure that the Peace Process, and the funding maintaining this, does not unravel on exiting the EU.
5. The situation regarding Gibraltar and its economic dependency on an open border with Spain is also complex and has revealed further tensions before negotiations have begun, which will need to be resolved.

## **10. Out of the EU but still European**

6. GMB is clear that, though the UK is leaving the EU, we will maintain our commitment to international trade union solidarity, which is a defining feature of our movement. We continue to be part of a global economy and our relationships with trade unions across Europe and the world will always be vital to ensure the voice of workers in multinational companies and sectors are heard. Communicating with each other and sharing information will be as important as ever in meeting the challenges of restructuring and changing markets.
7. GMB and our British trade union counterparts have played a major role in ensuring a voice for trade unions across the world in defending and promoting trade union and human rights, labour and employment standards and world development based on equality. It is important that we maintain this commitment.

BRO. A. NEWMAN (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, President, Vice President, speaking on behalf of the CEC and moving the Special Report on Brexit. I would like to thank all of the regions for withdrawing motions on this topic in favour of the Special Report.

Congress, comrades, last year at Congress we debated the union's position on the referendum and we agreed a position of an angry remain: angry because the balance between the social policies and the economic policies of the EU we felt were no longer working for many working people but remain because we saw, on balance, remaining in the EU was the best position in terms of economic stability, jobs, and employment rights. Nevertheless, on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016, a majority of the British electorate voted to leave the EU, including many of our members. GMB accepts the result and our priority now is to ensure that the GMB members do not pay the cost of Brexit.

In September 2016, the CEC adopted a statement on Brexit committing the GMB to work across all sectors and at every level to protect job interests, employment rights of our members, and their families. The Special Report confirms that this work is under way with the development of a GMB Workers Brexit Strategy and we have established a working group, including a number of CEC members to assist in the direction of this work. We are monitoring and mapping our sectors in relation to the threat of restructuring and withdrawal of investment and we are developing networks of members who are monitoring and reporting any developments on the ground.

We are also working with the TUC, the Labour Party, and our trade union colleagues, and MEPs at European level, to ensure that our union grasps the opportunities that an EU exit and our future relationships with the EU may bring. It is clear that the Conservative Government, if re-elected, will be neither inclusive nor transparent in relation to the negotiation position but GMB will insist that we are involved in that process. We will use all spheres of influence at our disposal, regionally, nationally, and at European level to ensure that our voice and the voice of our members is heard in the process. The negotiations will not be easy. There is already a dispute about the cost of leaving the EU. The EU assesses that we need to pay £600bn. The Conservative Government believes that this should be zero. We have concerns that the current government is reckless in terms of future involvement with European institutions in research and other funding programmes, and is pledged to leave the EU Nuclear Energy Community, Euratom, which we are opposed to.

The issue of movement of workers is a key concern in the referendum campaign and there is no point in us beating about the bush of that. GMB wants to see the rights of those workers in EU systems working and residing in the UK resolved immediately and also the issue of British citizens residing in the EU. For Theresa May EU citizens in the UK may be a bargaining chip but for GMB they are our friends, our neighbours, our work colleagues, and fellow GMB members. (*Applause*)

GMB demands that any future UK migration policy must base itself on guaranteeing the rate for the job and not on the exploitation of workers and the undercutting of terms and conditions. We want to see an end to agencies and employers recruiting only from overseas, from low-wage economies, and denying the local workforces the right to apply for jobs. We have had an immigration policy that has failed to address

basic issues such as the over-supply of labour in certain sectors of the economy and that has allowed exploitation by unscrupulous employers. That has led to tensions and in some cases to a rise in hate crime so it must not be allowed to continue.

*(Applause)*

The GMB does not trust the current Conservative Government, if they continue to be the Conservative Government on Thursday, we do not trust them to protect and promote employment rights, despite vague promises about being a workers' party. We know that is rubbish. We will oppose any attempts to undermine the wide range of rights and protections that we have fought so hard to gain from the European Union. We also recognise that workplace rights is unfinished business. We will campaign for improvements and new rights in relation to zero hours and the gig economy, and we will also fight to ensure that any improvements in workers' rights at the EU or international level are brought into the UK.

We also recognise that leaving the EU poses particular concerns for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Gibraltar, who voted with a majority to remain in the UK. It is vital that the British Government is inclusive in finding practical and working solutions to these difficult issues and, in particular, ensure that border issues are resolved to protect economic security, jobs, and peace in Northern Ireland.

Leaving the EU both gives the UK the opportunity to reframe our trade policy. We have long been critical of the trade deals, of free trade that the EU and World Trade Organisation have sought based on a power grab and free markets. We want to see future UK trade policy that puts people before profit and that maximises new job opportunities in manufacturing, ports, and other areas. Similarly, we want to see public contracting laws, promote adherence to collective bargaining, a living wage, local jobs, training and production.

Congress, we are in uncharted territory with a Government that has failed to grasp what needs to be done in the Brexit negotiation but the GMB can be trusted to ensure that we will fight for the interests of our members in that process and promote our members' jobs and economic security. I move the Special Report. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now call one speaker from each region that wishes to put up a speaker? Birmingham?

BRO. E. DOWNING (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, and visitors in the cheap seats, Birmingham accepts the CEC special Report on Brexit. However, we do have concerns about what will happen to migrant workers from the EU already here. We should show international solidarity with those workers to ensure that they are welcome, they are working, and they are with us. There is a net benefit to having migrant workers in the economy. They are culturally enriching, and they have built families, friendship, and lives in this country. We will not give in to fear and we will try and make sure that they are not used politically as pawns. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: London.

BRO. P. CULBERT (London): London supports the Special Report. President, Congress, London Region supports the Special Report, Brexit and Beyond, and it is happy to withdraw Motion 250 in favour of it. This report deals completely with the demands of our motion. When people voted to leave the EU they did not intend a deregulation of workers' rights, civil rights, and human rights. They did not vote for a right-wing takeover of business policy. They did not vote for big business over people. Congress, please join with the London Region in supporting this far-reaching document. London Region supports the Special Report, Brexit and Beyond. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Midland? Northern? (*Formally*) North West.

BRO. D. FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Congress, supporting the CEC Special Report on Brexit. Tories want Brexit for the free market. A free market is a way of them to destroy the workers' rights. For seven years the Conservative Government have sought to get rid of the social partnership in Europe that protects workers' rights, health and safety, working time directive, and rights to consultation. Brexit for them is yet another way of introducing anti-trade union legislation under the cloak of Brexit. Does anyone in this hall believe this Government wants to protect workers' rights? Many of those who had a genuine view about Brexit were sold a pack of lies. Congress, I think as you can see from the Tory campaign they only wanted a strong hand to negotiate what they want without being accountable.

During this Tory campaign tell me one policy, if you can find it, that adds to workers' rights, that makes companies accountable and contributes to the need of social justice in the world of work. They only have one Brexit plan, you pay with your rights so that their friends in financial institutions, multinational corporations, and investors, can walk away with increased profits on the backs of the working poor. Let's hope Brexit becomes Maggie May's exit from Number 10 and we trust a politician with integrity to do a true Brexit deal. Congress, we support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, good morning. I just want to make a quick announcement and then I will hand back to Malcolm. Please note that at 11 o'clock this morning I will suspend Congress so that we can observe a minute's silence for the victims of the London Bridge attack. Could I please ask those of you who are able to do so to stand so that we can all observe the one-minute silence across the country today in memory of the victims of London Bridge terrorist attack. Thank you. I will give you pre warning of that. I hope everyone will observe it. I know you will. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Scotland? Southern?

BRO. J. CABANAS (Southern): First time delegate, first time speaker. No matter how we voted on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, we can all agree it is a contentious issue and covering deep divisions within our country, society, and the Tories ran a campaign based on fear, lies, and distrust, an attempted power grab trying to create a one-party system. The fallout from this is the fear and uncertainty felt by thousands of our immigrant members who are now unsure and insecure in their workplaces up and down the country. Every week I am helping our members to fill in the ridiculous paperwork necessary to become citizens, creating more fear and insecurity. I am a son of

immigrants, ones who have lived, worked, and contributed to the UK society and economy for over 50 years. I call on the GMB to demand the Government fully maintains all the rights and privileges enjoyed by all the workers. We want to take this public and political awareness campaign into workplaces across the country and ensure rights at work are protected after Brexit. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: South West? Yorkshire?

BRO. A. EQUIANO (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, we walk into this Brexit blind but GMB will not walk into Brexit with eyes closed. There are challenging times ahead as shown in the report. GMB has to be 100% part of this challenge. GMB has a membership of workers, unemployed, and retired members, that is why Brexit should not fit one but fit all. GMB will fight for that. Even before Brexit the Tories brought in the Trade Union Bill. What will happen then if the Tories are elected? I think, unfortunately, more of our rights will be taken away. The divorce settlement, what a joke! Didn't the Tories realise this before they decided to take us down the referendum? It is like the Tories turned a blind eye to the cost of Brexit in their campaign. Ignorance is bliss, don't you think? EU and foreign nationals have contributed so much to the British industry, especially in the NHS. Congress, we cannot forget this. We need to ensure that all their rights are protected once we exit. Congress, I ask you to support this report actively as GMB members. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, could I have that report formally seconded, please?

*The CEC Special Report on Brexit was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now go to the vote. All those in favour please show. Any against? That is carried.

*The CEC Special Report: Brexit and Beyond – Protecting GMB Members' Futures was CARRIED.*

## **POLITICAL: EUROPEAN UNION**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call on Motions 253, North West, 264 North West, 265 Southern, and 273 London, to come to the front, please, and Motion 253, North West & Irish to the rostrum.

**BREXIT**  
**MOTION 253**

### **253. BREXIT**

This Congress calls on the CEC to campaign to get the Labour Party to uphold and fight for the employment rights and terms and conditions that working men and women have gained from Europe.

To campaign to get the Labour Party to make sure ALL employment rights are included in any exit plan that this Tory government is working on.

The CEC need to educate members on what is at stake and campaign to make sure members are aware of the disaster if we lose our rights. We know some of our GMB members must have voted to leave and they need to be aware of the GMB concerns for the future of working men and women.

P42 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

*The motion was formally moved.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Formally. Thank you. Motion 264.

## **BREXIT MOTION 264**

### **264. BREXIT**

This Congress calls on the CEC and the government to make sure manufacturing is not affected by the Brexit leave negotiations..

Manufacturing needs to keep the present output and should not be affected by any negotiations or principles that this government is working on to leave Europe.

We must protect jobs and the only way is to protect the production we have at present and make sure our terms and conditions are protected.

Future profit should not come from our jobs or our terms and conditions.

P42 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

SIS. Y. COWELL (North West & Irish): First time speaker. *(Applause)* Sisters and brothers, this motion calls on the CEC to lobby whatever government takes power on 8<sup>th</sup> June, which is Labour! We have to make sure the Brexit negotiations protect the manufacturing sector. I have worked in the furniture industry for over 23 years. Congress, we have to make sure that companies are not at a disadvantage in the markets they will have to operate in. We also have to make sure that Brexit negotiations do not affect our terms and conditions. We need to feel secure in our jobs, and our families, and not just so the company continues to provide a dividend for the shareholders and, more importantly, Brexit negotiations do not reduce our terms and conditions, and regulations from Europe that protect our members and that they have fought hard to achieve. Working time regulations and the health and safety regulations that are in place cannot be affected. We need to feel safe and secure in our workplace. Our members' lives are not for sale. I am not for sale. I move. *(Applause)*

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

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 265, Southern.

**BREXIT DUTY FREE  
MOTION 265**

**265. BREXIT – DUTY FREE**

Congress recognises that Theresa May and the Tory Government have unequivocally indicated that their interpretation of the vote to leave the European Union is a ‘Hard’ or ‘Clean’ Brexit. It is their intention to leave the Internal Market, leave the Customs Union in its complete form and end the jurisdiction of the ECJ.

It was the Maastricht Treaty, The Single European Act and the creation of the Internal or Single Market which end the sale of Duty Free Goods for travellers between the nations of the EU. Duty Free has not end in a global market, but has been replaced by a Tax Paid regime within the EU.

Congress wishes to see the return of a Duty Free market between the UK and the countries of the EU. If the UK exits the Internal Market and there is a restoration of relationships that exist prior to the changes driving the end to EU Duty Free there is no reason not to re-establish UK EU Duty Free.

Congress urges the GMB leadership to work with TU partners and use all political influence to raise this issue within the Brexit negotiations and work to restore a UK EU Nations Duty Free market.

The loss of Duty Free in 1999 was a major blow to our Shipping, Ferries, Airline and Airport businesses which are vital for supporting the movement of people and goods all year around. Providing trade and travel on a 24/7 – 365 basis is highly expensive and Duty Free sales provide valuable revenue streams which support vital infrastructure. This can only be of benefit to our GMB members working within these industries.

X23 DOVER FERRIES BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. S. MASON (Southern): Congress, I wish to commence by asking you to dispel any preconceived ideas you may have that this motion is in any way frivolous. This motion is about members’ jobs, terms and conditions, pay, and the capacity of business to maintain travel and trade arteries on a full year basis. I further wish to dispel any idea that we are making a case for a clean and hard Brexit. We have serious concerns about the adverse impact on business, trade, employment, and finance resulting from a hard Brexit.

We make our case for the restoration of UK EU duty free on the basis that Theresa May and her Conservative Government, if returned this Thursday, have stated categorically that Brexit means leaving the single market, the customs union, and the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice. This is enshrined in the Tory manifesto. Hopefully, the Tories will not have the option of implementing their manifesto but if they do then the conditions which brought about an end to UK EU duty free will have been reversed.

It was Maastricht, the international market, and the single European Act that gave the decision to end European duty free. We respectfully remind you that duty free is not a new phenomenon. For most of the period the UK has been linked to Europe as an economic entity, intra EU duty free has existed, and duty free with the rest of the world currently exists. The restoration of intra EU duty free will be a boost for the shipping ferries, airport, airline, and general tourist industry but would also be advantageous, for example, to drinks businesses and the Scottish whisky industry where clearly we have a large GMB membership.

If we use my own industry of ferries as an example, the loss of duty free was a greater hit than the building of the Channel Tunnel. The loss of duty free was devastating and set in motion a business realignment which led to an attack on terms and conditions which prevails today. Current CEC member, Dave Clements, who was convenor and European Secretary at the time working in tandem with Southern Region Secretary, Paul Maloney, GMB Senior Officer also at the time, faced a constant battle against attacks on the workforce, they will testify to the challenges created by an end to the intra EU duty free. Our business made serious losses in the first financial quarter and remained loss-making at half-year. Only the peak summer season quarter actually makes money.

However, people and businesses expect wide transport and trade links to be available all year round. This is mirrored to various degrees in other industries, such as airlines. The duty free support can help maintain more expansive route networks which clearly benefits people and business, and regional economies. The advantage of restoration of EU UK duty free are far too many and detailed for me to articulate in three minutes but they are comprehensive and ultimately of benefit to GMB members. This is a serious motion and we wish you to vote on this basis. Surely, we are not going to have ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Move the motion, Stephen.

BRO. S. MASON (Southern): Seriously, we need your support. I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. The mover of Motion 273.

**OPPOSITION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT  
MOTION 273**

**273. OPPOSITION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT**

This Congress reaffirms its opposition to The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and agrees a similar position opposing any UK involvement in The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) recognising it as a clear threat to workers' rights and public services".

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. R. POLE (London): Comrades, we live in extremely uncertain times and I do not think that any of us here can in all honesty state and predict that they know and can see into the future post-Brexit and with the appalling Trumpeter currently in the White House. One thing I am certain about is that we were correct in opposing TTIP and we should certainly oppose CETA and any other trade deal that threatens our rights and our public services. Like TTIP, CETA poses many, many threats. A few examples are: in health the market for medical care could be opened up increasing privatisation in the NHS, and alliance of big pharmaceutical companies could demand intellectual property rights for medicines, raising prices for necessary drugs astronomically through the roof. Farming standards would be lowered with health risks from hormone treated animals, providing more junk food, restrictions on pesticides and herbicides use would damage the environment, a true Frankenstein nightmare, all for the greater profits for the few.

CETA will give vast new powers to corporations including big large US conglomerates and Trump hotel businesses. What it significantly fails to do is address trade union concerns about the enforceability of labour rights. This is why already many union general secretaries have campaigned against this and the TUC have pledged to seek more meaningful involvement in consideration of the implications of CETA. I believe we need much more than this and should actively campaign against this tooth and nail to avoid this scenario. We need red lines for any trade deal to include strengthening of labour standards, to include strengthening health and safety provisions, and environmental protections. Please support this so GMB has the very clear position, no worsening of our employment rights. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, the CEC is supporting all four of these motions. I will now put them to the vote, Motions 253, 264, 265, and 273. All those in favour please show. Any against? They are carried.

*Motion 253 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 264 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 265 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 273 was CARRIED.*

## **INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: GENERAL**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Could I now ask for Motion 210, Northern, Composite 18, Yorkshire to move and London to second, to come down to the front, please, and the mover of 210 to the rostrum.

### **FREE MOVEMENT OF LABOUR MOTION 210**

#### **210. FREE MOVEMENT OF LABOUR**

This Congress notes, with concern, that since 1980 Britain, like most other “advanced economies”, has become more unequal. The share of the wealth taken up by the top 1% has steadily increased at the expense of the majority of our members.

Increasing inequality has been brought about by undermining the position of labour.

The means have included the conscious weakening of the trade unions, privatisation, technological and work pattern changes, the outsourcing and exporting of jobs to cheap labour countries, underpinned by the free movement of labour.

Our members have grasped the simple truth, that a surplus of labour drives down wages.

The employers know this, they are not supporters of the free movement because they are in favour of people experiencing different cultures, they support it because it benefits them economically.

Our members are asking the question, who benefits in relation to economic matters, they see the free movement of labour as helping to create an atmosphere of job insecurity and yet another way of holding down wages and terms and conditions of employment.

We clearly see the employers and our own rich and powerful class taking advantage of people, both EU migrants and our own workers. There is nothing socialist or inherently progressive that free movement of labour brings to a capitalist society.

Congress calls upon the Labour Party, to pursue in Parliament the regulation of all aspects of labour conditions and help those of our people, whose lives are dominated by insecurity and lack of hope.

Z48 SUNDERLAND 1 ENG BRANCH  
*Northern Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. S. FOSTER (Northern): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)*  
Congress, as the motion says, we feel that free movement of labour has been used in a capitalist country like ours to drive down terms and conditions. We do not seek to blame workers from abroad who come here to work and live, nor their families. It is the simple truth that employers' organisations, such as the CBI or the Institute of Directors, have never put their head up and talked about free movement. The reason is simple, Congress. It is because bosses have been happy with the status quo as long as they could live off the fat of the land while workers receive wages below the industry rates for the job, or in many cases what was enough to live on. That approach from bosses does not discriminate about where you come from. It is just the bosses' approach to running things. They want a low wage, low tax haven economy, off the shores of Europe.

We have many examples of bad employers who have subcontracted work and in the process undercut the rate for the job. We have a very real example in one of our key former shipyards where the mistreatment and poaching of local labour is only matched by paying below the minimum wage in euros to workers from Europe, where workers are sacked by text, where sackings are handed out by British managers, and where it is open to the abuse and scandal of blacklisting, and all the unsavoury practices of workers waiting in line until the boss picks out the face that fits.

That is the reality, Congress, of some of our workplaces. We need to call out for what the Tory future beyond Europe is and their actions, not words, will count. We applaud the Labour Party's approach and hope that the day of reckoning for bad bosses is just a few weeks or months away. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The mover of Composite 18, Yorkshire.

## **EQUALITY AND FREE MOVEMENT OF LABOUR & CAPITAL COMPOSITE 18**

### **C18. Covering Motions:**

- |      |                                   |                                  |
|------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 211. | FREE MOVEMENT OF CAPITAL          | Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region |
| 212. | EQUALITY BETWEEN LABOUR & CAPITAL | London Region                    |

### **EQUALITY AND FREE MOVEMENT OF LABOUR & CAPITAL**

This Congress notes that, during and after the referendum on EU membership, the main focus seems to be about the free movement of labour. However, Congress also notes that nothing has been said about the movement of capital.

This issue is as important, if not more so, than that of the movement of labour. Congress recognises that the issue is not clear cut.

On one hand, the movement of capital has allowed inward investment from companies such as Toyota. However, it also means that money can also flow out of the UK, for example, whilst James Dyson is happy to see Brexit and for foreign workers denied the ability to seek a better life here, he is quite happy to invest in countries with low wages to increase his profits.

We need a serious debate about the movement of capital to formulate an alternative to simply accepting the status quo.

Congress, therefore, calls on the Labour Movement to debate and discuss the movement of capital as a step towards producing alternative economic policies to the Tories.

This Congress is requested to campaign for Labour to have the same right to free movement as Capital.

*(Carried)*

**BRO. H. JAJCH (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire):** We fight in the interests of workers. It is in the best interests of workers to be united. Our enemies know this. That is why the *Daily Mail*, *The Sun*, etc., are always trying to divide us by scape-goating migrants. We in the GMB stand up to racism. People should have every right to move across the world but while it is perfectly natural for capital, financial investments, businesses, to move around the world to obtain a better reward, for workers to follow that investment and look for work is not okay. Yet we know that immigration is a good thing and benefits a nation. The NHS, for instance, would collapse without immigration, as would a lot of the food industry. Even Brexit's secretary, David Davis, has said it will take years and years to do without EU migrants. But while it is true that EU citizens can move around Europe relatively easily, for people born outside the walls of fortress Europe it is a different matter. As we saw with the Syrian refugee crisis, for example, Britain at first promised to allow 3,000 child refugees in from Calais, even though there are 100,000 children desperately looking for safety in Europe, but have only let 350 actually into Britain. It is quite disgraceful. However, Germany, which has a declining population, so to meet the needs of German capitalism hundreds of thousands have been allowed from Syria, and other countries, into Germany.

So, regarding the free movement of capital, we fight to defend members' jobs and to keep work in this country but at the same time we need to recognise that capitalism is a mode of production based on profit, not people's needs, and that capitalists will always look to maximise their profits. Now, on alternatives to the free movement of capital, one of Corbyn's policies, and there are many good, excellent policies, is to reopen the possibility of nationalisation as an alternative to providing services, and if a company like Nestle, for instance, threatens to move production we would call for that work to be nationalised. (*Applause*) Chocolate biscuits would taste just as good or maybe better produced by workers employed by the government rather than Nestle. The way to tackle the issue on insecure work, undercutting of wages and exploitation is the same as it ever was, through strong, well organised trade unions like ours. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Seconder, London.

SIS. V. THOMAS (London): Free movement of capital is indicative of the accommodating and indulgent attitudes society has towards money as in tax havens, financial loopholes, banking and corporations, as opposed to the punitive and harsh attitudes society has towards people. It is well demonstrated in the moving film, *I Daniel*. The global economy has facilitated multinationals moving their business abroad resulting in workers suffering poor pay and conditions and lack of health and safety regulations to maximise company profits. In money versus people all too often it is money that is the winner. Movement of capital should not be at the expense of people. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Andy Newman, from Southern, to give the CEC position.

BRO. A. NEWMAN (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, thank you to all the delegates for a fantastic debate on Brexit. The CEC is supporting Motion 210 and Composite 18 with the following qualifications. Although Suzanne in her speech very much emphasised the unscrupulous bosses, the motion as it is on your order paper focuses or seems to blame the influx of labour for growing inequality and driving down wages. The motion as written does not emphasise the roles of unscrupulous bosses exploiting people. GMB will never criticise someone for lawfully moving to get a better job to improve their life and the life of their family but what we will blame is unscrupulous bosses that use migration to cut wages, worsen terms and conditions, and weaken collective organisation.

Free movement of labour was a key issue in the EU referendum and what we do need to understand is that there will still be immigration afterwards, the UK government will be negotiating that and we need to make sure that those bosses who still want to bring in people from low-wage economies to undercut our wages, and terms and conditions, we will continue to oppose that and we will need that to be addressed in any future trade deals.

With regard to Composite 18, it is true that the referendum debate focused more on free movement of labour than the movement of capital yet both have an impact on GMB members positive and negative. The free movement of work between the UK

and EU may cease post-Brexit, but the Government will include provisions for movement of workers and capital in future UK trade deals with the EU and the rest of the world. The qualification is that the GMB's role is to ensure that any future movement of capital and labour is based on the benefit of the many, not for the few, and remove exploitation, undercutting, and inequality.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motion 210 and Composite 18 with the qualifications I have set out. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Does Northern accept the qualification on Motion 210? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Do London and Southern accept the qualification on Composite 18? (*Agreed*) I will put these now to the vote, Motion 210 and Composite 18, all those in favour please show. Anyone against? They are carried.

*Motion 210 was CARRIED.  
Composite 18 was CARRIED.*

## **POLITICAL: IMMIGRATION AND MIGRATION**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Could I now have Motion 241 on Immigration from North West down to the rostrum, please?

### **IMMIGRATION MOTION 241**

#### **241. IMMIGRATION**

This Congress recognises the tremendous contribution and benefits that immigrants have given to the UK and therefore calls upon the CEC to mount a vigorous campaign to counter the negative propaganda spewed out by most of the mass media.

B16 BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. M. DOCKERY (North West & Irish): Congress, the right-wing media in this country has a disgraceful history of speaking racist propaganda, creating fear, hatred, and diversity within our society. The *Daily Mail* articles from 1938, entitled *Germany Jewish Power into this Country*, told readers that jobless Jewish migrants would compete with unemployed British citizens for jobs, jobs which were scarce as a result of the Great Depression. Immigration was either viewed as bogus – sorry, I am getting a bit nervous now - (*Applause*) - asylum seekers who had immediate needs to leave their country or economic migrants who came to Britain to reap the benefits of our economy. Sound familiar? It took Kristallnacht, in November 1938, before the British immigration policy changed. Move forward 80 years and we have the exact same situation regarding migrants and again the same media outlets, speaking lies, fear, and hatred.

We call on the CEC and the GMB to work with the TUC to help create a multi-union approach in the country. Sorry. (*Applause*) The propaganda was pedalled by the

right-wing media, ignoring the contribution of migrants to our public society and to our economy. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleague, what are you doing?

A DELEGATE: Seconding.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, there are no seconders when it is supported. SOC Report No.1, when it is being supported we do not take seconders. Would like him to go? (*Agreed*) Right, get on!

BRO. S. ASPINALL (North West & Irish): First time speaker, first time delegate. (*Applause*) I would just like to say regarding the continuous small minded negative right-wing media attacks that have been going on towards immigration, these unfortunate members of society feel it is necessary to spread hate and blame on foreign labour and immigrants for the state of the British economy, i.e. health, housing, and employment. These people need to have word with themselves and give their heads a wobble. Unfortunately, these people refuse or ignore the fact that past and present politicians and governments have failed and let the British people down on health, employment, and housing. Yes, there are certain issues that need addressing on immigration but it is also a fact that a foreign workforce has contributed billions of pounds over the years and is important to our economy. Hate and passing the buck tactics must end. Congress, please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, the CEC is supporting this motion. All those in favour please show. Any against? That is carried. I will now pass you back to Mary.

*Motion 241 was CARRIED.*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY & INCLUSION**

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. Malcolm and I are playing tennis this morning, bat and ball. I have a couple of announcements to make and then I will move to item 6, Union Organisation, Composite 4, BAME and Migrant Workers Post Brexit, incorporating Motions 78, 79, and 80, London to move and Birmingham to second.

Colleagues, Paul McCarthy has donated £500 extra for Guide Dogs for the Blind. (*Applause*) Midland & East Coast Region, £500. Any more? (*Applause*) South Western. (*Cheers*) Birmingham. (*Cheers*) Southern. (*Cheers*) Did you wait for me to start! Anyone else? Don't worry, Paul, we will get a few more. Maybe the Regional Secretary – the General Secretary – I have just demoted him – (*Laughter*) – will make a contribution. We will make a note of that. Thanks, Paul, for starting that off.

The Disabled Workers would like to thank all GMB delegates for their support. We have raised £896.20. This will help keep disabled people in employment. The raffle prizes are on stall 10, with a full list at the stall. Will the executives double it? I think so. I think they are worth it. (*Applause*) Is that okay, Tim?

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: I wish you weren't all so bloody generous! Yes, that's a deal.

THE PRESIDENT: That is with thanks, Bill Davies, a wonderful individual. I now call London Region to move and Birmingham to second, please, and any one else who wishes to come in and debate, come down now or for ever hold your peace.

## **BAME AND MIGRANT WORKERS POST BREXIT COMPOSITE 4**

### **C4. Covering Motions:**

78. ORGANISING BAME & MIGRANT WORKERS	London Region
79. MIGRANT WORKERS POST BREXIT Region	Birmingham & W. Midlands
80. INDUSTRIAL ISSUES	London Region

### **BAME AND MIGRANT WORKERS POST BREXIT**

This Congress believes that the divisive and inflammatory language used in the lead up to, and after the 2016 European Union Referendum has created a hostile atmosphere towards those perceived as migrants or asylum seekers.

The EU Referendum was fuelled by racism and hatred centring around immigration which was highly toxic, with racist and xenophobic language, both the right wing media and many MP's used.

This Congress notes that Since the Referendum result to leave the European Union was declared and following Brexit there has been far more visibility in the media of racially and religiously aggravated attacks and murders in the workplace and in communities. We have witnessed a significant increase in the number of reported hate crimes.

It is BAME/migrant workers who disproportionately work on zero hour's contracts, low wages, racial bullying, instability. They experience upfront fees and have to pay debts back to paymasters, experience withholding of personal statements.

The Gig economy with unpredictable and social hours, no employment rights such as sick and holiday pay and being forced to become self-employed under the illusion that it would be more beneficial. This is organised criminal activity.

We call upon Congress to:

1. Continue to campaign to highlight the exploitation of BAME/migrant workers
2. Consider launching a well-resourced organising campaign with affiliates to recruit BAME/migrant worker.
3. Ensure BAME/migrant trade unionists are encouraged, included and engaged in their unions.

A situation now exists where we are now concerned as to what the future has in store. It is essential that we, as a progressive union, take action in order to show solidarity, and support our members who may have to deal with challenging issues in the workplace, and within the wider community. Therefore Congress calls on the GMB Equality Department to produce a

document condemning the bigotry and hatred with practical advice and providing contact details of agencies where our members can obtain further support.

The Trade Union Movement needs BAME/migrant workers as much as BAME/Migrant workers need trade unions to fight for their fundamental rights as workers. This Congress is calling for the rights of migrant workers to remain within the UK and not to be used as pawns in the political debate. Please support.

*(Carried)*

SIS. T. CHANA (London): President, Congress, as our Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, stated in the leaders' debate on Friday, as long as we have racism which goes unchallenged we will have division in society. As a black worker who came to the UK as a refugee with only the clothes on our backs, not speaking any English, we know the importance of self-organising against a backdrop of structural and institutionalised racism. Our needs are specific, the issues of language, dress or food, both in the workplace and in society generally. The iconic Jayaben Desai, who won the moral victory during the Grunwick dispute, exemplifies how black migrant women workers organised against a backdrop of structural and institutionalised racism and sexism, fighting for better pay, better conditions, against unscrupulous employers and the establishment, black workers fighting for the rights of all workers. The struggles of black workers have been won through collective organising and solidarity often with the trades union Movement being at the forefront.

As trade unionists, Congress, we owe it to the BAME migrant workers to protect them from exploitation and discrimination. In my workplace, which is especially a service for black majority ethnic refugee women, a few days after the Brexit vote we were harassed by the white community knocking on our doors threatening us, telling us how dare we call ourselves a service for black women even though we have been around for 30 years, a service that saves lives. In the same week a colleague had her hijab ripped off her head as she walked to work. Being sniggered at, at work, because your first language is not English, being exploited through zero hours contracts because employers and the establishment think you know no better, these are the daily realities of BAME and migrant workers. Congress, united we stand, divided we fall. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Taranjit. Birmingham.

BRO. I. POOLE (Birmingham): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)* Congress, as you are aware, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union on 23<sup>rd</sup> June last year and as a result when Article 50 was activated the fate of three million European nationals living in the UK was put in the balance. Migrant workers make a net contribution to the British economy. They are valued members of our communities and of our society as a whole. Some are the backbone of our public services, some are our brothers and sisters in the GMB and other unions, many have made Britain their home, and I am privileged to say some are my friends. On 6<sup>th</sup> July last year, a motion in the House of Commons calling on the Government to guarantee the rights of EU nationals living in the UK was passed by 245 votes to two. However, this was not binding on the Government.

Congress calls upon the incoming government to honour this motion and to recognise that migrants are all human beings and deserve to be treated with dignity and given the unreserved right to remain here if they wish, and not be treated as a bargaining chip in the upcoming Brexit negotiations. Congress, I second this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Ian. Does anyone wish to speak against? No?

## **POLITICAL: RACISM & FASCISM**

THE PRESIDENT: I now move on and call Motion 244, Yorkshire – I am banning this region next year – Yorkshire Region to move and to second, I am assuming. I didn't think I would get away with that one.

### **HUMANITY AND RACISM MOTION 244**

#### **244. HUMANITY AND RACISM**

This Congress recognises the importance of Standing Up to Racism in modern day Britain.

The current political climate, aided by the media has given rise to an increase in hate crimes and there has been a 200% rise in anti-Muslim hate crimes since 2012 (Myriad Foundations).

This conference believes that GMB should affiliate and work with MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development). MEND is an organisation that is grass roots based, helping the local communities to come together irrespective of religious beliefs, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and politics. MEND believes in educating and empowering the people to challenge hate in all its forms through positive channels such as engagement with local MPs and Councillors, as well as media forums - including writing to the tabloids to challenge negative rhetoric.

This Congress is proud of our Union's history and involvement in campaigning against racism. We have been central to many campaigns with great success for and on behalf of our members. Recent anti-Trump demonstrations are evidence of the need to combat increasing Islamophobia and therefore there is a greater need for GMB's support of MEND.

BRADFORD DISTRICT CARE TRUST BRANCH  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(*Carried*)

SIS. Y. HUSSAIN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, and visitors, firstly, I would like to pay my respects and condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones or were critically injured in the recent London and Manchester attacks. (*Applause*)

Fear is spreading in the media and political platforms due to the irresponsible reporting and irresponsible campaigns such as the Brexit and across the Atlantic the Trump campaigns, which have opened Pandora's Box to widespread racism but my personal belief is that we all have something in common, and that is humanity. GMB recognises the importance of standing up to racism in modern day Britain and would like to begin with observing this event because it signifies the openness and tolerance of British people; not only does it make Britain a great place to be but it also makes me proud to be British.

I have one question for you all: what legacy do we want to leave behind for our children and future generations? Given the rise in hate and, indeed, Islamophobia, MEND, as in Muslim Engagement and Development, was formed with the purpose of tackling Islamophobia through education, research, advocacy, and community development. MEND empowers the British communities to engage more effectively in media and politics. They hope to address disaffection and alienation among the British Muslims and the wider community, and inspire all members of the community to play a positive full and active role as Britain's citizens. It is innovative in its approach addressing divides and breaking down barriers and bringing communities together irrespective of race, religion, ethnicity, orientation, and class.

Recently MEND held an event in Harrogate International Centre in educating and creating awareness of Islamophobia and what the role of individuals and the wider community should be. The event raised community funds through one-off donations, standing order forms, and bucket collections. It is also to empower people to engage constructively and peacefully with the media and political forums in order to achieve reduction in Islamophobia and thus social injustice.

In order to be effective MEND has lobbied MPs and councillors, and cross-parties, in order to maximise effectiveness in reducing Islamophobia. MEND has existing partnerships with *Show Racism the Red Card* and *Stand up to Racism*.

The motion is simple, Congress to allow the GMB to affiliate with MEND as we believe it will be a stronger partnership in reducing Islamophobia and racism overall. We hope that you will support this motion. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Yusra. Well done. Secunder?

BRO. T. CALVERT (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, and visitors, according to Liar Liar Theresa May, the three recent terror attacks were bound together by the single evil of Islamic extremism, and military intervention abroad would not be enough, or demanding new laws, or longer jail sentences, so we need to be far more robust in identifying and stamping out extremist ideology from society. Given recent events, Muslims in particular are targeted, in fact a third of children believe that Muslims have taken over England and a quarter believe that Islam just encourages terrorism.

The prevent strategy in itself undermines the right to freedom of thought and that is according to the Institute of Race Relations. Theresa May says that terrorism just breeds terrorism but ignores the state terrorism carried out by Britain and the US that has torn apart Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. Corbyn is right in saying there is a connection between the recent attacks and the wars that are supported in other countries; 53% support that view. Predictably, there are trying to scapegoat Muslims and point at immigrants with negative rhetoric.

MEND should be supported because it is an opportunity to build genuine unity from grassroots against discrimination, racism, and Islamophobia. In these difficult times we must stand together, stay united, reject terrorism, hatred, and Islamophobia, and

racism, and those that seek to divide us. I second the motion and say we support MEND. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Terence. Well done. I now move to Composite 20, Fighting Fascism and Hate Crime. Scotland to move, Southern to second, Yorkshire priority in debate, and I will then call Colin Gunter from the CEC to give the CEC position.

## **FIGHTING FASCISM AND HATE CRIME COMPOSITE 20**

### **C20. Covering Motions:**

- |                                      |                 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 245. POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS             | GMB Scotland    |
| 246. HATE CRIME<br>Derbyshire Region | Yorkshire & N.  |
| 247. FIGHTING FASCISM                | Southern Region |

### **FIGHTING FASCISM AND HATE CRIME**

Congress, there has been a recent rise in far right attitudes expressed by the tabloid media and leading politicians. The main targets attacked by these views are migrants and Muslims who have members within both of these groups.

This Congress condemns the racist, misogynistic, disablist and other divisive language used by right-wing politicians during and in the wake of the European Referendum, the USA Presidential election and in political campaigns across Western Europe.

This Congress notes that following the European Union Referendum it now appears to be acceptable to express hateful views under the guise of “free speech”, and use terms such as “alt right” to legitimise far right groups.

Congress notes that the scapegoating of under-represented workers is fuelling the flames of division across Western democracies and emboldening the hard right-wing political agenda.

Congress calls on the CEC to work with sister trade unions throughout the world and organisations such as Hope Not Hate, Unite Against Fascism and Show Racism the Red Card to counter scapegoating, promote an inclusive agenda and to ensure that all political representatives govern in a responsible and fair manner.

We call on the GMB to continue and indeed increase our efforts to expose such views to our membership as abhorrent in a civilised 21<sup>st</sup> Century society and proposes that training is given on this issue through GMB Education, that also GMB uses its social media to present factual information and news articles that display these groups in a positive light.

*(Referred)*

BRO. P. BRESLIN (GMB Scotland): Congress, the global refugee crisis last year, the European Union referendum, and recent election campaigns in Europe, have seen the rise of a sinister political development. It seems to have become acceptable to express and display extreme right-wing views, fuelled by irresponsible elements in the media; there is a tolerance towards those who encourage hatred towards anyone of a different race, gender, or religious persuasion. A perfect example is the mother of

Mohammed Saleen, an 82-year old man walking home from his mosque stabbed in the back by a neo-Nazi in Birmingham. These crimes are rising.

Another appalling development is that some leading figures in politics, like the Trumped up President of the United States, have been at the forefront of this. Did you ever imagine that the successor to the first black American President would be an ignorant racist bigot? Here in the UK some factions think the unspeakable terrorist atrocities in the recent Manchester and London attacks on innocents give them licence to make statements or take actions that are both racist and bigoted. This poison is all too often excused as just free speech. Terrorism is terrorism and as a union we condemn it without reservation.

In GMB we do not and will not scapegoat or abuse Muslims, refugees, or migrants because of the acts of some misguided murderers. Far-right factions are legitimised by innocent sounding terms like “alt right”. Let’s be clear, Congress, there is no “alt right” when it comes to these views, there is just all wrong. Of course, the picture is not all bleak. Those trying to fuel division among hardworking people may be vociferous but they are outnumbered and those of us who condemn their agenda and stand against their hatred and bigotry have one huge advantage over them, we have organisations, vast collective groups of workers that oppose prejudice, that advocate justice, equality and fairness, and that embody tolerance and respect. We have trade unions, the greatest force for good and equality in our society and as trade unionists we have affiliations to other campaigning organisations like *Hope not Hate*, *Unite against Fascism*, and *Show Racism the Red Card*. We work together to combat the resurgence of far right politics.

Congress, by a joint effort with those organisations dedicated to fight fascism and racism, we can turn the tide. We have the resources, we have the activists, and we have the motivation. Let’s use these to spread the message that there is no future for a working class divided by right-wing dogma, let’s stand together and fight racism, let’s stand together and fight fascism, let’s stand together and fight the far right agenda that has nothing to offer us, nothing to offer our children, and nothing to offer our grandchildren. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done.

BRO. S. OAKES (Southern): We all know the power of social media and if you pop in to Google and you pop in “immigration” these are the first things that come up. The *Express* says: “Migrants rob young Britons of jobs.” The *Daily Mail* says: “Migrants, how many more can we take?” The *Express* says again: “Migrants take all new jobs in Britain.” The list goes on. Migrants are blamed for pressure on housing. Nigel Farage, by the way, blamed them for traffic jams on the M4. I am not quite sure how that one works. They are blamed for putting pressure on the NHS. Let’s make that clear, migrants are the lifeblood of the NHS and keep it going, Congress. (*Applause*) We have all this. You have Britain First, the scumbags, with 1.8 million followers; disgusting. What are we going to do about it? What we do and each and every one of us can make a difference here, right at GMB, up the top, we start posting positive media stories about migrants. We drop that down to region. We drop that down to branch. We drop that down to individuals in this room. Every day spread it. Fight it. We can make a difference, Congress. Fight back. I support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well done, Steve. Yorkshire Region? Yes? No? Formally. Oh, my God. Thank you very much.

*The composite was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to speak against? No. Thank you. I call Colin to give the CEC position.

BRO. C. GUNTER (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, responding on behalf of the CEC on Composite 4, Motion 244, and Composite 20. I will take them in the order of debate.

Composite 4 on migrant workers: the CEC is supporting this composite with a statement, which is that immigration was and is the central issue of the Brexit debate and is likely to remain so in the future as the UK negotiates withdrawal from the EU. However, we are still seeing bullying and targeting of migrant workers. We will continue to campaign on this issue and have developed a credit card sized information leaflet on which action to take if a member is racially abused or is a witness.

On Motion 244, the CEC recommends support with a qualification. The issue of racism and, in particular, attacks on Muslims is likely to be with us for the foreseeable future and Islamophobia will be highlighted in our work on challenging race hate crime. Our qualification is that the request to affiliate to MEND will need to be referred to the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee to ensure they are in line with the aims and values of the GMB.

Finally, on Composite 20, the CEC supports the motion but would like Congress to refer it for consideration. We have seen Brexit and the election of Donald Trump as ushering us into an age of bigotry and intolerance, which is diametrically in opposition to the values of the GMB. Unfortunately, some of our members will be subjected to racist behaviour and we will take all opportunity to oppose such behaviour and highlight the importance of decency and tolerance. We are asking Congress to refer the call for training in the composite to the training review to consider if this can be included in activists' training programmes.

Congress, to summarise, the CEC would like you to support our statement on Composite 4, agree to our qualification on Motion 244, and agree to refer Composite 20. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Colin. I now ask London and Birmingham, do you accept the statement on C4? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much. Congress agree? (*Agreed*) Yorkshire accept the qualification on Motion – Formally? Thank you. Somebody had a sleepover! London and Southern accept the qualification on C18? (*Agreed*) Good. Thank you. Does Scotland, Southern, and Yorkshire, accept reference of Composite 20? (*Agreed*) Does Congress agree to reference? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much indeed. Does anyone disagree? No? Right. I now move to the vote on Composite 4, Motion 244. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? They are carried. Thank you all so much.

*Composite 4 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 244 was CARRIED.*  
*Composite 20 was REFERRED.*

## **SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD**

THE PRESIDENT: I welcome on stage Ged Grebby, Chief Executive of *Show Racism the Red Card*. Welcome. Welcome, Ged. (*Applause*) Before I start on the next business, can I say to North West & Irish Region, Midland Region, and my own region, I am sorry that I could not attend your do last night but Mary's eyes would not make it. Please accept my most sincere apologies. Thank you. That's from me. Okay. We now move to the next item, *Show Racism the Red Card*. Tim.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much, Mary. Good morning, everybody. Nice to see you. Sadly, the debate we just had was very tragically timed. It was in the aftermath of the London Bridge attack and on the back of and behind the Manchester and then the Westminster attacks before that. What we are likely to see as a result of that, colleagues, is a further increase in attacks on Muslim people, Muslim people who denounce these violent acts as much as we all do, Muslim people who around the world unite in their solidarity for people who have lost their lives, lost their loved ones, or who lay maimed and injured in hospital. Muslims around the world reject this same extremism that ISIS pursue in a hopeless pursuit of what they think is their right.

Congress, we need to educate our people and we need to understand how we stand together in these attacks. What we will never ever stand by and watch is our own people, whatever your race, colour, creed, or gender, or ethnicity, attacked, often Muslim women attacked in the streets by our own people in front of their kids, who are frightened for their very lives. This cannot continue, Congress. The work that organisations like *Show Racism the Red Card* do knows no bounds.

I am so proud that your union, the GMB, nationally affiliate to *Show Racism the Red Card*. The work of *Show Racism the Red Card* educates people in a way that I cannot think there is better, mainly through sport, and often through football. When I stand on terraces, as I have done for many years and certainly when I used to stand on the terraces back in the day when it was acceptable to hurl racist abuse at players, I often think to these days when people say, "They're over here taking our jobs," and when you get people like Alexis Sanchez or Mesut Ozil they do not say, "He's over here taking our corners," do you? It is right that we use the medium of football and sport to educate our young people. We are all born the same, we all look the same, and the only way that we change is through people poisoning other people's minds, views and beliefs.

Conference, I know as a union we stand strong and together in pursuit against injustice and unfairness, no matter what your race and creed. So, first of all, if you are able please stand up and hold up your *Show Racism the Card* poster, and particularly on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, please wear red to show that we stand against everything that is despicable and disgusting, against racism.

*(Congress stood displaying posters)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Congress. Thank you, Tim. (*Applause*)

I will read this: “During my RMA report can I announce the raffle made £896.80, and as we are two days down in our sales is there any way, please....” Oh, dear.

A DELEGATE: Double it!

THE PRESIDENT: “I have just left that word out to help us in our fight for RMA pensioner issues. Thank you. Jan.” I think so, Jan. We will double it. (*Applause*) You do a lot of good work, all of you. Thank you.

## **SOCIAL POLICY: JUSTICE**

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to Social Policy, on Justice, 283, 284, 285, and 287, and, Tim, thanks for a wonderful contribution on *Give Racism the Red Card*. Well done. (*Applause*) Has anyone seen Allan Wylie this morning! Allan? He is probably having 50 fits! Can I ask North West & Irish Region – (*inaudible comment from the floor*) – Thank you very much. The CEC is supporting it.

Motion 284, Justice for the Innocent, Yorkshire Region, will the mover please come up?

### **JUSTICE FOR THE INNOCENT MOTION 284**

#### **284. JUSTICE FOR THE INNOCENT**

This Congress believes victims of crime deserve support & justice. It also believes those accused but not convicted of crimes should also receive support & justice.

It is a principle of UK Law, that those accused of crimes are presumed are innocent until proven guilty. However, all too often those who have been found not guilty, along with their families, suffer hardships, such as loss of income and jobs. As it is deemed that the justice system has worked, they cannot claim redress for their losses. In many cases, those remanded in custody are kept outside their locale, making it difficult for family visits. In order that the innocent and their families should not suffer unduly. Congress calls for:

1. Remanding in custody should only be used as a last resort, taking into account the severity of the alleged crime & the safety of the general public & the accused. In addition, remand centres should be locally based to allow ease of familial contact
2. Reversal of the closure of magistrate & other local courts and a return to the traditional British value of Justice being dispensed locally
3. A degree of employment & income protection for those accused awaiting trial so they and their families do not suffer financial hardship and to aid in a return to normality after the trial.

Justice not only has to be done but seen to be done for the innocent as well as the guilty.

LEEDS CIVIC BRANCH  
*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*

(*Referred*)

SIS. A. BURLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): This Congress believes that victims of crime deserve support and justice. We also believe those accused but not convicted of crimes should also receive support and justice as they are presumed innocent until proven guilty. It is a principle of UK law. Those accused and detained often find themselves in a difficult situation getting back into the workplace due to the way their previous employment ended. If we look at the lives of the Shrewsbury 24 many of you here will remember Ricky Tomlinson addressed Congress at Nottingham in 2014 and how this affected him and 23 other families who were left behind to find the money for their housing and food, and how this had a knock-on effect, which we all know as blacklisting in this union. This union fought so hard against and won.

There are many everyday families, some of which will be our members, too embarrassed by the situation they find themselves in to come forward and ask for our help so we never hear of their suffering or loss of income, especially when the breadwinner's employment citation is to state they have frustrated their contract, the legal term for dismissal. This is the legal term. A contract may be frustrated where there exists a change in circumstances after the contract was made, which is not the fault of either party. This renders the contract impossible to perform or deprives the contract of its commercial purpose. This is important as the person is innocent until proven guilty. Is it not their fault? They could be in a situation not of their making. This needs to be looked at by a change of legislation. This can lead to insecurity for many months especially when their employer frustrates their contract. This leads families to cope on universal credit which we know in this current system can take up to six weeks to come to fruition. This is also set to rise when universal credit goes live across the board later this year. Thank you, Iain Duncan Smith, and the Tory Party. After months of being detained, a case can fail due to many reasons while the family have been suffering on Universal Credit, food banks, and at the hand of the press.

This Congress believes a decree of employment and income protection for those accused awaiting trial so they and their families do not suffer financial hardship and an aid to return to normality after the trial. Justice not only has to be done but seen to be done for the innocent as well as the guilty. Congress, please support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done. Well done, Amanda. Secunder. Formally? Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 285, London.

## **JAIL WITHOUT END MOTION 285**

This Congress understands that IPP (Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection) became law in April 2005 and was designed to protect the public from serious offenders, whose crimes did not merit a life sentence. Thousands of UK prisoners are being held with no release date despite serving their minimum sentence, because of an "absurd" law which has since been repealed by Parliament.

An example of this injustice is shown in the case of a prisoner who was initially sentenced to a 10-month term, but is still in prison almost 10 years later due to the now defunct Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) law. In preparation for proving themselves “safe” for release, prisoners must complete a number of courses. However, the prison system lacked the resources to allow these prisoners access to these courses, placing them at a disadvantage. More than 4,000 inmates, some with mental health problems, are routinely denied release from prison by parole boards because they cannot prove they are not a danger to the public.

Former Conservative Minister Clarke abolished IPP sentences as Justice Secretary in 2012, but offenders who were jailed under the legislation can only be released by a parole board, which in turn must be satisfied the prisoners are safe. Clarke said “It is quite absurd that there are people who might be there for the rest of their lives, in theory, who are serving a sentence which Parliament agree to get rid of because it hadn’t worked as anybody intended a few years ago”.

For those who have been released on licence, they will remain monitored, in the system for a further 10 years. They only have to be in the wrong place at the wrong time to be recalled to prison to serve the remaining 10 year sentence. This is worse than a life sentence and many have not even committed crimes to warrant this. Is this what our legal system has been reduced to? It is inhumane and no thought has been given to these prisoners or their families’ future.

We want to see a retrospective retraction for every prisoner on IPP with those who are a real threat to society or those with mental health issues receiving a revised sentence fitting to their crime. We want the Government to take ownership of the mistake they made and put matters right, not brush it under the carpet.

As a Union, we need to campaign to support this cause so that justice can be done.

HARROW PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. A. JONES (London): First time speaker. *(Applause)* What is IPP? It is an indeterminate sentence that was introduced in 2005 designed to protect the public from serious offenders but the courts handed these sentences out to all offenders regardless of the length of their sentence. Prisoners were given a tariff, a period of time which they must serve, but no release date. In 2008, the threshold of seriousness was introduced which restricted IPP to serious offences that carried a tariff of more than two years, but this was not retrospective. Those already in prison stayed there. An example of this injustice is the case of a young man who was given a sentence of two-and-a-half years for the theft of a mobile phone and remains in prison eight years later and still must complete two courses of the 35 ordered by the legal system before he is considered for parole. He said, “I’ve been given an IPP and spent eight years in prison but there are murderers and paedophiles walking out.” This young man was placed on suicide watch, which appears to be a common trait amongst IPP prisoners because of the uncertainty of a release date.

Although the IPP sentence has been defunct since 2012, many of these prisoners remain behind bars long after their tariff. More than 3,000 inmates, some with mental health problems and learning difficulties, are routinely denied release from prison by parole boards because they have not completed the mandatory courses due to the

prison system's lack of resources. Prisoners who are released on licence will be monitored for a further 10 years and any indication that they are involved in any criminal activity could mean that they are recalled to serve this time in jail. All this for stealing a mobile phone?

I want to make it clear that we are not condoning criminal activity but when a law such as this has been passed without thought for the impact on services, families, or indeed the individual, it is only right to raise awareness and fight for the lives of these prisoners. A High Court judge described them as the "disappears". This is a crime against humanity. We are talking about people who have paid for their crime, who have finished their sentence, and want to return home to build their life back up again.

Where is the equality in the Government's actions? They are aware that IPP sentence is not fit for purpose and still have not addressed the issue of those still being punished under the IPP law. As quoted by one minister, it is quite absurd that they are people who might be there for the rest of their lives, in theory, who are serving a sentence which Parliament agreed to get rid of because it has not worked as anyone intended. Releasing those prisoners who have already served far too long is one of those rare policy objectives. It is the right thing to do to save money and it is the right thing to do for the sake of justice and humanity. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ann. Seconder? Formally? Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: The mover of 287, Wales & South West?

**STRONGER LEGISLATION & MAXIMUM SENTENCE FOR ANIMAL  
CRUELTY  
MOTION 287**

**287. STRONGER LEGISLATION AND MAXIMUM SENTENCE FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY**

This Congress believes that the current animal welfare laws in this country are totally inadequate, and that the penalties for cruelty are far too lenient.

There can be no doubt that those responsible for inflicting harm or injury upon animals should receive far tougher sentences, and we call upon the GMB to campaign for a change in the law to ensure that offenders are dealt the punishments that their heinous crimes deserve.

ASDA JOINT BRANCH  
*Wales & South West Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. H. FERGUSON (Wales & South West): President, Congress, the law is failing to adequately protect animals and ensure that punishment administered to those responsible for acts of cruelty fit the crime. Under the current Animal Welfare Act the term of imprisonment for even the most awful crimes does not exceed 51 weeks. People are literally getting away with murder. There needs to be a review of the Animal Welfare Act, increasing the powers of local authorities to protect animals and to increase the maximum sentence these crimes hold. At a minimum, animal cruelty should hold punishment similar to grievous bodily harm. Unfortunately, animal cruelty is becoming more and more prevalent today. Dog fighting, a common

practice in some places, is considered a crime in most countries; however, the punishment does not fit the crime.

As a result of the current legislation not acting as enough of a deterrent, some people will continue to neglect and abuse animals. A point I would like to make is that the law states that the maximum sentence for animal cruelty is 12 months yet the maximum sentence for theft is seven years. This is not right. The Animal Welfare Act is way too lenient for any offender to even think twice about committing such a heinous crime. If the law was tougher, it would hopefully start to put a stop to these vile acts. All animals, be it human, cat, dog, a rabbit, have a right to live a life free from suffering and that right should be respected and most of all defended. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder.

BRO. D. REED (Wales & South West): First time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, according to the Animal Welfare Act 2006 anyone committing one of the standard offences may be banned from owning animals. It states “may be” because it suggests that if even one of these offences were to be committed it is possible for the offender to own animals again in the future and, therefore, be given the opportunity to recommit one of these offences, which to me is ludicrous. Another possible punishment is a fine up to £20,000 or a prison sentence.

I know from keeping up with the cases through the media over the years it is rare that the offender will be given such a high penalty and for some of those a prison sentence also. In fact, the longest sentence given to an offender for animal cruelty is 12 months, which is the maximum sentence a judge can give for a crime of this sort. Bear in mind that criminals may be released after half the sentence has been served. This particular offence was “the most horrific case of animal cruelty that trading standards officers in North Hampshire had ever dealt with”. More often than not an offender will be given a suspended sentence. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to speak against? No? Thank you very much. I now call Mary Hutchinson to give the CEC position on the agenda. Mary.

SIS. M. HUTCHINSON (CEC, Manufacturing): Congress, the CEC asks you to refer Motion 284 and support Motions 285 and 287 with a qualification in each case.

Dealing, first, with Motion 284, the CEC support the objectives of the motion in respect of its general aim for a humane criminal justice process and for the reversal of the courts’ closure programme. However, some of the requests put forward are specialised areas of criminal and social policy that are more appropriate for experts and may not be practical, or realistic, for the union to achieve. For this reason the CEC is recommending that the motion be referred so that we can obtain more information before adopting policy.

Dealing with Motion 285, the criminal sentencing policy of intermediate sentences could only have worked if the prison and probation services had been properly funded in order to allow for fair and effective assessment. Prison overcrowding and a lack of resources have had a significant impact. The CEC supports the motion in this respect.

The qualification is that the underlying policy and the call for a retrospective retraction for every prisoner on indeterminate sentence are complex and matters of criminal sentencing policy that are outside the union's normal area of expertise. The CEC supports the demand for proper resources but the union would not be in a position to support the very specific matters raised in the motion, which are more appropriate for experts to consider.

Finally, dealing with Motion 287, animal cruelty is a relatively new policy area for the union and the qualification here is that the union may need to work with a number of animal rights organisations. The CEC notes that the Private Members Bill by Labour MP for Redcar, Anna Turley, calls for increased penalties. The bill was scheduled to be debated in February this year but earlier bills in the parliamentary session were talked out and there was no time for the bill to be heard. The CEC, therefore, is asking you to refer Motion 284, and support Motions 285 and 287 with the qualifications outlined. Thank you, colleagues. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. Could I ask Yorkshire Region, do you accept reference on 284? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does London accept the qualification on 285? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Do Wales accept the qualification on 287? Yes? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I now move to the vote. All those in favour of 284, 285, and 287, please show. Anyone against? They are carried.

*Motion 284 was REFERRED.*

*Motion 285 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 287 was CARRIED.*

THE PRESIDENT: Could I say that Motion 287 would be a tribute to John Toomey, whose lifelong work was with saving animals. (*Applause*) I would still be debating it if he was here. A lovely thought. I wish I could. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to agenda item 10, which involves motions 215, 217, 219 and 220.

## **INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: TAXATION**

### **ABOLITION OF UPPER LIMIT ON NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS**

#### **MOTION 215**

#### **215. ABOLITION OF UPPER LIMIT ON NATIONAL INSURANCE CONTRIBUTIONS**

This Congress calls to support lobbying for the removal of the upper limit on NI contributions, using the extra monies raised to fill the budgetary gaps within the NHS.

S37 SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. T. GARMAN (Southern): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I move the motion for the abolition of the upper limit on National Insurance contributions. When I agreed to move this motion, I was quite ignorant about what happens. I thought National Insurance contributions worked the

same way as Income Tax, that the more you'd earn, the more you'd pay. So when I looked into it, I was quite shocked. When you earn over 8 grand, you start to pay 12% on your earnings up to £43,000 a year. After that you only have to pay 2% on every pound. So that means if you are earning 60 grand a year, you are only paying 7.9% of your earnings towards National Insurance. If you earn 80 grand, you are only actually paying 6.4%. If you are lucky enough to earn a million pounds a year, you only pay 2.3% of your earnings towards National Insurance. I am still paying 12%. You are still paying 12%. Why? Why should somebody who is earning £1 million a year only be paying 2.3% towards their National Insurance bill when you are paying 12%? It makes me angry and it should be making you angry, too. So I ask each of you not only to vote in favour of this motion, but to spread the word, tell your MPs and let them know that we are not going to take it. If the upper limit should be scrapped, let's take their money and give it to an organisation which is in desperate of it, that is almost on its knees. A once great institution is the NHS. Let's give it to the NHS and let's make it great again. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tad. I am going to suspend debate, because I believe it is time. Tim.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much. It is 11 o'clock, Congress, For all those who are able, can you, please, stand so that we can observe the one minute's silence that is taking place across the country today in memory of the victims of the London Bridge attack. *(The Congress stood in silent tribute)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, thank you. *(Applause)* Can I now have the seconder of motion 215, please? *(The motion was formally seconded from the floor)* Thank you. Motion 217 to move, please.

## **PANAMA PAPERS ON OFFSHORE ANONYMITY MOTION 217**

### **217. PANAMA PAPERS ON OFFSHORE ANONYMITY**

Congress considers that the Panama Papers which has exposed the sheer scale of the wealthy elite across the world who use shell companies and devices like bearer shares and nominee directors etc to hide the assets of beneficial owners, demonstrates that the efforts of previous Labour Governments to deal with tax avoidance and tax evasion has been a total failure. A whole new approach is necessary and Congress calls for Parliament has to use the criminal law to deal with these matters.

Although many United Kingdom based law firms and accountants were identified.

C28 CENTRAL BRANCH  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

SIS. N. DANCEY (Southern): Congress, I move motion 217. The Panama Papers were the biggest and most unprecedented leak of 11½ million files from the database of the world's fourth biggest offshore law firm, Mossack Fonseca. They showed the world the myriad of ways that the rich and powerful can and do exploit secretive offshore tax regimes. There were 12 national leaders amongst the 143 politicians, their families and close associated that were outed from this. Putin was one of them.

Nothing has happened to him. UK firms also exploited the rules but not one company has been charged with wrongdoing. Their defence is that they technically did nothing illegal. To give you one famous example, an offshore investment fund run by David Cameron's dad avoided ever having to pay tax in Britain. That fund has been registered with the tax office and with customs since its inception. It has filed detailed tax returns every year, but not a single penny of tax has been paid to us, the British people. How does it get away with it? It is not only the complex loopholes that they can exploit, but it is because the Tories, the rich, the powerful, the media moguls and the capitalist elites, don't give a toss about this. It is in their interests and their money that these loopholes are protecting. We are never going to get them to regulate themselves willingly. So we need to push this as a union and as a labour Movement and we need to make sure that our policies against tax havens are accurate and up-to-day since the Panama Papers.

This motion calls on us to lobby what I really hope is the Labour government after Thursday to clamp down on these millionaire and billionaire parasites. Fundamentally, Congress, if you are poor, working class, you go out, still and get caught, you are likely to get banged up. I don't want to see the working class locked up, but seeing David Cameron's dad behind bars would be quite a pretty picture. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. S. RAZA (Southern): Congress, I second motion 217. The most important thing about the Panama Papers are their relevance since the crash of 2008. While the bankers were bailed out by us, they carried on getting huge bonuses and the gap between the rich and poor has grown enormously. Most of us have been suffering at the sharp end of austerity, and that is no accident. The new liberal agenda sits behind the entire concept of austerity and it is backed by the rich getting away with tax avoidance, which the Panama Papers made clear. The total tax gap between what is owed and collected has been estimated by Richard Murphy of Tax UK at £120 billion per year. The entire UK deficit is only £69 billion. The Revenue & Customs estimate of £35 billion has been widely recognised as a serious under-estimate. But even allowing for the fact that it will never be possible to close the entire gap, those figures give a sense of what resources could be mobilised with a determined crackdown, set against, for instance, the £83 billion in cuts planned for the Parliament, including £18 billion in welfare or the £1.2 billion annual estimated fraud bill. You then get a sense of what is at stake. We need to push the Government to keep up the pressure so that we can get back some of what the super rich owe the rest of us. Please support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: We now come to motion 219. Yorkshire region to move.

## **INEQUALITIES IN TAXATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS MOTION 219**

### **219. INEQUALITIES IN TAXATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS**

This Congress recognises the harm privatisation is doing to the NHS and calls upon government to look closely at tax legislation, particularly VAT and corporation tax and close loopholes which allow private companies favourable taxation conditions.

The private companies have huge tax advantages which public service employers do not have. NHS organisations are setting up “arm’s length” private provider organisations and hiving off parts of the NHS to themselves. Privatising whole swathes of the NHS without any procurement process or public consultation in the guise of “saving money.”

BARNESLEY HEALTH BRANCH  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

**BRO. B. CAIN** (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move motion 219: Inequalities in Taxation of Public Service Providers. President and delegates, this motion calls on Congress to take action against the continuing privatisation of parts of the NHS in the guise of saving money. Not only has it been hived off to the private sector, but it has been done so without public consultation and without proper procurement. Not only is the NHS being broken up, these newly privatised providers are benefiting from the inequalities in tax legislation. Loopholes in this legislation mean that private companies benefit from favourable tax conditions that the NHS does not, particularly corporation tax and VAT.

I am not an expert on tax, but official Labour figures quoted that from 2010 the corporation tax rate on company profits has dropped from 28% to 19% and it is expected to come down to 17% by 2020. Official figures show that between 2016 and 2022 this reduction will amount to £64 billion less in the public pocket, which is badly needed by our public services. It raises the question as to why one of our country’s most treasured services is in a financial crisis, without enough beds, where their staff have had their pay capped for many year and is treated so less favourably to the money-making companies. I ask you to support this motion, to lobby your MPs, to campaign for change and continue to support our valued members in this institution. The system needs to change. Let’s save our NHS. Thank you.

*(Applause)*

**THE PRESIDENT:** Thank you. Yorkshire? *(The motion was formally seconded from the floor)* I call motion 220.

## **SEASONAL BUSINESS RATES FOR COASTAL AREAS MOTION 220**

### **220. SEASONAL BUSINESS RATES FOR COASTAL AREAS**

This Congress is to instruct the CEC to campaign for a reduction in business rates in coastal holiday towns whose income is based on the full one year annual business rate but where income is over a shorter period.

Many coastal town businesses rely on the tourist industry, which is reducing in British coastal towns forcing small businesses to close.

Business rates should be charged based on the income of these small businesses and not the measurement of the property so as to keep the small businesses running to the benefit of local people.

ISLINGTON 1 & HARINGEY BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

BRO. G. HARRIS (London): Congress, I move motion 220 on seasonal business rates for coastal areas. Over many years successive governments have presented themselves as “Government for small businesses”. The fact is that this may be the case for many inner-city areas but those small businesses in either rural areas or coastal towns have seen very little support from any government regarding business rates. Many inner-city businesses rely on trading all year round and collect the income as a result. However, those in coastal tourist towns that rely on tourism and our lovely British weather, who mainly make a living during six months of the holiday season, if they are lucky, and without much in way of business rate relief. The recent increase in business rates has made it far more difficult to keep the business going in coastal towns. In fact, it is a major threat. Many have already closed. In some areas business rates have increased from approximately £9,300 to £25,000 per year. Such an increase will force businesses to close. The impact of ever-increasing business rates on small businesses, especially in coastal towns, has driven local labour and families out of these areas, resulting in a major impact on the local economy. There is already an increase in the lack of jobs, opportunities and high levels of unemployment.

If you look at many of these coastal resorts, you will find an increase in pound shops, food banks and gambling establishments. However, you will also find a growing interest in political organisations like UKIP, the far-right groups and the exploitation of young voters. Congress, there is such a thing as Rural Rate Relief and Small Business Rate Relief. However, this relief is based on businesses trading for 12 months of the year. This is not a level playing field. What is needed to save coastal town businesses is special rate relief that is based on the reduced rate system where a discount is offered that takes into account consideration of reduced time available to trade in tourist coastal towns, including out-of-season time when businesses are closed. This will give some financial help to these coastal towns and give them the help they need to survive. If we ignore coastal small businesses, we will see an increase in the destruction of coastal towns, which will allow building developers to move in, to build luxury apartments as well as inner-city dwellings for the rich and the famous and expensive local communities. Support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call the seconder.

BRO. B. DUFFIELD (London): Congress, I am supporting motion 220: Seasonal business rates for coastal areas. President and delegates, when my family were young, they used to love to visit the seaside every summer. The beaches were packed, the cafés and the pubs were heaving and the arcades and funfairs were full of families enjoying themselves. Then I made the mistake of visiting the seaside in the off season. What a stupid move! Who goes to a seaside town out of season? That is the problem, because no one goes at all. I found a ghost town with many businesses shut.

Seaside towns move regularly through boom and bust, but this doesn't happen every so often during a period of several years. It happens every year. In the summer the towns thrive, but in the autumn, winter and spring the opposite happens, and that is in a good year. If the summer is late or wet, the boom period might never come. Small businesses on the coast desperately need our help. The business rates don't take the seasonality into account. You are charged as if your business is trading all year.

What's more, the rates are going up in one town, on the coast of Folkestone, by an average of 177%. Visitors to the seaside have been part of our life for almost two hundred years. To protect the businesses, we need a special rate relief for coastal towns to take into account the seasonal nature of visitors to the town. If not, then these holidays, which are such a special part of our lives, will vanish. It is not the only problem that these towns face, but it is the one problem that we can hit back at first of all. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. Does anyone wish to speak against? (*No response*) Can I now call Dave Clements to give the CEC's view.

BRO. D. CLEMENTS (CEC, Commercial Services): President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on motions 215, 217 and 220, which we are fully supporting but with qualifications.

Motion 215 on National Insurance contributions is in line with a similar proposal carried at Congress nearly 10 years ago which call for all workers to be paying the same percentage of National Insurance. Our policy is for fair taxation, and we support making NI contributions fair and progressive. However, although the motion is well-meaning, the qualification is that we are unsure how the money could be used to just fund the NHS as NI payments are currently ring-fenced to pay for the NHS as well as unemployment benefit, sickness and disability allowances and the state pension.

Motion 217 is on the Panama Papers. The motion is in line with our current policy that offshore and tax havens cost the Treasury billions. We continue to call for their abolition and we have supported campaigns to bring these tax havens under regulation. The qualification is that the motion condemns the Labour Party for failing to act, but the Tories are equally to blame and have done little in Government to prevent these practices. Furthermore, the motion calls for the criminal law to be used to tackle illegal tax havens, but this already happens. With these qualifications we support the motion because it chimes with our policy of closing down UK-controlled tax havens and tightening the law generally on tax-evasion schemes.

Finally, on motion 220 on business rates, we support the motion and, at the time of the motion being submitted, the Government were reforming business rates. Our only qualification is that until the next government is elected, we are not aware of any concessions that may be given to small businesses or regions. We are, therefore, unsure as to whether any concession would address the income of small businesses.

To recap, we are supporting motions 215, 217 and 220 but with those qualifications I have outlined. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. Does Southern Region accept the qualification on motions 215 and 217? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does London accept the qualification on motion 220? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much. I now put motions 215, 217, 219 and 220. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*Motion 215 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 217 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 219 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 220 was CARRIED.*

THE PRESIDENT: I now hand over to Malcolm.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. I call on motions 347, Southern; 348, London; motion 350, London, and composite 26, with London to move and Yorkshire to second.

**GTR/SOUTHERN RAIL FRANCHISE SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO  
THE MAYOR OF LONDON  
MOTION 347**

**347. GTR/SOUTHERN RAIL FRANCHISE SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THE MAYOR  
OF LONDON**

It is clear that the existing GTR/Southern rail franchise is a disaster and the DfT has awarded the franchise to a company that can't deliver a reliable service to its passengers. GTR/Southern are operating under the instruction of the DfT in a bid to undermine workers' rights and passengers' safety.

The service provided by GTR/Southern has been substandard since it took over the service in July 2015. It is clear that there is no simple resolve to its dispute with the railway trade unions all the time it is doing the Government's bidding and not free to negotiate a settlement with the trade unions..

This Congress believes the only resolution to this dispute and for a reliable train service in London and Southern England is for the Southern Metro and Suburban train services to be transferred to the Mayor of London. To date the Mayor of London runs some of the most reliable train services in London and has proved to make a success out of a number of failing franchised services.

This Congress also demands that the Prime Minister sacks Chris Grayling MP the Secretary of State for Transport for writing to the previous Mayor of London saying he did not want to transfer any more services in London to the Mayor in case a Labour Mayor was seen to run them better than the Tory Government.

C60 CROYDON BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. N. JACKSON-AMPAW (Southern): Congress, I move motion 347: GTR/Southern Rail Franchise. President, for travellers on Southern rail, which is run by GTR, the working of the franchise has been a disaster over the last year. There has been a complete breakdown of trust between the train operating company and our sister unions, ASLEF, and RMT. The protracted industrial disputes over the operation of driver-only trains, which was contested by the unions, is due to health and safety concerns. This dispute has caused misery for travellers, misery that is 100% the responsibility of GTR, the train operating company. The trade unions have acted responsibly to protect the safety of staff and the travelling public.

This motion calls for Southern Rail to be brought back into public ownership, and for Chris Grayling, the Transport Secretary, to be sacked. Please support this motion and make both demands happen by voting in a Labour Government on Thursday. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder? (*The motion was formally moved from the floor*) I call motion 348.

## **LONDON UNDERGROUND STAFFING LEVELS MOTION 348**

### **348. LONDON UNDERGROUND STAFFING LEVELS**

This Congress will recall item 250 of Congress 2014 which was carried dealt with the closure of London Underground ticket offices and deplored the then Mayor of London's decision to implement these cuts which would lead to the inevitable worsening of the service with increased safety, crime and vandalism risks and greater difficulties to the travelling public.

The last paragraph of that resolution read as follows: "Congress calls on the GMB not to support any Labour Mayoral candidate unless they pledge not to implement these draconian cuts or reverse them".

Congress therefore calls on the GMB to remind the Mayor of London of this policy and calls on him to implement this and condemns his lack of support to our colleagues in the rail unions taking industrial action in order to provide a better safer tube service for all".

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. R. POLE (London): Vice President, I move motion 348: London Underground Staffing Levels. Comrades, this motion refers to a decision we made in 2014 in respect of the draconian staffing cuts being implemented, which we rightly determined would have a huge detrimental effect on people travelling on the London Underground. Thanks to the magnificent concerted industrial and strike action by members of the rail unions and the support shown by the public, many jobs were saved. However, many ticket offices remain closed.

If you ever visit our splendid head office in Euston, and then try to travel on the Tubes afterwards, especially in peak times, you will often witness chaotic scenes at the station, as people, unfamiliar with the ticketing systems, queue for ages, only to find that they are in the queue for a machine that cannot answer their questions, will not give change, accepts only the exact fare or only takes credit cards. Therefore, guess what? They have to go and queue again, causing delays and congestion. The staff on duty at the barriers are surrounded by people getting more and more irate. Congress, we need staff in ticket offices for the reasons detailed in our resolution of three years ago.

Comrades, I was delighted that Sadiq Khan was elected as Mayor of London, especially after the vile, racist and Islamophobic campaign waged against him. GMB and the rail unions rightly supported him and campaigned accordingly. Therefore, it is extremely disappointing that he has not agreed to re-open the ticket offices,

particularly at prime locations, and more disappointing that he criticised the workers taking action to save jobs and improve rail services. Furthermore, and worse for him, he praised agency workers brought in as scabs to undermine the legitimate strike action being taken. This is not what we should expect from a Labour Mayor.

Therefore, the resolution calls on the GMB to remind him of our policy and that we want the jobs returned for a better and safer Tube service for us all. I urge support for this resolution. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

SIS. K. HENDRY (London): Congress, I am seconding motion 348. The underlying theme of many of the motions that we have heard at this year's Congress is austerity and the way that the cuts to our public services and to our infrastructure are making our lives worse on a daily basis. As a Londoner, I can testify to the chaos and the difficulties that Dick has described caused by the ticket office closures. There are major health and safety and equality issues around these closures, which the RMT, TSSA and ASLEF highlighted at the time. As a woman travelling late at night, with the ticket office closed on the station, you can feel very unsafe and uncomfortable. People with disabilities struggle to access public travel because of these ticket office closures because they cannot find anyone to assist them. It is also a false economy because if tourism is one of London's biggest earners, then forcing bewildered tourists to queue, sometimes for up to an hour or more, for a ticket just to travel around to see the sites is hardly conducive to a good image of London.

On too many occasions, right-wing Labour politicians accept GMB money and support, as Sadiq Khan did in the election for Mayor, but don't support our policies. This has to stop. Finally, after 20 years of Blairite and neo-Liberal policies we have finally got a leadership which opposes austerity and on the side of unions, workers and the poor. Let's send a reminder to the Labour Party and to the Mayor that our support can no longer be taken for granted. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call the mover of motion 350, London.

## **DRIVERS CPC TRAINING MOTION 350**

### **350. DRIVERS CPC TRAINING**

This Congress notes that drivers CPC training is currently undertaken by all professional LGV drivers to maintain their commercial licence, currently payment for time and training is interpreted by individual employers as to who (employee/employer) pays for the time training.

We believe that Congress should support a campaign to insist that employers pay their CPC time and training in line with all other types of training that they are required to do as work related training.

CAMBRIDGE 2 BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Referred)*

BRO. K. ROBERTS (London): Vice President, I move motion 350: Drivers CPC Training. This motion calls upon the CEC to campaign and lobby the Government to get this essential piece of training for professional drivers to be paid for and time allowed in normal working time. All the other training is done like this so why should this be any different. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder? (*The motion was formally seconded from the floor*) Thank you. I call the mover of composite 26, London.

## **CROSS BORDER TAXI HIRE COMPOSITE 26**

### **C26. Covering Motions:**

- |      |                        |                                  |
|------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 351. | CROSS BORDER HIRE      | London Region                    |
| 352. | CROSS BORDER TAXI HIRE | Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region |

### **CROSS BORDER TAXI HIRE**

This Congress supports the need for amendments to the 2015 Deregulation Act which allowed a proliferation of drivers unlicensed in local authority jurisdiction to carry out work that was quasi pre booked and that in effect this then stops licensing authorities from carrying out their work and local drivers from earning a reasonable living as a result of over supply by outside drivers. This change is supported by Transport for London.

This Congress further considers we:

- Campaign Nationally for reform of Taxi Laws to end Cross Border Hiring
- Lobby Parliament for a change in this regime and work with MPs and other trade unions/Associations in partnership to end this ridiculous situation in the country

*(Carried)*

BRO. S. GARELICK (London): President, Brothers and Sisters, picture this. You open a pizza restaurant and another opens nearby. Then another, then another and then another. Then pizza vans, without any licensing authority or health and safety approval, start to park around your restaurant. How would you feel? This is a daily occurrence for private hire and taxi drivers in towns and cities throughout the UK. The changes to a law that suited a minority who lobbied for the changes in legislation have caused mayhem throughout the United Kingdom. What this legislation does is to create a facility for drivers who are not licensed in one particular district to come, without a by or leave, and take work from local drivers and leave no licensing officials with no facility to take drivers off the road or the vehicles that may be sub-par. In effect, a driver can, in effect, be licensed in London, along with their vehicle, and work, as an example, for Uber and drive wherever they wish in the country and take work without adhering to local laws.

The past has seen drivers sent by companies to pick up drivers in other districts where they have a booking, returning back to their home district upon completion. Now there is no reason for drivers to return. Some operators have created bogus offices which, if they open at all, are in serviced offices with no staff or real facilities.

Drivers are taken on wholesale and are forced to seek work wherever they can, in some cases due to over supply. Operators such as Uber show a total lack of social responsibility by taking on drivers wholesale.

Just after Christmas members in Southend alerted me to a major concern. Drivers had their licences revoked for criminal offences including transferring speeding points and, in another individual's case, a £32,000 plus housing benefit fraud, and then went to London and re-licensed with Transport for London, allowing them to work with a London licence with Uber due to no national database showing revocation elsewhere.

My rule is simple: support drivers. However, with the best will in the world, I cannot support criminality which damages the already fragile public perception of private hire and taxi. Unless properly considered laws and guidelines are instituted, we can see not only the erosion of local work but we will see a degradation of safety for both driver and the public. Legislation is urgently required to change a law that suits operators but damages drivers and their families by those greedily seeking profits for themselves and their shareholders. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Yorkshire to second. (*The motion was formally seconded from the floor*) I now call Brian Farr, CEC and the South West, to give the CEC response.

BRO. B. FARR (CEC, Manufacturing): Vice President, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting motions 347 and 348 with a qualification, and it is asking Congress to refer motion 350.

On motion 347 Congress recognises that Transport for London has managed to improve overground rail services within the confines of the system compared with the previous franchises. However, our qualification is that the GMB continues to support changes to the law so that all railways can be brought back into public ownership to deliver a more regular service and a fairer fare for ticketing passengers.

On motion 348, we confirm our existing policy to support the retention of ticket offices and the protection of these jobs. We are aware that TSSA members voted to accept a deal reached with the Mayor of London and that some jobs have been saved. However, there are still closures and more jobs are being lost. We acknowledge that we should not support a Labour Mayoral candidate who is in favour of the closure of ticket offices. Our qualification is that it is an issue for TSSA and the transport unions, whose campaign we will continue to support.

Finally, on motion 350 we are asking Congress to refer this motion. Where the GMB is organising companies which employ LGV drivers, companies pay their drivers their CPC costs. It is possible that this occurs where GMB is not organising, so we are asking for the motion to be referred to allow us to identify companies where the GMB has some presence in order to build a campaign for organising and resolving this matter.

Therefore, Congress, please support motion 347 and 348 with the qualifications I have set out, and agree to refer motion 350. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brian. Does Southern accept the qualification on motion 347. (*Agreed*) Does London accept the qualification on motion 348? (*Agreed*) Does London also accept the reference back on motion 350? (*Call of "Right to Reply"*)

BRO. R. POLE (London): I am expressing the right to reply to section 348. The CEC originally sought withdrawal of this motion on the grounds that the Transport Salaried Staffs Association had reached a deal with the Mayor of London. I was aware of that because I did actually work for the TSSA for 30-odd years and I am still a part-time member. I refer back to the terms of our resolution which calls for the ticket offices to be re-opened. I would like assurances that we will remind the Mayor that, regardless of what the TSSA policy may be, because it is our policy, not another trade union's. On that basis, I am very happy to accept the qualification. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does London agree to the reference back on motion 350? (*Agreed*) I will now move to the vote. They are all being supported by the CEC. Motions 347, 348 and composite 6, all those in favour, please show? Any against? They are carried.

*Motion 347 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 348 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 350 was REFERRED.*

*Composite 26 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call motions 359, London; motion 275, Midland; motion 275, Midland; motion 278, London; motion 279, London; motion 280, London; motion 281, Birmingham and motion 282, London.

## **SOCIAL POLICY: WELFARE RIGHTS & SERVICES**

### **REDUCING INEQUALITIES AND POVERTY MOTION 359**

#### **359. REDUCING INEQUALITIES AND POVERTY**

This Congress is requested to campaign for:

- (i) The DWP budget to be used to secure bulk discounted products and services for low income people.
- (ii) And for this discount to be shared with the not-for-profit advice sector to secure sustainable funding to advise the former.

NORFOLK PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Lost)*

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): Congress, I move motion 359: Reducing Inequalities and Poverty without the support of my region.

We are 21<sup>st</sup> century union. Given that fact, it is to be expected that we will need to adopt some new ways of working that some of us, brought up in the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

might find difficult to take on or understand, me included. That said, some things don't change, and our strength is still based on our collective endeavours and that remains as true today as it did a hundred years ago. This motion seeks to build on the collective action of our members' individual spending power for the greater good of the union nationally. This motion supports motion 51 on welfare rights, which Congress has already carried despite the CEC advising that this be withdrawn. This motion also provides a ways and means to fund GMB rep training as outlined in the CEC's Special Report, and it doesn't stop there. It also supports composite 2: Funding for the future of trade union education, covering motions 53, 54 and 55, which were also carried.

The motion asks Congress to campaign for the DWP budget to be used to secure both discounts for low-income people. Congress, our members. The motion also asks that this discount be shared with the not-for-profit advice sector. Congress, that's us. The GMB is a not-for-profit organisation. We provide advice. Welfare rights advice and representation has to be paid for one way or another whilst still keeping it free to our members. This motion provides a way of doing that. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Secunder?

SIS. V. THOMAS (London): Congress, I am seconding motion 359. Vice President, this motion asks Congress to campaign for the Department of Work & Pensions budget to be used to secure bulk discounts for people on low incomes. When presented with a new idea or concept, sometimes it is easy to think that if it was any good, surely, someone would already be doing it. However, we know that this is not always the case. Sometimes we just need the courage of our convictions to pursue new possibilities.

Brothers and sisters, with your support together we can look to the future and we can be the ones already doing it for the benefit of our members. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call the mover of motion 275.

## **SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL**

### **ABOLISHMENT OF 'SUCKER LISTS' MOTION 275**

#### **275. ABOLISHMENT OF 'SUCKER LISTS'**

This Congress calls upon the GMB to spearhead a UK wide campaign to urge the Government to intervene and make illegal the compiling, selling and misusing of 'sucker lists'.

These lists are compiled by fraudulent tele-marketers and sold to the highest bidder. These lists are responsible for thousands of our most vulnerable friends and family being 'scammed' repeatedly, by conmen.

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

*(Carried)*

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move motion 275: Abolishment of ‘Sucker Lists’. President, Congress and visitors, aren’t we all sick of all those promotional flyers that are posted through our doors every day, telling us about our big chance to be rich, to win a boat or even to have a lifelong supply of bloody toilet rolls. These flyers are just a hook to get your details. If you are sucked into these promotions and you fill in the details with the hope of winning, you have now been probably put on a ‘suckers list’. Suckers lists are illegal lists of people who have entered a bogus competition or promotion. These people have been targeted by gangs of conmen who bombard our friends and family with more hooks, more chances to win big. Almost 200,000 people appear on faked sucker lists. These lists were obtained by National Trading Standards through raids on bogus companies. It is reported that the majority of these people are of the older generation with some victims having kitchen drawers and cupboards jammed with letters from fraudsters hoping to catch them out. The average victim is about 74, living alone and they have lost more than £1,200.

National Trading Standards are responsible for the investigation of these frauds but, as we all know, the public services have been absolutely decimated over the years. This leaves an absolute perfect storm and opportunity for the fraudsters to operate. This Government have said that they are committed to stamping out these appalling criminal scams that target the elderly and vulnerable, but when? When are they going to do it?

This motion is asking for the GMB to spearhead a national campaign against the compiling, the selling and the misuse of sucker lists, and to inform the public about them. We are about protecting our people. We are against injustice. We have to carry our values forward and help our most vulnerable. Please support this motion.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Shane. I call the mover of motion 278, London.

## **STOP THE USE OF BEEF PRODUCTS IN £5 NOTES MOTION 278**

### **278. STOP THE USE OF BEEF PRODUCTS IN £5 NOTES**

This Congress urges the CEC to lobby the Government to stop the use of tallow in the production of the new 5 Pound Note and any future bank notes.

ESSEX PUBLIC SERVICES  
*London Region*

*(Withdrawn)*

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): Congress, I move motion 278 without the support of my region. I am sorry to say that I am not getting the support of my region with this motion but I will carry on regardless, because I feel it is too important to let people know that, for some unknown reason, the Bank of England is using beef products in making the £5 note. Although a colleague at pre-Congress said, “They’re changing it to palm oil, so that’s all right”, so let me tell you that palm oil is destroying the habitat of thousands of animals including orang-utans. These species are under threat of

extinction so why, in the supposed forward-thinking west, are we allowing this to happen? Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call the seconder.

BRO. G. BRUNNING (London): Congress, I second motion 278: Stop the Use of Beef Products in the £5 Note. Vice President and delegates, I speak in full support of this motion and my colleague but without the support of my region. Money is important and vital to everybody on a daily basis, so why, in an all-inclusive and diverse society, does the Bank of England use beef products in the production of the £5 note? That is a thoughtless and senseless decision. This decision, clearly, had detrimental effects on those of our members whose beliefs or personal circumstances forbid or prohibit any association with beef products.

Urgent action was taken to further ensure that the production of new £5 notes using beef products was stopped. I urge Congress to continue to set standards in all inclusivity by continuing to lobby Government at the highest level to ensure the same senseless and needless mistakes are not repeated in the future. The Bank of England, after aggressive and positive political lobbying, is now moving to the use of palm oil in the production of its new bank notes, something which will clearly have far-reaching environmental consequences. However, that is a debate for another day. Please support.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. I call the mover of motion 279.

## **TREATMENT OF LIVESTOCK MOTION 279**

### **279. TREATMENT OF LIVESTOCK**

This Congress asks the CEC to lobby the Government to improve the legislation to protect the rights of livestock whilst being transported to and from farms and slaughterhouses and during the slaughter process.

ESSEX PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Lost)*

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): Congress, I am moving motion 279. I am sorry to say that my region is not supporting me in this fight to get fair treatment for the movement of farm animals in transit. Firstly, they are starved and refused drinking water for 24 hours before they are moved about. Guess why? It's because they will make a mess of the lorry that they are being transported in. Maybe we should stop it. I know about this because my daughter, Shay, is a campaigner for animal rights, and I am proud of her. As an animal-loving household, we are horrified at the treatment of these animals. Then they arrive at the slaughterhouse at a heightened state of anxiety and are going to be unpredictable. There is no reason to be cruel in managing control. Please find a way to treat them with dignity. Even at the slaughterhouse, they are subject to cruelty. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Secunder?

BRO. G. BRUNNING (London): Congress, I am seconding motion 279, the Treatment of Livestock. Again, I fully support my colleague, but without the support of the region.

Congress, close your eyes. Picture yourself and the whole of your delegation on a single carriage, trapped on a packed, delayed, Southern Rail, early-morning London bound commuter train without access to food, water or sanitation. Picture it! As the air recycles, the basic needs are not forthcoming, and you begin to experience the effects of a heightened state of anxiety and stress, not for the normal one or two hour delay but for 24 hours! If we were here debating the transportation of human beings, I would be quoting numerous breaches of the Human Rights Act, but we are not. We are debating the rights of animals, themselves considered sentient beings, yet afforded no more than the minimal rights and legislation concerning their transportation. As human beings, we have an ethical and moral responsibility to ensure the rights of all sentient beings as they are transported to slaughter. This motion is not about should we or should we not eat meat but, as human beings, how we treat all sentient beings.

I call on Congress to utilise the appropriate expert legal advice and political lobbying, where possible, to finally ensure that all animals, as sentient beings, are shown and given the dignity and respect they fully deserve. Please support the motion. I second.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call the mover of motion 280.

### **5p CARRIER BAGS MOTION 280**

#### **280. 5p CARRIER BAGS**

This Congress says that since the Government introduction charging 5p plus for plastic carrier bags has resulted in some of the manufacturers closing down resulting in some of our GMB members becoming unemployed.

Congress calls for a campaign to get these charges withdrawn.

EAST DEREHAM BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Referred)*

SIS. H. HAMBLIN (London): Congress, I move motion 280: 5p Carrier Bags. At last year's Congress motion 215 was referred back. From the research, it came to light that we have GMB members who work within the industry producing these bags. It also showed that since introduction of the charge, there have been closures resulting in job losses. The GMB is all for saving jobs. Therefore, colleagues, in the interests of our members, please support in getting these charges removed. Thank you.

*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Seconder? *(The motion was formally seconded from the floor)* Thank you. I call motion 281.

## **CEMETERY SPACES CRISIS MOTION 281**

### **281. CEMETERY SPACES CRISIS**

This Congress – It was announced this year by the Ministry of Justice that cemetery space will run out completely within 20 years. For some councils this has resulted in an 80% cost increase within the last 10 years and some cemeteries in different parts of the UK are full right now. While some alternatives have been explored, woodland and sea burials being promoted as ecologically friendly and while more people are leaving their bodies to science, one organisation is suggesting the compositing of human bodies. This is less radical than the suggestion made back in 1873 that bodies be cremated which now accounts for 3 out of 4 burials.

Unfortunately none of the above processes represent a significant change in body disposal given the increasing population and environmental degradation while the suggestion of new disposal processes, “ecolation and promession” (freeze drying) are in the early stages of development and have zero impact on the environment while having regard for the feelings of the deceased person’s family sensibilities. It is felt that society has become more open to different ways of disposing of the dead and comment has been made that if everyone took part of a day within a year to think about the disposal of their mortal remains this would be a good thing.

I am calling on Congress to promote awareness of this looming crisis and to ask members to consider different ways in the disposition of their bodies

B01 BIRMINGHAM FORWARD BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. A. GILRAINE (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move motion 281: cemetery spaces crisis. I know that this is going to be a hard issue for some people to deal with but we’re running out of space in our cemeteries and we need new ways to look at how to dispose of remains. GMB members need to consider the various ways to dispose of mortal remains, many of which are suggested in the motion, and one of the options may appeal. One method of disposing of human remains is by freeze drying, which reduces the body’s original weight by 30%, and this is then placed in biodegradable casts, and when the cast is interred, only a top layer of soil is needed. This method has been pioneered by the Swedes, so the disposal of dead bodies is, quite possibly, a European issue.

America, too, has taken up different ways of disposals. One procedure involves heating the body and when the process is completed, the ashes are handed back to the relatives. This process results in less carbon dioxide and pollinations. So cemeteries are providing a visible alternative in the US and Canada.

Recently, a National Dying Matters Awareness week, and a crematorium in the west Midlands won a national environmental award by pumping the waste heat from the crematorium to heat the local swimming pools. This could be regarded as recycling. There is also another way. We could become trees. *(Applause)*

BRO. E. DOWNING (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I second motion 281 about the looming crisis in public cemeteries. As you may know, the public is not aware that there is a looming crisis —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Hang on, colleague. Are you seconding motion 281?

BRO. DOWNING: Yes.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We don't have seconders when the CEC supports. Unless Congress agrees to let you do it, I have got to pull you up. Do you agree, Congress. *(Agreed)*

BRO. DOWNING: I am nearly finished. Nobody likes their own mortality, but there needs to be more environmentally-aware ways of disposing of bodies. Therefore, I would like you to support the motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call motion 282, London.

## **GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION CHARGES MOTION 282**

### **282. GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION CHARGES**

This Congress is concerned that a large majority of councils are now charging for the collection of garden waste. This is putting a huge strain on society and the residential community; the elderly, the unemployed and residents with large families, who are already finding it very difficult to cope. Financial demands with extra added pressure will definitely see families on low income or no income struggling to meet these high levels of demands.

Garden waste has always been collected as part of our weekly refuse collection, which is already being paid for through the Council Tax charges, so why are we being forced to pay again.

Many Councils that have introduced a charge said they have had to cut costs to cope with a reduction in government funding. Whether you pay and how much you pay depends on where you live in England, this means some pay and some don't

The GMB calls on the government to abolish these charges.

AVIATION SECURITY BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. WOOD (London): Congress, I move motion 282: Garden Waste Collection Charges. A large majority of councils are now charging for collection of garden waste. This is a tax of £70 and is putting a strain on the elderly, the unemployed and residents with large families who have to make a choice of "Do I feed my family or do I heat my house, or do I pay this obscene tax?" This tax, which needs to go, has always been picked up by the council as free, but again it is another way of getting money from the poor. I call on Congress to push the Government and the councils to abolish this tax. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now call upon Paul Maloney to give the CEC response.

BRO. P. MALONEY (Regional Secretary, Southern): President and Congress, I am Paul Maloney, Regional Secretary of the Southern Region, speaking on behalf of the CEC. I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on motions 359, 278, 279 and 280. I will take those in order of debate.

The CEC is asking for motion 359 to be withdrawn. If the motion is not withdrawn, the CEC will have to oppose. The initiative of community buying when consumers group together to buy goods or services in bulk is not a new idea and already around one hundred such schemes exist in the UK. The wording in the motion is a little vague when it calls on the DWP budget to be used for such schemes. How much of that budget is the question? We already know how stretched the DWP budget and their staff are, so it would be impracticable to add the extra burden on overworked staff. We appreciate that charitable organisations that provide services are struggling and could use any money, but we are unsure of the practicalities as to how any discount could be shared with them.

Therefore, although it seems like a worthy idea, it would be difficult to implement in practice and such collective purchasing schemes are already in place. So we ask that the motion be withdrawn.

On motion 278, on the £5 notes, the CEC, again, is asking for this motion to be withdrawn as it has, in effect, been overtaken by events. When the new polymer notes were introduced last year there were protests and petitions mainly from vegan, vegetarian and religious groups calling on the Bank of England to stop using tallow in the form of beef or mutton that are used in the production of these notes. The Bank of England did in fact take this matter on board and looked at potential solutions. They announced that their notes would remain in circulation as scrapping them would be too much of a cost and certain anti-counterfeit measures would be by-passed by burning them. They have offered to meet with the Hindu Council over their concerns. Furthermore, they will hold off from signing any contracts for the £20 notes while they investigate they investigate. I can tell you that the Bank of England has come up with a fat-free £20 note which will be introduced in 2020. A company called De La Rue, which is a 196-year old company, has promised that they will provide a fat-free £20 note. Congress, the current notes only contain traces of tallow. If we are concerned about tallow, then we would also need to address every-day products that we come into contact with, which contains more tallow, such as plastic bags, make-up, crayons, candles and, yes, bike tyres.

On motion 279 — the treatment of livestock — again, the CEC is seeking withdrawal of this motion. In 2014 Congress agreed a similar motion promising a total ban on the movement of livestock in Europe. The motion is on a similar theme, and we note that both the Labour Party and the Conservatives have strict animal welfare policies. The Government says that all EU-Member States should ensure that all animals are only sent to slaughterhouses that meet high welfare standards. The Labour Party state that the humane treatment of animals should be a benchmark for civilised society.

Finally, on motion 280, which asks for the 5p charge on carrier bags to be withdrawn, we debate this subject last year and the motion was referred. Since then, work has been carried out to identify how GMB members would be affected by this. In fact, no GMB UK-based has been affected, but there has been an effect through the importation of plastic bags.

We are asking for this motion to be referred, once again, so that we can continue our research in mapping into this industry in order to protect our members as to whether the charge continues or not.

We are asking for motions 359, 278 and 279 to be withdrawn. If not, the CEC is recommending opposition. We are also asking for motion 280 to be referred.

*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Does the mover of motion 359 wish to exercise the right to reply?

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): Vice President, what is relevant to our members is their net disposable income, not purely the hourly rate. If you go out and buy a pair of shoes, and then go out again with the rest of you to buy an identical pair of shoes, would you paying the same rate? No, of course you won't. You will get a discount. With that discount, split the difference and it could be an income for the union and an increase of the net disposable income of our members. As for the CEC to talk about the DWP being stretched, that sounds like a quote from the *Daily Mail*, quite frankly. The DWP underspent £16 billion every year in unclaimed tax credits and benefits. Those are our members. It applies to some members in this room. We can do it. For the CEC to say that it is too difficult and then to quote that there are hundreds out there already, they are not ours. They are not supporting our union. Support this motion and support our members.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Vaughan, while you are at the rostrum, do you wish to withdraw that motion?

BRO. V. THOMAS: No.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does the mover of motion 278 wish to have the right to reply?

SIS. C. HOLLAND: We will withdraw motion 278 but not 279, because I know for a fact that that is all a load of rubbish. You wouldn't transport your pets like they are transporting them. Even this week, I have evidence that they are transporting animals in cruel conditions. So think about it, delegates.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now go to the vote. We are asking you to oppose motion 359 and 279. All those in favour, please show? All those against, please show? Again, the CEC is asking you to oppose motion 359 and 279. All those in favour of those motions, please show? All those against those motions, please show? *(Calls of "Separately")* Oh, you want them dealt with separately. I apologise. I am sorry for that. We will take motion 359 first, then. All those in favour of motion 359, please show? All those against? That fell.

*Motion 359 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now take motion 279. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That fell.

*Motion 279 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does London accept reference on motion 280. (*Agreed*)  
Does Congress agree that reference? (*Agreed*)

*Motion 280 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motions 275, 281 and 282 are being supported. All those in favour, please show? Any against? They are carried.

*Motion 275 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 281 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 282 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That brings us to the end of the business today. I will now hand you back to Mary to close the Congress. Thank you very much, indeed.  
(*Applause*)

(*The President took the Chair*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. I am extremely proud of all of you at your attendance this week in this hall, as well as our visitors who have sat in the gallery day in and day out. Thank you all so, so much.

## **CLOSING PROCEDURE OF CONGRESS**

THE PRESIDENT: We are now commencing the closing procedures of Congress, which begins with the omnibus vote of thanks this year, to be given by Sheila Bearcroft from our host region, Wales & South West.

## **OMNIBUS VOTE OF THANKS**

SIS. S. BEARCROFT (Wales & South West): Congress, I am proud and privileged to be delivering this Vote of Thanks on behalf of the Central Executive Council, especially in one of my region's home towns here in Plymouth. Firstly, to the Banner Party from the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region in opening Congress this week and symbolising the collective unity and strength of our union and our class, the working class.

Then to my great friend, indeed, everyone's friend here, our National President, the peerless Mary Turner. (*Applause*) From the early days of her involvement with our union at Salisbury Road School in Brent, Mary has been the supreme champion of the underdog, fearlessly opposing all forms of discrimination and injustice. Mary's attributes are many and varied, but her charisma, wit, courage and integrity serves to

distinguish her from others. Her election to our Executive and being the only woman to do so all those years ago has ensured the start of a process whereby the representation of women within the union is now being achieved on the basis of merit and not favour. (*Applause*) Thus breaking down the barriers of vested interests that held back so many able and talented female activists for so many years. Mary, your health problems, coupled with the sad loss of your dear husband, Denny, have caused great difficulty during the past couple of years, but your indomitable spirit has prevailed, as we know it would. It is just so fantastic to have had you here with us this week. (*Applause*) Calls of “Mary, Mary, Mary”!

Mary, you really are the jewel in the GMB crown. You have your own style when discharging the role of National President and in chairing Congress. You have that rare ability to show that you care for everyone in the GMB. Mary, may you continue to represent all that is good and decent in our great union. We all love you. (*Applause*)

Thanks, too, to Malcolm, Mary’s and the GMB’s Vice President. In Mary’s unavoidable absence, you have borne much of the responsibility for presiding over the internal business of the union. No better nor more able deputy will anyone find in the entire British trade union movement, and that is for sure, Malcolm. (*Applause*) He is calm, confident, accomplished and compassionate. Yet he is the man with the fastest finger on the right-light button. (*Laughter and cheers*) Malcolm, you are an absolute top individual, and we thank you sincerely for everything you do and the way in which you do it.

To our General Secretary, Tim Roache. Tim, you took over from Paul Kenny at the end of February last year. Since then, you have been confronted by what Hamlet once described as “*The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune*”. Not only have you had to step into the shoes of that giant of the trade union and labour Movement that Paul was, but you have also had to deal with little matters such as the European Union Referendum, the Labour Party leadership, the Trade Union Act, and now the General Election, at the same, of course, as continuing to build the base of the GMB through a coherent and organising strategy.

Tim, you have epitomised the true spirit and resolve of the founders of our union in showing fearless and decisive leadership and never shirking a fight with those who seek to exploit our members. At a time of desperate cuts to decaying public services, growing unemployment and poverty, a widening gap between rich and poor, the denial of basic workers’ rights and a Government attack upon the most vulnerable in society, you have ensured that we remain fit for purpose, challenging those who seek to destroy us and what we stand for and creating the social change necessary to achieve justice, fairness and dignity, both inside and outside of the workplace. Tim, you will maintain our core values and beliefs and make sure that our members will never be bullied or exploited. You are a man who puts his words into action and have quickly earned the respect and admiration of so many members and activists. For this, we thank you. (*Applause and cheers*)

Congress, thanks must go to the Standing Orders Committee. It is a tough enough job in any year, but this shortened Congress has made their role even more challenging

and demanding. Well done to all of you — (*Applause*) — for the professionalism and expertise this week in steering all of us through a compact agenda.

Many thanks, too, must go to the stewards from my region for their efforts in ensuring the safety and security of all delegates, visitors and staff, a vital role performed with a smile, with courtesy and a willingness, as always, to help and advise.

As ever, the sterling work of Steve Short and his team behind the scenes has been invaluable. (*Applause*) It has been invaluable in facilitating the success of Congress, not just this year but every year. Steve and Ida Clemo work like Trojans throughout the year to plan and prepare for an event, which is so logistically complex. Well done, again. You are an absolute credit to the GMB. (*Applause*)

To another old friend, Kathleen Walker-Shaw. As Brexit dawns closer, let's never forget the incredible contribution that she has made to the effective representation of members in the European context. GMB has been the most dominant and influential union in Europe, and much of that is down to what Kathleen has done. Thanks, so much, Kathleen, you are an absolute star. (*Applause*)

Our thanks must also go to our excellent Press and Communications team. Their work this week has been top-notch, but also the level of coverage that we are now receiving, its timing and quality every day is at a new level. To Lisa Johnson and her team, thanks for the effort and expertise in promoting and publicising the GMB cause so ably and adeptly. (*Applause*)

So to the delegates here this week, it has been your Congress and always will be. You are the bedrock of the GMB and our agenda will only ever be that of yourselves and your members. It is you who represent what the GMB stands for, providing a distinctive voice and representation for working people. The democracy of our decision-making process will never be up for auction, so I hope that you will all return to your regions, branches and workplaces even more enthused and empowered than before and prepared to invest in the heroisms of the past to allow our members to oppose unfairness and injustice. At least this year you will return 40% less tired than in previous years. (*Laughter*)

I pay tribute also to the hard work of staff here in the Pavilions for providing a first-class service since Sunday, and to the shorthand writers (*Applause*) for recording every spoken word with such diligence and accuracy. It is such an onerous job but performed so admirably.

Congress, I think it is time for me to conclude this vote of thanks as I run the risk of making the speech even longer than my regional secretary is prone to do. (*Laughter*) I am not going to say "Sorry", John. Let's continue to build our union, as no one else is ever going to do that for us. Irrespective of what happens on Thursday, we need to keep on investing in our union by bringing in new membership. Colleagues, have a safe journey home and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible next year in Brighton. Thank you. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Sheila and the region, can I say thanks very much for your kind words and all the help that the region has given me, and the fact that you have taken

the time to pick up the phone to see how I am. To this Congress, I thank you for your support. Your words make me feel so humble because this is a job I love to do and I am here because you have willed me and I have willed to get here. I am going to close now before I start bubbling again. I would sincerely like to thank all of you, my family, and my own family for all the kindness, love and help that they have given me during the past two years. *(A standing ovation)*

A DELEGATE FROM THE FLOOR: Three cheers for Mary Turner. Hip hip hooray, hip hip horray, hip hip horray.

THE PRESIDENT: I now call your General Secretary, Tim Roache.

### **GENERAL SECRETARY'S CLOSING SPEECH**

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Wasn't that thoroughly deserved? Sheila and Wales and South West, what a brilliant vote of thanks. It was absolutely inspiring. Thank you so much for such kind words. I am not going to speak for long, Congress, because you have been so co-operative in getting this Congress into two-and-a-half days, which ordinarily it would have been five, and no it is not going to set the precedent for the future, believe me, although I have heard the rumours.

Six special reports, four charters and hundreds of motions have been moved from this rostrum so skilfully by yourselves, but as well as your magnificent co-operation it takes an enormous amount of hard work to get this Congress on in the first place, let alone having to re-visit the whole thing and move it from five days to two.

We all turn up, me included, sweaty palms, ready to do your bit and ready to come and say your piece, but what you don't see, of course, is what I see, day in and day out, and that is two people, particularly, who are the first people in the morning in National Office and the very last to leave for five days a week, sometimes six and seven days a week, and that is Ida Clemo and Steve Short. A remarkable achievement! *(Applause and cheers)*

I will be honest with you, Conference, I have sat down *there* for many years. Last year, when I was General Secretary for my first Congress, I really did not know how much work it took. But now, having spent the whole year between Congresses, I really do now see how much work it takes to put Congress on every single year, and long will it continue. So thanks, again, Ida and Steve. Thanks also to all of the staff, the people like Lauren, here, who sits and makes sure that your name goes on the screen, the people who staff the information desk at the front and the people who, when you walk into the GMB Congress office at the back and are working tirelessly to put this whole event on. T5, who are the back, who put the screens up, who make sure that the camera work and make sure that the rostrum goes up. It is all the stuff that we take for granted. Without you, it just wouldn't happen. *(Applause)*

I hope you liked the display as you walked in, the *Walk Through the Years*, something befitting of our 100<sup>th</sup> Congress. Congress, we must never forget that we are celebrating our 100<sup>th</sup> Congress, and that is a remarkable achievement in itself.

Another person I need to thank — when you sit *there*, it looks like a duck floating on the water, but underneath you want to see her feet going — is Kathleen Walker Shaw. She moves tirelessly up and down and making sure that Congress proceedings are running along smoothly, helping out Mary and helping out Malcolm. Kathleen, thank you so much for all your help. (*Applause*)

Of course, to our amazing President and Vice President, Mary and Malcolm. Mary just to see you here was not just an inspiration for the trade union Movement, but it was an inspiration for every single working person in this country. Your fight, your spirit, your constitution and your will knows no bounds. We are so proud of you and so proud to work alongside you and may it continue for very many years to come.

Malcolm, the same for you. You are always stepping in, exactly as Sheila said. Sometimes Mary can't get to business during the week and Malcolm always, ably, steps in and does a fantastic job. You are both the proudest people in this organisation. We, as a trade union, GMB, want to build a 21<sup>st</sup> union. That means breaking new ground, taking chances, taking risks, having a go and doing something different, but you can't do that if you don't have that rock of stability at the very centre. That is Mary and Malcolm, and I thank you both so much. (*Applause*)

There are two other people I want to thank. The first is my PA, Wendy Bartlam, whose very first job it was last year when she joined GMB, when she came to work for us, was to come to Congress. So you can tell that Wendy, along with me, had hardly been in this role for five minutes when we started off last year. Throughout the year, Wendy, you have been absolutely unstinting in your professionalism, your support, you being my right hand, and my left-hand as well at times, your support, skills and dedication, but also you are fun as well. You are great to have around and I think the world of you. Thank you, so much, Wendy. (*Applause*)

Last but not least, we are a family in the GMB. Of course, we all have our own families, and this job is tough. Yes, it is very tough. I was speaking to PK about it a couple of nights ago. Sometimes I am away five days, six days and seven days a week. We have a 15-year-old son, and my wife, Mandy, is his mum and his dad, and it is bloody tough. I love you so much. Thank you so much for everything. (*Applause*) We all know that without the support of our families, we could never do this job. Mandy, thank you so much.

Congress has been cut short this year for a very good reason, and that very good reason is a general election. As I said in my speech, as soon as I leave here, I will be out on the knocker, on the campaign trail, trying to seek the election of a Labour government. Please do all that you can to do the same, and let's get the Labour government that working people so desperately need: free childcare, free school meals, workers' rights from day one, fairness and security for workers, a massive house-building programme, properly funded care for those who need and deserve it and a properly funded NHS that this country desperately needs. Every single vote is crucial, but whatever the outcome on June 9<sup>th</sup>, whatever the shade of Government that is in No. 10, I know that we will continue to do the job that is most important to us, and that is fighting for our members. Walk tall. Leave Plymouth walking six feet tall. I am so proud to work alongside you. I am so proud and honoured to lead you as

your General Secretary. Have a wonderful trip home and thank you for a great week.  
*(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. Well done. Congress, the next part of our closing ceremony is in two. We will now have a short slide show showing some highlights of the Congress. If you have been caught napping, it will be showing up on the screen. The slide show and music will now be shown.

*A slide show was shown and the Red Flag was sung.*

*Congress concluded.*