

GMB

CONGRESS 2018

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MALCOLM SAGE  
(Vice President)  
(In the Chair)

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Held in:

The Brighton Centre,  
Brighton

on:

Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018  
and  
Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018

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PROCEEDINGS  
DAY ONE  
(Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2018)

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**FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS  
MONDAY, 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2018**

**MORNING SESSION**

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

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Congress to order. Please switch off your devices or make sure they are on silent. I must also make you all aware — delegates, visitors and staff — that all Congress sessions will be filmed and shown live on You Tube.

Congress, this week I will be joined at the table by Margaret Gregg of the CEC. She has been nominated to help chair Congress this year, and cover my usual duties at the top table. Thank you, Margaret. *(Applause)*

**TRIBUTE TO MARY TURNER MBE**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We are beginning our Congress differently this year; with a Tribute to Mary Turner. This is ahead of our customary Congress welcome and banner ceremony. The Standing Orders Committee has also granted us permission to move CEC Rule Amendment 1 after our tribute.

I have on stage with me, Lisa, who is Mary's granddaughter, and also Barbara, who was Mary's best friend. Lisa will be receiving Mary's Gold Badge to mark her CEC membership. Both Lisa and the General Secretary will be saying some words about Mary. I welcome Lisa and her family to Congress this year, and I welcome her to address Congress after Tim.

Normally, we have a minute's silence but the request this year is for a minute's applause. Can we now take that minute of applause, please. *(A minute's applause)* Thank you, colleagues. A video will now be played honouring Mary's life. *Mary Turner Tribute Video played to Congress. (Applause)*

Colleagues, I will now ask the General Secretary to take the rostrum to speak and present Lisa with Mary's Gold Badge.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good morning, Congress. I am hugely honoured to celebrate and pay tribute to our incredible National President, Mary Turner, and it is especially fitting and moving to do so at GMB Congress, a venue that was Mary's home, where she excelled and where she absolutely belonged.

From her young years in Tipperary, a working-class girl from a working-class family, I am not sure that Mary O'Brien, as she was then, would ever have dreamt that after her final moments had passed, her life would be celebrated by so many under the Dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. How fitting and appropriate was that!

Mary's family settled in Kilburn, North London, and the first thing her father asked when she started work at 16 was, "Have you joined the union yet?" Today, we are all thankful that the answer to that question was yes. Mary worked in a tailors in Oxford Street and joined the Tailor & Garment Workers' Union, which, fittingly, is now part

of the GMB, before working in the print trade where, unsurprisingly, she was elected Mother of the Chapel. During this time Mary met and married her husband, Denny Turner, within six weeks of their first meeting, so sure was Mary that he was the one. They had two children, Denise and John; grandchildren, Lisa, Anthony, Louise, Jack and Katie, and great grandchildren, Jessica, Millie-Jo, Halley, Freddie, Dennis and the little one, Holly. Mary adored her family and, by God, her family adored her back. They were all so generous in their support of Mary's huge devotion to her other family, the trade union and labour movement. She hated unfairness, and if she saw it it did not matter who you were or how big, you were going to get the wrath of Mary Turner. All I can say is, I'm bloody glad I was on Mary's side.

One of the first to feel that wrath was the management at Salisbury Road School in Brent where Mary went to work as a dinner lady after Lisa and John got older. She took no time to see that staff were not being treated right and recruited all nine into the GMWU. She raised the unfairness and management demanded to know who she was. "I'm their representative", she growled, and the rest is history. It was at that very school that Mary would see two queues of kids lining up for dinner; those who paid and those who couldn't afford to. Kids going hungry and the stigma of a different queue lit Mary's passion for free school meals, a passion that burned in her till her final days, by which time she was thrilled to see that it is now part of the Labour Manifesto to ensure that all kids get free school meals.

Mary was really becoming active throughout the 1980s, along with her partner in crime, Barbara Benham, a time which both summed up as fun but bloody hard work! One such time was when local government pay talks were taking place in Red Lion Square in London, and Mary, Barbara and the gang went to demonstrate outside. Charlie Dorrick was the national officer for the Union. He was leading talks inside. Mary asked one of the coppers if she and Barbara could go and use the loo. Of course, using her persuasive tongue she got a yes, and once inside they could hear Charlie's voice and the door to the room was slightly open. In order to get a better listen, Barbara got on her hands and knees and Mary climbed on top of Barbara, when all of a sudden the door burst open and both rolled in on the floor. Can you imagine Charlie's face when both got escorted out by security?

Things were far from easy for Mary, especially being a woman, as when she was first elected to the GMB Executive she was the only woman out of 40. She was bluntly told at the time that she had taken some other man's seat and that she wouldn't last longer than a two-year term. How wrong they were, as she continually showed exactly what she was about. Mary Turner really was a giant amongst men.

In 1997 she was elected as our President and served in that role for every single year since. Alongside that, she was a long-standing and highly-influential member of Labour's National Executive, including being Chair of the Party in 2004. It was what she achieved in that time that was so incredible and was so right, therefore, that she was honoured with an MBE for her services to the Movement in the 2010 New Year's Honours List, an honour which I know she was so hugely proud of and so were her union. "Our Mary" was an inspiration that showed time and again that we can all fight to make the world a fairer and better place, and we, in the GMB, will continue this fight in Mary's name. This Congress just won't be the same. Mary has been a fixture, chairing business for longer than some of our young members in the audience

today have even been alive. She was always a calming and supportive figure to first-time delegates, as knees knocked as the rostrum, but a firm hand when delegates tried to bend the rules. She did so always with humour, always with compassion, always for a united GMB and always with warmth that so many remember her for. It is typical of Mary that she made and kept friends from all parts of her life. Time and again, I would be with her when someone would come running across and greet her with enthusiasm, ask her for advice or proudly give her an update on how they were getting on. She never failed to recall their names and, invariably, had some funny story about them from their past, just showing what a brilliant and sharp mind Mary always had. Mary was a natural leader, the rock around which the GMB has been built, the beating heart of our great Union. That flame has gone out but not that fire. Our fire is Mary's legacy, a legacy of which I know her wonderful family are so very proud. Talking of fire, the orange in our GMB colours will always burn bright to remind us of the fiery, warm, red-haired fighter that was "Our Mary".

Following Mary's passing, I opened a book of condolence for Mary and her family. It was just the right thing to do, and I know that people have already shared special memories, but if you have not it is out in the foyer here. Please, feel free to write your own tributes. But you realise then just how special and unique Mary was by the huge number of messages received from international colleagues, national presidents, prime ministers, socialists, trade union leaders, both past and present, but then thousands from ordinary working people, some who knew Mary very well but others who had met her once or twice only whose lives she touched for ever.

There are words that recur in every single tribute: kind, generous, caring, funny, fearless, inspirational, encouraging, a fighter and someone who never forgot their roots!

None of us are indispensable; so very few are irreplaceable. Mary Turner was irreplaceable. Thank you for your life, Mary, for all that you did for millions of working people across our Movement, especially in our great Union. Your Union and your Congress will never forget you. It now gives me great pleasure to present Mary's Gold Badge to her granddaughter, Lisa.

*(Presentation made amidst a standing ovation)*

LISA FOLWELL: Malcolm, Vice President; Congress, first-time guest and first-time speaker. *(Applause and cheers)* When Tim asked me to speak at Congress I knew it would be incredibly difficult to sum-up in a few words Nan's contribution to the GMB, the trade union Movement and to the wider community. Mary was an active trade unionist for over 40 years, from being the Mother of the Chapel at a local printing form to being a dinner lady campaigning for improved pay and conditions for school dinner staff in Brent.

The fight for free school meals was always Mary's campaign and I am proud that this is now incorporated in Labour Party policy, and I know the GMB will ensure that this legacy lives on. As a result of her trade union activities, she was black-listed in the 1980s. It was something she was immensely proud of because she knew she must have been doing something right if Margaret Thatcher's Government had decided that she was a threat. *(Applause)* Nan enjoyed being a nuisance, as you all well know.

She was proud to be speaking out for working people in a language that they understood and putting the case for a fair and just society. She was passionate about young people and fought to get better pay, housing rights and work opportunities for the young people. She held the position of shop steward and branch secretary for the Hendon branch for over 26 years, and was on London Regional Council and Committee, and was fully elected on to the CEC in 1983 and served 34 years in that post.

Mary was fully aware that women were not expected to move up the ladder, but everyone she came into contact with learnt that she was not going away. She encouraged many people to be members and to be active at all levels, and was a shining example to all women. Who better to chair the Women's Task Force? Furthermore, she was so proud to receive the very first Eleanor Marx badge at Congress 2016 to mark her being an inspirational woman and in recognition of her exceptional services to GMB members.

At Congress 1997, Mary was elected as the union's National President, and a position she held for over 20 years unopposed. As National President and Chair of the CEC, she faced many challenges and struggles to keep the Union afloat. She was there as the union moved into new areas of membership and always ensured that GMB continued to fight bad employers and injustices. Mary was committed to the defence of the NHS and the fight against privatisation in all forms as the workers were always the victims.

As Chair of GMB Congress, she was understanding, compassionate, fair and professional. She treated everyone as an equal and did not care for positions, power or personal gain. She made everyone feel at home and would be seen at Congress with her arm around someone or holding a new delegate's hand as they made their first speech. She was a real working-class hero, never afraid to say what she thought, and some of you can vouch for that from listening to her Congress speeches.

Trade union colleagues from the Musicians' Union recall how they would help Mary put her words to music, but Mary's versions of songs always took a pop at the Tories, something she revelled in and, as I am sure some of you will remember, were often challenging. She was feared by bosses and bullies, and she could hold politicians to account, making some guest speakers scared when she pointed her finger at them, but we all know who was really in charge. Whatever platform she spoke from, whether it was Parliament, Congress, CEC, TUC or her branch, she was always held with the respect that she earned and she was always worth listening to.

For Mary people came first. She would always answer a call to a member and even being hospitalised did not stop her.

I have been at Congress with her on many occasions and she could not walk more than a few feet without someone stopping her for a chat, some support or advice. If we were leaving the hotel at 8 pm, I would have to make sure that I was pulling her out of the door at least an hour-and-a-half beforehand otherwise we would be eating our evening meal at midnight, which would then class as having her breakfast, too. All the great things which made our union and trade union Movement are embodied in the memory of Mary Turner. She never forgot her roots as a GMB

activist. I have never met anyone else with the same personal commitment and encouragement that Mary showed in her battles and dedications to fight for the working-class and to stand up against injustice, bullying, harassment and any form of intimidation.

Most people say that I am just like my nan, but there will only ever be one Mary Turner. Mary was pure gold. In 2012 she was awarded the TUC Women's Gold Badge to celebrate and recognise her contribution to the trade union Movement. As an example, in 1983, when the TUC March for Jobs took place, Mary's members donated a week's pay to support the marchers who were cared for by school-meals staff when they arrived in London.

Tributes have continued to pour into the family from people in all walks of life, and for these we will forever be grateful. She was the beating heart of the GMB and her principles and values will remain at the heart of the Union. She devoted her life to the trade union and labour Movement and rubbed shoulders with the great and the good. She never brought up her own problems, never complained, but just continued her fight for justice and equality. As a family, we fully supported her in whatever she did and shared her with you all. I would like to wish the incoming National President every success.

Before I finish, I would just like to say a special 'thank you' to three people who are here today. First, to Barbara Benham, who you will all know as nan's true friend and always was through thick and thin. (*Applause*) For over 60 years they were joined at the hip and never once had an argument. Without Barbara, there was no Mary. Together, they were united. So thank you, Barbara. (*Applause*) Thank you for being so dedicated to nan and our family, and thank you for everything that you do for us all.

Secondly, I would like to say a really special "thank you" to two other people here today, which is also their first time to Congress, and they are my two daughters, Jessica and Millie. (*Applause*) We all know that being part of the GMB requires hard work, passion, dedication and commitment, as well as unsociable hours. Supporting nan over the years showed what type of energy was needed, whether it be spending time with granddad, who most of you will all know as "My Denny", or accompanying nan to various places around the world. In doing so, this took me away from you two! My time with both of my grandparents was always precious to me and somewhat limited, and the memories I have I will cherish for ever. Your love and understanding allowed me extra time for nan and granddad and also gave me extra moments to love and care for them, and that's all I ever wanted to do. So Jessica and Millie, I love you, and thank you for supporting for me for caring for our grandparents. (*Applause*) Vice President, Congress, delegates, I am proud and privileged to accept this Gold Badge in her memory and, on behalf of my family, I would like to dedicate this to the thousands of trade unionists across the world who have been bullied and murdered simply because they want fairness and justice. Thank you. (*A standing ovation*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: I call on our Vice President, Malcolm Sage, to move CEC Rule Amendment 1, Mary Turner House.

## **CECRA1**

Rule 1, Clause 2

Line 1:

Insert "Mary Turner House"

Rule 1.2 to read:

2. Our main office is at Mary Turner House, 22 Stephenson Way, London NW1 2HD. Our main office in Northern Ireland is at Victoria House, 1a Victoria Road, Holywood BT1B 9BA.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, I move CEC Rule Amendment 1, Mary Turner House, on behalf of the CEC. Congress, as a mark of tribute and great respect to "Our Mary", the CEC is asking Congress to support the change of the name of our GMB National Office to Mary Turner House. Please support this amendment. *(Applause)*

THE VICE CHAIR: Does anyone wish to speak against CEC Rule Amendment 1? *(No response)* I did not think so. I now put CEC Rule Amendment 1 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? I do not need to ask if anybody is against. Thank you.

*CECRA1 was CARRIED.*

## **NATIONAL BANNER CEREMONY, MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now have the National Banner ceremony which is the traditional opening of Congress. This year Midland & East Coast Region is forming the banner party. Please stand to greet the National Banner. Thank you.

*(The National Banner Ceremony proceeded to the music of Jerusalem)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Midland & East Coast Region.

## **OPENING VIDEO**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now start Congress with a short opening video.

*(Video played to Congress)*

## **WELCOME, SAFETY PROCEDURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, together with my Vice-Chair, Margaret Gregg, and my General Secretary, Tim Roache, we would like to welcome you all to GMB Congress 2018.

We would also like to give a warm welcome to our verbatim shorthand writers, Phyllis Hilder and Michael Thear.

We also have Lynsey Mann and Mel Bartlett helping with the lights this year. We will also be joined by National Office colleagues across the Congress sessions to take part in the debates.

You will find details of the fire and evacuation procedures on page 4 of the Congress Guide. Please take time to look at these and familiarise yourself with the nearest exits. If a venue Manager comes on to the stage, it will be to announce an evacuation. Please listen carefully.

As Congress falls during Ramadan, we have allocated Office 7 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor behind the stage for use as a prayer room. We have not had any requests for signers this year but if you require any assistance, please go to the info desk.

Firstly, could I extend a warm welcome to all delegates, but especially to any first-time delegates. If you are due to speak, we have some procedures you should follow and be mindful of: Please show your credentials to your colleagues at the desk in the front of the rostrum so that your name can be shown on the screen. Also say your name and region for the verbatim record. Mention if you are a first-time speaker. Could I remind delegates again that all Congress sessions are filmed and will be shown live on YouTube. This means that your speech will be shown live over the Internet, so please don't use any inappropriate language.

We have a packed agenda this year. Please listen carefully to my announcements. Where changes are expected, I will try to give delegates advance warning.

## **OBITUARIES**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Those of you able to stand, please rise as a mark of respect for our departed GMB colleagues. Their names will be shown on the screen and listed in the Congress Guide.

*(Congress stood in silent tribute)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Congress.

## **TELLERS AND STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Details on Tellers can be found on page 3 of your Congress guide. All Tellers must remain in the Hall whilst Congress is in Session and delegates must be in their allotted seats when a vote is taken. I welcome the General Member Auditor who will be supervising counts of votes. It is John Swainson of the Northern Region. To see if you are eligible to vote, please look down at your Congress credential. If it says the word "Delegate" on it, then you can vote. All others in the Hall are not eligible to vote.

Could I congratulate Helen Johnson on her election as Chair of the Standing Orders Committee for the 11<sup>th</sup> year. Well done, Helen. *(Applause)* I will now call on



Helen, Chair of the SOC, to move Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1, which is on page 21 of your Final Agenda. Helen.

## **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1**

HELEN JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Vice Chair and Congress, I am Helen Johnson from the Midland & East Coast Region, Standing Orders Committee Chair, formally moving SOC Report No. 1. Congress, you will find a copy of the Report in your Final Agenda, starting at page 21. I formally move adoption of that Report and, in doing so, the SOC would like to thank delegates and their regional secretaries for agreeing 27 composite motions which also appear in your Final Agenda, starting on page 122.

Would colleagues also please note the long-standing Guidelines for Congress Business on page 16 of your Final Agenda. This will help all of you, but especially new delegates, in understanding the procedures and the guidelines that the President and the SOC work to.

Withdrawn motions: The SOC has been informed that the following 31 motions have been withdrawn: These are: Motions 4, 5, 18, 22, 34, 35, 39, 52, 54, 60, 91, 93, 94, 102, 103, 114, 121, 202, 209, 213, 255, 256, 257, 261, 262, 276, 277, 278, 281, 311 and 378. I will give you those numbers again if you are writing them down: They were 4, 5, 18, 22, 34, 35, 39, 52, 54, 60, 91, 93, 94, 102, 103, 114, 121, 202, 209, 213, 255, 256, 257, 261, 262, 276, 277, 278, 281, 311 and 378. Would Congress delegates please note that if, any further motions are to be withdrawn during the week, you must advise your Regional Secretary who will, in turn, advise the SOC.

Existing Policy Motions: Congress, in accordance with Congress decisions adopted since 2008, the SOC is recommending that motions which are existing policy are endorsed by Congress without the need for debate, following advice from the CEC on the particular motions in question. The existing policy motions are listed in SOC report No. 1 at page 23 of your Final Agenda. You may also find it helpful to refer to the detailed report from the CEC which is at page 144 of the Final Agenda. The letters EP appear by the side of such motions in your Final Agenda.

Emergency Motions: The SOC has accepted an emergency as being in order for debate. This is Emergency Motion 1: The Murder of Three Nestle Trade Unionists in Columbia, standing in the name of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. The SOC is recommending that this be heard during the Wednesday afternoon session.

Motions out of order: Congress, as you know 2018 is not a rules revision year. The SOC has, therefore, ruled that the following motions are out of order for debate. First, there is one motion dealing with GMB Congress that is out of order for debate. This is because amendments would be required to GMB rules to give effect to its provisions. This Motion 7: CEC and Congress Speakers. Secondly, there are two motions dealing with GMB contributions which are out of order for debate as they also would require rule amendments. They are Motion 23: Recruiting Young Members, and Motion 62: Minimum Wage Subs. Thirdly, Motion 253: Labour Party, is out of order for debate, because if adopted the consequences of the motion would also require rule amendment.

Congress, there are, additionally, eight motions that refer to the pay or terms and conditions of GMB employees. These are Motion 41: Regional Secretary Pay Award; Motion 42: Regional Secretary's Pay; Motion 43: Regional Secretary Pay Award; Motion 44: Deliberate Uplift in Salaries without a Job Evaluation; Motion 45: Fat Cats Within Our Ranks; Motion 46: ACAS Pa6y and Grading Guidelines not exemption for GMB Officials; Motion 47: GMB Trade Union Adheres to ACAS Guidelines as Recognised Employer; and Motion 49: GMB Vehicle Provision.

Congress 1985 adopted a special motion, and this motion is printed in your Guidelines for Congress Business at page 19 of the Final Agenda, and confirms that matters relating to the pay, terms and conditions of GMB employees are matters for the CEC. Rule 17a.1 provides: "The Central Executive Council has full authority over all national, sectional and regional officers and has the final say over all matters relating to their conditions of employment". None of these motions seek to reverse the 1985 resolution. Therefore, all eight motions are considered to be out of order for debate.

Vice President and Congress, I formally move adoption of SOC Report No. 1.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Do any delegates wish to speak on any of the SOC's recommendations? Let me say that if they are for reference back, I will not allow speeches on the subject. I will only allow the reason why the delegate wants it referred back.

ANTHONY CHOLERTON (London): Congress, I am responding to SOC Report 1 regarding Motion 23. Vice President and Congress, SOC 1 has ruled Motion 23 out of order on the ground that it requires a rule change to Rule 45, stating that it calls for entry-level membership for young people to rise to full membership over a period of time. This is incorrect. This motion merely asks the GMB to consider this option to help us all recruit and retain young members. The apprentice and part-time rates were given as examples only. Therefore, as this does not call for a rule change, it is not out of order. Congress, it is for delegates to decide whether this motion should be debated and not the SOC, but look around you and see how many young people are here. Congress, please allow this motion back on the agenda so that you can decide its merits. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

DOUGLAS RIGBY (London): Vice President and Congress, I am seeking to challenge SOC Report No. 1 on Motion 49: GMB Vehicle Provision. This motion is merely seeking a review which is in line with current policy and has been debated in Congress. I can show you how conditions of employment have been discussed at Congress and policy formed. In 2007 the CEC Special Report on the Environment agreed to challenge an Eco Friendly Car Fleet for GMB Officers. In 2008 Motion 10 on Green Options was carried. In 2016 Motion 31 asked for a Review of GMB's Carbon Footprint, and it was referred. So what has changed this year? We are asking for a uniform policy to be applied. The CEC position stated that our car fleet is one of the most environmentally friendly in the country, but this is incorrect as it fails to address those at senior level, which is what the motion is about. Yes, hybrid cars are

used in the GMB car fleet. However, certain staff, over senior organiser grade, such as regional secretaries and national secretaries, are outside this arrangement and —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Cut it short, colleague. I don't want to hear a speech.

DOUG RIGBY: — and are free to order whatever they want, more so now with their £5,000 pay increase. We want —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleague, please cut it short. I don't want speeches. You have made your point.

DOUG RIGBY: I haven't finished.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No. You have finished. Thank you. (*Applause*)

DANNY FAITH (London): Congress, I am challenging the SOC over resolution 43: Regional Secretary Pay Award. The SOC has argued that we, as Congress, are not empowered to determine the wages, conditions and so on of GMB employees. We respect that and accept that. But if you take the time to look at Resolution 43, which I would urge you to do now, you will see that it does not seek to determine any of their pay but it does say but it does say that we have an opinion on what has been decided. Our position, as the London Region, is very simple. It is within the rules of our Union for us, as delegates, us as Congress, the sovereign body of this Union, to take a view and to express an opinion on a matter like this. For this reason, we argue that Resolution 43 should be put to this Congress, it should be discussed and should be voted on. (*Applause*)

CATHY HOLLAND (London): Congress, I am speaking on the SOC's Report concerning Motion 43. Although these motions have been ruled out of order, this goes against the GMB Equal Pay talking and should be debated. Needless to say, while all GMB members are made to show restraint, what this says is that they will disregard what our members are saying. Thank you. (*Applause*)

JOHN DOLAN (GMB Scotland): Congress, I am challenging SOC Report 1. Very shortly the CEC will be asking for the subs to be put up. You are meant to be leaders and our leaders have been awarded a pay increase which is really disgusting, actually. We are looking at challenging the percentage increase to £5,000. That decision is totally out of order. There was no reference. We ask for reference back. (*Applause*)

TOM HUNTER (Northern): I am challenging what has been said regarding Motion 43. The reason why I am challenging is not because it concerns a regional secretary, the General Secretary or anybody else. In Liverpool, I have got a colleague sitting out *there* who has sat down and done between 15,000 and 17,000 equal pay claims. And there were another 6,000 for schools. When an award was won by our colleagues, we did not want to challenge it because they earned it. We didn't go out and say that they shouldn't get it. We told them what we got, we got was in their best interests. We had the council on our backs. We told them years ago that we were coming over job evaluation and equal pay. What you are saying, and it is on television, going right round the world, is that it doesn't matter if you've got job evaluation, because the GMB says that if it goes above a certain amount you can say no, but you can't say no

if it is agreed and it is done properly, that's what they are awarded. We should award that right round to all of our members. Whoever gets it, I am not interested if it is a general secretary or a regional secretary, but I am interested that they are a person of our union and we support them. We should back them to the hilt. I oppose what they are saying. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Is there anybody else who wishes to speak? Have you all done? (*No response*) Right. Helen.

HELEN JOHNSON: Acting President, Congress, I am responding to the requests for reference back. Colleagues, in doing so, can I remind delegates that the SOC, as lay delegates themselves, do not look at the merits or substance of the motions. The SOC only considers whether they are in order for debate or not and by reference to the long-standing criteria set out in the Guidelines for Congress and supported by previous GMB Congresses.

I will deal with each request for reference back in turn and, forgive me, if I miss something here because it was a little unclear which ones were being objected to by whom. However, Motion 23 call for entry-level membership for young workers, increasing to full membership over a period of time. This would require a rule amendment. Since Rule 45 sets out reduced rates for young members, non-working students, £1 a month; apprentices, £2 a month; under-18s, £7.72 a month. Therefore, the motion is out of order for debate because it would require a rule amendment.

The rest of them, I think, and correct me if I am wrong, related to the motions to do with the terms of employment for GMB employees. These motions listed refer to the terms and conditions, and in 1985 Congress did adopt that special motion. It is printed there for you all to read. Reserve such matters for the CEC, not for debate at Congress. Rule 17a.1 clearly outlines the responsibility there. "The Central Executive Council has full authority over all national, sectional and regional officers and has the final say over all matters relating to their conditions of employment". Therefore, the SOC believes that these motions are out of order.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. The CEC is asking you to vote against all reference back. I will now take the votes. Motion 23: Reference back. All those in favour, please show? Those against? That is lost.

*The Reference back on Motion 23 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 49: Reference back. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is lost.

*The Reference back on Motion 49 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 43. All those in favour of reference back, please show? Those against? That is lost.

*The Reference back on Motion 43 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now take the vote on SOC Report No. 1. All those in favour of SOC Report No. 1, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1 was ADOPTED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. These are the rules that you have adopted for the conduct of Congress for the coming week.

### **VICE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

THE VICE CHAIR: It gives me great pleasure to call on our Vice President to address Congress. Malcolm.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, it is with great pride, but also with sadness, that I address you today as your Acting President. I have served our union for 51 years, starting out in 1967 and working my way up to the platform today. I have served GMB as your Vice President for 11 years and, as we heard this morning, I serve as your acting President today after the sad passing of Mary Turner, who was beloved by us all and a true friend to me and my family. But Mary would not want us to mourn. She would want us to organise, as she did her for whole working life. That is what I know we will all do.

This Congress will unveil a new GMB logo, saying, clearly and proudly that: "We are GMB". Our opening video shows why many of you joined our great Union and why you are GMB members. Congress, I am GMB. Because as much as the world of work has changed in the last few decades, one thing remains true and constant. We are better off together than we are alone. Working people standing shoulder-to-shoulder will always have more power than a lone voice. As I look around the Congress hall, I see hundreds of activists who make a difference day in and day out, and I want to thank you all for being here and for everything you do and for being what GMB is truly about.

I don't remember a trade conference in existence that has ever started with "The job's been well done", and this year is no different. In some ways, being a committed trade unionist is a thankless task because no matter how much we achieve, there is always more to do because we will always want better for our members. When we win better pay with one employer, another exploits workers in a gig economy. As we enforce the rights of workers in one place, other unscrupulous bosses find new loopholes to make a quick quid on the back of their workforce. You can bet that, for every possible chance they get, the Government will make it harder for us to organise.

Congress, it was ever thus. We are not strangers to adversity, and we are not strangers to the bosses and Tories attacking us. It is how we were formed, how we grew and how we drive forward.

During the next few days you will play a key role in driving our union's agenda for the coming year. What we do here matters, and it will be an exciting Congress. We have business on the floor, regional receptions, fringes, workshops and a visit from the Labour Party leader. Also plenty will be going on at the National Office stand, where you can try out our soon-to-be-launched website to be filmed on the green

screen and build a “Making it” wall for those who feel they have missed their calling as a brickie.

As your Congress Chair and with CEC Member, Margaret Gregg, holding the Vice Chair position for this Congress, it falls to me to say that we have a lot to get through. I am going to ask that delegates stick to time because, otherwise, you will be sitting in this hall way past dinner.

Congress, delegates, welcome to Brighton and Congress 2018. Let’s make it a good one. (*Applause*)

## **VOTE OF THANKS TO THE VICE PRESIDENT**

THE VICE CHAIR: I call on Margie Clarke, CEC member from Birmingham & West Midlands Region, to give a vote of thanks to the Vice President.

MARGIE CLARKE (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, I am proud to be moving the Vote of Thanks for Malcolm Sage, our Acting President. I suppose the most sensible way to begin a vote of thanks to Malcolm is to echo what our President, “Our Mary”, used to say about Malcolm, and that was she saw him as her rock, ever-present to support both her and the Union and always willing to stand in when a smoke break beckoned. If Malcolm was her rock, I, sort of, pictured Malcolm as the Rock Hudson to Mary’s Doris Day, although I have always thought of Mary as more of a flame-haired Maureen O’Hara figure, which would then put Malcolm as a John Wayne co-star. So do not be surprised this week if, as a delegate, you demand to speak longer than allowed, and you get a response from Malc saying “The hell you will, duck!” (*Laughter and applause*). I am sure that Mary will be smiling down on you this week watching you chair the proceedings of Congress with your own unique professional style and manners.

Malcolm, I understand, is a Mansfield lad through and through. Over there, in Mansfield, they refer to people in a friendly way as “Duck”. It’s always “Are you all right, Duck?”, “There you go, Duck”, and through the more heated debates this week the sharp-eared amongst you may overhear Malcolm saying, “That fat Duck from” such a region. It will probably sound like “Duck”. (*Laughter*)

Malcolm has been Vice President of our proud Union for 15 years. He is known for being fair-minded, always willing to listen and to offer help to any delegate who may need it. Malcolm is also known for keeping proceedings moving along without undue delay, or in the case of the Senior Management Team meetings, which Malcolm also chairs, then it is without any undue pontificating. Let me tell you that anyone who controls that group of super egos as efficiently as he does, deserves a medal.

My suggestion to the Brexit negotiators in Government is to get Malcolm to chair the meetings. You would have a good deal in record time and still have time to have a smoke break or two along the way.

For new delegates here this week, Malcolm will be, as usual, patient and supportive, and for those delegates who have been around the Congress block a few times and try it on, they will get short shrift from him. You see, with Malcolm, the clue to his

success as Chairman is his name “Malcolm Sage”. A sage, as it says in the English Oxford Dictionary, is someone who is wise as a result of great experience, and that is definitely true about Malcolm. That is why it gives me great pride and pleasure to be moving this Vote of Thanks. Delegates, have a great week of debate and discussion and join me in thanking Malcolm for all he does for our great Union. We always used to say “Our Mary” in an affectionate way. Well, let’s all thank “Our Malcolm” for being just that. Thank you, Malcolm. (*Applause*)

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Thank you, Margi. Congress, before we begin our first debate, I would like to explain a few points of procedure. Please listen carefully. To save time, I will take the motions in groups. Your session programme will show the grouping. If you are speaking on any of these motions, register at the desk in front of the stage before going to the chairs. You must do this so that we can put your name up on the screen when you start to speak at the rostrum.

I will call movers and seconders and then anyone who wishes to speak against a motion. I will call the CEC speaker to reply at the end of the group rather than deal with each motion individually. Where the CEC is supporting a motion, I will advise Congress. Where the CEC has any other position, the CEC speaker will give the reasons for their decision. We will then move to a vote of all the motions in that group. Where there are no speakers against the motions, I will call for the votes on motions in a block. Should any delegate wish me to take a separate vote on individual motions, please make this known to me in good time.

Finally, could I remind Congress that as you have voted in SOC Report No. 1, all existing policy motions will now not be debated.

## **CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RULE AMENDMENTS**

### **CECRA9**

Rule 19,

Insert: New Clause 14

14 In relation to GMB Scotland, any reference in these rules to Regional Secretary shall mean the GMB Scotland Secretary; any reference to Regional President shall mean the GMB Scotland President; any reference to Regional Council shall mean the GMB Scotland Council and; any reference to Regional Committee shall mean the GMB Scotland Committee.

(*Carried*)

### **CECRA10**

Rule 2

Insert: New Clauses 10 and 11

10 To make available a range of membership services, including but not limited to discounted offers and financial services, provided either by the union or by third parties.

11 To do any such lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above aims (or any of them) or that the Central Executive Council may consider to be in the interests of the members or likely, directly or indirectly, to benefit the union or any member of it.

*(Carried)*

THE VICE CHAIR: I call on the Vice President to move CEC Rule Amendments 9 and 10. The CEC Rule Amendments are on page 143 of the Final Agenda and the CEC is supporting all of these.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, I am moving Rule amendments CECRA9 and 10. Rule amendment 9 updates the language used in GMB Scotland. Scotland is a country and our colleagues there need to work on equal terms with the other national Scottish bodies. The rule change follows on from Motion 5 passed by Congress last year. This is not a change to the structure of our union and GMB Scotland remains an integral part of the GMB UK. The rule change ensures that GMB Scotland is treated in all respects as a GMB region in our rules.

Rule amendment 10 strengthens our Union's aims and objectives. Partly, this is just good practice so that we cannot be challenged for doing anything not specifically provided in the rules. The second reason is to underline our ability to communicate with our members on the full range of union activities and membership services so that we are compliant with the new data protection laws. Congress, please support rule amendments 9 and 10. *(Applause)*

THE VICE CHAIR: The rule amendments are formally seconded. Does anybody wish to speak to either of them? *(No response)* In that case, I call for a vote on CEC rule amendments 9 and 10. All those in favour? Any against? Those are carried.

*CEC Rule Amendments 9 and 10 were CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we are now moving on to the first of the Congress motions. I call Motion 12, Mary Turner Award, Southern Region to move. The CEC is supporting this motion.

## **UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL**

### **MARY TURNER AWARD MOTION 12**

#### **12. MARY TURNER AWARD**

This Congress believes that GMB should create a national award in the memory of our sadly departed president Mary Turner so that her name can live on within the GMB and to inspire people to be passionate about Trade unionism and workers' rights as she was.

G36 SECURITY  
Southern Region



*(Carried)*

TIM LANGLOIS (Southern): Vice President and Congress, I move Motion 12, the Mary Turner Award. When I knew I had to move this motion, I decided to do some research to write my speech. I thought to myself, "Why am I doing this?" I had the privilege to see Mary in person. What more do I need? Congress, this is what I thought. This Congress believes that GMB should create a national award in Mary's name. Mary was a national award in her own right, and I am sure, if adopted, Mary will have inspired others to be passionate about trade unionism and workers' rights. If you ever happen to be one of the recipients of this award, I know you will look back to see what Mary stood for. This award will keep Mary's name and what she stood for alive. Every year her name will live again in Congress, which I am sure she would have wanted.

When Mary was in the Chair at Congress she always put speakers at ease and spoke with passion about any subject. I keep thinking about last year at Plymouth. We all knew that Mary was not well but she came to Congress and saw it through. That is what I call commitment, dedication and total determination, a true inspiration for many years to come. That's where my prepared speech ended, but since I have been here for the last couple of days so many people have spoken to me about Mary and what she stood for.

So I am going to pick up one little story. Last night I met a man called Gordon and he told me that in 2015, in Dublin, there was a big flight of stairs. Mary stood at the bottom. To cut a long story short, he picked her up and carried her to the top of the stairs. When they got to the top of the stairs, Mary said, "I'll tell you when to put me down". I think that sums Mary up. Congress, I ask this motion to be adopted. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim.

MARTIN DOLAN (Southern): Congress, I second Motion 12: Mary Turner Award. The question: Should we have a national award in the name of Mary is a question that should not need to be asked. She was the President of this Union from 1997 until her sad passing. She led by example and from the front. This is a quote that was made once Mary had left us from someone who you may have heard of. The General Secretary, Tim Roache, said: "I, and the whole GMB, are truly heartbroken by the loss of our President, Mary Turner, a woman who has been the heart and soul of our Union for a generation. The word "giant" is sometimes overused, but in the case of Mary she really was a true giant of our Movement. Mention the name 'Mary Turner' and people will smile and say she had that unique blend of fighting spirit mixed with care and compassion." As I said at the beginning, this question, surely, does not need asking. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Congress, the CEC is supporting this motion. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 12 was CARRIED.*

## **CEC SPECIAL REPORT: REVIEW OF GMB ELECTIONS**

### **CEC Special Report to Congress 2018**

#### **Review of GMB Elections**

Following Congress 2016 reference of Composite 2 Review of CEC and General Secretary Elections an Elections Review Working Party (ERWP) was established with members from the Central Executive Council (CEC) (Kevin Buchanan, Penny Robinson, Cath Sutton, Mark Sykes), Senior Management Team (Warren Kenny, Paul McCarthy, Gary Smith), the General Secretary (Tim Roache), the Legal Director (Maria Ludkin), the Director of External Relations (Lisa Johnson), the IT Manager (Nicholas McGhee), a Regional Returning Officer (Tony Warr) and the National Returning Officer (Steve Short).

Warren Kenny was elected Chair of the Working Party.

This report to Congress 2018 covers proposals for future elections of the Central Executive Council, General Secretary & Treasurer, President and Vice President, which the ERWP recommends to be effective immediately, subject of course to Congress 2018 adoption of this CEC Special Report.

The ERWP has met several times starting with a blank sheet of paper in trying to encompass what all ERWP members would like to see in terms of current legal advice, best practice from other unions, transparency, trying to make candidature and selection as democratic as possible, considering the opportunities and challenges around social media and addressing issues that have been raised in cases involving GMB and other unions by the Certification Officer with clarity and certainty.

The first drafts of the recommendations led to greater opportunity for candidates to present themselves to the membership but presented a long and exhausting campaign trail. Issues around social media and how much involvement the GMB can have in managing these remain challenging.

However the ERWP has narrowed down the issues and reached final recommendations to Congress 2018.

#### **CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2019**

The Working Party agree that the current procedures for CEC elections work well and should remain unchanged, save for the nomination process by Branches.

Under the current system a branch must get a nominee to countersign the nomination form before submitting to a Regional Returning Officer (RRO), and the nomination form must be the original form sent to the branch by the Regional Returning Officer and not a photocopy or scan of it.

It had been argued by a candidate in the 2015 CEC elections that this is an onerous task for both branches and nominees. The ERWP agreed and make the following recommendations to Congress on how to simplify this process.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. Branch nominations to be sent direct to the Regional Returning Officer (RRO) without the need for the nominee's countersignature.**
- 2. Nomination forms can be returned to the Regional Returning Officer by post or electronically.**
- 3. Upon receipt of a valid nomination the Regional Returning Officer will write to the nominee asking them if they accept or decline nomination. Only one acceptance from the nominee will be required regardless of number of Branch nominations**
- 4. The period for nominees to submit their Personal Details Forms, Supporting Statement and Photo would be increased from 10 days to 14 days to allow for any Regional Council member receiving their first nomination on the close of nominations date to accept nomination and be sent forms for completion by the deadline.**
- 5. The RRO will notify the nominating Branch(es) if their nominee has accepted or declined nomination**
- 6. The ERWP also recommend that all ballot packs would be sent to members by a direct stand-alone mailing in future elections, unless the law prohibiting electronic balloting is lifted in which case GMB should use electronic balloting.**
- 7. Amend the wording on the Nomination Form to reflect the above changes.**
- 8. Amend the wording of the Election by-laws accordingly to reflect the above changes**

The issue was discussed of the role of Regional Returning Officers in deciding if words in an election statement are defamatory, obscene or otherwise unlawful.

Legal advice confirms that the election address of a candidate in a CEC election sent with the voting papers should not be modified without the consent of the candidate. Hence, if the RRO considers part of an election address to be defamatory, obscene or otherwise unlawful, that address should only be changed with the consent of the candidate. Any liability for publishing the contents of the election address with the voting paper falls on the candidate (and not the GMB).

No other statement from any candidate beside the election address published with the voting paper is to be published by the GMB in CEC elections

To address this it is recommended that the CEC by-laws make clear that liability on publication of a candidate's election address lies with the candidate.

## **Recommendation**

**There be included in the CEC election by-laws provision making clear where liability lies on publication of the election address.**

## **GENERAL SECRETARY & TREASURER ELECTION 2020**

The Working Party discussed the last election and agreed that the election process for General Secretary & Treasurer Election needs updating. In particular it was noted that steps needed to be introduced to ensure more knowledge of the process, more clarity, the widest possible circulation of information regarding the election, more opportunities to introduce potential nominees to branches and a realistic approach to social media.

The ERWP agreed to make the following recommendations to Congress:

### **Recommendations**

1. **The Working Party recommend some basic general principles:**

- that the minimum number of branch nominations be increased to 50, to include a nomination from a Branch(es) in at least two different Regions to enhance democracy
- that distribution of ballot packs by a direct stand-alone mailing was the only option for future elections, unless the law prohibiting electronic balloting is lifted in which case GMB should use electronic balloting.
- the process is fair and even and candidates are prevented from “buying” the result.
- hustings worked but not in isolation, with challenges related to accessibility, geography and number of meetings to be addressed where practicable,
- pre-determined clear criteria for eligibility to stand for election were required
- The Election by-laws would to be updated and amended accordingly to reflect any new process.

The ERWP agreed that social media activity during an election is almost impossible to police. Therefore, the ERWP recommends that the by-laws establish a period of purdah. At the next election we anticipate this will be from the date of the announcement of the election - 29 May 2020 to 11 November 2020. During purdah all Employees should refrain from active campaigning in line with election by-laws and all Employees, Central Executive Council members, Regional Committee members and Regional Council members must refrain from any online activity or social media activity in respect of, related to or referencing the General Secretary & Treasurer election. By-laws will establish any disciplinary action against individuals who breach purdah, and a letter will be sent to all the above members advising responsible behaviour regarding campaigning and social media activity during the purdah period.

GMB is only protected in relation to a candidate’s election address when published with the voting paper if that address is potentially defamatory, or otherwise unlawful, material is concerned. To address the risk arising from the publication of potential nominee statement, the ERWP suggests that the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GPC) be given an appropriate power to remove wording before publication.

Additionally tweets, texts and emails giving only factual information on locations and dates of hustings meetings will be centrally issued by GMB.

It is recommended therefore that the F&GPC can make a decision on whether to remove any wording in a potential nominee’s supporting statement to be published by the GMB

if deemed untrue, obscene, discriminatory, defamatory or otherwise unlawful. That decision is final and not subject to appeal. This does not however apply to a candidate's election address to be published with the voting paper.

**ERWP therefore recommends Congress to adopt CEC Rule Amendment – CECRA7**

**Therefore the ERWP recommends that in accordance with current election by-laws, other than face-to-face canvassing or hustings meetings, no canvassing or campaigning will be permitted by or on behalf of a candidate,**

**2. Proposed GS&T Election Timetable – 6 months (29/5/2020 to 12/11/2020)**

April 2020	April 2020 Finance & General Purposes Committee determines election budget for each candidate
April 2020	April 2020 CEC meeting adopts by-laws, agrees timetable, agrees qualifying standards and criteria, appoints independent scrutineer, and appoints national returning officer
	The purdah period will be 29 May to 11 November 2020.
By w/e Friday 29 May	Letter to Branches, posting on GMB website, text and twitter message to members and an email to all staff notifying that an election is due, notifying who the independent scrutineer will be and setting out the process for any member who wishes to seek nominations. It is the responsibility of Branches and individuals seeking nominations to ensure that they access the information in the letter/email as soon as possible, and they contact the NRO if any difficulty. Letter sent to Employees, CEC members, Regional Committee members and Regional Council members advising responsible behaviour regarding social media activity during the purdah period.
Monday 1 June to Monday 22 June	Potential nominees, including the incumbent, declare their intention to seek nominations by contacting their Regional Secretary or in the case of the General Secretary & Treasurer, Regional Secretaries, National Officials by contacting the President or the National Returning Officer (NRO). All potential nominees names will be referred to the National Returning Officer who will supply to each person a pack containing a personal details form, the election by-laws, and instructions on providing a current photo, a personal statement up to 1000 words, and contact details of the nominee.
June 2020	<b>CONGRESS 2020, BLACKPOOL</b>

Monday 15 June	Deadline for potential nominees to declare intention to seek nominations.
Monday 22 June	Deadline for return of personal details form, photo, personal statement and contact details to NRO.
Monday 29 June	NRO reports to a Special CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting for their ratification that potential nominees comply with qualifying standards and criteria. The F&GPC decision is final. NRO writes to potential nominees to confirm F&GPC decision.  The F&GPC may remove wording from a potential nominee's personal statement that is deemed by them to be untrue, obscene, discriminatory, defamatory or otherwise unlawful. The decision of the F&GPC is final.
By w/e Friday 3 July	Nominees personal details, photo, statement and contact details are loaded onto the GMB website under a General Secretary & Treasurer Election page.
By w/e Friday 3 July	Nomination packs sent to each branch containing nomination form, by-laws, list of qualified potential nominees, plus hard copy of potential nominees personal details forms/photo/statement/contact details, so branches can contact nominees direct to seek further information.
Monday 6 July – Monday 31 August	8 week nomination period. Minimum 50 branch nominations required, to include Branch nominations from at least two different Regions
Monday 31 August	Close of Nominations
Monday 7 September	Special Finance & General Purposes Committee meets under Rule 15.3 to determine that nominees have met deadlines, are eligible under rule, have complied with the by-laws, have received sufficient valid nominations. F&GPC also confirms nominees who did not achieve 50 nominations, confirms NRO decisions to reject branch nominations. F&GPC confirms list of candidates.
Monday 7 September	NRO writes to each candidate to confirm candidature and requests each candidate to supply an election address of up to 1000 words supporting statement for inclusion in voting packs . Deadline 23 September.
Monday 14 September	Deadline of 1 week for appeals to be lodged (rule 59)
Monday 21 September	Appeals against F&GPC decisions heard by Appeals Committee. Appeals Committee decision is final

Tuesday 22 September NRO provides Regions with contact details to invite candidates to hustings

*Maximum 3 hustings per Region – No branch hustings. The first hustings held in each Region will be deemed as the Regional Hustings and will be filmed and loaded onto the GMB website (Hustings Period – 22 September to 11 November)*

*During the hustings period nationally sent tweets, text messages and emails will be issued solely for the purpose of providing factual information to members on locations and dates of hustings meetings.*

By Thursday 24 September NRO supplies candidates' names, personal details, photo, the election address of up to 1000 words and list of nominating branches to independent scrutineer. Candidates details uploaded to General Secretary page on website.

Up to Thursday 15 October Printing and distribution of voting packs / Last date for despatch of ballot packs.

Wednesday 21 October Last date for ballot packs to reach members

Wednesday 21 October –  
Wednesday 11 November 3-week voting period

Wednesday 11 November Close of Voting

Wednesday 11 November –  
Thursday 12 November Witnessed count at Independent Scrutineers, if requested by candidates

Thursday 12 November Result Announced  
Independent Scrutineer report to be uploaded to GMB website

**Subject to Congress 2018 approval the ERWP will be re-convened to review election by-laws for CEC endorsement, including deadlines for financial returns against the election budget, breaches of by-laws leading to disqualification, and determine criteria for eligibility to seek nominations which needs to focus on job description experience without shutting out lay member nominees. The Union's Data Protection Officer will be consulted in respect of safeguarding the Union's data during an election period.**

### **PRESIDENT / VICE-PRESIDENT ELECTIONS** **President Election – Congress 2018**

Following a question raised at an ERWP meeting on whether the current rulebook election procedure for GMB President elections was correct, legal opinion was sought. That legal opinion advised that elections of President and Vice-President should satisfy the provisions of the TULR(C) Act 1992, and in order to satisfy TULR(C) Act 1992, if to be elected by Congress,

only members of the Central Executive Council (CEC) would be eligible for election as President or Vice-President.

Legal advice received demonstrated ambiguity in our current rulebook which requires amendment by Congress to clarify this point that only CEC members would be eligible to stand for election as President or Vice-President, or hold the office of President or Vice-President.

Further advice clarified that provided this rule clarification is endorsed by Congress, it will have instant effect in relation to the election of President at Congress 2018. Any nominees who are not CEC members would then be ruled out.

Following the sad death of Mary Turner, and in line with rule 12.4 the Vice-President Malcolm Sage has assumed the Presidency until the next Congress. Malcolm has indicated he will not seek election as President, but will continue as Vice-President to which he was elected by Congress 2017 for a four-year term of office. Therefore an election for President will be held at Congress 2018.

In order to maintain the synchronicity of the timing of elections for President and Vice-President the President elected by Congress 2018 will serve a three year term of office.

In accordance with Rule 12.3 nominations must be received by the General Secretary by the Monday of the week before Congress i.e. by Monday 28 May 2018

The rulebook is completely silent on the nomination process, however traditionally nominations have been received following pre-Congress delegation meetings or from Regional Committees or Regional Councils.

Because it is important that the President and Vice-President have the confidence of the Central Executive Council, the members of the CEC, in attendance at Congress, should also have the right to vote in these elections at Congress.

In line with Standing Orders Committee Report No.1 the following procedure will be followed at Congress 2018:

In the event of a contested election of President and/or Vice-President of the Union, the Committee recommends the following procedure:

The General Secretary should announce the names of the candidates to Congress at the close of business on the afternoon of Monday 4 June.

On Tuesday 5 June each candidate will be entitled to make an election address to Congress, prior to the distribution of Ballot papers. The number of minutes allowed for an election address will be established by the Standing Orders Committee.

Ballot papers will be prepared under the supervision of the Standing Orders Committee. At 10.00 am on the morning of Tuesday 5 June, the General Member Auditors will deliver to each Regional Secretary the envelope containing the ballot papers for lay delegates of the Region, and will deliver to the General Secretary the envelope containing the ballot papers for Central Executive Council members. Other non-voting delegates are not entitled to vote in this election. The Regional Secretary will issue a ballot paper to each delegate entitled to vote. The General



Secretary, via the Executive Officer, will issue a ballot paper to each Central Executive Council member entitled to vote.

If any delegate arrives late, his/her Regional Secretary should accompany the delegate to the General Member Auditors and request a ballot paper. If any Central Executive Council member arrives late the Executive Officer should accompany the Central Executive Council member to the General Member Auditors and request a ballot paper.

Each delegate and Central Executive Council member is entitled to place their ballot paper in one of the ballot boxes at the front of the hall. Tellers are *not* responsible for collecting ballot papers in this election.

Voting will close at 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday 5 June, at which time the General Member Auditors will take the ballot boxes and count the votes. They should report the result to Congress before the end of the afternoon Session on the same day.

### **Rule Amendments**

The ERWP therefore recommends to Congress 2018 to adopt the following CEC Rule Amendments - CECRA2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 - to take effect immediately upon the Congress decision on Monday 4 June 2018, and to apply to any election of President to be held by Congress 2018.

The ERWP further recommends that rule A3.3 is amended in order to maintain the synchronicity of the timings for elections of Section National Presidents by Section National Conferences with the election cycle outlined in rule A3.3 – CECRA8.

***[Line numbering refers to rules as printed in the GMB Rulebook]***

### **CECRA2**

Rule 8. Clause 8,

Line 8

After “• General Member Auditors” insert: “Notwithstanding this clause, all members of the Central Executive Council attending Congress will have the right to vote in elections for the President and the Vice-President.”

Clause to read:

8 The following will take part in the Congress and will have the right to speak but not to vote.

- Central Executive Council members
- The general secretary and treasurer
- Regional secretaries
- Section national secretaries
- National industrial officers
- General member auditors

Notwithstanding this clause, all members of the Central Executive Council attending Congress will have the right to vote in elections for the President and the Vice-President.

### **CECRA3**

Rule 12, Clause 1

Line 2

Delete "Congress elected in line with rule 8.4 for that year, and from the members of"

Line 6:

After "their four year term of office" insert: "With effect from and including Congress 2018 in the event an election is required at Congress in an intervening year to fill a casual vacancy, it shall be from among the members of the Central Executive Council and the president then elected will serve the balance of the period of office until the next election is due in line with this rule. Nominations for president will be made by a regional committee, a regional council or a regional pre-Congress delegation meeting."

After Rule 12 Clause 1, insert new clause 1a:

1a The president shall vacate office if they are no longer an elected member of the Central Executive Council.

Clause to read:

1 The president will be elected in 2005 and at every fourth Ordinary Congress from then on, from among the members of the Central Executive Council. The president will hold office for four years, chair the Congress after that at which they are elected and be eligible to be nominated and re-elected after their four-year term of office. With effect from and including Congress 2018 in the event an election is required at Congress in an intervening year to fill a casual vacancy, it shall be from among the members of the Central Executive Council and the president then elected will serve the balance of the period of office until the next election is due in line with this rule. Nominations for president will be made by a regional committee, a regional council or a regional pre-Congress delegation meeting. During their term of office, the president will chair all meetings of the Central Executive Council and other union meetings the Central Executive Council may hold. They will also:

- be responsible for making sure Congress carries out its business in a proper way;
- sign the minutes (the general secretary and treasurer will also do this);
- make sure all members of Congress keeps to these rules; and
- go to the TUC and Labour Party Conferences, and other conferences as appropriate.

1a The president shall vacate office if they are no longer an elected member of the Central Executive Council

### **CECRA4**

Rule 13, Clause 1

Line 2

Delete: "Congress elected in line with rule 8.4 for that year, and from members of"

Line 4:

After "They will hold office for four years." Insert: "Nominations for vice-president will be made by a regional committee, a regional council or a regional pre-Congress delegation meeting."

Line 6:

After “hold office until the next Congress” insert: “With effect from and including Congress 2018 in the event an election is required at Congress in an intervening year to fill a casual vacancy, it shall be from among the members of the Central Executive Council, and the vice-president then elected will serve the balance of the period of office until the next election is due in line with this rule.”

Clause to read:

1 The vice-president will be elected in 2005, and at every fourth Ordinary Congress from then on, from among the members of the Central Executive Council. They will hold office for four years. Nominations for vice-president will be made by a regional committee, a regional council or a regional pre-Congress delegation meeting. In the event of a casual vacancy the Central Executive Council will appoint a vice-president to hold office until the next Congress. With effect from and including Congress 2018 in the event an election is required at Congress in an intervening year to fill a casual vacancy, it shall be from among the members of the Central Executive Council, and the vice-president then elected will serve the balance of the period of office until the next election is due in line with this rule. If the president is absent from a meeting of the Central Executive Council, the vice-president will chair the meeting and be responsible for making sure business is carried out in a proper way.

#### **CECRA5**

After rule 13 Clause 1, insert new clause 1a:

1a The vice-president shall vacate office if they are no longer an elected member of the Central Executive Council.

#### **CECRA6**

Rule 13, Clause 2

Line 2

Insert “by”

Clause to read:

2 The general secretary must receive all nominations to elect a vice-president by the Monday of the week before Congress.

#### **CECRA7**

Rule 15

Insert New clause 2a

New clause to read

“2a The Central Executive Council may remove wording from a personal statement of a potential nominee, to be published in accordance with by-laws made under this rule by GMB that is deemed to be untrue, obscene, discriminatory, defamatory or otherwise unlawful. The decision of the Central Executive Council will be final and Rule 59 shall not apply to any such decision. For the avoidance of doubt this rule does not apply to the election address of a candidate to accompany the voting paper

## **CECRA8**

### **Rule A3.3**

Line 7

Insert: "In the event an election is required to fill a casual vacancy at an intervening Section Conference the section national president then elected will serve the balance of the period of office until the next election is due in line with this rule."

Rule A3.3 to read:

3 A section national president will be elected in 2008 and at every second Section Conference from then on, from among the members of the Section Conference elected in line with rule A3.2 for that year, and from the members of the Section National Committee. The section president will hold office for four years, chair the Section Conference after that at which they are elected and be eligible to be nominated and re-elected after their four-year term of office. In the event an election is required to fill a casual vacancy at an intervening Section Conference the section national president then elected will serve the balance of the period of office until the next election is due in line with this rule. During their term of office the section president will chair all meetings of the Section National Committee.

*(Carried)*

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** We will now move to the first of our CEC Special Reports: Review of GMB Elections. I will now explain how I intend to take this debate. The Report will be moved and seconded. I will then call on only one speaker from each region that wishes to put up a speaker. We will then move to the vote on the Special Report. I now call on Tim Roache to move the CEC Special Report and Cath Sutton to second.

**THE GENERAL SECRETARY:** Thank you very much, Malcolm. Good morning again, Congress. I am moving the CEC Special Report: Review of GMB Elections on behalf of the CEC.

Motion 2 referred by Congress 2016 led to the setting up of an Election Review Working Party, which included lay CEC members as well as members of the Senior Management Team and relevant staff members. The Working Party met several times to discuss and review GMB elections and considered legal advice, best practice from other unions and issues raised in Certification Officer cases. The Working Party reviewed the elections of the CEC, the elections of General Secretary and, following a question raised during a Working Party meeting, reviewed the election of GMB President and Vice President. Their recommendations were discussed and endorsed by the CEC and are laid out in the CEC Special Report along with related recommended rule amendments. The CEC felt that the current election procedures for CEC elections worked well, save for the nomination process and that ballot packs must be sent by stand-alone mail in the future; in other words, no longer tucked inside a magazine or something similar.

The issue of deciding if words in an election statement were felt to be defamatory, obscene or otherwise unlawful and who decides this was discussed and legal advice sought. That advice was that liability for the content of an election address issued with ballot packs lies with the candidate and not the Union, and the by-election laws

will reflect this. Any changes to an election address could only be made with the consent, therefore, of the candidate.

The Working Party and the CEC felt that the election process for General Secretary and Treasurer needed updating to ensure more knowledge of the process, more clarity, the widest possible circulation of information regarding the election, more opportunities to introduce potential nominees to branches and a realistic approach to social media and election hustings. It is hoped that the changes recommended will lead to greater turnout in future elections. In order to introduce potential nominees to branches, a dedicated page on the national website will be created, giving personal details, photo and a statement by potential nominees. Again, as with the CEC election recommendations, this should make the nomination process for branches more simple.

In order to ensure that any potential nominee statements are not defamatory or otherwise unlawful, the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee will be given appropriate powers to remove wording from the statement prior to publication. This would only apply to potential nominee statements and not to supporting statements sent to members with ballot papers. Recommendations are also made on the number of nominations needed, the distribution of ballot packs by direct mail, yet again avoiding what happened in the last General Secretary election, hustings and clear criteria on eligibility to stand for election and social media activity during elections.

Congress, the Working Party and the CEC agreed that social media activity is almost impossible to police but are recommending a period of *purdah* during the election period during which employees, the CEC and other senior lay activists must refrain from social media activity in relation to or referencing the election. Further recommendations are made in respect of election addresses and canvassing, and the Special Report sets out the proposed timetable for the next General Secretary election. The overwhelming view of the Working Party was that we would ensure that no General Secretary GMB election would ever turn out like sister unions have done and the debacle that is then played out in the media.

Turning to the elections of President and Vice President, brought into focus by the tragic passing of our beloved President, Mary Turner, it means that an election for President needs to be held at this Congress.

Let me walk you through, colleagues, what I think the issues are. First and foremost, it says in our Rule Book — see Rule 12.1 at page 19 — “The president will be elected in 2005 and at every fourth Ordinary Congress from then on, from among the members of Congress elected in line with rule 8.4 for that year, and from the members of the Central Executive Council.” That is talking about eligibility to stand for President. What our rule says is that if you are a CEC member or a Congress delegate you can stand for National President.

The next part of the rule — 12.4 — says, and forgive the language but it is in the rule book because it sounds a bit disrespectful: “In the event of a casual vacancy the Vice-President assumes the Presidency until the next Congress.” Of course, Mary’s passing means that Malcolm has stepped up as Vice President to chair Congress but it says “until the next Congress”.

Rule 12.3 says: “The General Secretary must receive all nominations to elect a president by the Monday of the week before Congress”. So here we have our rules saying that if you are a Congress delegate or a CEC person, you are eligible to stand for President. It says that in the event of a vacancy the National Vice President steps up and the election for National President will take place at the very next Congress; ie, where we are now. It then says that any applicants who wish to be considered need to have their nominations in my office by the Monday before the start of Congress. It all seems very clear.

The difficulty is, colleagues, as pointed out by one of the senior lay activists who was on the Working Group, that breaks the law. The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 established that in trade unions there are certain key positions that have to be elected by the whole membership. Those two positions in the GMB are General Secretary and Treasurer and President. We have taken legal advice about this, we have obtained written legal advice and we also had a meeting of key people, including Warren Kenny, who chaired the group so well, myself and a number of other key people, met with the solicitor. We went through with the solicitor about legalities or not. The legal advice is this. If you are a Congress delegate but not a member of the CEC, you are not deemed, in law, to have been elected by the members. So if you are a Congress delegate, you cannot stand for President as it would be unlawful. It doesn't matter what our rule book says. Of course, the law will trump our rule book. So if we proceed with an election for President with CEC members — I will deal with that in a minute — but also non-CEC members, that would be unlawful. We would seek a challenge to the Certification Officer and that would be ruled out of order, and the GMB would be dragged through all of the media circus that would follow.

So why, then, if you are a CEC member are you eligible to stand? Of course, CEC members are elected by the membership. Every four years, you stand for CEC, you go out to an election of the membership and, if you are elected, you then take your place at the CEC.

Let me take it further. Other sister unions, which we have looked at, get their own CEC to elect their president, so it is just like you do in your regional council. What happens when you are at your first regional council when you have all been elected as the new regional council for your region, at the very first meeting, it is your regional council that then elects your own regional president. Other unions do the same for their national president. It is at their very first CEC, or whatever is their equivalent — some of them call it the NEC — where they elect their president.

In GMB terms, and what we have tried to do with the rule, is to say no, we don't just want the CEC to elect our President but we want our Congress to elect our President. That is still possible, colleagues. If you adopt, endorse and support this report, which I am encouraging you to do, that is still possible. Let me be clear. What it will do is take out anyone who is currently nominated who is not a CEC member. Frankly, I heard the discussion earlier on today about if it is a Congress delegate, they could sit at CEC but not vote. How, honestly, would that work? You have the person who is chairing and presiding over Congress and over our National Executive who has not got the right to vote? That just would not work and would not fulfil what the GMB needs. So you have two choices. Either this report is adopted in its entirety, which

does talk about eligibility to stand, it talks about the fact that you need to be a CEC member and it talks about eligibility to vote. Anyone at Congress is eligible to vote, including CEC members, in the exception of the National President only. So CEC and Congress delegates are able to vote.

The alternative, if this paper is defeated, means that you will forfeit your right to elect your President, because we cannot go to an election of President in Congress if we have someone standing and we are told by legal advice that it would be unlawful. So it would then go to a vote of all members at some time later in the summer. So we would leave Congress with no National President and we would go to an all-member vote, costing £300,000 of members' money. I am not sure that that is the best option. I am not sure that you want to concede your right to deliver your President each and every four years. So I ask you, please, to support this Special Report, to support the rule amendments that comply with that. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. I now call on Cath Sutton from North West & Irish Region to second.

CATHERINE SUTTON (CEC, Commercial Services): Vice President, Congress, seconding the Special Report: Review of GMB Elections. As a lay member of the Election Review Working Party, I fully endorse what the General Secretary said in moving the CEC Special Report, Review of GMB Elections. On CEC elections the CEC is recommending that the nomination process is amended so that nominees can be nominated by branches without the need to countersign each nomination form. Nominees would then be sent an "accept" or "decline" form to complete rather than the onerous task of trying to make arrangements to countersign each nomination form. Furthermore, ballot packs will only be sent by direct standalone mail in the future elections, unless there is a change in the law to allow electronic voting.

On the General Secretary's election as well as the recommendations outlined by the General Secretary, the working party will reconvene to review election byelaws, including reviewing deadlines for financial returns and breaches of byelaws leading to disqualification criteria for eligibility to seek nominations which would focus on job description and experience. Given the new GDPR rules, the union's Data and Protection Officer will be consulted in respect of safeguarding the union's data during the election period. I do not need to add what the General Secretary said about the elections of President other than to ask Congress to endorse and adopt the CEC Special Report and related rule amendments so Congress can carry out its rule book rights to elect your next national President.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Cath. I will now call on one speaker from each region who wishes to put up a speaker. Birmingham?

LEONARD GRIMMETT (Birmingham & West Midlands): Vice President, Congress, speaking in support of the CEC Special Report: Review of GMB Elections, and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) The Birmingham & West Midlands Region welcomes this report and in the case of the CEC election process we are pleased to see it has been somewhat streamlined to make the process easier for candidates to get information to returning officers by extending the time, the deadline, to 14 days than the current 10. This enables the nominations going forward without the need of the nominee's

countersignature, which was unnecessarily time-consuming. It is also very sensible to have in place a procedure to enable electronic balloting once the law on electronic balloting is changed, which we hope is sooner rather than later.

Being a lay representative of the union I am pleased to see the proposed changes will enable us to take part in the very important process of the CEC elections with as few barriers in place as possible, apart from those that are absolutely needed. The suggestion put forward for the election of the General Secretary and the Treasurer is long overdue. Everyone knows that campaigning takes place in such elections so it is commonsense to try to legitimise this through properly organised hustings. Social media is with us whether we like it or not so again we need to attempt to control it or at the very least limit its use in the election period.

Finally, congress, it is eminently sensible never again to have ballot papers sent out with other publications. That was a mistake that should never be repeated and I am pleased to see our General Secretary is brave enough to tackle this and change the process to make sure that lay member democracy is put at the top of GMB's agenda. Tim Roache said he was going to be an activist General Secretary and he is being just that by putting forward these changes to ensure activists play their part in making GMB elections fair, transparent, and democratic. Birmingham and West Midlands Region supports. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Leonard. London.

KAREN DUDLEY (London): Speaking in support of CEC Special Report: Review of GMB Elections. Our Regional Secretary, Warren Kenny, was the chair of the election review working party and therefore, as such, London Region wholeheartedly supports the recommendations and proposed rule changes enshrined in this report. On behalf of the London Region we would also like to acknowledge the work undertaken by everyone on the working party but special thanks must also go to Steve Short and Maria Ludkin, who both worked tirelessly to support the working party in constructing this report. *(Applause)*

We know this subject is not without controversy but it was high time that we examined our internal election processes and procedures to bring them up to date. We have all seen how other unions have run elections for their General Secretary and the subsequent complaints to the Certification Officer causing allegations relating to the misuse of membership data and union resources. We note from the report that there are now stricter proposals on the handling of security of membership data when conducting our internal elections.

We also welcome the introduction of GDPR training for staff and branches and a more secure method of transferring our data via GMB branch email accounts being introduced. The GMB should always ensure we never fall foul of the new GDPR regulations and protect our members' data from any potential misuse or skulduggery when conducting these important elections. We support this Special Report. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Karen. Midland.



KERRY HUMPHREYS (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, speaking in support of the CEC Report. Midland & East Coast Region support the review of GMB elections for the following reasons. It fulfils our obligation to the trade union law, we get to elect our CEC members, and we can trust that they are best placed to make the necessary decision, choice, and decisions on voting when nominating our future candidates. When choosing our future CEC candidates we, however, need to be mindful that they will be joining the pool of people with the potential to be the President of our union. Please support the report. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kerry. Northern? North West.

ARTHUR MOSS (North West & Irish): Congress, speaking in support of the Special Report. We are hoping that all Congress will support this but I am only asking one thing. If there is any paperwork to come out for the vote, can you make sure it is in the *Beano* or the *Dandy*. I understand those better than the paperwork that came out last time. We need to be a bit more mindful of how we vote and how we do it, and the last one was the biggest farce you have ever seen in your life. I hope you support this Special Report. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Arthur. Scotland.

ANNETTE DRYLIE (GMB Scotland): President, Congress, speaking in opposition of the CEC Special Report on Review of GMB Elections. GMB Scotland notes the report on the elections but has a concern with this report specifically the recommendation that only CEC members will be eligible for election to President and Vice President. The rationale behind this is that CEC members have been through a recent election for CEC. Congress, every member in this hall attending Congress has been through a regional election just to participate in any debate. Every Regional Council member has been through a regional election. Why should any other member who has been through a regional election be debarred from standing for President or Vice President? Is it a justifiable reason for not being eligible? I do not think so. Not to mention inequality that is present is that a route that we really want to go down again? I do not think so.

Congress, we have always been a proud member-led and democratic union. This part of the report is not democratic and for the reasons previously given GMB Scotland urges you to oppose the Special Report. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Annette. Southern.

STEVE OAKES (Southern): We are supporting this motion. I would just like to keep it nice and short and sweet and say the importance of getting a President in place quickly is what we should be focusing on here. I think Tim mentioned it as well. If a ballot went out, for instance, it is going to have a very low turnout, we know that is the case, and it is going to cost an awful lot of money to do that. I do not know about you but I think honestly that that money is best spent on campaigns for our members and best spent to give them hardship funds so that they can get out on picket lines and they can win disputes rather than spending it on bits of paper that no one is ever going to open. We support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Steve. South West.

LORRAINE PARKER DELAZ AJETE (GMB Wales & South West Region): Responding to the review of the GMB Elections Special Report. Acting President, Congress, this report correctly identifies the importance and the need for a thorough analysis of our relevant election procedures in order to ensure that they are sufficiently transparent, democratic, disciplined, and of course legally compliant. Any proposed changes should also seek to encourage more extensive levels of participation by members in the run of an election process. All too often in the past low levels of voting turnout have served to devalue not only the process itself but also question the support and endorsement of successful candidates. We should continually seek to maximize the numbers of members who have an active involvement in the decision-making to be more involved. Apathy has the effect of questioning the mandate given to those who succeed so encouraging more members to vote must be an ongoing priority objective. Higher turnouts are fundamental to the credibility of the winners too so we have to find a way of demonstrating that internal elections really do have an impact on how the GMB is led and run and upon the members themselves.

The revised proposal on CEC elections are sensible in the fact that they address the issue of the bureaucracy in the nomination procedure and helpfully tackle the awareness problem associated with mixing up ballot communications with other literature and other materials sent to members. Obviously, access to electronic balloting methods should remain as an objective but separating out the ballot information should continue to contribute improving focus and stimulating engagement.

With regard to the General Secretary and Treasurer elections my region agrees that social media activity is exceptionally difficult to regulate and supports the ban on campaigning during the designated period of purdah. We also approve of the proposals to bring the election to the widest membership audience by way of use of websites, direct electronic contact with individuals. The concept of branches having prior knowledge of potential nominees is very helpful as previous nominations may well have been discussed because of the lack of knowledge and understanding of who the likely runners and riders were. The threshold levels for nomination when they are sourced regionally are realistic and reasonable, too, ensuring that the size ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine.

LORRAINE PARKER DELAZ AJETE (GMB Wales & South West Region): We support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Now Yorkshire.

BRIAN GOLDING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Vice President, Congress, speaking on the review of GMB elections. Congress, this report is long overdue and very welcome. Even before the lamentable participation rates in our last General Secretary and CEC elections put the matter front and centre the level of engagement with members in national elections has been falling for years. Our democracy is the beating heart of our union. It needed a by-pass. This report will help restore its

health. The working party has come up with some sensible, practical, proposals which we should fully support. Legal advice has been sought in relation to the President and Vice President elections. The legal advice is clear, CEC members satisfy the law and our rule book. It would be folly to ignore that advice, would incur thousands of pounds of extra cost, turn the election into a free-for-all, and, most importantly, take the election of our President and Vice President out of the hands of this Congress. We believe that would be a mistake.

In my own workplace, members vote for the shop stewards, the shop stewards vote for the convener, and the convener votes because then people know it is working. So, we support the review. Let's get on and elect a new President tomorrow. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brian. Kevin, do you want to speak against? Come on, then.

KEVIN FLANNAGAN (North West & Irish): It saddens me to have to get up here but I think a lot of the report is good. I think the part of the presidency is not good, not because of any self-interest, anybody who knows me knows I am not interested in that, but I think it is bad democracy when we shut down the nominations process only to the Regional Council, Regional Committee, and I think that whole process is wrong. If we really want to be democratic, if we really want to engage the membership, if we really want them to get a sense of ownership of this movement, what do you do, engage the branches in the nomination process. Why exclude them? If you exclude them I think the danger is you narrow down the chance of participation and engagement.

I think the rule is wrong that says it has to be an elected member of the CEC. I will tell you why I think it is wrong. The legislation in the Act actually excludes any President who is not a voting member. The legislation does not apply to anybody who is elected and not a voting member. Let's take a scenario. If you have an ordinary lay delegate who gets elected but not a member of the CEC, they would not be a voting member because your rule book does not give the President a vote. It does not state in there it gives them a vote. So, in fact it would still be valid so, therefore, I cannot agree with part of the document that actually restricts democracy for you the ordinary member back at grassroots. *(Applause)*

All wisdom – all wisdom – does not reside in the CEC. In fact, now if you get a chance to get on the CEC you get a chance of a nomination, if you are on the Regional Council you get a chance of a nomination, but actually ordinary members do not. Why is that? In fact, if you look at it now the way it is going, you have a 51% chance – a 50 to one chance of getting elected as president.

All wisdom is not in the CEC as much as I love them, and I think it is about time we opened up the doors and had real democracy. If you want to bypass do not bypass democracy, do not bypass the right of ordinary members, do not bypass the right to have a say. It is your movement. It is your say. I don't want to upset this movement. I don't really want to upset it, I love it dearly, and I have so much passion for it. So, do not think I am trying to wreck anything, I am not in anybody's camp, here, there, or everywhere, I am in your camp and I am in the ordinary lay members' camp. I am

in democracy's camp, that is where I stand and, in fact, I am quite happy to accept tomorrow I will not stand as President once you have passed this report. Fair enough, that is the life, that is democracy, but at least it is democracy; at least it is democracy.

The only reason I got up is because I think that section on the President is badly flawed. We could have fixed it but we have already looked at a very narrow option and it is not good enough ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. (*Applause*) I will now put the CEC Special Report: Review of GMB Elections to Congress. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried unanimously. Thank you very much, Congress.

*The CEC Special Report: Review of GMB Elections was ADOPTED.*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: CONGRESS**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, I will now ask that speakers of Motions on Union Organisation Congress please make themselves ready. Composite 1, London, Composite 2, London, Motion 8 North West & Irish, Motion 9, London, and Composite 3 London. Please come to the front. Today, please!

### **SHORTENING OF CONGRESS**

#### **COMPOSITE MOTION 1**

*(Covering Motions 1, 2, 3)*

- 1 – Shortening of Congress – London Region
- 2 – The Unilateral Shortening of Democracy – London Region
- 3 – GMB Congress – London Region

### **SHORTENING OF CONGRESS**

This Conference is aware that Congress 2017 was a Special Congress shortened by the announcement of the General Election and the General Secretary remarked that this would not set the precedent for the future.

GMB Conference also notes that the General Secretary, in his speech when addressing the issue of Congress 2017 being cut short, confirmed that this was an exceptional reason and that Congress next year (2018) will not be shortened, and this was not setting a precedent.

GMB Conference also notes that the General Secretary, in his speech when addressing the issue of Congress 2017 being cut short, confirmed that this was an exceptional reason and that Congress next year (2018) will not be shortened, and this was not setting a precedent.

Conference notes that GMB diaries have the date for Congress from 3rd June 2018 to the 7th June 2018.

We were then informed that Conference will close on the 6th June 2018. Notwithstanding that 2018 includes a Sectional Conference, Conference notes that this is the members' Conference, an opportunity to make the changes/amendments/ and set the agenda of how we, as members foresee the future of our union. This democratic right to debate/ challenge/hold to

account and make policy has been taken away from the members unilaterally. Congress has always been set over 5 days and it has worked and will continue to work.

This Conference is deeply unhappy with the fact that Congress 2018 has been shortened as the General Secretary assured the 2017 delegates that this would not happen again, as it was a one-off event due to the General Election.

There may be some merit in a shorter Conference, but this should be investigated further, and options presented to Congress delegates for a decision as the supreme decision-making body.

We therefore call upon Conference to:

1. Provide clarity, in writing, as to who made this decision, when it was made, why it was made and how it was reached?
2. Confirm that Congress 2019 and thereafter will not be shortened.
3. Provide answers in writing, as to why members were not consulted on this important issue.

We would like this Conference to vote that if there is to be a permanent change to the length of Congress that it should be consulted with branches through the Regional Councils and Committees and only in exceptional circumstances should this decision be made without going through Congress, i.e. such as last year's snap election as a change of Congress is a policy change.

*(Lost)*

SARAH HURLEY (London): Vice, President, Congress, first, I would like to welcome all first-time delegates to GMB Congress. Congress is a special and magical event that happens once a year and is five days long. Congress is not just where the democracy of the union takes place but a lot more than that and when you talk to other members about Congress as a first-time delegate you will normally hear them say, "I will never forget my first Congress." This is because it allows you a platform to benefit the likes of others. It provides you with an opportunity to change the rules of the union. It allows you a safe place to overcome your fears and to challenge and overcome disabilities which may affect your public speaking. That is not all. Congress is a place which opens your eyes about what it is to be a trade union member. You build friends with members from other regions. It recharges and energizes our shop stewards to keep fighting for workers' rights. It is a place where we remember trade union members we have lost, like our Mary, and because of Congress never forgotten. However, last year we know Congress was shortened because of a general election. Our president, Mary Turner, in her opening address to Congress said: "We are meeting this week at a shortened Congress because there is a general election and this is the second time since I have been involved in the union that this has happened. It is sad for new delegates, they have been looking forward to

coming but now is the time more than ever that we must stick together because we need a Labour government on Thursday.”

Furthermore, at the end of Congress last year our General Secretary said: “I am not going to speak for long, Congress, because you have been so cooperative in getting this Congress in, in two-and-a-half days, which ordinarily would have been fine and, no, it is not going to set a precedent for the future, believe me, although I have heard the rumours.”

We were all surprised to see this year’s Congress ending on a Wednesday with a packed agenda. Congress, I was a delegate at last year’s Congress and it was incredibly difficult as delegates remained in the hall until the business of the day was done, which did mean some late closing and members sacrificing their speeches to second formally, regardless of the work they had put into writing them, just to cut time.

Congress, I understand the CEC is a decision-making body of the union in between Congresses and has the power to set the date of Congress but not the length, so I call on you to send a strong and clear message to all future Congress working parties, CEC members, and the SMT, and the General Secretary, that this is our union, our Congress, and our family which ain’t for cutting. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. Seconder?

JOHN MOFFETT (London): Vice President, Congress, in line with the shortening of Congress, I have shortened my speech accordingly. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. Composite 2, London.

## **CONGRESS REPRESENTATION COMPOSITE MOTION 2**

*(Covering Motions 6 and 396)*

6 – Congress Representation – London Region

396 – Congress Representation – National Equality Conference

## **CONGRESS REPRESENTATION**

This Conference believes that recent regional delegations to Congress do not reflect the spirit of GMB Rule 8 and in particular Rule 8.7 as the final makeup of Congress delegates is a poor representation of the great diversity of our unions’ members. This congress notes that GMB rule 8 was amended to allow for 10% of delegates to be appointed by regional committee to reflect the equality of the region.

In recent years, we have seen fewer women being nominated for Congress and some regional delegations with an unequal gender balance and unequal strand representation.

Congress needs full member democracy and participation as it is a means for members to influence the policy and direction of our Union. Therefore we

need to ensure that Congress delegates are as representative of regional composition as possible both industrially and socially.

This congress believes the above rule is being undermined by branches and does not reflect the spirit of these clauses, using this rule to nominate women as a second delegate, rather than the delegate for their branch. There are instances of;

- entire 10% being used for women
- delegations gender balance remain unequal
- other strands are not considered
- regions delegation does not reflect the make-up of the region let alone the 50/50 gender balance

The CEC Special Report to Congress 2017 on Reserved Seats will take its time to show progress and we hope that as a result many more women and equality groups will start to engage in union democracy however we believe more need to be done.

We call upon Conference to instruct the National Equality Forum to work with the SOGs, SMT, regions, and CEC on solutions to address this issue. This could include reviewing the wording of the 8.7 Rule and making changes to the nomination forms used for Congress so that regions have the fullest information to enable them to make an informed decision on make-up of their delegation.

We would like a report on the findings and recommendations to be published before November 2018 and then if necessary, propose Rule Amendments to Congress 2019.

*(Referred)*

BRIAN SHAW (London): Acting President, Congress, proud to be moving the motion from the National Equality Conference albeit now composited as C2. For new delegates and observers, every year the Equality Conference votes on one of their motions to come to Congress, a demand that originated in London Region and was supported by the National Equality Conference and subsequently this Congress.

Back in 2010, the then General Secretary proposed a rule amendment that every region and national will be able to send an extra 10% of delegates, that that regional committee would agree to look to ensure that under-represented groups will be appointed as delegates to ensure better representation. Indeed, new rule 8.6 says: "...the regions' remaining 10% of delegates will be appointed by the regional committee to ensure that the regional delegation properly reflects the balance of the regional membership in respect of industry, geographical spread, ethnic, gender, disability, youth, and sexual orientation. Appointments made under this rule will be in line with guidance from the Central Executive Committee."

So, from 2011, that rule applied.

In 2014, the Women's Taskforce recommended that regions and nations should seek gender balance of their Congress delegation, endorsed again by this Congress.

I would now like you to look at page 14 of your Final Agenda. That shows you that we have not achieved gender balance; indeed, 100 extra men than women are delegates at this Congress. We do not know the information around LGBT, disability, youth or BAEM. It is perceived the branches are using the ability to nominate a second delegate as a woman delegate post, other minority groups potentially missing out, so our aspirations and policy of this Congress are not being achieved. This motion calls for review of how rule 8 is actually being operated and actually proposing changes that maybe should come to Congress in 2019 and, indeed, if we need rule amendments to change it, let's have those in 2019.

As the CEC stance on this motion says in terms of the motion, it may just need a tweak, to the former all well and good but is it not right to have a review as it may identify other issues that need addressing. Page 14 of your Agenda suggests that is the case. It does not need a long-winded review. The Equality Action Group, if you remember, showed what we can achieve, great change, and delivered around CEC rule amendments, so it can be done in a short period of time. There are other big issues, I know, going on so we do need to support this motion.

I am going to finish with a big shout out for our member of the NEF, Beccie Ions, who has actually been seriously ill, so get well, Becky. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brian. Secunder?

SARAH HURLEY (London): The purpose of rule 8.6 and 8.7 is to increase all strand groups' attendance at Congress to reflect the make-up of our membership. I believe that every region, including the National Equality Forum, and the Regional Equality Forums, need to be included in the review called by this motion. We need to do better in making this Congress representative and this is a step in the right direction. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. Motion 8, North West & Irish.

## **SPEAKERS ON MOTIONS**

### **MOTION 8**

#### **8.SPEAKERS ON MOTIONS**

This Conference urges that, in the interest of the smooth running of Congress, and to maximise the time allocated for open and meaningful debate, any motion that remains unopposed should have its speakers limited to the mover and the seconder.

Q78 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

(*Carried*)



PETER MACKLIN (North West & Irish): Vice President, Congress, colleagues, this motion is not about denying or curtailing delegates the right to speak, in fact the reverse is true. It is about ensuring that those offering opposing views are afforded the time and opportunity to express those views so that these alternative views and opinions can be openly debated to enable delegates to make a balanced and informed decision when casting their vote. Unfortunately, a lot of valuable time is taken up during Congress by numerous speakers echoing the same view and sentiment as that of the original speaker and mover. Do we really need this level of repetition? The fact that a motion remains unchallenged would indicate that it is a good strong motion in its own right and will stand on its own merits, without the need for numerous speakers regurgitating the same sentiments and opinions, and potentially using valuable time that would be better served discussing and debating those issues that may be more controversial or contentious, and the more deserving of the time needed for speakers promoting both sides of the respective arguments. I move. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Peter. Secunder?

ANDREW McCANN (North West & Irish): I really am starting to shorten things, folks. I am speaking on behalf of Motion 8, seconding it. It is a good motion and we would encourage you to support it. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andrew. Motion 9, London.

## **FRINGE MEETINGS NEED TO BE PROFESIONALLY FILMED MOTION 9**

### **9.FRINGE MEETINGS NEED TO BE PROFESSIONALLY FILMED**

This Conference calls for fringe meetings to be professionally filmed. The GMB has invited many experts to Congress over the years to talk about and discuss the many industries that they work or organise in.

*(Referred)*

BRENDAN DUFFIELD (London): I have been coming to Congress for many years and the fringe events have always been a major part of the week. Every lunchtime I have to decide which one I will go to. I have had a great choice of subjects over the years, blacklisting, academies, re-nationalising of the railways, Show Racism the Red Card, and my favourite was Owen Jones talking about class, which we promoted. I even found myself going without lunch to attend, which was and is very unusual.

Two years ago at Bournemouth I got up on the stage and asked for fringe meetings to be professionally filmed. I thought why all that expertise to be on show only once. We have hundreds of stewards and members across the country who would benefit from seeing these meetings. We broadcast our own Congress on the internet so why not the fringes. Now, that was two years ago. Our General Secretary said, "Brendan, fringe meetings are interesting. What a brilliant point, get it filmed, cut out some of the rubbish." Tim said, "I do not know quite what that would leave you, brother, but seeing as I have spoken at most of them what a brilliant, brilliant idea, and point."

It has not happened yet which is why I am bringing it up again. It is still a brilliant, brilliant point, even if I come up with it myself. I said professionally filmed and I thought big old video cameras, no, you do not need that today. Nowadays everyone with a little mobile phone can be filmed and edited. By 2019, it will be easier even still. Everybody is on YouTube; we should be as well. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. Seconder?

MARK WATSON (London): Vice President, Congress, there is a voracious appetite for video on the web and that goes not just for teasers about the latest blockbuster film, the market is there for the niche as well and our union is a very, very large niche. The GMB has a YouTube channel and they seem to have been adding to it since about 2010. They have 149 videos at the moment and some of them have very high viewing figures. “Why Working People care about the EU Referendum” has had 29,546 views since it went live in 2016.

On Sunday, at an equality fringe Angela Rayner, MP, and Shadow Education Minister, made an impromptu speech about the difficulties faced by a teenage working class ginger and how she proved people wrong, and those were her words, by the way, not mine. It was a brilliant speech and deserved to be preserved for posterity but only 24 people were in the room to hear it. Since last year’s Congress we put up 25 videos with 11,500 hits between them. One of the greatest hits is, not surprisingly, GMB Congress 2017. The evidence is there. There is an appetite for the political video. It does not have to cost the earth. Every phone can now be a full editing suite. The idea was first put up two years ago; we can do it now. Congress, I second the motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mark. Composite 3, London.

### **GMB AND THE TRADE UNION FRIENDS OF ISRAEL COMPOSITE MOTION 3**

*(Covering Motions 10 and 11)*

10 – Trade Union Friends of Israel – London Region

11 – GMB and the Trade Union Friends of Israel – London Region

### **GMB AND THE TRADE UNION FRIENDS OF ISRAEL**

This Conference welcomes and applauds the GMB General Secretary’s signature appearing in support of the advert in The Guardian on 2 November 2017 placed by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign listing many reasons why the British Government should apologise for its actions (and indeed lack of actions) over the hundred years since the Balfour Declaration and in respect of the Palestinian people.

The General Secretary’s action represents the strongest statement of support for the Palestinian people that this union has ever made.

It is therefore disappointing and certainly contradictory, that the CEC continues to extend Congress facilities to the Trade Union Friends of Israel.

Conference expresses its dismay therefore that the CEC continue to allow Trade Union Friends of Israel to continue to pay for a stall at GMB Congress bearing in mind that this organisation actively opposes the sentiments expressed in the advert and that the GMB CEC Political, European & International Committee meeting held on 8 February 2016 made it absolutely clear in the minutes that “GMB does not affiliate to the organisation at any level, nor would we join a delegation at national or regional level or accept any money from them”.

The Minutes of the CEC Political and European International Committee of 8th February 2016 confirm that the union:

“Does not affiliate (to TUFI) at any level, nor would we join at delegation of national or regional level or accept any money from them”.

Accepting a booking from TUFU for a stall clearly involves the acceptance of TUFU money and therefore violates union policy.

Conference demands that union policy is confirmed and that TUFU will be excluded from those organisations allowed to have stalls at this Union’s Congresses.

*(Withdrawn)*

VIC PAULINO (London): Vice President, Congress, first-time delegate and speaker. *(Applause)* I am actually moving this motion without the support of London Region. I did not know I was going to be live-streamed or I would definitely have had my hair cut. Hello, Mum. Anyway, for the serious business, the CEC is seeking withdrawal of the motion on the grounds that the position on accepting money from the TUFU for a stall changed last year. When the resolution was written this was unknown to us otherwise the wording would have been submitted and it would have been totally different.

The CEC decision goes against the previous decision referred to in the resolution, that the GMB will not accept any money from this organisation. It also goes against the spirit of Resolution 314 carried at the 2013 Congress in Plymouth and the full apology given by the previous General Secretary to the North West London Branch for the breaking of that resolution by sending a delegation on the TUFU visit in 2015. It also places the GMB in a ludicrous position of agreeing to accept money from an organisation whose policies are in direct opposition to those agreed at GMB Congress. It goes against a full paid advert in the *Guardian* on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016, signed by the current General Secretary, Tim, on behalf of the GMB but not in a personal capacity. It listed 11 reasons why the Government should be apologising to the Palestinian people for the actions of the British Government, 11 reasons Trade Union Friends of Israel would be wholly against.

It goes against the spirit of the letter in the *Guardian* signed by the current General Secretary on behalf of the GMB on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018, calling for a stand to be taken against the killings in Gaza and Israel’s unlawful siege and military occupation of Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Again, the position as to TUFU would

totally be opposed. It goes against the GMB's Affiliation to Palestine Solidarity Campaign and goes against our support as determined by Congress with a boycott and disinvestment campaigns. Again, the position is totally opposed by TUFI.

We are prepared to take money from an organisation whose policies are in direct opposition to those of the GMB decided by Congress. It makes us look ludicrous, mercenary, and having totally double standards. Would you allow, Congress, God forbid, the Tories a stall because they had paid for it at our Congress? No.

Anyway, we are prepared on this occasion to withdraw the motion as TUFI do not actually have a stall this year but we intend to keep the situation under close scrutiny. We withdraw. Thank you. (*Applause*)

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

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now call on Sheila Bearcroft, CEC member for Wales and South West, to respond on behalf of the CEC.

SHEILA BEARCROFT (CEC, Manufacturing): Thank you, Malcolm. The CEC is seeking the withdrawal of Composite 1 and Composite 3. We are also asking for Composite 2 and Motion 9 to be referred. On Composite 1, rule 8.2 gives the CEC the power to determine how long Congress is by setting the dates of Congress, the date that Congress starts and ends. The Congress working party made recommendations agreed by the senior management team at their meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2017. This recommendation was proposed to the Central Executive Council on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017 under rule 8.2, that section conferences be held on the Sunday of Congress week in 2018 and that Congress would be held without a break starting on Monday and finishing on the Wednesday, if possible. This recommendation was accepted and agreed by the CEC in line with the CEC's obligation under rule 8.2.

Congress, the CEC has not shortened Congress. There is no rule that Congress will be a set number of days, nor is there a rule that sets a minimum or a maximum number of days for the length of Congress. Custom and practice has led to Congresses that generally last four full days plus however long is needed on the fifth day to complete business, including and incorporating section conferences in alternative years.

Congress, Motion 2, carried by Congress 2017, now included in the guidelines for Congress business printed in the Final Agenda was, and I quote, concerned at the extended period over which the business of annual Congress is conducted and ask the CEC to ensure that the time of this event is used as optimally as possible and to limit the time set aside for paid officials and guest speakers. In considering the length of Congress 2018, under rule 8.2 obligations, the CEC looked into consideration of the points raised in Motion 2 from 2017 and determined that section conferences be held on the Sunday of Congress week in 2018, and the Congress would be held without a break starting on Monday and finishing on Wednesday, if possible. GMB Congress is

unique in that it always covers its full agenda without dropping any business and this will not change.

On Composite 3 the motions involved call the CEC Political European and International Committee minutes of February 2016. However, since then in 2017 both the CEC Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Central Executive Council have debated this matter and this supersedes the 2016 minutes. The CEC position is that Trade Unions for Israel can exhibit so long as they pay their stand, which is within Congress policy. TUFU were not able to attend Congress 2018 but this will remain the CEC position as Congress is aware the Palestine Solidarity Campaign are also of course present in the exhibition area.

On Composite 2, the rule states it is a matter for each regional committee to determine appointments made under rule 8.7. Appointments are made in line with CEC guidance issued to regional committees each year. However, it may be timely to review the nomination forms issued to branches for appointments of delegates. Under rule 8.7 and the Equality Action Group it could be reformed to review and, if necessary, update this nomination form to give regional committees the fullest information to enable them to make an informed decision on making up their delegation. Therefore, we are asking for Composite 2 to be referred to the CEC and the Equality Action Group is able then to review rule 8.7 nomination forms.

On Motion 9 the CEC is determined to make GMB Congress as accessible as possible to delegates, visitors, and members watching back on Congress TV activity via our YouTube channel, Facebook Live, Twitter Feed – I don't do any of those – and on the website. It is an important part of documenting our debates and policy that is passed which shapes the direction of our union. The CEC is asking for this to be referred as our main focus is to have the activity on the main conference floor documented at the highest possible standard and where our costs are focused. The concern with this motion lies in the request for them all to be professionally filmed as we fear this will make it unaffordable to fulfill the request. However, it is worth being referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to look at the costings and to make an informed decision.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking for Composite 1 and Composite 3 to be withdrawn and for Composite 2 and Motion 9 to be referred for the reasons I have laid out. Thank you very much, Congress. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sheila. Does the mover of Composite 1 wish to withdraw? *(Not agreed)* You are withdrawing? *(No)* You are not. Right, Composite 1 they have refused to withdraw. The CEC is seeking that you oppose that composite. All those in favour please show? All those against? That is lost.

*Composite Motion 1 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The mover of Composite 2, do you wish to refer? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Composite 2 wish to refer. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Composite 2 was REFERRED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 8 is supported by the CEC. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 8 was CARRIED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 9, does the mover wish to refer? (*Agreed*) Thank you. The mover said they refer motion 9. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 9 was REFERRED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 3 was withdrawn at the rostrum. Thank you very much for that.

*Composite Motion 3 was WITHDRAWN.*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We move on now to the Union Organisation and Motion 13 Wales & South West, 14 Southern, 15 Wales & South West, Composite 4 London and WSW, and Motion 20 Midland. Could you please come to the front, please, and can the speaker of Motion 13 please come to the rostrum?

### **TRADE UNION DAY MOTION 13**

#### **13. TRADE UNION DAY**

This Conference is concerned that trade union membership is reducing year on year and believe it is because of the misconception that there is no relevance for such movements in our day. Therefore we call upon the GMB to work with the TUC to establish an Annual Day to recognise the Trade Union Movement.

This day could then be used to encourage schools and organisations to celebrate the success and contributions of the trade union movement and re-educate our nation of our modern day relevance.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAFF BRANCH**  
Wales & South West Region  
(*Carried*)

JENNIFER SMITH (GMB Wales & South West): Chair, Congress, as trade unionists we know exactly the campaigns, policies, motions, and equality work we undertake in every day lives which benefit and support hundreds of thousands of members every year. As the motion states, beside our very hard work and campaigning our trade union membership of young members is declining year on year. Colleagues, trade union membership has declined steeply in the 1980s and 1990s to around 7.3 million in the year 2000. We are all aware that this is parallel with the reduction of many traditional industries which have been highly unionized, such as steel, coal, printing,

the docks, and shipbuilding. We all know what Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government did to our trade unions and what the Conservatives passed as the new Trade Union Act, which attempts to decline and put barriers in our way to grow stronger and has clearly put barricades in the way of our members preventing them to air their voices and stop their democratic rights.

Colleagues, we must reverse this trend. We are all aware that the GMB has a growing concern that young people simply do not know what trade unions are. Consequently, we have all been actively looking at new ways of organizing young workers by encouraging young people of all genders, ethnic backgrounds, and ability, into our union. We need them to lead the way into creative organizing, using social media, and to continue seeking out and fighting injustice. We need a trade union to ensure our foundations are built into towers led by our young and future generation bringing modern and developing campaigns into the forefront of a new way forward.

Congress, Trade Union Day could be used to encourage and campaign in schools and organisations to celebrate the success and contribution of the trades union Movement. Sisters, brothers, we need to reeducate our nation of modern day relevance and develop trade unions into more powerful organizations than we already are. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jennifer. Seconder?

MARGARET DOCHERTY (GMB Wales & South West): Acting President, Congress, the young generation has it tough. Under a previous coalition government and the current Conservative Government, the younger generation has faced high unemployment rates, removal of housing benefits, and yet our membership of young people in our trade union is in decline although we are running a few organizations that could actively help them. The Students Union is integral to university itself. Effectively, it works as an independent force to represent all students. There will be no threat or fear of society or welfare support without it and every student within universities are members of the students union whether they like it or not. There should be a special bond between students and the trades union Movement. They should be even more important at a time when the future appears bleak for many of our members, although this does not offer an explanation as to why trade union members are so low amongst young people. The feeling of powerlessness and instability is rife within the rising generation who are squeezed by global recession and biting financial pressures. Perhaps we can reflect from this that young people do not join unions because they feel as if we will not do anything to help them.

Congress, we need to change this overall image because more young people and school children need to have a clear understanding and knowledge of the strength they are able to bring to a trade union and ensure their views, issues, and future is addressed. Our families and ancestors created a trade union for working people and communities. Let's re-educate and make a stronger union for their future and the GMB's future. Let's create a Trade Union Day. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret. Motion 14.

## **ADDITION OF GMB@TOLPUDDLE TO NATIONAL POLICY GUIDE MOTION 14**

**14. ADDITION OF GMB@TOLPUDDLE TO NATIONAL POLICY GUIDE** This Conference will be aware that within the GMB National Policy Guide under the heading GMB General, it is current policy that all regions and branches are to promote and support the outstanding annual Durham miners gala. (2013:16, 2016:32), A Gala which in itself is a focal point not only for GMB members but the wider trade union movement. It is asked that congress agrees to give the addition of GMB@Tolpuddle to this section of the policy.

Before 1824 the Combination Acts had outlawed “combining” or organising to gain better working conditions. In 1824/25 these acts were repealed, so that trade unions were no longer illegal, the removal of this act brought working people together.

In 1833, six men of Tolpuddle in Dorset founded the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers to protest against the gradual lowering of agricultural wages. This act saw the type of backlash from the local establishment which until this day is a template for the undermining of the organising of workers. The mechanism of isolating, intimidating and blacklisting was born as an acceptable mechanism of the establishment to trample on workers and their rights.

In 1834, James Frampton, a local landowner and magistrate, wrote to Home Secretary Lord Melbourne to complain about the union. Melbourne recommended invoking the Unlawful Oaths Act 1797, an obscure law which prohibited the swearing of secret oaths. This Act itself was generated by a small section of the population awash with secretive societies such as the freemasons.

With the ceremonial act of swearing an oath, six local men were condemned by the disgraceful acts of local aristocracy and judiciary to see their work, their families and indeed their lives destroyed by a seven year sentence with transportation to the penal colonies to follow.

From that moment onwards, the dye was cast. People across the country came together. Once word spread of the sentencing of the Tolpuddle Martyrs the support for their pardon and return grew. A national movement which saw a Demonstration on Copenhagen Fields near King’s Cross, London on 21 April, 1834 against the sentences of transportation imposed on the Tolpuddle Martyrs saw between 35,000 to 100,000 people attended the demonstration, which was organised by the Central Committee of the Metropolitan Trade Unions and marched through London to Kennington Common with a wagon carrying a petition with over 200,000 signatures for the remission of the Martyrs’ sentences.

For many years GMB have been proud attendees at the annual Tolpuddle festival commemorating the struggle of the martyrs. The sight of local



branches and their members gathering to share the story of not only their recent struggles but also their victories.

Trade Union colleagues both brothers and sisters and their families are attending from across a wide area of GMB Regions. To listen to the pillars of the Labour and Trade union movement speak, to see friends and colleagues celebrate the Martyrs, but moreover to come together as not only the GMB family but as part of the greater Trade union movement.

The GMB much to the envy of some others has now found its own home at Tolpuddle, The widely known GMB Field. The very land that those martyrs toiled upon is now an annual gathering point for all GMB members nationally. Our home at Tolpuddle.

All regions, branches and individual members are encouraged to attend and be a part of not only our history but our future. GMB@Tolpuddle last year supported young members from regions across the country to come together to experience the first GMB Youth@Tolpuddle event. The banner procession now sees not only the display of local GMB banners, but a number from further afield across the GMB family.

GMB@Tolpuddle is an opportunity for members and their families to spend a week camping in the fields of Dorset at no cost to the member or their guests. Able to learn the history and be a part of making history. Meeting, with friends and comrades to build new relationships.

Conference, We ask that GMB@Tolpuddle is added to the GMB National Policy Guide under the heading GMB General to sit alongside and receive the same support as the Durham miners gala.

F40 FIRST WESSEX  
Southern Region  
(*Carried*)

ROXANA FRASER (Southern): First-time delegate. (*Applause*) This Congress will be aware that within the GMB policy guide, under the heading, GMB General, it is current policy that regions and branches are to promote and support the outstanding annual Durham Miners Gala. This motion is asking Congress to add GMB Tolpuddle to its policy section as we believe this procession merits the approval and promotes the values the GMB stands for, protecting and fighting for workers' rights.

In 1833, six men at Tolpuddle in Dorset founded the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers to protest the gradual lowering of agricultural wages. This act saw the type of backlash from local establishments, which until this day is still a template for undermining the collective organizing of workers. The mechanism of isolating, intimidating, and blacklisting was born as an acceptable establishment mechanism to trample on workers and their rights. With the ceremonial act of swearing an oath six local men were condemned by disgraceful acts of local aristocracy and judiciary, their work, families, and indeed their lives, were destroyed by a seven-year sentence and transportation to the penal colonies.

For many years the GMB has been proud attendees of the annual Tolpuddle festival commemorating the struggles of the martyrs. Trade union colleagues, sisters, brothers, and families, are attending from across the GMB regions to listen to the pillars of the labour and trades union Movements, to see friends and colleagues celebrate the martyrs but, moreover, to come together not only the GMB family but a part of the greater trades union Movement. GMB@Tolpuddle is an opportunity for members and their families to spend a week camping in the fields of Dorset at no cost to members, or their guests, learning the history, making history, meeting with friends, and comrades, and building new relationships.

Congress, we ask that GMB@Tolpuddle is added to the GMB national policy guide under the heading, GMB General, to sit alongside and receive the same support as the Durham Miners Gala. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roxana. Secunder?

HELEN O'CONNOR (Southern): Congress, lessons can be drawn from the history of the Tolpuddle Martyrs that are still important for our Movement. It began with a struggle of farming people who had nothing and who had no choice but to organize in the face of oppression, desperation, and starvation. It is scandalous that parallels can be drawn between how people lived in the 1800s and the way many working class people are forced to live today. Oppression, desperation, and starvation exist today as the Tories smash the welfare state and public services. Big employers like ISS Interserve Mighty drive our brothers and sisters into poverty in order to hype up their profits. In 2013, the Tory Party attacked the right of our class when they introduced the anti-trade union laws.

In the days of Tolpuddle those who owned and controlled everything also feared the power of working class people rising up and making demands. Even though the Combination Act legalized the right to organize, the landlords, the courts, and the judges, came together to stop the six brave men of Tolpuddle fighting against wages being lowered. They scoured their law books and found a way to get rid of them. However, the legal system proved to be no match against organized anger of 100,000 people led by determined trade unionists. The campaign led to the release of the Tolpuddle Martyrs and it swelled the rank of our Movement. Trade union membership has declined in recent years but the history of the Tolpuddle Martyrs holds the key to reinvigorating our Movement. Wherever injustice occurs and bold determined leadership is given, people gain the confidence to join our Movement and to fight back. The Tolpuddle Martyrs were six real people who risked everything to build a proud labour Movement we are all part of today, the history of the Tolpuddle Martyrs proves that it is true to say that we stand on the shoulders of time. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Motion 15?

## **SUPPORT FOR BURSTON STRIKE RALLY MOTION 15**

### **15. SUPPORT FOR BURSTON STRIKE RALLY**

This Conference notes the longstanding Burston Strike School Rally which takes place every year on the first Sunday in September. This commemorates the longest strike in history not staged by miners but by minors – the children of a small village in Norfolk.

In line with national support for the Durham Miners Gala, we call for National endorsement and support through advertising and promotion of this event.

We would like to see a significant GMB presence as this is another opportunity for GMB members and their families to unite together to continue our fight for working class education and trade union rights.

**KING'S LYNN NO 1 BRANCH**  
London Region

*(Carried)*

ALAN LAW (London): President, Congress, for those of you who do not know about the Burston Strike, it began on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1914. Teachers, Tom and Annie Higdon were dismissed from their posts in the rural village of Burston, Norfolk. Then the longest strike in history began on that day. The children marched around the village with cards hanging from their necks demanding, "We want our teachers back." The banner at the head of the march was inscribed with just one word, Justice. Sixty-six children had gone out on strike in support of their teachers. The boycott of the local authority school lasted for the next 25 years.

This Congress should note the longstanding Burston school strike takes place every year on the first Sunday in September. This, brothers and sisters, is the longest strike in history, not staged by miners, coal, but by the children of the village. In line with the National Support Act for the Durham Miners Gala we call for national endorsement and support through the advertising and promotion of this event. We would like to see a significant GMB presence at this rally. This is another opportunity for GMB members and their families to unite our fight for the working class education and trade union rights. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alan. Secunder?

JAN SMITH (London): President, Congress, the mover, Alan, has given you a bit of the history on the Burston Strike School but I can tell you that Annie and Tom Higdon started out their teaching career back in Wood Dalling, again a very rural village in Norfolk. They were offered a promotion to go to Burston. They packed up their bags and took this promotion and toddled along the rural country lanes until they arrived at Burston. From there that is when the people who offered them the position did not like their teaching skills and hence the strike began, and it began by the children. Congress, the celebration of Burston Strike, as Alan said, takes place every first Sunday of every year so we would like to see more GMB presence at that strike

celebration. They are both buried in Burston cemetery. They have a beautiful grave, which is always maintained and which you could visit. Also, on that day you will meet up and celebrate with a lot of other people. Burston Strike School is as important a celebration as the Tolpudde Martyrs' celebration and the Durham Miners' celebrations. Please, GMB, get your buses out, bring your delegation, and we look forward to seeing you in Norfolk the first Sunday in September. I second.  
(*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Composite 4.

#### **PRIVACY OF MEMBER RECORDS & EMAIL SECURITY COMPOSITE MOTION 4**

(*Covering Motions 17 and 19*)

17 – Privacy of Member Records – London Region

19 – Email Security – Wales & South West Region

#### **PRIVACY OF MEMBER RECORDS AND EMAIL SECURITY**

This Conference demands a full unequivocal statement regarding the security and maintenance of members personal data held by the Union.

In the light of the introduction of GDPR, this Conference further demands to know what actions have been taken by the Union to ensure members personal details are protected at all times.

This Conference calls upon the GMB and its Regions to ensure that lay representatives use safe and secure electronic mail addresses and systems such as GMB secure.

(*Referred*)

DOUGLAS RIGBY (London): Malcolm, I will keep it short. Congress, we demand that any and all of the union members' personal information that is gathered by GMB is and has been made secure, and assurance is guaranteed to all members that it will be safe and protected. In light of the introduction of the GDPR it is paramount that members feel safe in handing out their data to the GMB. Over 12 months ago our Branch Secretary stood down and the new secretary took over the role of branch and we are still having our branch accounts sent to the old secretary. It is a good job he is very amicable, trustworthy, and has not moved.

We have seen on Facebook and other sites where people's data has been misused and passed on to third parties. In this day and age where lots of people use computers, it is so easy for information to fall into the wrong hands and make people vulnerable. Congress, I ask you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Douglas. Seconder?

LINDA MOORE (GMB Wales & South West): Vice President, comrades, when I became a Branch Secretary albeit just for 18 months I had it drummed into me by the office secretary that if I sent an email to a group of members I should blind copy the message. I noticed that whenever I received a message from any of the regional

officers this was not what they were doing and anybody who received one of these messages could read the emails of all the other recipients. Since the data protection law has been strengthened, this has stopped so it is good to know that our officers and staff are obeying the new law.

I recently received the GMB guide on the new law. However, training needs to be given to the lay members in the understanding and implementation of this law so as not to make any mistakes and bring the GMB into any legal action. I second this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. Motion 20.

## **INDUSTRY/BUSINESS SPECIFIC CROSS-REGIONAL ORGANISING FRAMEWORK MOTION 20**

### **20. PAPERLESS GMB**

This Conference believes that GMB should try where possible to reduce the amount of paper it uses by adopting a scheme where Workplace Organisers and members can opt to receive all correspondence electronically.

This would improve GMB's environmental impact, reduce costs and make GMB more appealing to environmentally aware people of all ages.

LONDON ZOOLOGICAL BRANCH  
London Region

(*Referred*)

ANTHONY CHOLERTON (London): Acting-President, Congress, this Congress believes that GMB should try where possible to reduce the amount of paper it uses by adopting a scheme where workplace organisers and members can opt to receive correspondence electronically. This would improve GMB's environmental impact, reduce costs, and make GMB more appealing to environmentally aware people of all ages. This Congress notes that in an electronic age of change GMB must keep up with technology and the changes that it allows.

As a Branch Secretary, I see duplication of correspondence. A lot of the letters I receive through the post are also sent via email. This is both wasteful and unnecessary. Adopting a more eco-friendly balance will not only save GMB a significant amount of money but will also help GMB reps to recruit young people. Many people, both young and old, are now taking the paperless option of receiving utility bills and magazines from various organizations are preferred in electronic format by a significant number of people. GMB regional magazines are available in electronic form, as is the GMB rule book, which can be downloaded from the GMB website.

Although the General Data Protection Regulations have now come into force, this should not affect this motion as it would involve people opting into a paperless GMB. Congress is aware that there are times where it is necessary to use paper. Every year

we ballot our members on whether to accept or reject pay awards and changes to our terms and conditions. There will be other things that also require printed documents but to do nothing would be wrong. This motion will not make GMB totally paperless but it is a step in the right direction. It is time for GMB to look closely at the duplication that currently exists and take measures to reduce waste and to redirect any savings into campaigning for our core values. Congress, please support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Anthony. Secunder?

ANDRE MARQUES (London): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, I am seconding motion 20 because we agree GMB paperless is the future. With this measure we all save time and money by cutting costs associated with paper, ink, and file space. We can eliminate all file storage and be compliant with the Data Protection Act. Congress, we will make GMB eco friendly and we will add some sense of security to all our members. We believe we could use GMB paperless as an opportunity to attract and recruit new members by presenting online applications. Please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andre. I will now call on Neil Derrick, Yorkshire Regional Secretary, to respond on behalf of the CEC.

NEIL DERRICK (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Regional Secretary): Thank you, Vice President. Congress, on Motion 13, the CEC is supporting but with a qualification. The motion calls for an annual Trade Union Day to promote the good work that unions do. We are of course doing exactly that every day this week and we do it 365 days of the year. We want, however, to work with the TUC to develop the "I Heart Unions" week to give it a sharper focus and more coordinated edge, and as the motion requests to have one day in that week where the aim is specifically to reach into schools and colleges and promote trade union achievements on rights at work.

Composite 4 and Motion 20 are connected by GDPR. Composite 4, first: GDPR now makes trade union membership legally sensitive information akin to people's medical information and financial data. Non-compliance with GDPR can now attract huge fines but the truth is for the GMB reputational damage is the bigger risk. Who would join a union that could not be trusted with its members' personal information, no one. So, we have been doing a huge amount of work to ensure that we can be trusted and are compliant with the new law.

We set up a national working group, which I chair, we appointed a National Data Protection Officer, Bob Robinson, each region has now appointed a regional data protection contact, we have trained all of our staff right across the union, we have updated our data protection and privacy policies, we devised and secured the sharing agreements with every external organization with whom we share our membership information. For example, ERS, who carry out industrial action ballots on our behalf, or any mail houses that we use to send out large bulk communications to members on our behalf. We have produced a GDPR reps guide and work book which has been sent to every rep in the union and will be covered on every IST and on all GMB induction courses from now on. We have developed an online e-learning course for

reps which will be available within the next few weeks. We are running a workshop here tomorrow, lunchtime. We set up a GMB activists' email account for every Branch Secretary in the union, all 850, so that we can be confident when sending members' information that it is safe and secure. We have changed our joining form so that it is compliant with the law and now gives members a choice on contact preferences, and we have updated our website so that the options and privacy policies are there also. All done, colleagues, to protect the integrity of our members' information and personal details. No union has done more on this than the GMB.

GDPR signals a permanent change in how we collect, handle, and store membership information. It must, of course, be ongoing so the CEC asks for Composite 4 to be referred so we can evaluate the changes we have already made and explore the other benefits we can further derive from developments in technology and report back to Congress next year.

Finally, Motion 20, the CEC is asking you to refer. The motion calls for a reduction in the amount of paper we use by allowing all reps and members to receive all communications electronically. The CEC want to have a look at this as we do as a result of GDPR have to allow members the choice of how they receive information so they have the right to receive information on paper. However, GDPR, like it or not, gives us an opportunity to consider smarter more secure electronic methods of communication and the CEC wants to do that and report back to you.

In summary, Congress, the CEC is asking you to support Motion 13 with the qualification, refer Composite 4, and refer Motion 20. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Neil. Colleagues, before I go to the vote, the next section is Union Organisation where there are six motions. We are not going to get time to call them in before lunch but we can take item 20, which is Employment Policy where there are only two motions. With your permission, I would like to go to that one after this. Is that okay? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

We will now go to the vote, Motion 13, does the mover of that motion, GMB Wales and South West, agree to the qualification? *Agreed?* (*Agreed*) Thank you. Congress agree? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 13 was CARRIED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 14 is supported by the CEC. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 14 was CARRIED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 15 is also supported by the CEC. All those in favour please show? That is carried.

*Motion 15 was CARRIED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does the mover of Composite 4 agree to refer? (*Agreed*) Thank you. They have agreed to reference. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Composite 4 was REFERRED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 20, from the London Region, do you support reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Congress, all those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 20 was REFERRED*

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move on to Item 20, which is Employment Policy and can I have the movers of Motions 147 and 148 from North West & Irish to the rostrum, please.

### **PROTECTION OF WORKERS DURING HOSTILE TAKEOVERS MOTION 147**

#### **147. PROTECTION OF WORKERS DURING HOSTILE TAKEOVERS**

This Conference notes that when businesses are taken over by another enterprise without consent of the Board of Directors, the bidder is able to go directly to shareholders for consent. These deals are governed by The City Code on Takeovers and Mergers, which has a statutory basis following the implementation of the Takeovers Directive (2004/25/EC) and the Companies Act 2006.

The Conference believes The Code offers very little protection for employees and instead is all about protecting the shareholders' investment.

This Conference calls on GMB to lobby the Labour Party to commit to greater statutory protections for workers whose employer is subject to a hostile takeover as party policy. X39 Branch North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 147 formally moved? (*Agreed*) Is it formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally moved and seconded.*

### **WORKER REPRESENTATION AT BOARD LEVEL MOTION 148**

#### **148. WORKER REPRESENTATION AT BOARD LEVEL**

This Conference calls on the GMB to challenge the government to take action to bring forward legislation to require worker representation on board.



Conference notes Theresa May's statement that workers' voices should be heard in the boardrooms of Britain. Congress recognises that workers in any organisation can provide unique insights into its operation and have a shared interest in its success. Whilst this cannot replace meaningful engagement with trade unions, worker representation on decision making boards would be a welcome development.

Conference further recognises that trade unions are the only democratic organisations that are truly representative of the workers' voice and can provide the full support that a board representative would require in order to carry out their responsibilities properly. Any development on boardroom representation therefore must ensure that trade unions form an integral part of the process.

Conference further calls on the GMB to hold government to account for its claims on worker engagement by demanding it immediately ensures that all public bodies act now to ensure worker representation on decision making boards, or equivalent, through their recognised trade unions.

**P42 BRANCH**  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: What about 148, is that formally moved? *(Agreed)*  
Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The Motion was formally moved and seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: They have both been supported by the CEC so I will take the vote together, 147 and 148, Congress agree, please show? Any against? They are carried.

*Motion 147 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 148 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Right, we will move back, then, to the others and take some of them because we do not want to waste Congress time. Can I have Motions 24, 26, and 27 to the front, please? Motion 24 to the rostrum, thank you.

## **RECRUITING YOUNG MEMBERS**

### **MOTION 24**

#### **24. RECRUITING YOUNG MEMBERS**

Congress calls on the CEC to promote a discussion on our aging membership and how to recruit young people into our union, the GMB.

It is the young people, 16-25, who have suffered the most since 2010 from low wages and lack of jobs which lead to wages where they can lead independent lives. Many are going from job to job on low wages. Some are

homeless, sofa-surfing without a permanent address. They know little about their unions and how the work for members. At every level of the union we must address this problem and explain what we stand for. We can no longer hide behind the working time directive. We must explain to young people how in the past what was achieved by trade unions - holidays with pay, shorter hours, sick pay and pensions. Most working people have suffered a wage freeze for 7 years which has affected young people the most as they are on less pay. We must reverse the decline by recruiting young people or wither on the vines. The government claims 32 million people in work. The trade unions have about 6 million members. This figure is down from 14 million in the 1970s.

## Z39 NORTH KENT ENGINEERING Southern Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID LEAK (Southern): President, comrades, the gig economy and zero hours contracts are affecting young workers, especially when they are trying to gain much needed workplace experience. Like a lot of us, they leave school with little or no qualifications. Young people know little about unions and what we can achieve together. Unions are mentioned less and less in the popular press in a positive way. Today is a prime example regarding this issue in the press this morning. We need a firm strategy for engaging and reaching out to young members so that they are not exploited. Let's build that 21<sup>st</sup> century union. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Secunder?

JOE ABEL (Southern): Mr. President, fellow delegates, the Resolution Foundation released a report recently about the intergenerational contract and how it had been broken, much as the social contract has been broken. The TUC this morning released a similar report on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Manchester Conference. So, with that in mind, the one thing everyone can remember from that first report by the Resolution Foundation is the idea to give every millennial £10,000, which as a millennial I approve. As a union rep, however, I say don't take the first offer. Other than make John Humphries spit his cornflakes out that did not really do much.

So, with that in mind I would like to play the intergeneration game where I try and remember all of the other things from the report: precocious work on zero hours, dangerous work and inadequate safety provisions, tuition fees, Mac jobs, the gig economy, malnutrition, a cuddly toy although due to EU regulations being lapsed that is full of asbestos, freedom of movement or at least less of it, inequality of opportunity, unpaid internships, withdrawal of child benefit for third children, and housing benefit caps, an increase in pollution, and all the (?)transformer films. Mr. Speaker, I move to second the motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Joe. Motion 26. Motion 26?

## **INCREASE IN COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNING MOTION 26**

### **26. INCREASE IN COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNING**

This Conference is requested to campaign for:

- (i) Increased community activism outside the workplace on issues that affect our members.
- (ii) To heighten the GMB's profile across communities to consolidate the GMB's position as the "go to" union for action and support on issues in our community, locally and nationally.

NORFOLK PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
London Region

*(Referred)*

VAUGHAN THOMAS (London): I know and understand that much if not most of the union's focus is on members' workplaces and in the first instance this is right and proper. However, our members do not exist in a parallel universe separate from the communities they live in. More than that, though, especially when their workplaces have a more direct impact on the public regardless of whether they are in the public or the private sectors when members' workplace interests coalesces with that of the community. I recently advised several school support staff members facing redundancy due to funding cuts. They were called into the head teacher's office and given a "choice", they could either accept redundancy or they could go through a formal consultation; either way, they were told there was no money to pay their wages for the next academic year.

We all live in the real world and we know all about the Government's austerity programme. The members could not see the point of going through a consultation so accepted this fait accompli, although very unhappy with this turn of events. The next day the head teacher sent out an urgent email to the members to tell them in no uncertain terms that their redundancies were a confidential matter, not to be discussed with other staff and certainly not to be discussed with parents.

Congress, our members were supporting children with special educational needs. They were also parent support advisers. Their redundancies have a very real impact on the local community and what added insult to injury is that this decision was a matter of weeks before the local elections. Do you not think the local community would have wanted to know about this? The interest of our members is also of interest to the local community and we should be getting our message out there to involve the community, especially when it impacts directly on that community. No more should our members be going silently into the good night. When it affects our members' livelihoods and that of the community we should be shouting it from the rooftops and involving that community. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Secunder?

SHARON WILLSON (London): President, Congress, our members are just as much members of local communities as they are of the GMB. We need to organize beyond the workplace as in this age of austerity our members' interests are also the interests of their local community. A good example of this can be found in our schools. Cuts in schools have a direct impact on families across the communities. Some schools are closing at 1 p.m. on Fridays. How is this not going to impact on parents that are members of our union and their communities? By widening our organizing and campaigning, we would be acting in our members' best interests. I second.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sharon. Motion 27.

## **REVIEW OF GMB@WORK MOTION 27**

### **27. REVIEW OF GMB@WORK**

This Conference agrees that time has now come to review GMB@Work and bring it up to date.

ESSEX PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

DANNY FAITH (London): Acting Vice President, Congress, this motion calls for a review of GMB@Work, something we have not done since 2007. This is not about changing the fundamental principles behind GMB@Work, which was spelt out in the 2007 review, which I will read to you now: The GMB@Work organisation's organizing strategy aims to tackle long-term membership decline within the existing budgets, changing how we work as a union to make sure membership growth becomes central to all we do, using the process of bargaining to grow the union, organizing every workplace as if a ballot for action was imminent, and mobilizing members to organize themselves setting their agenda in the workplace."

I fully support these principles but having said that there are good reasons for review. Ten years have gone by and we need to look at what has worked and what has not. We cannot afford to stick to policies if they are not delivering for us as a union. On the other hand, this can be an opportunity to learn from the successes in particular industries or regions. There are other developments that have occurred since then, the gig economy, data protection, and growth of social media. We, therefore, believe it is high time for an honest, transparent, and thorough review of GMB@Work. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. Secunder?

CATHY HOLLAND (London): President, Congress, GMB@Work appears to rely on conveners, reps, and workplace organisers to have responsibility for some recruitment and members' representation. It is all right for people like me who have been doing it a long time but I talk to new reps who feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they are expected to do. As a convener for the council, I was often asked to

work in the private sector, which I did not mind, and my council has been very flexible because I have been doing it a long time and they tended to leave me alone. Obviously, it is not like that now, they tend to want their pound of flesh. I would obviously work 12-hour days. Luckily, I have an understanding family as I was only paid 7.5 hours. We need more support from our union to be able to have someone to help otherwise we will lose that support. At Congress we voted to be shop stewards. The union must remember that. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Cathy. Colleagues, there are three motions left in that section, Motion 28, Composite 5, and Motion 31. I shall be taking them this afternoon first thing after the presentations of the awards. So, could the people for those three motions be ready.

Now, I can just say one thing, a bit of information, there is no designated smoking areas outside but there are council bins with ashtrays and the council will fine anyone who is seen dropping a butt on the pavement, so please be careful.

Your Congress credentials entitle you to a GMB Congress 2018 gift, which is a leather folder in your Congress wallets or rucksack. If you wish to swap for a non-leather version, please go to the national office stand in the foyer to exchange.

Colleagues, that concludes Congress for this morning. You can find details of fringe meetings and workshops in the Congress Guide. The fringe meetings start on page 16 and workshops start on page 54.

We will take the vote as a block this afternoon, sorry about that. June Minnery will speak.

Enjoy the fringe meetings and workshops. Do not forget also to visit the exhibitors out behind the Congress hall and please be back for 2 o'clock. I assure you, I will be starting at 2, dead-on. Thank you very much, Congress. Enjoy your lunch.

*Congress adjourned.*

## **AFTERNOON SESSION** *(Congress re-assembled at 2.00 p.m.)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Could I call Congress to Order. I have another reminder. Please switch off your devices or make sure they are on silent. I also remind everyone that Congress is being filmed and is being streamed live on Youtube.

## **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now call Helen Johnson to move SOC Report no. 2.

HELEN JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Congress, I move SOC Report No. 2. Withdrawn motions. The SOC has been informed that the following motions have been withdrawn: Motion 99, Boycott the Daily Mail, standing in the name of Southern Region; Motion 263, Labour Party Democracy — Young Members,

standing in the name of Southern Region; Motion 264, Labour Party Democracy, standing in the name of Southern Region; Motion 265, Labour Party Democracy Review, standing in the name of Southern Region, and Motion 266, Labour Party Democracy — Wales and Scotland NEC REPS, standing in the name of Southern Region. Finally, Composite Motion 3: GMB and the Trade Union Friends of Israel, was moved and withdrawn from the rostrum this morning.

Bucket collections. The SOC has given permission for the following regions to hold bucket collections. First, to GMB Scotland for Guide Dogs for the Blind. The SOC recommends that this takes place at the close of this afternoon's business. To Midland & East Coast Region for Life for a Kid Sensory Centre in Hull. The SOC recommends that this takes place at the close of the afternoon session on Tuesday. To North West & Irish Region for the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice. The SOC recommends that this takes place at the close of the morning session on Wednesday. Would regional secretaries please note that when the collections have taken place the regions should provide the SOC with a written note stating how much has been collected so that this can be reported back to Congress.

President and Congress, I move SOC Report No. 2.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Does anyone want to speak against? (*No response*) If not, I will now take a vote on SOC Report No. 2. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Standing Orders Report No. 2 was ADOPTED.*

## **PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP AWARDS FOR EQUALITY**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move on to the Leadership Awards for Equality. We launched these awards at Congress 2009, so this is the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress where we recognise the exceptional work of our members in regions and branches. There are four categories with awards given to those who have inspired and championed various aspects of the Equality Agenda. This year we had three categories fulfilled with nominations: Category 1, Category 2 and Category 4. You will find more details about the winners in a separate document in your wallets. It gives me great pleasure to announce the winners of each award and invite them to come up to the platform to collect their framed certificate and trophy.

The first award is the Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in the GMB or at Work, and that goes to Paulo Fernandes of the Southern Region. (*Presentation made amidst applause*) Paulo, would you like to say a few words?

PAULO FERNANDES (Southern): Congress, this is a high profile award that is given at the GMB Congress. My dear colleagues, I spoke at the rostrum in 2012, and this is the first time I have spoken at the Brighton Congress. I want to thank my colleagues for all the help they have given to me from the W15 branch. This award is not for me alone. It is by the teamwork of Southern Region, which includes the Regional Secretary, Paul Maloney; our wheelchair helper, Andy Newman; and our Regional Organising Office, who never says no, and for all the Southern Region staff who have done everything we have asked of them.

Everybody knows that one day Carillion will be no more. Carillion is a corrupt company because they have looted in multi-million pounds. So, my dear colleagues, let me put this to you. Carillion's high-profile staff have been subject to an investigation, including the directors. After four months of investigation, we are told that there is no prima facie case against them! My dear colleagues, let me say one small thing. If an employee of a restaurant behaved in such a way, that person would immediately lose their job. Carillion had the power to blacklist their employees. So my question for the media and for this Congress is this. Anybody can move this motion. If this type of management has wasted millions of pounds of public money, like multi-national companies such as Carillion did, and nothing has been found, where have those millions gone? There should be a law to put them on trial. That is what I say. I thank the Standing Orders Committee for allowing me these few minutes to talk. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paulo.

The second award is the Most Inspirational Regional Equality Forum. That award goes to the Southern Region Equality Forum. *(Presentation made amidst applause)* Would someone like to say something? *(Declined)*

In that case, I will move on to the Most Inspirational Project for Making A Difference at Work. That goes to the W.I.N.G.S Cymru from GMB Wales & South West Region. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

JAN (No surname given): Colleagues, I would like to thank you all for presenting us for this wonderful award for W.I.N.G.S Cymru. We organise period-poverty supplies to schools in Bridgend County Borough. We are now in 48 schools. We have eight schools to go and two colleges. Jemma Hartnell, our founder, should be here today but she could not get the time off because she does not work in a unionised place. Thank you very much. It is most appreciated. I would like to thank John Phillips, my Regional Secretary, and Ruth Bennett for the donations and help that they have given us. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now give the winners of the Highly Commended awards their certificates. Could they please come to the stage to collect their framed certificates. The first one is for the Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in The GMB or at Work. That award goes to Margaret Clarke from the Birmingham & West Midlands Region. *(Presentation made amidst applause)* Margaret, would you like to say a few words?

MARGARET CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): Good afternoon, Congress. I would like to say thank you very much from the bottom of my heart. This award means so much to me. I am really pleased to receive it. Thank you also to Joe Morgan, the Regional Secretary for Birmingham & West Midlands, the equality officers and everyone who has helped me get this award. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret.

The second award in this category is the Most Inspirational Regional Equality Forum, and that goes to Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Regional Equality Forum.  
*(Presentation made amidst applause)*

A DELEGATE (No name given): President and Congress, on behalf of the Region and especially the Regional Equality Forum, thanks for this award. We might not be the biggest regional forum that is going but we have certainly put a lot of work in. The main thing I can say about what makes our regional forum so good is that we don't stick labels on people, merely because if they stuck a label on me they couldn't get one big enough to say "Able-bodied, middle-aged and white". That is what makes our regional forum special, the fact that we do work at equality, no matter what you are or who you are. All we are bothered about is fighting, not because it is politically correct, right or trendy, but because it is the right thing for this union to do. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

### **MARY McARTHUR HEALTH & SAFETY AWARD 2018**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now go on to the Mary McArthur Health & Safety Award. Last year we launched a new award for GMB Health & Safety Reps who make outstanding contributions to workplace safety. This award is in honour of Mary McArthur who ended the barbaric practice of 'sweating' works and who organised safety standards for women working with explosives in World War One. I will call the award winners up to the stage to pick up their awards. I am proud to announce that the winner is Teresa Farmer from Birmingham & West Midlands Region.

*(The Vice President awarded the Trophy and a signed copy of the Health & Safety Reps Handbook amidst applause)*

TERESA FARMER (Birmingham & West Midlands Region): I am sick of being bullied. There have been three attempts to dismiss me just because I wanted to take the job of being a union rep for Wilco. I win an award for health and safety and I am banned from doing my basic stage 1 health and safety training. We have 50 stores in our region and only six reps, and we need all 50 stores in our region to have a rep. I want to say thank you for the support. I want to say thank you to a lady called Julie Weeks for giving me and some training and giving me some backbone for making me feel strong as a woman when I am being bullied by a bunch of men. I would like to thank my branch officer, Ian Edwards, for his support, for stopping me from being lazy and for making me do my homework, and for making me know the titles of the wrongs that are being done against us, what they are called and the pigeon hole that we can put them in so we can then take them to task. I thank the GMB for all of my support and for making me feel strong. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Teresa. We now have two runners up. The first one is Grant Bennett from the London Region. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

GRANT BENNETT (London): Congress, I have been given finest blend Scotch Whisky and I am a recovering alcoholic. *(Laughter and applause)* So someone is going to get lucky with some whisky tonight. It just won't be me.



I want to thank so many people, especially, Dennis McNulty, the Camden branch secretary. He has been absolutely fantastic since the day he walked through the door. (*Applause*) Thank you to everyone who nominated me. If there is more than one of you and I have not mentioned anyone or I do not say “Thank you” to everyone, you know who you are so I should not have to say too many thank yous. Secondly, in an ideal world I should not really be stood *here*, because out *there* we should be working in places which are adhering to the regulations and legislation put in place. There should be absolutely no reason for me to have to go to the lengths that I went to have to be nominated for this award. The trouble is that we are not living and working in ideal worlds any more. All I ask is that we change with the times. Employers have changed with the times. We need to change with the times. I was accused once of being a ‘70s trade union representative! My answer to that is, “Well, don’t be a ‘70s employer”. (*Applause*) All I ask is that we keep our eyes on the prize and put our members first. That is all I ask. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Grant. The second runner up is Jason Granger from the Midland & East Coast Region. (*Presentation of the Silver Badge and a signed copy of the Health & Safety Reps Handbook made amidst applause*)

### **ELEANOR MARX AWARD**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It gives me great pleasure to announce the third year of our GMB Women’s Award in memory of Eleanor Marx. Eleanor worked alongside Will Thorne setting up our Union and was elected to our Executive at the 1891 Congress. I am so pleased to announce that the winner is: Sarah James from Birmingham & West Midlands Region (*Applause*). Sarah has been elected for her outstanding commitment in fighting for justice and fairness and for her work in regional and national equality forums and campaigns. Her incredible work on launching the Birmingham Organised Sisters Society, known as BOSS in 2014, including campaigns on period poverty called Bleeding Insane, and her work on domestic violence awareness are just some of the great campaigns that she has led on. A truly deserving winner of the Eleanor Marx Award. Sarah. (*Presentation of a certificate and brooch made amidst applause*)

SARAH JAMES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Vice President and Congress, I want to say thank you, really. We have heard a lot already this week of the GMB being a family and that is exactly what it is. I don’t think any of us could be standing *here* doing what we do without our own families and without our union family. I just want to say a quick thank you to everybody who supports me and enables me to be able to do what I do. It is not just me doing it on my own. There is everybody in my branch, in my region and on the National Equality Forum. Without them, we would not be able to do what we do. So thank you to everybody. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We would also like to present a special award to Sarah Kelly from Yorkshire Region for her incredible work this year in the Yorkshire Ambulance Service. (*Applause*) Not only has Sarah changed policy on abuse to staff within her employer, she has also spearheaded changes to legislation. She has campaigned to better protect ambulance staff on the front line from violent attacks and abuse, and make sure that those who have abused workers are prosecuted properly, and staff are not exposed to their attackers again. This is an incredible

achievement and shows exactly the determination campaigns need in order to make change. *(Applause)* Sarah.

SARAH KELLY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I would like to thank my GMB family in Yorkshire, especially, Pauline Keilly, my branch secretary, and to Stacey Booth, for actually getting me back to work and making me make a difference, and to carry on making a difference. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, that concludes the awards. We will now move on to finish off this morning's business with the three motions that we left off from this morning's session. They are Motions 28, to be moved by London; Composite 5, to be moved by London and Birmingham Regions, and Motion 31, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire. I call the mover of Motion 28 to the rostrum.

## **WORKPLACE MAPPING MOTION 28**

### **28. WORKPLACE MAPPING**

This Conference calls on the CEC to assist branches in collecting at point of joining more detailed information on job roles and actual location to enable workplace mapping to be more effective.

Making certain aspects of the form compulsory, say email and mobile number with consent for the union to also communicate in this way would make ease of communication swifter and more effective between branch and its members.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH  
London Region

*(Referred)*

MARIE McCORMACK (London): Congress, and Vice President, knowing who your members are, what their actual jobs are and where they are based is essential. Fast and efficient ways of communication are also vital. This motion is about workplace mapping. I want to be able to see at the click of a button where certain pockets of members are based and/or how many members we have in a particular work-type area. It would also identify areas where extra efforts need to be made in recruitment.

This motion asks for certain information to be made compulsory at the point of applying to become a member on-line or by application form; eg, email work and private emails, mobile work and private, clearly identifying the actual job that somebody does, not just the job title, because that does not always give us any clues as to what they actually do, they say, and to specify the exact location, maybe the team they are in and if they are self-employed. This will be helpful when grouping members together as I am also interested in mapping areas where there are, for example, hot spots in the area of workplace stress. Members don't always know who in their team is a GMB member, and they are entitled to their privacy. Their individual privacy is paramount, but for me as somebody who is trying or organise it is helpful for me to know where there are different groups and particular groups of

GMB members. Also it helps to see whether there is a particular problem; say, for example, if there is workplace stress, and to see if there are hotspots where there is a lot of stress. Sometimes it relates to a particular manager, and it would just be helpful to help the members ultimately.

In addition, departmental reorganisation-proposal documents are presented for scrutiny almost on a weekly basis. If I was able simply to press a button and pull up all the details of all the members in a particular area in a matter of seconds, it would be a far more effective way of operating. As I say, all branch secretaries are at times strapped for time. We already have the technology, but without the capturing of certain key data we cannot exploit the technology to its full potential to both the members' and the branches' advantage and the effective and overall smooth running. Taking this particular form, it says: "Tell us about you", and then it says the important bits and it refers to the direct debit. I think that everything on this form is important, and particularly capturing what people actually do for a living is most important, not just the job title. So I move Motion 28. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. Secunder?

BEVERLEY WOODBURN (London): I will be seconding Motion 28. I am a first-time speaker and a first-time delegate. (*Applause*) Pressure! Workplace Mapping is vitally important to branch building and to branch organisation. If a branch is to grow or recruit and not to standstill, then it must know where its current membership is and where they are. This is equally so in preparation for a likely dispute.

Mapping tells us where we are strong, where we are weak, where the opportunities exist for growth and where the threats are. Mapping guides us as we campaign on things locally. In getting the vote out, in the past I have created mobile-phone lists. These lists have no names, just phone numbers, so we can keep in touch with people and find out who has voted, who has not yet voted and who is yet to vote. It has been invaluable in getting a turnout which, in turn, helps to sway negotiations, hopefully, in our favour.

We cannot wait on a review of the GDPR, the General Data Protection Regulation. At the end of the day, we are not PPI. We are not cold-calling our members. We are a union with the best interests of members at its heart. Whether staff stay or join or leave a union depends on a live union presence, and mapping is that presence. So I ask you to support Motion 28. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Beverley. I call Composite 5.

## **INFORMATION MATERIAL FOR MEMBERS COMPOSITE 5**

*(Covering motions 29 and 30)*

29 — MATERIALS AND PUBLICATIONS FOR MEMBERS — London Region.

30 — PROMOTION PACKS — Birmingham and West Midlands Region.

## **INFORMATION MATERIALS FOR MEMBERS**

This Conference notes that generic basic information material (hard copy) offered to members is lacking. In order to empower our members, and recruit new members, we need to produce consistent professional-looking leaflets, brochures, booklets, posters, etc.

Not all our members have access to a computer and photocopies of old leaflets make us look unprofessional, outdated and quite lame compared to what other unions produce.

The following list shows examples, but is not exhaustive:

1. An **Introduction Pack** given to all new members with information that will aid members with employment issues (a basis “what to do if.....”), give contact information of their Branch and Regional Officers (this info can be inserted by Branch), what they can do to help their GMB colleagues, benefits to members, useful contact details (TUC, ACAS, LRD etc).
2. **Briefing Papers (for Reps and Members):** How to recruit (e.g. from the Toolkit); responsibilities of Reps, Branch Officers; grievances and what to do; disciplinaries and what to do:
3. **Updates** on National/Regional employment regulations;
4. More **guides** similar to Women’s H&S at Work and Mental Health at Work.

Once these materials are designed and produced (with a standard format throughout), they can be uploaded onto one specific website that is easily accessible for download or, for bulk numbers, online orders.

There may be some good examples within regions and branches, but these have not been shared with others. National HQ should request all branches to submit their selfproduced publications and then come up with publications and materials usable throughout the country. Further, this Conference asks the CEC to instruct regions to make available informative promotion packs and materials for inductions into the GMB where required.

***We call on National GMB to invest time, skill and money in producing publications/materials that will help our members in the workplace and be fit for a 21st Century union.***

*(Carried)*

EUTON STEWART (London): Congress, I move Composite 5. This composite motion highlights a challenge all unions face today working in the fast-paced digital world. It is now more than ever before that we need to ensure that we remain relevant and up-to-date with all our materials and publications. As a general union, we have members in all sectors of the economy, of all skills, ages and nationalities, but we recognise that we need to move into a new era and a new pattern of working practices in the gig economy. Our members are becoming more demanding. They need

information at their fingertips to support and inform them and show how professional we are. We need to embrace new ways of working, new technology and working in a digital world.

Unions are built on structures that cascade information down to the workers and bring views of the members back up the chain. Unions have had the advantage of having direct access to people on the ground through their structures and ways of communicating with them. Democratic structures such as ours have not by and large been updated for the digital age. Every organisation can use digital channels or other forms of communication to speak to their members or customers so we need to keep up. Other organisations are taking the union Movement's digital cake and are eating it. Campaigning is taking different forms. Social media and apps are being used to run campaigns. We, too, need to ensure that we can campaign equally and use our digital platform as well as using traditional methods, such as posters, leaflets and bulletins. We are working in a society which is being bombarded with information, news and even fake news.

What we are asking for complements a referred motion from Congress 2017 asking for updates to the workplace organisers' toolkits as some of our materials are 10 years old. London together with all regions are looking at retention of members. We are looking at what members get when they join and what other information they are sent by regions or branches.

We need to ensure that throughout the whole of the members' journey from when members join that we communicate with them on matters that are relevant to them and enable them to best represent members or raise the profile of the GMB. We appreciate that much of this work is underway and we look forward to seeing the new GMB website with a range of materials, advice and best practice. We have a duty to ensure that our reps and branches are armed with facts and policies that can be used or adapted in order to advise or consult with their members. We have a duty to train and support our activists, reps and branches. Let's make sure that we are fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in all we do and say. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Euton. Secunder?

ROGER MANDER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) This Congress asks the CEC to instruct the regions to make available information, promotion packs and materials for the use of induction into the GMB where required. We have heard for the right reasons about the importance and priority of recruitment. Unity is Strength comes to mind. It is, in fact, one of the cornerstones of organising your workplace.

Workplace organising is about being good at recruitment, retention and representation, so to improve our chances we have a viable, credible product, which we have, and it is best to grasp the opportunity at the induction stage into the workplace, where possible. Strike while the iron's hot. What better way to recruit than to speak to new starters and explain why it is much better to be a part of the trade union family and share in its benefits. Having promotional material — a pen and other freebies — would help the initial impact no end. It looks organised and professional and shows how inspirational and persuasive our reps and officials can be.

Sometimes, but not always, a glossy flier, a pen and a couple of stickers could well be a deal clincher. It sounds a bit over the top but expressing the virtues trade unions and GMB principles can be quite hard going without a free pen.

Signing up to the GMB with a pen to take home along with your promotion literature is as rewarding as our reps saying, “Thanks for joining”. I do not want a carte blanche system to demand facts for every and all, but for larger groups it could be very cost-effective in the long run. What we want is, where there is an opportunity for a recognition agreement, a proposal for new membership or a recruitment drive in the workplace to be able, at the initial meet, to look the part as well. So don’t waste money and be specific in the needs of larger or more needy recruitment drives.

To finish off, a free pen does not make a strong union. A glossy sticker doesn’t make the rep brilliant, and a banner or any promotional literature does not make your job any better, but it does not hurt and it doesn’t make it worse. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call Motion 31.

## **GMB MONEY MOTION 31**

### **31. GMB MONEY**

This Conference calls for each new GMB member to be provided with information and recruitment forms for GMB Money, along with other documents which they receive as a newly recruited member.

**BARNESLEY HEALTH BRANCH**  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

SUSAN WALKER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 31 — GMB Money. Vice President and Congress, this motion when read is pretty much self-explanatory. It calls for new GMB members to be provided with information and recruitment forms for GMB Money. As we know, this is a fantastic member benefit, which many members may not be aware of. If the materials were sent direct to new members with their membership cards and so on, it would help promote this under-used but often for some members vital lifeline to financial help and support. If we can point members into the direction of GMB Money, it may help to steer them away from the other less reputable high-interest sharks. It is a no-brainer membership benefit, and it should be promoted at every opportunity to new members and even us old ones. If you would like any more information, go to stand 11 in the exhibition hall and there is a fringe meeting on Tuesday lunchtime in the Syndicate room. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder? *(The motion was formally seconded)* Does anyone wish to speak against? *(No response)* I now call on June Minnery to respond on behalf of the CEC.

JUNE MINNERY (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking for Motions 26 and 28 to be referred and for the Congress to support Motion 31 with a qualification. On Motion 26, Increase in Community Campaigning, GMB members are already involved in community campaigning, whether it be about the protection of local services, opposition to fascist organisations or campaigns on housing and transport issues.

These campaigns can involve GMB acting on its own or with other unions, often through local trades councils. GMB needs to be wary of the potential impact on many branch secretaries who can be called on to be lead community campaigns and might suffer forms of burn out as a result. Where the motion has merit, it would be very useful for the CEC and regions to look at potential impact on GMB in the longer term. Therefore, the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred.

On Motion 28 — workplace mapping — the motion is suggesting that more detailed be collected and stored for workplace mapping. It is incredibly important to GMB that we, effectively, map our workplaces in order to be the strongest possible union membership. However, new regulations regarding data protection in the form of GDPR will mean that we have to carefully consider the data we collect so as not to be in breach of the new regulations. We must protect our members' information as a paramount concern. It is important, therefore, that this motion be referred for GMB to see how this motion can be fulfilled within the regulations.

On Motion 31, GMB Money, it is a vital resource for members and should be promoted at every opportunity. The New Member Pack is currently being reviewed and change to what new members receive and when is being looked at as part of this process. The qualification is that the CEC recommends that the National Communications team work with regions to look at the best way to promote GMB Money. Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking for Congress to refer Motions 26 and 28 and to support Motion 31 with the qualification for the reasons given. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, June. We will now go to the vote. Motion 24 is being supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 24 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does the London Region accept reference back of Motion 26? (*Agreed*) London Region accepts reference back and the CEC is supporting. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 26 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 27 is supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 27 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 28. Does London Region agree to reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Those against? That is carried.

*Motion 28 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 5 is supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Composite 5 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 31. Does Yorkshire accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 31 was CARRIED.*

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICY PENSIONS & RETIREMENT**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to item 6, which is Employment Policy. This section includes Composite 12 and Motions 138, 139, 140 and 142. I call the mover of Composite 12 to the rostrum.

### **EMPLOYEE PENSION FUNDS COMPOSITE 12**

*(Covering motions 137 and 141)*

137 — EMPLOYEE PENSION FUNDS — Birmingham & West Midlands Region

141 — COMPANY LAW — Northern Region

### **EMPLOYEE PENSION FUNDS**

This Congress calls on the Government to urgently introduce company legislation to make company directors personally liable for pension deficits, so that the lack of due diligence in the collapse of Carillion is avoided in the future as this Conference believes that senior directors responsible for companies are still not taking adequate action to properly fund employees' pension funds.

Conference therefore instructs the CEC to campaign to make these directors personally liable for any shortfall in the funding making it a criminal offence where negligence can be proved, and Congress calls on the Labour Party to adopt this proposal as part of its Manifesto.

*(Carried)*

BRYON COOKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Composite 12, which you will find on page 130 of your Congress Final Agenda.

What can I say? It is all something we know and do. You work hard throughout your life, save for the future, build up a nice little nest egg and then (*banging the rostrum*)



it's gone! It just like *that* and it's gone! Why? Because of greed, incompetence and lies all by a few people put in place to run a company. What happens to them? A slightly smaller yacht next year! So let's make it a criminal offence for these directors to touch our pension funds. Let's make it so that they are that scared to go anywhere near them so they won't.

We lift the veil of corporate responsibility for deaths in the workplace, so why can't we lift it for pillaging our pensions which is something we have saved for? You can be as rich as possible but when you are held at Her Majesty's pleasure, you are no richer than your cell mate. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Byron. Secunder?

ERIC WILLIAMS (Northern): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker and proud to be here! (*Applause*) I am seconding Composite 12: Employee Pension Funds.

Congress, the way that greedy directors are allowed to use company pension schemes for their own ends is a scandal. We have a situation where directors seem to be able to act without having to account for their actions unless it is too late. In the case of British Home Stores, the trustees of that pension scheme were, clearly, under pressure from an owner who, to say the least, could pull the wool over their eyes. In the case of Carillion, it is not clear what involvement there has been with the trustees. The fact is that there needs to be much more greater scope for the trustees to step in and have greater powers to prevent shares and dividends to be paid out at the expense of the company pension scheme.

Congress, it makes a mockery of the pensions auto-enrolling scheme if directors can still get away with using a pension scheme as a way of boosting the value of their shares and, in the process, director pay. What needs to happen is for the law to change to ensure that pension trustees have more say. Sorting out pension deficits needs to be placed before paying dividends, and there should be either a new company law and existing laws beefed up so that current and future pensioners, and their dependants, get a decent pension. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Eric. I call Motion 138.

## **PENSIONS MOTION 138**

### **138. PENSIONS**

This Conference asks to pass a Law to protect work pensions.

We ask Congress to lobby MPs on both sides of the House to pass a Law to protect our pensions, and not allow employers to degrade our pensions.

HULL RETAIL & DISTRIBUTION BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region .

(*Carried*)

CAROL CLARKSON (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 138: Pensions. Vice President and Congress, this Government have introduced new legislation around pensions. You must pay a minimum of 3% in 2018 and 5% in 2020. Asda and many other companies have taken the opportunity to erode our pension. Where we paid from the first penny we earned and Asda matched it, we now don't pay into a pension scheme until we reach the target that Asda has set. However, a lot of our low-paid, part-time workers, are under the threshold so cannot take part.

I have worked for Asda for 38 years and I remember 22 years ago when the GMB took Asda on for not allowing part-timers to be in the Asda pension scheme. Because part-timers are mainly women, we took them on under the Equalities Act legislation. We won and got three years' back investment. *(Applause)* Surprise, surprise, as Cilla would say, they are at it again. They are after our pensions again. The majority of my colleagues cannot earn enough to be in the pension scheme, and unless they are Asda won't match it. If we put 5% in, Asda will put 3% in. That can't be fair. How are we going to have security and dignity in our old age with this pittance of a pension?

Governments are asking us to save for our old age and yet are allowing employers to dodge their responsibilities. We must lobby and put pressure on the Government to make sure that the employer does not ignore their responsibility. Congress, please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Carol. Secunder?

KAREN MORRELL (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 138: Pensions. Vice President, most of us who work are in a pension scheme. It is not only Asda but most of our employees are attacking our pensions. They have already attacked our pay and conditions and now it is our pensions. The employers want us to be poor workers and then go on to be poor pensioners. We need Government to intervene and make our pensions safe and make our pensions a living wage for our twilight years. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Karen. I call Motion 139.

## **UNDERFUNDED PENSION FUNDS MOTION 139**

### **139. UNDERFUNDED PENSION FUNDS**

This Conference agrees that it should be illegal for companies to pay bonuses to bosses and share dividends to shareholders when their pension funds are deliberately seriously underfunded. This motion calls on the CEC to lobby Government and Pension Regulatory Bodies to make this practice illegal.

LUTON BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

GEORGE FRASER (London): Congress, I move Motion 139 on underfunded pension funds. Vice President, if you rob a bank, you'll get a jail sentence. If you rob a pension, you will most likely get a knighthood. Just look at Robert Maxwell and Phillip Green and many others. They plundered the Mirror Group and BHS pension funds to maintain their elaborate lifestyles and keep their companies trading. Monarch Airlines and Carillion are more recent examples of workers' futures and their pension funds being put into a position of precarious jeopardy due to incompetence and plain theft!

Congress, it is simply not acceptable that bonuses to bosses and dividends to shareholders are paid despite the fact that staff pensions are being plundered to keep these payments to bosses and shareholders in place and the companies running. Shareholders have a responsibility to ensure that the companies they invest in are run properly. That includes looking after their employees. If the company does well, they win. If the company does not, they lose. That's the way of it. They cannot temper that risk by robbing the pension funds of their employees.

It is estimated that British pension funds are only 67.7% funded, and this shortfall is not only in the private sector. Many local government pension funds are underfunded because employers' shares have not been paid in. All this puts pressure on the Pensions Protection Fund and, ultimately, our taxes. Pension is pay. Robbing a payroll is a crime. Robbing a pension fund is robbing a payroll and ultimately a client. Directors and shareholders must pay the price when they do. Please support.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, George. Secunder?

DAVE REID (London): Congress, I am a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I am seconding Motion 139: Underfunded pension funds. We think that when a pension fund is underfunded by companies, the companies should have to bring the pension fund up to a level where it is not underfunded before they take any bonuses or make any payments to shareholders. Also pension funds should be ring-fenced so that the company cannot touch them when they run into trouble, which will make the pensions more secure. It is only right that the companies should look after their employees' futures rather than giving their shareholders bigger payouts than the company can afford. It is only right that the employees are paid their full pension entitlements as they have given loyal service to their employer. All companies need to understand that their workforce is their greatest asset and they should be looked after in service and in retirement. All companies should not be able to touch the pension fund once the money goes into it. It should only come out for pensions. We ask that you get behind this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. I call Motion 140.

## **DIVESTMENT — PENSION SCHEMES MOTION 140**

### **140. DIVESTMENT - PENSION SCHEMES**

This Conference notes that we all understand the threat of global warming on our environment and to communities around the world. To have a decent

chance of avoiding catastrophic climate change impacts, approximately 80% of proven fossil fuel reserves must be kept in the ground.

Urgent action is required to radically transform our energy and transport systems away from fossil fuels and towards clean, renewable alternatives. To achieve this requires a reliable significant change in energy policy and strong efforts from all parts of society for investment in alternatives.

Local Government Pension Funds (LGPF) in the UK have assets worth over £290 billion. At least £16 billion of this is invested in fossil fuel companies. Islington Council's Pension Fund has approximately £48 million invested in fossil fuel companies, including Royal Dutch Shell and BP in their top 4 holdings.

With this investment in fossil fuel extraction, our Local Governments are directly funding climate change and air pollution which is affecting the health of our members and the community we serve. As public bodies, councils have a responsibility to work for the public good and promote public health; they should not be financially and politically supporting the most destructive industries on the planet.

It is noted that fossil fuel investments are becoming increasingly risky; as the world takes action on climate change, fossil fuel assets are at significant risk of becoming stranded. Pension Fund Trustees have a fiduciary duty to protect members' investments from these risks.

Divesting from fossil fuels also presents an opportunity to re-invest in sectors such as low carbon, renewable clean energy source, low carbon infrastructure improvements and energy efficient social housing, which are consistent with the Council's aims.

We acknowledge and commend the Pensions Sub-Committee on their previous efforts to engage with fossil fuel companies within Islington through their shareholder AGMs, and their efforts so far to understand the exposure of the fund to climate risk and reduce its carbon footprint. We now ask that all Local Authority Pension Schemes commit to fully divest in order to properly protect the funds from climate risk and take a strong moral stand on climate change and air quality.

We call on the CEC to campaign for the following:

- \* Commit to encourage all pension schemes to divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within 5 years;

- \* Enshrine action on climate change and climate risk into the fund's investment strategy and policies, as well as the selection and review procedures for investment managers.

\* Seek alliances amongst other trade unions who share our objective and work cooperatively with them to achieve divestment.

## ISLINGTON 1 & HARINGEY BRANCH London Region

*(Lost)*

ALAN TYLER (London): Congress, I am a first-time speaker and first-time delegate. *(Applause)* I am speaking on behalf of London Region, moving Motion 140: Divestment — Pension Schemes, without the support of the region.

We have already seen on our TVs the threats of global warming and the use of fossil fuels on our planet. My concerns are, and I am sure yours are as well, how much money has been used from our pension pots that is going into fossil fuels? These are the facts and figures produced so far. The Government have said that £2 trillion of our workplace pensions goes into fossil fuels and they have now decided that this should be diverted into other schemes and away from oil, gas and coalfields. The Government are to introduce new investment regulations that will mirror our members, ethical concerns and address the environmental regulation. Rules are to be consulted on next year regarding these issues. About £78 billion a year pours into our pension pots from fossil-fuel companies and even my local council has £48 million tied up in fossil fuels, companies which they may try to invest in in cleaner energy, which they have started to do now.

There are now 18 electric pumps being put into our borough and new energy schemes for residents in the south of the borough are being set up as well. One of the biggest investors in Norway has started to take steps to come out of investing in fossil fuels and looking into the future and what to do next. Crown Prince Al Rashed from Saudi Arabia has commented, “We have a disastrous dependence on oil”, but his understudies are not too sure on what the future will hold for their country when other countries are turning to cleaner energy. So what happens when countries start coming away from fossil fuels and battling for climate-change starts? Will fossil fuels become stranded assets and worthless? This has been held a victory for fossil-fuel campaigners.

I understand the views of our union and the worries and job losses in the fossil-fuel industries and losing so much of our pensions. Once it all goes wrong, like the bad old days of the ‘80s in the Thatcher era when thousands of miners got thrown on to the scrapheap and there was no work for them, I feel that there is a way out but this will be hard. We must invest in cleaner alternatives to fossil fuels, which is going on right now and invest in jobs for those that will be made redundant, which the unions will take a full view on.

I look at my children and their children’s children, as I am sure you all do, and I don’t want them breathing in the same that I breath in. Pollutants from fossil fuels are shortening my life. So I want them to breath in clean, fresh air, to live longer and not have to pour resources into our beloved NHS, which is in such a mess at the moment.

There is another point here. Imagine how much money the NHS would save if we could all breathe cleaner, fresher air. We are damned if we don't and damned if we do, as the old saying goes. I hope you look into this situation with your hearts and not your wallets. Thank you very much.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alan. Secunder?

MARIE McCORMACK (London): Congress, I second Motion 140. Alan has really said it all. Sometimes you simply have to review and start anew. We can't pretend this is not a problem. The elephant is in the room and it has got the potential to affect our health and the health of generations to come. So let's start a debate on the matter. That is really what we are doing here today, to get the debate rolling. It is something we simply cannot ignore. I second this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. I call Motion 142.

## **PENSIONS MOTION 142**

### **142. PENSIONS**

This Conference calls on the GMB to fight the injustice of local government employers damaging our rights and pensions by their unfair use of pooling arrangements which make our jobs open to TUPE to private employers by reducing their employers' contributions to pensions.

We are humans we are not assets to be bartered like modern day slaves.

M15 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

(*Lost*)

LORRAINE WINSON (North West & Irish Region): Congress, pension pooling was a means for the setting up of larger groups of funds that by merging together would provide a small number of larger funds. In 2015 it was 91, now it is eight. The Tory Government's aim was to cut admin costs. Translated, that meant to cut admin jobs within the pension fund. My branch is concerned that these pools put our pension pots under Government control and not in the control of its members.

One of the main architects of this pooling was Sajid Javid, and we were not surprised when he did not want trade unions on the fund management boards. This alone should make trade unions want to have a degree of control over our own pension funds.

The Government have another use for pooling; to make and continue to make massive cuts to the public sector. Councils contract out services. Schools increasingly tender out services and that is all schools, not just academies. Our second worry is that the Local Government Pension Scheme was made up of local government workers and employers, but they were all local authorities. Now a scheme that had 11 employers now has 800. That is employers, not members. Schools and councils in tendering out

services to private companies have created a huge rise in employers which has an effect on the fund. There are cases of employees being TUPE'd from a council into a school and then into private companies. Small companies taking over do face some difficulties. First, they have got to apply for Admitted Body Status. It is worth saying that TUPE does not cover pensions until admitted status has been granted, and that the death-in-service grant may not be granted without a lengthy legal battle over this period.

Secondly, employers' contributions. This is where a problem lies. Private companies are out for profit. They will cut your terms and conditions quoting economic, technical or organisational reasons. Companies that should pay a higher rate of employee contributions have been sheltered by the pooling effect. This is wrong on so many levels. This is being done all over the country. By keeping the private companies' contributions low, they are encouraging them to come in and take employees' pensions into the private sector. This is pooling in its worst form. My branch's objection is around the unfairness of the process that takes our members into the private sector.

If the CEC opposes this motion, and I believe they are doing, then the GMB must make sure our reps and members are fully aware of these issues and prepare members to sit on and take an active part in local pension management structures. I also hope that someone from the CEC might inform me and my region what a cross-pool forum actually is and what it does, because not one person I have asked so far has a clue. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine. Secunder?

JOHN MERCER (North West & Irish): Good afternoon, Congress and Vice President. Mary, you've finally got me here. Hats off to you, and you have run away. I don't blame you. I am seconding this motion. Thank you, Lorraine, that was a really well put-together proposal. I liked it very much.

I am going to use the term "carpetbaggers". *Carpetbaggers*, for those who are a bit older, was a story written by Harold Robbins about people who went around making lots of money. The actual definition is this: "The term 'carpetbaggers' refers to an outsider relocating to exploit locals. It derives from those northern Americans who moved south after the American Civil War. It referred specifically to opportunistic Northerners who flocked to pillage the occupied Southern states in Robbins novel, and it became a film. The reason I have mentioned that is because what is going on with our pensions is that carpetbaggers are coming along, people coming along and making use of our funds, just like they are doing when they got going into the NHS or anywhere else that the Government were privatising. They are making money, as was rightly stated before. I call them "asset strippers" and "carpetbaggers", obviously. I have made up a little acronym, and it comes from a sentence that I have written: Constructive removal of our assets from our pension funds! The acronym that comes out of that is C.R.A.P. (*Chuckling*)

So I second this motion, and I ask Congress to act on this matter urgently. Today may already be too late. As you probably realise, the 1<sup>st</sup> April has gone. That is the date

by which everyone should have been in a pool. So these people are already active and taking our money away and our pensions. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. I now call on David Hope to respond to the motions on behalf of the CEC.

DAVID HOPE (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking that Composite 12, covering motions 37 and 41, be supported with a qualification; that motion 139 be supported as well with a qualification. Congress, we ask you to oppose Motions 140 and 142.

On Composite 12 and Motion 139 the CEC is asking that both be supported with a qualification. We have seen entire workforce pensions wiped out because of incompetence and greed of company directors, BHS being a prime example. The CEC supports reforming pension legislation so that money that is saved for workers' retirement is as far away from risk as possible. The qualification is that making company directors personally liable would require a drastic legislation change, and that is something the Government would not support us about. We can support other methods, such as greater powers given to trustees to intervene with trigger points, at which shares and dividend payments would be suspended pending resolution of the pension deficit. We can also lobby to amend the Insolvency Act of 1986 to include pension fund deficits.

Congress, on Motion 140 the motion is correct in outlining that pension scheme trustees have a duty to invest in the best interests of the scheme members to ensure that there is enough money within the scheme to provide pensions that were promised to the workers. However, this motion does not take into account the vast number of GMB members who work in the fossil-fuel industry and supply chain or offer any sort of plan to help them transition the many highly-skilled and well-paid jobs into other employment.

Whilst the machinery and engineering of renewable energy components are manufactured outside of Britain, we cannot justify de-investing in our members' jobs until these industries prove that they can support a significant workforce supplying industry with power and heat for our homes. So we simply cannot de-invest in the industries that we have members in.

Finally, Congress, on Motion 142, we are asking you to oppose this motion as well. Pooling arrangements bring flexibility and economies of scale which, in turn, maximise returns for LGPS pools. Pools are now well established and a trade union representation is required on each pool and newly created cross-pool forums in order to protect members' interests. Where employers seek to transfer GMB members to the private sector, we note the precautions afforded by TUPE and the Fair Deal.

Congress, the CEC is asking for you to support Composite 12; Motion 139 with the qualification I have just explained and oppose both Motions 140 and 142 for the reasons I have just set out. I have found out what a cross-pool is, Lorraine. Thank you.



THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. We will now move to the vote. Composite 12, does Birmingham and Northern Regions accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Composite 12 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 138 is being supported by the CEC. All those in favour show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 138 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 139. Does London Region support the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 139 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The CEC is asking you to oppose Motion 140. All those in favour, please show? Against? That is lost.

*Motion 140 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The CEC is also asking you to oppose Motion 142. All those in favour, please show? Against? That is lost.

*Motion 142 was LOST.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Let me tell Congress the new faces on the top table. Next to the General Secretary is Lisa Johnson. Lisa is the Director of External Relations and Training. Sitting next to Lisa is Nell Andrew, who is the National Equality and Inclusion Officer. Welcome to the pair of you. (*Applause*)

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I ask the movers and seconders of Motions 157, 159 and 162 to come to the front of the hall.

### **SSP WAITING DAYS MOTION 157**

#### **157. SSP WAITING DAYS**

This Conference calls on the CEC to lobby this Tory Government to remove the requirement to have the three waiting days before payment of SSP.

B16 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Congress, I move Motion 157 on SSP Waiting Days. Currently the rules for statutory sick pay stipulate that employees do not receive payment for the first three days of sickness. If you have not been off sick for four or more days within the last eight weeks, then the first three days that you would normally have been at work are classed as waiting days. From the fourth day, if you are still off ill, then you qualify for SSP.

For some colleagues and members this poses a problem. For example, if you normally only work one day a week, you have to wait three weeks before you qualify for SSP. We all get ill from time to time through no fault of our own. All this motion asks is that workers are supported from day one. We also have members who do not receive any sick pay from employers, particularly those that fall within the gig economy and are insecure work where the employers will do all they can to avoid paying any sick pay. This means we have, across the union, thousands of members who receive no sick pay at all. Three days out of a five-day week is the difference between survival and poverty. Delegates, remember that a lot of the people working for these employers who refuse to pay sick pay often need five days' pay as a minimum they need to stay alive, to function and to support their families. Please support. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Seconder? *(Formally seconded)*  
We now move to Motion 159.

## **CONTINUAL SERVICE RIGHTS FOR AGENCY WORKERS MOTION 159**

### **159. CONTINUAL SERVICE RIGHTS FOR AGENCY WORKERS**

This Conference is concerned for those long term agency workers who are eventually given an opportunity of direct employment to an organisation in a role that they have been covering longer term via an agency contract.

We call upon the GMB to lobby Government to get additional agency workers protection in so much as employment service can count from day one of an agency contract and transfer into a company similar to a TUPE agreement when such employees are taken into a company's employment directly.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAFF BRANCH**  
Wales & South West Region  
*(Carried)*

CAROL ESTABANEZ (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, I move Motion 159, Continual Service Rights for Agency Workers. Over the years it has been standard practice to use agencies for temporary work, or "managed service providers" for organisations to fill gaps in a fluctuating work environment. In many cases, it has been seen as a means to save money and to trial employees before a company commits to employing them. Some of the temporary labour providers or agencies have been known to be less than fair with workers, and this has caused tenuous relationships between agencies providing staff, their workers and the company that is

using the temporary workers. This method of coping with seasonal or sickness cover has been extended and, in many cases, the same people are covering a job that has not been filled in the normal recruitment way of advertising and interviewing for what is a permanent post.

An agency worker could be in the same location doing the same job for a number of years. The changes in legislation have gone a long way to improve the situation of agency workers. A lot has altered in the way that agencies operate, not least to move away from umbrella companies that have misled and cheated workers and the Government, but there is still a long way to go to give agency workers access to better rights and working conditions. One area that I have noticed recently is that of agency workers having worked through the agency for a number of years in a specific location and job role and then, eventually, been taken on directly by the employer. The new employer has given them their legal basic rights, but what of any perks or recognition that they may have earned? In many organisations there are bonuses for loyalty. This may be an additional pay rise or an increase in the number of holidays that they have incurred. The agency worker would already have earned recognition for knowing the job and would, generally, be helping other newer employees, but no recompense is received as the time spent with the agency does not count. They are regarded as a new employee in a financial way but the employer gets more benefit as they are well versed in the job they do.

In many organisations, especially the public sector, these people would have been given the chance to keep the time served and benefits they have accrued and would otherwise be entitled to. In some cases, it appears that they are worse off by being employed in a permanent position as they are losing out on holiday entitlements and a better pension provision as well as sickness payments and, maybe, even the chances of promotion. But, most importantly, job security. Congress, please support.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Carol. Secunder?

MARIE McDONALD (GMB Wales and South West): Congress, I second Motion 159: Continual Service Rights for Agency Workers. Vice President and delegates, when taking on former agency workers as directly-employed individuals, employers are very clear about when their period of continuous employment began for the purpose of any service-related rights or entitlements. If the worker was engaged upon a permanent contract of employment with the agency, then they will have accrued rights with them up to the point that they transferred. The number of agency workers is probably at the highest level that it has ever been, but they face many challenges in the labour market, including how to work out what rights they actually possess.

Agency workers offer flexibilities to the host employer as they can usually be sourced at short notice and used for anything from just a few hours to much longer periods.

However, the experience of my branch and that of many others is that agency workers are retained for much longer terms, often covering not just for short-term leave, such as sickness, but permanently established positions in the relevant service area. In many cases, the worker proves to be competent and valuable to the end user but remains tied to the agency. Due to pressure from the GMB representatives, public

bodies have sometimes applied a criteria whereby agency workers become direct employees after a certain period of continuous employment has elapsed. Although this type of arrangement is outside the terms of business between the agency and the employer, it has helped in removing any uncertainty and insecurity.

Congress, more than 60% of agency workers would prefer to be in a permanent role. They still lack other basic employment rights, such as occupational sick pay and parental leave and have no notice period or legal recourse in the event of dismissal. We need to lobby to toughen the laws to create more level playing fields for agency workers and providing for continuity of employment from day one has been a priority objective. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. I call Motion 162.

## **CAMPAIGN AND OPPOSE THE SCRAPPING OF THE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE MOTION 162**

### **162. CAMPAIGN AND OPPOSE THE SCRAPPING OF THE WORKING TIME DIRECTIVE**

This Conference is to oppose the scrapping of the Working Time Directive by hard Brexit members of the Tory party.

Ministers including Boris Johnson and Michael Gove are plotting to scrap the Working Time Directive, according to numerous media reports. This is a crucial piece of EU law that protects working people – and which working people were promised would still apply after Brexit.

If Johnson and Gove succeed, 7 million workers could lose their guaranteed legal right to paid holidays. That includes nearly 5 million women and many workers on part-time and zero-hours contracts.

**Here's what the rules actually say:**

**48 hour limit on average weekly working time is generally calculated over 17 week average but a 26 week average is used for some sectors, including hospitals. Unions can negotiate the average period up to 52 weeks if workers want it.**

**48 hour average limit on night work, in the case of dangerous work the limit is understandably tighter applying to a single week averaging and a right to annual free health checks for night workers.**

**One day off a week, or two days off a fortnight.**

**11 hours rest between working days.**

**20 minutes break if the working day is longer than six hours.**

**4 weeks paid annual leave (Britain has gone further by raising the entitlement to 5.6 weeks but uniquely in Europe, we have no separate right to time off for paid bank holidays).**

Stripped of the laws that restrain them, bad bosses could force their staff to work excessive hours, far above the current limit of 48 hours a week. Lunch and rest breaks would be under threat too, as would health and safety protections for night workers.

Workers in sectors like health and transport are more likely to make dangerous mistakes if they're overworked and exhausted – so we should all worry about the impact of taking away these legal rights.

Since these rules were introduced, in 1998, they have transformed working life – and family life too. Everyone deserves the guarantee of time off to rest, relax and spend with family and friends.

And it's not just about the Working Time Directive. If Johnson, Gove and their allies win on this, they'll surely be emboldened to come after other hard-won rights. Those secured by the EU include parental leave, time off for family emergencies, equal pay for women and equal rights for part-time, fixed-term and agency workers.

During the referendum campaign, Vote Leave promised Britain's workers that their rights from the EU would be safe after Brexit. In the year and a half since, the Prime Minister has repeatedly stressed her desire to 'protect and extend' workers' rights – included in the Conservative Manifesto.

So Theresa May's promise is now being put to the test. Will she keep her word? Or is she a hostage to the hard Brexiteers in her cabinet?

Brexit promised ordinary working people more control over their lives, not a draining away of power to bad bosses and big corporations. No one voted for that. No one voted to be forced to work excessive hours. No one voted to lose out on their paid holidays or their lunch breaks.

The Prime Minister can take a stand for working people by standing up to the rogue Brexiteers in her cabinet – and putting all options for a final deal back on the table. Hardworking Brits deserve nothing less.

C80 DUDLEY BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

ROY PERRY (Birmingham & West Midlands): President and Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move Motion 162: Campaign and oppose the scrapping of the Working Time Directive. While Brexit negotiations are in full swing regarding trade agreements, border arrangements and our relationship with Europe, big, bad Boris and smarmy Gove — you might recognise

them *here* — have plotted to have our rights removed. The Working Time Directive is a key element of workers’ rights that we can ill afford to lose. There are other not-so-high profile Brexit Tories who also side with Johnson and Gove. Apart from Johnson and Gove, Priti Patel: “There would be huge benefits to slashing the burden of EU employment legislation”. Benefits for who, I ask? Not the hardworking employees of Britain. Mrs. Patel sees our rights as a burden. Andrea Leadsom said: “I envisage there being absolutely no regulation whatsoever, no minimum wage, no paternity rights, no unfair dismissal rights, no pension rights for the smallest companies which are trying to get off the ground”. So in Mrs Leadsom’s world workers could be hired and fired at will, bosses could pay what they want and exploit who they want. My favourite is no maternity or paternity rights. That is a clear attack on family life. Even the Victorians had respect for a family life.

My all-time favour quote comes from Michael Gove himself: “Scrapping the Working Time Directive is what is taking control is all about”. This quote comes from a man who has made a pig’s ear of every position he has held in government. Ask the school support staff.

Our learned friends in the British Medical Association also seem to agree with us. The BMA Council Chair, Dr. Chaand Nagpaul, wrote a letter to the Prime Minister highlighting the dangers of removing the Working Time Directive. He said: “The Working Time Directive protects medical staff from the dangers of overwork whilst protecting patients from over-tired doctors and nurses”. The full letter can be seen on the BMA website.

Three million workers in the UK have already signed the opt-out to the 48-hour working week, but the Working Time Directive contains more than just a 48-hour limit. If the Working Time Directive was removed, the following would have more of a detrimental effect: 11 hours uninterrupted rest; a weekly rest period of 24-hours uninterrupted or at the employer’s choice of 48 hours per fortnight; a shift break of 20 minutes when working more than six hours per shift; eight hours maximum average normal hours for night workers in every 24 hour period; and four weeks annual paid leave increasing to 5.6 under UK domestic rules. These people need stopping in their tracks, so it is time to campaign and propose the Working Time Directive. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roy. Secunder? Is it formally? (*Agreed*) Thank you. We will now move to the vote. The CEC is supporting all of these three motions. I will take them altogether. That is Motions 157, 159 and 162. All those in favour, please show? Any against? Those are carried.

*Motion 157 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 159 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 162 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, a request has been made to have hand rails added to the access point to the stage. Unfortunately, we cannot make this adjustment but if anyone needs assistance in getting on to the stage, could they please let the colleagues at the names desk know when they book in as they can help them on to the stage. Thank you.

We will now move to have the first of our Regional Success stories, and we will show three videos: Scotland, Yorkshire and Southern. *(Video shown) (Applause)*

## **CEC STATEMENT ON POLITICAL STRATEGY AND LABOUR PARTY REFORM**

### **CEC Statement Political Strategy Update and Labour Party Reform**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2012, GMB Congress passed a ground breaking political strategy to put working people back at the heart of the Labour Party.
- 1.2 Over the last 6 years, GMB has worked to increase participation in politics, to support members standing to be candidates, councillors and MPs. We have campaigned in elections, influenced changes to legislation and policy for the benefit of our members, taken GMB issues to parliaments in the UK and Europe, and we have continued to campaign in local government as continued austerity impacts on services and communities.
- 1.3 But also in those 6 years, much has changed in Labour – in part as a result of the work GMB has done to elect politicians who share our values. The Labour leadership are now proudly trade union. We work in partnership with Shadow Secretaries of State and Shadow Ministers on what a real agenda for government looks like. The 2017 Labour manifesto would have made practical improvements to the lives of GMB members and millions of working people.
- 1.4 In the last year alone, in Parliament our members have given evidence to the BEIS select committee on precarious work and fake self employment, making headlines on the back of it. Utilities workers from the NW have lobbied MPs, our members in Southern Region have spoken to MPs and the Shadow Health Secretary about the shocking situation at Coperforma, resulting in an increased profile of these industrial issues, greater awareness and mounting pressure for change. Reps attended a debate on defence and shipbuilding held by a GMB backed MP. Our Parliamentary group heard about the Making It campaign and signed up our manufacturing pledge, while MP after MP signed up to end the Pay Pinch. At the end of last year, a Yorkshire region campaign came to fruition when the government gave in, and said foster carers would be entitled to 30 hours of free child care. When Bombardier jobs were at risk, we lobbied at a European level and ensured detailed evidence we submitted to the Northern Ireland Select Committee. GMB MPs and Peers consistently raise issues affecting our members inside Parliament and campaign alongside us across the country, in every region and nation.
- 1.5 In Wales the Welsh Labour Government, working in Social Partnership with Trade Unions & Employers, via the Workforce Partnership Council and the Economic Partnership Forum. Crucial policies on everything from blocking the Trade Union Act in Wales, to gaining better protections for care workers; from giving schools support staff a right to training through to maintaining Union Learning funding have been delivered through political action.
- 1.6 We are making a practical difference through politics.

1.7 Congress reaffirms our commitment to the Labour Party, to putting working people at the heart of the Party we formed, and fighting for Labour governments at all levels.

1.8 With so much accomplished, and with the Labour Party looking at how to change and improve Party structures on the back of hugely increased membership, it is time to update our political strategy and re-state our purpose within Labour.

## **2. Party Reform**

2.1 A vibrant, flourishing Party with over half a million member's needs structures and resources fit for the modern era. But those structures must always include and respect the collective voice and decision making processes of the trade unions that founded our Party.

2.2 Labour was founded on the principle of collectivism, and giving a voice to working people through politics. The clue is in the name: Labour Party.

2.3 Labour Boroughs like Barking and Dagenham where GMB have been subject to threats from the labour council that the local party "will break the GMB". It's this attitude that steers our members away from Labour Support.

2.4 GMB will never cede ground to those who believe individualism and online polls are a replacement for the collective voice of working people. We will staunchly defend the collective voice of trade union members within the Labour Party, and accept no dilution of our members' voice within Labour's structures and policy making process.

2.5 This includes within the selection and re-selection process for Parliamentary candidates. Union branches must continue to have a say in who represents us, which is why we will continue to oppose mandatory re-selection of MPs which seeks to dilute the voice of unions within that process.

2.6 In this vein, we will ask the Party to assess the effectiveness and practicality of the affiliated supporters system. The system requires resource to administer and has not led to the sort of engagement envisaged in the Collins Review. We must look at how our collective voice is best heard within leadership contests in a way that gives members a bigger say, but is also cost effective for the Union.

2.7 However, there are areas where the Party needs to change to better reflect both trade union and party membership – this is an area a number of congress motions have sought to address.

2.8 As part of the reform process, we will argue for proper representation for young workers, for devolved parties and real engagement between the Labour Party and GMB at branch level.

2.9 We will argue for new rules to strengthen the relationship between Labour politicians and trade unions with a requirement for at least one year's trade union membership for all candidates standing for public office, and to insist that all Labour Politicians, at whatever level of Government, remain members of an appropriate Trade Union.



- 2.10 We will work with Labour to breathe new life into our local links and ensure the affiliation process at all levels works for working people and the Party alike - from the NEC to Regional and branch level, always ensuring the voice of our members is heard and that there is a link between our members and structures and the appropriate Party unit.
- 2.11 Part of this will be ensuring that there are transparent, and uniform, party structures and standing orders across CLPs, that aid, rather than limit, participation.
- 2.12 We will push for more and better ways for trade unionists to get involved in the Party and for all local parties to have a Branch Trade Union Officer.
- 2.13 We will also push for increased accountability of Council Leaders to the Party they represent.
- 2.14 Hundreds of thousands of GMB members' jobs – and services we all rely on - depend on decisions made in local government. Many Council Leaders are working hard in the face of unprecedented cuts to local government. However, in some areas there is frustration and anger among GMB members at the behaviour of Council Leaders who would seek to use austerity as a cloak for driving down pay, terms and conditions and to privatise services. Others have sought to use their position to disrupt or prevent union organisation or recognition, with one Council Leader in Barking and Dagenham making it his stated aim to attack GMB and our members.
- 2.15 Council Leaders, who are representing the Party we helped to found, should not be allowed to attack our members' pay, terms and conditions or refuse to recognise GMB where we have a legitimate presence, in the name of our own Party.
- 2.16 Labour under Jeremy Corbyn has worked with local government unions to develop a process for addressing disputes within the Party. This processes must be strengthened, with real consequences for Councillors who refuse to act in line with the values and principles of our Party.
- 2.17 At every level in the Labour Party, those who make decisions in our name are elected - from Young Labour to the NEC, from Regional Board to elected Mayors, right through to the leader and deputy leader of the Party. It is time that trade union and Labour members have a say about who leads in local government. GMB will push for Party reform that sees Labour Council leaders elected by Electoral College, and for the Labour Party to put in place a code of conduct for Labour Councils. Our Party was founded on a set of principles that must be upheld in all levels of government.
- 2.18 BAME Labour must be reformed - while maintaining its electoral college structure - so that BAME members have a proper say in its structures, and as a result in the Labour Party. This opportunity must be taken to increase levels of diversity within the Party and political representation.
- 2.19 Young Labour must also adapt. With over 100,000 young members, the youth movement needs support and resource to organise and channel the enthusiasm and commitment of those from all backgrounds into tangible change for workers, communities and to see Labour in power. While students are an important part of youth organisation, so are young workers (some of whom are students too). Much more must be done to ensure the voice of

young workers is heard, and that party structures don't inadvertently present barriers to participation. So too must we ensure that Young Labour activists understand that role and need for collective decision making in our movement – too often the call for OMOV is done without regard for trade union structures, processes and democracy.

2.20 GMB will work with Young Labour to educate and organise young workers so that the youth movement is just that – one movement.

2.21 GMB has, does and always will speak up for our members politically both inside and outside the Labour Party. We've been there since the beginning of our Party, and as families do we will disagree, but the 2017 election manifesto showed what is on the table: real, lasting and practical change for millions of working people, their families and communities.

2.22 GMB wants to see an open Labour Party that faces outwards, speaking to the public not ourselves.

### **3. Political development of GMB members**

3.1 Currently, there are almost 100 GMB MPs, hundreds of councillors and thousands of activists across the country. That is in part thanks to the work done nationally and regionally to support our members from the first time they consider standing, through to speaking on the floor of the House of Commons. But standing for office is not for everyone, nor is it the only way to lead in politics.

3.2 Only 650 people will ever be an MP at any given time - and not all of them will be Labour.

3.3 GMB members have the ability and want to play many different roles, be that chairing a constituency, speaking on platforms or in the press about policies that help our members, in community organising or training fellow GMB members to get engaged.

3.4 Working through TULO and across the union movement, we have trained and developed our people to be leaders in politics. That must continue.

3.5 GMB reaffirms our commitment to train and support members who have union values at their core, in standing for public office, but also the long term political development of GMB members to ensure we have a voice in all aspects of political life.

3.6 Congress asks the union's political team to:

- a. Continue to run candidate development training and to support GMB candidates who want to stand for office
- b. To develop a longer term training package that will be available to members nominated by GMB regions to help GMB Political Leaders to become well rounded, fully trained political activists who can make the case for GMB members and the issues we care about. A political curriculum should be developed that begins at general awareness of why politics is important, through to how to stand for political office.

- c. To campaign to abolish political restrictions on local government workers standing for public office that effectively ban our local government members from representing their areas politically.
- d. Coordinate political action to elect Labour representatives with our regions and activists, supporting and growing activism through training, communication strategies, social media activity and collaborating with the Labour Party on community organising and workplace projects.

#### **4. Making a difference through policy**

- 4.1 When something happens in the workplace, we organise industrially, but often there is a political and policy solution too.
- 4.2 The Labour Party was formed as the political wing of the trade union movement, GMB will always ensure that the industrial needs of our members are at the heart of what and how we do things within the Labour Party.
- 4.3 GMB's political strategy will continue to ensure we play not just a full role within the Labour Party, but that we put the issues that matter to the lives of GMB members on the agenda at all levels, and to push for practical change.
- 4.4 GMB will continue to link the union's industrial agenda with political and policy action in all administrations - from local government, through devolved Governments through to the EU.
- 4.5 We expect and welcome the support of GMB backed politicians in achieving those aims.

*(Carried)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, the CEC would now like to present to Congress its statement on Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform and to do this I will call on Jim Clarke, the CEC speaker from the Midland Region.

JIM CLARKE (CEC, Public Services): Vice President, Congress, to say the last few years have been politically turbulent would be an understatement. From the Labour Party Leadership contest to Brexit, from Trump to the snap general election, to say a week is a long time in politics, well, these last two years have felt like a lifetime.

I am here as a proud Labour Party member. I joined because I saw the value of working people having a voice in their services and their communities. We were there at the founding and we have been there through thick and thin. I remember the jubilation of Tony Blair walking into Downing Street and some of the fantastic policies Labour delivered: the minimum wage, maternity rights, investment in our NHS, schools, and hospitals. I also suffered through those years where I felt like my party had left me behind: PFI, war in Iraq, privatisation, tuition fees. That was not my Labour but I was still Labour. It was our party and it was created by and for working people and that is how it will stay. This statement reaffirms not just our commitment to our party but to the collective voice of the trades union Movement within it.

There are those who say that unions have too much power. They do not say that when they are taking our money, do they? We do believe in democracy within our party, that is why this paper calls for an expansion of the electoral college. It cannot be right that every senior position in the Labour Party is elected except for council leaders. Many council leaders do a marvellous job, working with the unions as austerity cuts services and funding to the bone, but there are some Labour council leaders who, quite frankly, should not be allowed to wear a Labour rosette. If you want to be a Labour councillor you should adhere to Labour values and, if you do not or will not, then it should be within the gift of the trade union and party members to demand a change. Union-busting council leaders who do so in the name of the Labour Party should be put on notice that we will always have our members' backs industrially and politically too and we have been doing this across the spectrum.

I was delighted to see Labour Party policy on shipbuilding a few weeks ago on the back of dozens of GMB reps attending a meeting in Parliament to say how important it is to their livelihoods. We changed the law with our campaign to protect the protectors, we delivered free childcare to foster carers, we have reps in the gig economy telling MPs straight to their faces what the working world is really like.

GMB makes a difference for our members through politics and we make a difference with Labour for our members. Congress, please support this statement to give trade members a proper say in the Labour Party and to reaffirm our commitment to the collective voice of the trades union Movement: we achieve more through our collective endeavour than we achieve alone. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jim. Would any of the regions like to put up a speaker? If they do, could they come down to the front, please? We will start with Birmingham.

SAM FAGAN (Birmingham & West Midlands): Speaking in support of the CEC Statement, Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform.

Vice President, Congress, our relationship with the Labour Party is historical. For over 100 years the Labour Party has been the political voice of the union Movement born out of a need for working people's voices to be heard. GMB has been part of the Labour Movement from the start and we must never shy away from its history. Over the years, we have had disagreements but we have also had huge successes and our political strategy is key to a Labour Party that supports trade unions, their members, and their values.

As Tory austerity continues, it is our members who are suffering and we cannot afford to take a back seat on these issues. We need to be at the forefront of the political Movement now more than ever. From mental health matters to a real living wage for all workers over 18, ending period poverty, to a fair deal for care sector workers, GMB is writing policy that will benefit our members industrially and socially. The Labour Party is our means to push that policy further linking industrial aims with political goals.

We must continue to educate our members on why the Labour Party is so important and we must always work to ensure that all of our members have the opportunity to

pursue their political ambitions. As a local government worker myself, I am, like my colleagues, restricted from running for public office. Lifting these restrictions would allow many politically experienced GMB members to represent areas that they know well and have good connections in. By allowing more members into politics the more we can shape policy from within. Training our members for political office is key to this and that is why our political strategy is so important. Every GMB MP, councillor, CLP member, every GMB member who joins Labour allows us to create real change. We must support our members at every level on their political journey.

As a founding member of my region's young members group, Birmingham Youth, and former chair of the GMB Young Members Network, I also believe that it is important to recognise the recent shift within the Labour Party. Thousands of young people have joined Labour over the last few years but are not joining trade unions at the same rate. With this political strategy we can bring young members to GMB and ensure that all young workers are supported. We need to look to the future of our Movement and a strong political strategy will do that.

Congress, our members deserve a government that treats them with respect and decency, a government that reflects their needs and wants, to make real change we must take part. Through a strong political strategy we can and we will put our members at the heart of the Labour Party and at the heart of politics in this country. Congress, I urge you to support this statement. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: London Region.

BRENDAN DUFFIELD (London): Vice President, Chair, Congress, speaking in support of the CEC Political Statement but we would like to raise additional points on the strategy.

We need to continue to work at local levels, however, there are some local councils who have constantly attacked the trade union and disrupted the ability to organise. What is needed is a full recognised local government dispute procedure where trade unions can go to the party with disputes in a Labour council and trade union branches. The dispute procedures must have the power to set standards within the Labour Party which is all binding.

Over the last few years the GMB and the CLPs, like London and Dagenham, have come under attack. There have been disgraceful statements made by and from the Labour Leader saying they are going to make it their mission to break the GMB. We have been subject to gutter politics from a Labour council – yes, a Labour council – and rather than work with the GMB they continue to try and destroy us and our collective voice. It would seem some in Barking have short memories. It was not long ago that the Labour Group were happy to take GMB money and resources to ensure they were re-elected and the BNP and UKIP were kept out.

The GMB will pursue any attack on its members with retaliation that could disable the Labour Party locally. Let's be clear. We will never concede or run away from a fight and attack on our members irrespective of who is running the council. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. Midland? Midland, no one speaking? Northern? North West.

BILLY GOULDING (North West & Irish): President, Congress, speaking in favour of the CEC Statement: Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform.

Congress, we in our branch initially had concerns with regard to funding to the Labour MPs and their party when we have supported them in the past only to witness them doing nothing to support our values or our trade union policies. However, after reading this report, we can see what the GMB and the CEC are trying to do. The report states that over the last six years much has changed in the Labour Party as a result of what the GMB has done to elect politicians who share our values. We need to ensure those MPs who we support continue to support us, the GMB, and its members, in its fight against Tory policies which aim to attack our members' working conditions, pensions, and lives. We support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Billy. Scotland. Nobody? Southern.

EMILY BROTHERS (Southern): Emily Brothers, and Truffle (*dog*), Southern Region, new delegates. (*Applause*) Truffle is going to let me speak this time!

I welcome the political statement from the CEC with some caveats. I welcome, for example, the broad brush of the approach but have some concerns about the breadth around its diversity. So, I welcome the calls, for example, for strengthening BME Labour and Young Labour. However, there are other social societies like LGBT Labour and Disability Labour that also need attention from GMB. I think also that it is important for our political strategy to reflect what is said elsewhere on the agenda in the equalities statement, which very much talks about mainstream, and this political statement perhaps falls short at this stage.

I am also encouraged by what is said in section 4 about training but I think it is important as part of that mainstreaming to look at how our education and training will reach out to under-represented groups, particularly disabled people. That is important for improving the political participation of under-represented groups.

Congress, politics should be about the many and not the few. Disabled people are part of the many in our population, some 18% of us, but less than 1% of us are represented in the House of Commons. If it was to be truly representative there would be 125 of us across political parties in the chamber. That is not the case and GMB has a role in supporting disabled people to make a difference.

The Government froze recently the access to elected office that supports equipment and support services for disabled people standing for elected office. I took out a judicial review with support of More United. The Minister, the Tory Minister panicked over it and has put forward a quarter-of-a-million pound for the next year but we need a long-term solution and we need GMB and across the political Movement actually to bring about change so that we are clear about the contribution GMB can make to the political lives of disabled people.

Our Movement, the disability Movement, has a slogan, *Nothing about us without us*, but that is not the reality in politics for disabled people today. As the Southern Region vice said a short time ago, it is time for us to make a difference. That is what GMB is good at achieving and that is what we need to do with disabled people, to provide an authentic voice. It is no wonder that disabled people and other groups in society are turned off by politics because the system does not reflect who they are. We cannot, Congress, take the votes of disabled people for granted, that would be a dangerous thing to do. We need to reach out to disabled people and other groups like LGBT people, and if we do that in a way that involves and includes in a practical as well as policy way, then we can achieve a Labour government, a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn that will deliver politics for the many and not the few. I support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Emily. South Western.

DAN WALSH (GMB Wales & South West): Chair, Congress, first time here at Congress. *(Applause)* I rise to support the CEC Statement on Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform, but before I start I would like to take a second to pay tribute to the outgoing Labour First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, for all of his work and for his leadership in showing what can be achieved in social partnership between governments and trade unions. *Diolch*, Carwyn.

Congress, the Labour Movement is bigger than just one person. Our traditions and our achievements belong to us all. Since 2015, we have seen the Labour Party grow beyond our wildest expectations and while this is certainly welcome we must never compromise on our founding principles. We are a modern and dynamic Movement but also one steeped in history.

Congress, this statement is an excellent statement. I do not agree with every single point but it does unambiguously commit this union to fight for some very important principles. Every day elected members at all levels, and their staff, work incredibly hard to advance our values. They should be able to take forward our priorities in Parliament free from abuse and threats to their livelihoods.

It is because of our traditions as a Labour Movement, colleagues, that we must oppose mandatory reselection of MPs. It is a concept designed to hold the proverbial gun to the heads of the servants of our Movement. We have always fought to end undue influence over our members and it is in this spirit that we must oppose mandatory selection and respond to all of our party reform proposals. We must also ensure that individualists do not weaken our collective democratic voice and this includes in Wales. Online polls cannot replace our structures and our members must continue to have a stake in the work of the Labour Party.

Congress, our Movement has clearly defined values and objectives. Our Movement is not an umbrella Movement for anyone that has ever had a left wing thought in their life. The Labour Party is the political wing of the organised labour Movement and it must always remain so. Collectivism and solidarity are not optional extras and, colleagues, it is incumbent on us to do the right thing, to lead from the front and not bow to the new form of populism.

It is incumbent on our national officers who sit on national committees of the Labour Party to do the right thing, to stand up to anti-Semitism and to defend the rights of ordinary men and women who fund this Movement. Please support this statement and make sure that this union does its part to lead from the front. *Diolch. (Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dan. Yorkshire.

KAREN ROWLING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Vice President, Congress, first-time delegate, first-time speaker, supporting the CEC Statement: Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform. *(Applause)*

The Labour Party was built by the trade unions and this is something that nobody in the Labour Party should ever lose sight of. Our links are as important today as they ever were faced with a Tory government, one that is currently ruling without a majority, who are hell-bent on diluting and eroding the rights of workers and the influence of the trade unions. We must stand firm together as a collective and fight to ensure that every working person in this country has representation both from their union and also a strong opposition in government from the Labour Party.

We have seen what can be accomplished by joint working between the GMB and the Labour Party and we must build on this. In the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region we are fortunate to have many GMB MPs who work collaboratively and positively to ensure that the aims and objectives of the union are reflected in the work they do in Parliament.

We are proud that it was our region whose successful campaign forced the Government to agree to foster carers receiving 30 hours of free childcare through the hard work and dedication of Rachel Harrison and the team. This is an example of what can be achieved when the GMB and the Labour Party work together.

It has to be recognised, though, that this is not always the case and Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region support strengthening the structures to ensure that all elected members in the Labour Party hold the same aims and values of the trades union Movement. We must ensure the end of council leaders and councillors who whilst trying to balance the books in these times of unprecedented austerity and cuts lose sight of the people they were elected to represent and seek to take away vital pay and conditions.

At all levels of the Labour Party there is a place for the union Movement and Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region support the continuation of the training and support offered to members who want to run for public office. Over the last few years, we have seen a rise in the number of MPs elected from less traditional backgrounds. Gone are the days of Parliament being full of the so-called elite. Thanks to the work and encouragement of the GMB, we now have MPs from normal working class backgrounds, MPs who understand their constituents because they grew up with them and have compassion and understanding for their needs and their struggles and a better place to stand up and shout to ensure they get a fair deal.



The work of the GMB within the Labour Party should be celebrated and encouraged because who understands the needs of the workers more than the union that is there to represent them. Congress, we support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thanks, colleague. Congress, we will now go to the vote. The CEC is looking for your support for the statement. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*The CEC Statement on Political Strategy and Labour Party Reform was ADOPTED*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I would like now to introduce our first guest speaker, who has been invited to address Congress by the Southern Region. Last time we gathered here in Brighton the council was under a Green Party control and we all know how that turned out. Now we are back here under a Labour-controlled authority and it is my great pleasure to introduce the new Leader of Brighton Council, Daniel Yates. (*Applause*)

**DANIEL YATES, LEADER OF BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL,  
ADDRESS TO CONGRESS**

DANIEL YATES: Vice President, Congress, hello and welcome to Brighton & Hove and I hope it as sunny as Paul claimed it was going to be. It was not necessarily when I walked in, I have to say.

I am Daniel Yates, Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council, and can I just add that I am really proud to be the first Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council to be invited here to attend your Congress. (*Applause*) I am not a delegate and not a member. It was one of the very first invitations that I received. (*Call of "Give him a form!"*) Patience. After becoming the Leader of the City Council elect I received a very kind invitation to come and speak to you and I really do want to share what we think we are doing and how we think we can work well with the GMB, well with the members, and really deliver the best possible public services for those who live, work, and learn in this great city.

I am only two weeks into this new role so I cannot really claim that I have gained any particular wisdom or any great particular insight but that is okay because I know there is an awful lot of collective wisdom and insight in this room and outside in your membership that you are too willing to share, and I am all too willing to listen, to be honest. I need everybody's wisdom in order to be able to lead this city out of the position that we are in at the moment.

I know the GMB will always be there. Sometimes you will be behind us, sometimes you will be beside us, and sometimes you may be in front of us, either leading us or looking at us across the table, but either way I welcome that role. I welcome everything that you do. There is nothing better than knowing that we have an engaged group of trade unionists within our workforce. Actually, that gives me the confidence that we can learn from every single member of our workforce and if we are not learning from every single member of our workforce, then we are not really doing the things that people want, are we?

So, I am only two weeks in. I am only a fraction older. I am only a fraction greyer, certainly no wiser, but I have only been a city councillor since 2015 so I have only really got three years of experience being a city councillor but I have already learnt an awful lot about how the GMB works. I learnt very, very quickly that your members drive everything. I learnt that you are not a trade union that is going to sit back. You are an active campaigning union.

I was really proud to work alongside Southern members and officials to support them in the campaign when our privatised patient transport services across Sussex were being called to account for their abysmal record in delivering for patients and delivering their promises to staff alike. I was more than delighted when that private contractor handed back the service and that service moved back into an NHS ambulance trust who took on that work. That is something that you should all be proud of in this room. *(Applause)* I learnt a lot from that whole campaign. I learnt especially that once ambulance crews start a sit-in in a council meeting it is very, very difficult to shift them, and it is impossible to ignore them.

I have also learnt, unlike other trade unions, the GMB does not try to tell its members what to do, what to think, when to jump. So when the GMB starts asking questions about the impact of schools cuts or raising concerns about the viability of new services or changes to services, I know as a Local Council Leader that I had better shut up and listen because that is the voice of the members coming through. That is the voice of the people that are delivering those services day in, day out.

I have also learnt that the GMB is not afraid to put its members' money to good use. So when the gig economy raises its head and Uber comes knocking at the door, I can be sure that front and centre to any campaign to ensure that there is a level playing field is going to be GMB expertise, GMB support, GMB resources. The GMB are going to be there supporting their members' interests.

Anyway, we are two-and-a-half weeks in to me being Leader of the council. It is a daunting task in the current times of austerity, as you have just been discussing, and even I as a Labour Council Leader cannot promise to reverse the dramatic impact of such prolonged attack on all of our local private finances and our local public services. Everything about this city is under attack from austerity, but I am proud of how we, in Brighton & Hove, over the last three years as a Labour Council have made sure that every decision that we have taken is rooted in the best interests of residents and the best outcomes for the city.

That is why in Brighton & Hove we have seen every single children's centre protected so far. *(Applause)* We have seen no library closures so far. In fact, we have increased the opening times of our libraries, at times when other councils are slashing library services. We have increased our investment in social care services, protecting, most important, the most vulnerable people living in our city, and we have seen not one single compulsory redundancy across city council services in the last three years. *(Applause)*

I might say I am no wiser than I was just over a fortnight ago but, to be honest, I have learnt a couple of important lessons. The first lesson I have learnt over the last few weeks is that people are very quick to blame council staff for the failings of council

services. I do not just mean the usual suspects, like the Tory councillor in Hove who only last week was saying parts of our City Council services were too heavily unionised. To be honest, that is just par for the course for some people.

It is also the Green Party's councillors, and their former councillors, who have a problem with collective action. They have called the links between the Labour Party and the trades union Movement a vested interest as if that is a bad thing. I think that is around solidarity, isn't it? I seem to remember it being written throughout the whole history of the labour Movement. Our shared values, our joint working across the last century have delivered the biggest pieces of social change imaginable yet those previous Greens want it labelled as a vested interest. As if that wasn't bad enough, it is not just previous Green councillors, it is the leader of the Green Group on Brighton & Hove City Council who was quick enough to suggest that there was a work to rule or unofficial action going on at our City Clean Depot.

Now, those are just unreasonable attacks, especially coming from the same Green Party, who, when they were allegedly running the Council for four years, managed to force GMB members all the way to the picket line and at the same time had their own councillors, and even their very own MP for the city, visiting the picket line supporting the striking workers. That is the two-faces of the Green Party in this city and I do not know if the Green Party in local government represents friend or foe to the unions and our staff, but I do know that to residents of the city it is still represents abject failure, failure of leadership, failure of delivery, failure of all of their promises.

So from all of that hideous party political point scoring I have learnt one very big lesson. When the fringe elements and the dodgy local political parties start attacking your workers, there is only one thing to do, show some solidarity. That is why I have brought two pieces of paper out today. I brought my speech and I brought my GMB membership application form. (*Applause*) Although I was listening to your speeches earlier – I am keeping the pen – (*Laughter*) – it is because I believe in unity and solidarity. That is why when the GMB stands up for its members I shut up and listen. That is why when the GMB is forced to take action to protect its members I will be there to help where I can. When the Tories and the Greens start to blame unions and the workforce for the failings of the Council, I will stand front and centre with you. When politicians are throwing the blame at staff, they are forgetting that you, our colleagues, are part of the solution, not part of the problem, and the unions are part of the solution, not part of the problem.

That is why I first joined a trade union in 1994. That is why I joined the Labour Party in 1995. That is why I joined the GMB, ooh, about a minute ago: better late than never. I am proud to lead Brighton & Hove City Council and as part of the Labour and Cooperative Parties Group I am proud of working alongside a wide range of trade union colleagues. I am proud of the work that you all do. I am proud of the unions that you are representing and most especially today I am proud to be applying to be a member of Mary Turner's trade union. Thank you very much, Congress. I am listening. (*Applause*)

*(Presentation of gift amidst applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will move on. Could I ask for Motion 228, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, Composite 18, to come to the front, please, and the mover of 228 from North West & Irish to go to the rostrum? Withdrawn? Thank you very much.

*Motion 228 was WITHDRAWN.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 231, speaker to the rostrum, please.

## **VERIFICATION OF PARTY POLITICAL MATERIALS MOTION 231**

### **231. VERIFICATION OF PARTY POLITICAL MATERIALS**

This Conference says you cannot by law, hold a Party in power to the promises that they made in their manifesto. If circumstances change they have to change their plans.

However we should be able to hold them responsible for statements that they make whilst they are trying to get us to vote for them. We have a right to know that a statistic that is being used comes from YouGov or it comes from the Sun or indeed if it is made up.

This Conference calls for all published materials used in manifestos and promotional material for all parties to be verifiable at the point of publication and that information to be freely and easily available to all.

**BARKING & DAGENHAM LGO BRANCH**  
London Region

*(Carried)*

MARK WATSON (London): Vice President, Congress, I work in a museum as an Education Officer. My training was in archaeology so I work with objects from under the ground. It is also in archives and I work with old written material. When I use these objects and the documents, what I am after is the hard facts that I can get from them. I can then weave these into a story and that is how I actually do my job. So, with this sort of background it came as a surprise to me to find out there is little or no control over facts in election material.

Now, election material has a definition and it means “any published material that can reasonably be regarded as intended to influence voters to vote for or against a political party or a category of candidates”. The important words here are “intended to influence”. There are rules about conduct. They cover what is called the imprint and that means that we have to be told who is publishing the material, and who is behind it. They also cover false statements about the personal character or conduct of the candidates. The Electoral Commission says, “In general political campaign materials in the UK is not regulated and it is a matter for voters to decide on the basis of such material whether they consider it accurate or not.”

They do not want to police it and I am not surprised. It would be extremely difficult for them to check the truth of every statement. I accept that but I feel that with fake news on the agenda we should go further. I think that the candidates should do the leg work. What I want is for each statement or fact that is made there should be a corresponding reference to an accessible primary source that I can look at because I am a bit of a geek. I mean accessible, not hidden in a report that no one can see.

If somebody mentions the size of British strawberries in Europe in the same sentence, then that statement needs to be documented in an EU directive. If a photograph is published, then it needs to show exactly what the caption says that it shows. If they use a statistic it needs to be from a publicly available site, and so on. All this information has to be easily accessible on a website.

I do not want to touch the dreams and aspirations of future MPs. I know that you cannot hold a party to task for their manifesto. I know that circumstances change and that what you can do or say you want to do before you get in power may not be the same thing that you can do when you get in. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century when we are all besieged by information, you have to make it a lot easier for us.

This Congress, therefore, calls for all published materials used in manifestos and promotional materials for all parties to be verifiable at the point of publication and the information to be freely and easily available for all. Congress, I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mark. Secunder?

BRENDAN DUFFIELD (London): In my household, we call the *Telegraph* the *Torygraph*.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: A seconder for 231? Formally? Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 232 mover?

## **MISUSE OF THE MEDIA MOTION 232**

### **232. MISUSE OF THE MEDIA**

This Conference demands that Ministers should not use newspapers or media that support their Party to make policy announcements.

When Theresa May writes for the *Telegraph* and tells us of hew new policies she is making a Conservative supporting newspaper and organ of government.

The government is not her government and it represents more than just the readers of the *Telegraph*. The government is Her Majesty's and it represents everyone, not just those that voted for it therefore, it is incongruous that she gives us her ideas and policies through the medium of one newspaper. This information should be made available to all.

Prime Minister's and members of the Cabinet should not be writing about government in restricted media, if they must do so then the information should be released to all media simultaneously, free of charge. There should be no more scoops.

Conference therefore calls on a campaign to end this.

## BARKING & DAGENHAM LGO BRANCH London Region

(*Carried*)

MARK WATSON (London): Sorry for that, we have just confused everybody! Vice President, Congress, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century a Church of England vicar was reported to have stood in his pulpit and said, "Oh, God, as you have no doubt read in today's *Times*..." Now, the story may be anecdotal but it talks about a time when the church and the Tory government controlled most of the country and when they were supported by one newspaper. That was over 200 years ago. By 2018, we should have become more independent, as well as newspapers we have the web, social media, twitter, but newspapers are still important for propaganda reasons and we have been moving slowly back towards that earlier situation.

We know that there are Tory supporting newspapers and we know that there are Labour supporting newspapers, and we also know that there are ones which sit in the middle and pride themselves on providing balanced reports. Mrs. May has taken to making political statements and policy announcements in the *Telegraph* newspaper. That will cost you between £1.80 and £2. I am not expecting you to go out and buy that. What she says will quickly be re-reported in the media and the rest of the press, and reinterpreted on websites and social media. That is not the point. It is the symbolism that I object to, the same symbolism as was shown from the pulpit, and it should not happen. When Mrs. May says "my government" she is wrong. It is Her Majesty's government. It is also the government of everyone and not just certain newspaper readers.

This is not an anti-press motion. I said when the motion was submitted no more scoops but this is not intended to ban the scoop. The political interview can still take place but important policy statements must always be available to all media simultaneously allowing them all time to put it on their front pages. I am not at all sure whether the members of the Cabinet should be allowed to write columns for newspapers. I am fairly sure most of the members of government should have their tweets vetted, but those are subjects for another day. Congress, therefore, calls for a campaign to end this association. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thanks for that, Mark. Secunder?

BRENDAN DUFFIELD (London): It's all right, I have it in order now! In my household we call the *Telegraph* the *Torygraph*. In some households, a middle-class person with left leanings is called a *Guardian* reader. We all know that when they call you a *Sun* reader they are not being complimentary; and it's best not to talk about

the *Daily Mail*. Information is important. 2018 was when people wanted to hire Cambridge Analytica to misrepresent things. Where you get your information from is still important. It matters if the party in power makes policy announcements in a newspaper. It tells us all that the party and the press are one; that is what it tells us. Support this motion and start ending the link between the Tory Party and the press. Congress, I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. 233.

**DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTERESTS BY MPs AND THEIR FAMILIES  
MOTION 233**

**233. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTERESTS BY MPS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

This conference notes that Theresa May's husband, Philip May is an investment banker who makes his money trading on offshore accounts held by tax avoiding countries. It also notes that Theresa May, as Prime Minister should be responsible for closing the loopholes that allow this tax avoidance to take place legally.

This conference believes that this sort of relationship should not be allowed, where the family members and friends of eminent politicians can directly gain from decisions such as the award of public contracts to private firms, without the politician in question having to declare an interest.

This conference can also point to the continued award of contracts to Carillion even after its three separate profit warnings within six months, and can also point to the completely unrelated matter that the former Chairman of Carillion acted as an advisor to David Cameron and was advising the electorate to vote Conservative in 2015.

This conference calls on the Labour Party to outlaw MPs from having financial interests in the sectors for which they have responsibility and the power to make decisions. The vast majority of working people would be able to live very comfortably indeed on an MP's salary, and the fact that some appear unable to live on this wage unsupplemented smacks not only of greed but of sleaze and corruption too.

**C28 PETS**  
Southern Region

(*Carried*)

MATTHEW PHULL (Southern): Vice President, Congress, first-time speaker. (*Applause*) This Congress notes that Theresa May's husband, Philip May, is an investment banker who makes his money trading on offshore accounts held by tax-avoiding countries. It also notes that Theresa May, as Prime Minister, should be responsible for closing the loopholes that allow this tax avoidance to take place legally. This Congress believes that this sort of relationship should not be allowed

where the family members and friends of eminent politicians can directly gain from decisions such as the award of public contracts to private firms without the politician in question having to declare an interest. This Congress can also point to the continued award of contracts to Carillion even after its free separate profit warnings within six months and can also point to the completely unrelated matter that the former chairman of Carillion acted as an adviser to David Cameron and was advising the electorate to vote Conservative in 2015.

Congress, this is not just an issue affecting the Conservative Party, unfortunately. It is an issue affecting our own party, the Labour Party. Therefore, this Congress calls on the Labour Party to outlaw MPs from having financial interests in the sectors for which they have responsibility and the power to make decisions. The vast majority of working people will be able to live very comfortably on an MP's salary and the fact that some appear unable to smacks not only of greed but of sleaze and corruption, too. Congress, I ask you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Matthew. Secunder, please.

PATRICIA ENNIS (Southern): Congress, Chair, I am Trish Ennis. My mother only calls me Patricia when I am naughty! I am a first-time speaker and delegate. (*Applause*) Following a Panorama investigation that was undertaken by the International Consortium of the Investigative Journalism, there have been exposed 11.5 million secret files from the database of the world's fourth biggest offshore law firm. It exposed many of the British politicians linking family and friends with financial associations. That also was linked to the devastation of the Carillion construction company and linked to former Prime Minister, David Cameron's advisory board.

Congress, we are calling on our union Executive to lobby the Labour Party to ensure the clear transparency of Members of Parliament in public life and to uphold the seven principles of public life. Congress, please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Patricia. 234.

## **COUNCILLOR PAY AND CONDITIONS MOTION 234**

### **234. COUNCILLOR PAY AND CONDITIONS**

This Conference, the changes in the law introduced by the Local Government Minister Brandon Lewis on the 1st April 2014 abolished councillor's access as tax payers to contributing to pension's schemes.

Councillors elected from 1st April 2014 were not entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme and existing councillors with a pension have had their policy terminated at the end of their current term of office.

This has left councillors in limbo!



What are councilors? In actuality they are not classed as employed yet they pay a class 1 employed persons contribution at 12% from our allowance.

Why are we paying employees contributions at the higher rate when we are not classed as employed? If we are employed, why don't we have access to contribute to a pension scheme?

Class 1 contributions clearly states employed Class 2 self-employed flat rate earn less than £6025

Class 3 Voluntary Contribution

Class 4 self-employed people earning profits over £8164 per annum

The impact of this is that anyone of working age is immediately disadvantaged. This is another way of this government creating a barrier to people being involved in democracy.

What is the attraction for new and young people, who want to become a councilor?

How do we encourage someone of 25 or 35 with the responsibility of rent, a mortgage and family, to live off half a wage slip and not build up a pension from it?

What about the councillors who have dedicated their life to public service. A councillor does more now, and have taken on greater responsibilities. Being a councillor is a full time job.

Congress I ask you to support us in being recognised and have employment rights.

Support councillors in England to be recognised and have access to the pension schemes. Their Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish counterparts can continue to be part of a pension scheme, and plan for their retirement years. Support English councillors who are severely disadvantaged in comparison.

GMB ORGANISING BRANCH  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

KAREN ROWLING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Being a local government councillor is a demanding and often thankless job. They are the decision-makers on how local authorities spend their budgets and Labour councillors up and down the country currently have to implement swingeing Tory cuts and stand in the firing line from disillusioned voters who do not understand that council budgets have been slashed to the bone with many losing over 50% of their revenue.

Most councillors are dedicated public servants who have to juggle their duties with other jobs as in most local authority areas a councillor's pay alone is not enough to live on and when accounting the hours that a good councillor puts in falls far short of even the minimum wage. Councillors are not categorised as being employed. Their salary is classed as an allowance designed to cover expenses and costs incurred through their duties yet they pay tax and Class 1 National Insurance contributions in the same way as any other employed person would.

In 2014, the Tory Government changed the law and abolished councillors' access as taxpayers to contribute into pension schemes. This has left councillors in limbo, unable to plan for their future with some having to make tough decisions and stand down from their role because they simply cannot afford to have no provision for their retirement. The GMB is trying to encourage more ordinary working people to become councillors, and rightly so. Councils should be made up of people who understand the real world, who have compassion and understanding for people's everyday struggle and they will always fight to get them the best deal because they truly understand what matters to them and what their priorities are. How do you sell a role to somebody and encourage them to enter public service when you know that you are effectively limiting their future solvency by doing so.

Congress, I ask you to support this motion to support councillors in being recognised with full employment rights and to have access to pension schemes the same as every other working person. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Karen. Secunder?

SHAUN THOMPSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am a virgin, first-time speaker, first-time delegate. (*Applause*) I am seconding Motion 234 regarding councillor pay and conditions. At a time when this Conservative Government is encouraging and forcing individuals to make pension provision it seems ludicrous that the Local Government Minister, Brandon Lewis, abolished councillors and elected mayors in England access to the Local Government Pension Scheme from April 2014, whilst Police and Crime Commissioners, Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Irish councillors retain access. From April 2003, regulations were introduced by the Labour Government allowing councillors to be members of a Local Government Pension Scheme at the discretion of the local authority on the basis that many councillors had lower occupational or personal pensions than they would otherwise have as a result of their commitment to public duties and in recognition of the work they carry out for their communities sacrificing paid working hours and family time. The Local Government Association described the decision to scrap pensions to councillors as a kick in the teeth. MPs get a salary and a pension so why not locally elected representatives.

Congress, I urge you to support democracy, support councillors access to the Local Government Pension Scheme and support councillors' employment rights. Congress, I urge you to vote for 234. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. 235.

**CAMMELL LAIRD 1984**  
**MOTION 235**

**235. CAMMELL LAIRD 1984**

This Conference calls on the CEC to instruct one of our sponsored MPs to ask the question at Prime Minister's Question Time:-

"Why, after over three years, has this government not apologised for the jailing of 37 trade unionists in 1984, locked up for a month in top security Walton Jail on top security I Wing for fighting for jobs and the shipbuilding industry, as per the ruling of the European Court, and further investigate the loss of redundancy rights and pension rights to the 37 and others including two apprentices."

To-date, 11 of the 37 have died, plus one apprentice. We've said it before, "Don't let any more die before we received justice."

Z15 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

WENDY HALL (North West & Irish): First-time delegate. I am totally honoured to be moving Motion 235. In 1984, 37 men, trade unionists like you and me, spent one month in a high security wing of a prison after being in an industrial dispute for 10 months and occupying part of their worksite. They were sentenced to jail in their absence. Now, let's take that in, in their absence. Hearing that story for the first time you may think, surely that was some far-flung country with a dictatorship and no human rights but, no, this was Cammell Laird, everyone, in Birkenhead, Merseyside, in the United Kingdom, which is meant to be a democracy. There was a dictator, Margaret Thatcher. She hated Merseyside. She hated unionism. Eddie Marnell and these men fought for over 30 years and they have been exhausting all legal options. Some of them have actually passed away, and they are not going to be here for ever.

Now, you may look at me and say, if you know me I work for the Ambulance Service, "Why would Wendy Hall be bothered about this?" Well, I am very bothered and, in fact, we all should be bothered. I am a Birkenhead girl born and bred and I have several generations of ancestry that were in Cammell Laird and were boilermakers, and they were also trade unionists. It is actually in my DNA.

Now, if you are looking for something with a lack of human rights and infringement of civil liberties and an injustice, I think the history of this motion says it all. Now, since December 2014, Eddie Marnell, who was one of my heroes, has asked at every CEC meeting that he has attended for one of our sponsored MPs to ask the question at Prime Minister's Question Time: "Why has there been no apology?" Is this too much to ask when there was a question at Question Time about irritable seagulls in Brighton? Does that take priority over this injustice? You know, the Ambulance Service is in my heart but the fight for justice for the 37 men of Cammell Laird who had this injustice against them in 1984 is my heart. Congress, I emphatically move.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Wendy. Seconder? 235 seconder? Formally? Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 18.

**DEFENCE SPENDING  
COMPOSITE MOTION 18**

*(Covering Motions 236 and 237)*

236 – Dreadnought Submarine Programme – Northern Region

237 – Strategic Defence Reviews – GMB Wales & South West Region

**DEFENCE SPENDING**

This Conference calls upon the Government to increase the Defence Industries spending on the UKs Armed Forces, to ensure long-term Sovereignty for the UK, home and aboard.

Further, we call on the future Labour government to fully endorse and commit to the Dreadnought submarine programme which provides much needed highly skilled, well paid employment in both the direct and supply industries involved in the above project, whilst providing large apprentice schemes in the commercial, technical & graduate fields, often in areas of the UK where such schemes would otherwise be non-existent.

*(Carried)*

LINDA SERRECHIA (Northern): Congress, the Government is committed to spending 2% of our GDP on defence. However, we still have the situation where ships are being scrapped and aircraft carriers have no UK planes on them and where in fact we have to lease them from France, where we have an Army that is short on numbers and where we have jets that are 40 years old and need to be replaced.

Congress, in our region we have the Barrow Shipyard, which is recognised as one of the best in the world. The workers at Barrow, the GMB members at the Barrow yard, have some of the highest skill levels anywhere on the planet for building submarines. Congress, it takes just under 10 years to build and ensure safe delivery of a submarine in the Dreadnought submarine programme. There are four of them on order from the Government, in other words, 40 years' worth of work for GMB members, their families, and the community of South Cumbria. The supply chain across the UK is vast so a future Labour government is going to have to come off the fence: does it support defence or not? Does it support GMB members and their communities or not? The level of commercial, technical, and graduate areas that are providing apprenticeship schemes means our younger members and their families will have jobs for decades to come. The simple fact is that you cannot turn off the tap on defence skills and overnight turn them into civilian use. In the Northern Region we have had that approach and that is why so many yards are empty. Our members are working offshore. We need safety and security. That is what is at stake, Congress. Please support. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. Secunder?

ELAINE WORGAN (GMB Wales & South West): First-time delegate and first-time speaker at Congress. (*Applause*) Vice President, Congress, in the very uncertain and volatile world in which we now all live, it is imperative that this country is able to deal effectively with any threats of aggression made by other countries. To be able to do that we must have the best Armed Forces possible. It is not a time to be talking about cuts but about the need for money and more money to maintain Britain's defence capabilities. Although counter-terrorism and cyber security are key threats, it is important that the Ministry of Defence does not become a junior partner in the Intelligence Agencies when spending allocations are made. Ensuring our Armed Forces are adequately funded is not only commonsense for national security but for the good of our own economy. Treasury spending on defence is all too often seen as a pure cost and a burden upon our national finance; that presumption is wrong. Our defence industries not only provide the high quality jobs in thousands of small businesses across the country but they also produce the valuable spinoffs of the wider economy and significant export earnings. We cannot neglect our defences. Our Armed Forces are an integral part of our overall military capability and capacity. Spending on these forces would make us both safer and richer whereas expenditure cuts would undermine the services upon which our security relies. Congress, our defence laws must not retreat but invest in the future. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Elaine. Can I now call on Brian Farr, for the CEC?

BRIAN FARR (CEC, Manufacturing): Vice President, Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC and speaking on Motion 228, which the CEC is asking to be withdrawn. On Motion 232, we are supporting with a qualification, and on Motion 234 we are also supporting with a qualification.

On Motion 228, while this motion has really good intentions, a GMB forum already exists for sharing best practice and looking at political organisations in public services. In the Public Service Section Committee there is also a sub-committee of the CEC which covers the issues raised, including the Political, European, and International Committee, an organisational sub-committee of the CEC.

On Motion 232 there is already a ministerial code which should prevent government announcements being made in the media prior to being made in Parliament. This needs to be vigorously enforced. However, politicians must be free to use the media for opinion pieces and stories of interest to the public and our members need to be made aware of the importance to them. Some of the best ways of doing this is using the press and the media. This is the qualification on this motion.

On Motion 234, councillors play an important role in our local communities and the best councillors stand up for their values whether that is on the delivery of services for those who rely on them, or the terms and conditions of local government workers. We support the call for councillors to be readmitted to the Local Government Pension Scheme. However, for the very reason that we want working people to become councillors and the GMB support members to do just that, we would be concerned if

people saw it as a full-time job or were solely attracted by the financial benefits. Being a councillor by design is not permanent. To encourage more working people to take on the role we need them not to treat it as a full-time job.

Therefore, Congress, we are asking for Motion 228 to be withdrawn and for Congress to support Motions 232 and 234 with the qualifications I have set out. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brian. We will now move to the votes. Motion 228 has been withdrawn. So, it is 231, the CEC is supporting it. All those in favour show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 231 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 232 is being supported with a qualification. Does London agree the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 232 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 233 is being supported by the CEC. All those in favour please show? Against? That is carried.

*Motion 233 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 234 is being supported with a qualification. Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire agree the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 234 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 235 is being supported by the CEC. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 235 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 18 is also being supported. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Composite Motion 18 was CARRIED.*

## **POLITICAL: LABOUR PARTY**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, the next one is Political: Brexit. Now, there are 11 motions in that category and I am not going to start it because I will not have time to finish it in time for us to close, so I am going to move on now to Item 12, which is Political: Labour Party. Can I ask for Motions 254 and 258 to come to the front, please? After that it will be 13, which is Political Democracy, so could 270 also come to the front, please?

## **POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS MOTION 254**

### **254. POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS**

This Conference fully recognises that politicians must reflect the makeup of those they represent, in fact it's part of the Labour Party rules. However, society fails to allow the same rights to representation in Local and National Government by restricting those who work in local government jobs and want to become Councillors and/or MPs. The reason is that the law restricts employees in areas such as Local Government by claiming they can't stand in elections for Councillors as they are politically restricted. Conference recognises the fact that in many of the higher paid jobs within Councils, this could be an issue. However, refusing a road sweeper or care worker claiming political restriction is simply unacceptable. Conference therefore calls on the Government to set a cap at which political restrictions come in and not simply a blanket view that if you work in any Local Government job that you can't stand for any election or hold office. This is denying hundreds of our members the right to hold an electable office. The cap should start where the Chief Officer grades come in and this would allow many of our working class members to stand and represent their communities and trade unions.

FULHAM 1 BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

JAMES DOHENY (London): Vice President, Congress, first-time delegate.  
*(Applause)* Free and fair representation of the people is a cornerstone of democracy and a fundamental human right. For modern government to have legitimacy it must be open to and reflective of the people that seek to govern, a mirror of modern society in all of its diversity.

One hundred and fifty years ago at the very first trade union congress in Manchester this may have seemed not just a lofty but a very radical aspiration. Since then at no small cost we have come a very long way and today it is both commonplace wisdom and day-to-day Labour Party policy. It may surprise you to learn that in terms of UK electoral law we are still not quite there yet.

At present, the United Kingdom has a deficiency in its democracy by failing to allow full representation in government. It does this by preventing those who work in local government jobs from standing in not only local but in some cases national elections preventing them becoming local councillors, or MPs. This is what is known as political restrictions.

The legal basis for these restrictions is to be found in the Local Government Act 1972 and 1989, and their broad theoretical basis is sound. They are there to avoid conflicts of interest. In any form of government to have the same people who make the laws, the legislature, could be the same people who enact and enforce the law, the executive, and requires careful handling at best because at worst it can be a recipe for disaster. Keeping these functions apart is such a fundamental doctrine of government

that we give it a special name and call it the separation of powers. Exactly because society has moved on, that separation is at the heart of why we need a change.

Today, as nearly 50 years ago when the first of those Acts was passed, the majority of people who work in local government jobs are not in executive or politically sensitive decision-making roles. What has changed is that 50 years ago electoral candidates were drawn from a much narrower and often self-selecting band of society so much so that a blanket ban then may well have had merit. That is clearly not the case today, however. Society has moved on and the electoral aspirations and expectations of working people have moved along with it. The law has not kept up and it needs to as at present it is denying hundreds of our members the right to hold elected office in local government and for no good practical reason. That is not only unfair to the individuals concerned it makes our whole society poorer. The law needs to go back to first principles. It needs to put safeguards in place where those safeguards are actually needed, in local government they should begin at the chief officer grades as that is where executive and legislature power actually meet. For everyone else, raising the cap in this way would free up many of our members round the country already doing valuable work in our communities to stand for election and represent their communities. That is good for them, good for their communities and good for democracy. We therefore call on government to update the law on political restriction so as to reflect modern social and electoral reality. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, James. Secunder?

ANTHONY CHOLERTON (London): Acting President, Congress, this Congress believes that the current rules restricting who can stand for election are outdated and unfair. The rules state that you cannot be a candidate if at the time of nomination or on polling day you are employed by a local authority. Understandably, there are offices in local and national government where there would be a conflict of interest but these posts are generally at a high level. For most workers, and indeed the majority of people we represent, there is no such conflict and, therefore, the restrictions are not only unnecessary but they are also very unfair. It simply is not right that a worker who is carrying out a role that is the same as someone who is not employed by a local authority cannot stand for election when the person outside the authority can. A TUPE transfer can change whether a person can or cannot stand for office. For example, a care worker for a local authority does not have the same right as a care worker for a private company or agency. This needs to change. Congress, please support this motion. I second.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Anthony. 258?

## **LABOUR PARTY REPRESENTATION MOTION 258**

### **258. LABOUR PARTY REPRESENTATION**

This Conference notes that the Trade Union Movement was and remains the backbone of the Labour Party as its founders. Over the years many seem to have forgotten how the Labour Party was formed. It was formed to give working people representation in Parliament.



Conference also notes that many of our members work within the Labour Party and are members of the Labour Party Staff Branch in London Region. In line with the law, the Labour Party recognises the Trade Unions namely the GMB for full representation of its staff. However, the Labour Party refuses to allow recognition of thousands of our lay members who are simply members, elected as Councillors, and/or Parliamentary candidates.

The Labour Party rulebook only allows a “silent witness” who can only sit and observe at meetings where these same lay members are disciplined, investigated at national and/or local level through the CLPs and/or the National Constitution Committee.

Representation is one of the main reasons members join the Trade Unions, and we must ensure that the Labour Party now gives the GMB members their full rights as long as the individuals are members. After all, the rulebook now stipulates that Councillors and MPs must join a Trade Union, but then the Party refuses them basic rights that we would demand from any employer.

The Labour Party rules need to give our members full rights of a Trade Unionist, by giving all Trade Union members the right to representation no matter what their status or organisation.

## **BARKING BRANCH** London Region

*(Carried)*

MATT LAKE (London): Congress, the GMB can be proud of its work in encouraging our members to engage, support, and become active in the Labour Party, which has led to many of them standing in an elected office as local councillors and MPs. Congress, I am sure you are also aware from the numbers of high profile cases at national level concerning issues of discipline and complaints within the party and, if you are, it must seem to you that the party has a set of rules that do not appear to be fit for purpose with some complaints taking months and even years to be resolved and concluded.

What many of you may not know is that this is mirrored up and down the country at a local and regional level with constituency Labour parties and regional party structures having to deal with complaints and appeals on a number of levels. This motion is not seeking to pass judgement on any of those cases but rather to try and ensure that the party’s disciplinary process and procedures for party members, elected councillors, and MPs, are fit for purpose and conform to a basic understanding of natural justice.

If one of our members is disciplined in the workplace, trade unions have won the right to represent them throughout the process. If a member faces legal action they have the right to be represented by a solicitor or barrister in court but if they are a Labour Party member and a complaint is raised against them, while they have the right to a hearing and an appeal, they do not have the right to be fully represented in those meetings. The party rule book currently only allows them to take a friend with them as what is called a silent witness to the disciplinary hearing or appeal. This is not

what we as trade unionists understand to be full representation. You all know that full representation should involve the ability to speak and cross-examine on behalf of the person you are representing.

Currently the Labour Party is undertaking a democracy review, which is looking to update the party's rule book. So, Congress, we are asking the CEC to get fully involved in that review, to ensure that the party has a 21<sup>st</sup> century rule book that is fit for purpose and allows party members to have complaints dealt with in a reasonable timeframe but, more importantly, that the process upholds the basic right of party members to natural justice and full representation at any hearing they are called to. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

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

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I call upon Ray Dowson of the Northern Region to speak on behalf of the CEC.

RAY DOWSON (CEC, Manufacturing): Vice President, Congress, the CEC is supporting Motion 258 with a qualification. While the CEC agrees with the sentiments of this motion, we must remember that membership entitlement of trade unions is for industrial representation and not political representation. The GMB now has recognition for parliamentary staff and will assist members with issues that concern their employment. Therefore, Congress, please support Motion 258 with this qualification I have set out. Short and sweet! (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move to the vote. Motion 254 is being supported by the CEC. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 254 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 258 was CARRIED.*

## **POLITICAL DEMOCRACY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Could I have the mover of 270, please?

### **DEMOCRACY AND VOTING – CURRENT POLICY MOTION 270**

#### **270. DEMOCRACY AND VOTING – CURRENT POLICY**

This Conference, our proud nation boasts a parliament which has been the envy of, and a model for, many other democracies around the world. Despite this proud heritage, political apathy is rife within our communities and thousands of British citizens feel unwilling or unable to take part in the democratic process - a process for which people fought and died.

Congress notes that our 2017 National Policy Guide states that a call in 2009, to introduce compulsory voting at local, general and European elections for all over 18, was referred, with advice that if this motion was placed before Congress, the recommendation would be to oppose it. Congress, in the 8 years since that 2009 call, political engagement has increased slightly, but there is still a huge mountain to climb in order to make our democracy truly reflective. I submit that there should be a full and frank discussion regarding this aspect of current GMB policy.

Having these discussions, I believe, would lead to fruitful policy suggestions that would help increase voter engagement and give our county the working democracy our members and our citizens deserve.

#### GMB ORGANISING BRANCH Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Referred)*

TOM KOWALSKI (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Acting Vice President, Congress, first-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Thank you. Congress, apathy towards politics is rife. Having stood at the recent local elections as a Labour candidate I can safely say that I have had firsthand experience. This seat was a LibDem stronghold and they had victory as expected but what we did not expect was the rest of the result. We did not realise there was a Tory standing until the count and despite a valiant campaign by GMB and Labour colleagues the same Tory, who knocked no doors, delivered no election leaflets, and put up no election posters, beat us into third place. Colleagues, it is a good job we have a sense of humour.

Why do I mention this? I mention it because it has further strengthened my belief that political disengagement is damaging our democracy and that the time to open up the democratic process is now. Congress, our 2017 National Policy Guide stated that a call in 2009 to introduce compulsory voting was referred with advice that if the motion was to be put before Congress the recommendation would be to oppose.

Congress, in the nine years since that decision many have grown in political awareness but there is still much to do in increasing voter engagement and a full and frank discussion on this element of policy is needed, so we call upon the CEC to set up a working group to look more deeply into the issues so that progressive policies can be formulated to increase voter engagement in the democratic process.

Tory changes to voter registration systems have left close to 800,000 people in the position where they are not utilising their right to vote. The decision to move away from household registration to the individual has helped the accuracy of the electoral register but it has also resulted in 1.8% dropping off the register completely. Under household registration one resident could sign up everybody in the household but the individual voter registration has meant that lots of people realise that they have not got round to registering only when it is too late.

Analysis shows that areas with a high concentration of students, private renters, and young adults are particularly in danger of having low registration numbers. Congress,

many of those people are our people, they are our members who are being adversely affected by Tory policy to make voter engagement more difficult. This barrier could be easily remedied with automatic registration for all eligible voters and this could form part of the fruitful policy suggestion to improve our democracy.

Voter turnout is another issue. At the last general election it was the highest it has been in 20 years at 68% but that still means 30% of people are not exercising their right to vote. It is 100 years since the introduction of the Representation of the People Act which paved the way for the universal right to vote that we enjoy today. It is vital to educate people as to sacrifices that were made so that we today can say who we want to represent us.

Participating in elections is a right of citizenship. For some it is seen as a civic responsibility with some countries introducing compulsory voting. The question for us today, Congress, is not whether this is the answer to the problem but whether or not the time is right to discuss how to increase voter engagement and whether this may form part of the solution.

Comrades, the Tories want us to be disengaged. They want us to think there is no point in voting. If people remain disengaged, the Tories and the vested interests they represent remain unchallenged. It is up to us to convince people why voting is so important and the impact it has. We must tackle this disengagement head-on and be unapologetic in discussing as broad a range of ideas as possible to remedy this stain on our democracy. Our forebears fought and often died for a dream that one day our democracy could be truly reflective and voting could be a right for all to enjoy. Congress, let's make that dream a reality now, please support this motion. Congress, I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

PHILIP HILL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, our proud nation boasts of a parliament which has been the envy of and a model for many other democracies around the world. However, political apathy is still rife within our communities. Thousands of British citizens still do not vote, a right for which many have fought and died. We need to educate these people in the importance of using their votes. I, therefore, ask this Congress to assist in this task, to start having open, full and frank discussions and educating our membership of the importance of voting. With this in mind, I second this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. John McDonnell.

JOHN McDONNELL (CEC, Manufacturing): Speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motion 270 which the CEC is asking Congress to refer. As the motion correctly points out, a full and frank discussion must take place on this issue. The motion is passionate about the GMB to determine how better to engage the electorate in our nation's democracy. The CEC is asking that this motion be referred to the PEI sub-group to hold full and frank discussions as we recognise that compulsory voting would increase participation but there are many hurdles to get over in order to

achieve this. Therefore, President, the CEC is asking Congress to refer Motion 270 for this reason. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. We will now go to the vote. Does Yorkshire Region accept the reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour of 270 please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 270 was REFERRED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: YOUNG PEOPLE**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I ask Motion 339 and 340 to come to the front, please, and the mover of 339 to come to the rostrum?

### **YOUNG WORKERS UNDER A FUTURE BREXIT MOTION 339**

#### **339. YOUNG WORKERS UNDER A FUTURE BREXIT**

This Conference notes the demands of all Trade Unions with the TUC for a “jobs first” Brexit and for membership of both the single market (SM), the Customs Union (CU) on leaving the European Union (EU). Concerns are expressed by all Trade Unions, (TUs) for all workers’ rights to be protected.

Conference deeply notes the Conservative Party’s desire to reduce workers’ rights, lower standards in health and safety, environmental protections in exchange for “free trade” deals. A hard Brexit will affect all workers particularly the young in all sectors, Food Processing, Packaging, Agriculture/Horticulture, Care Homes etc.

Conference calls for not only new employment rights to go into any workplace, ensure the low wages are covered by collective agreement and to make 2018 the year of the Young Worker in both retention, recruitment and motivating current and future GMB members with calls to the TUC to undertake the same.

**EAST DEREHAM BRANCH**  
London Region

(*Carried*)

JAN SMITH (London): President, Congress, Motion 339 expresses the concern for our young and future workers, particularly under Brexit and also the Tories’ desire to reduce all our workers’ rights which we, being me, you, and our forefathers, fought for over the years. Congress, our young generation during the 2017 elections were heavily engaged and motivated in trying to get a Labour government. In fact, Jeremy Corbyn was so impressed he urged them to join a trade union.

We, the GMB, and this Congress need to support them by us making 2018-2019 the year of the young, which can lead to increasing our GMB membership. Within this

group they are our future, the future for the young. I move. Please support.  
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Secunder?

HEATHER HAMBLIN (London): President, Congress, General Secretary, I am pleased to second Motion 339, especially with the hard times ahead that we and our young persons face with the looming of Brexit. Congress, please support this motion by showing them that we, the GMB, can make 2018-2019 the year for our future, being the young persons. I move. (Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Heather. 340?

### **WHEN AGE REALLY IS A NUMBER MOTION 340**

#### **340. WHEN AGE REALLY IS A NUMBER**

This Conference is aware that young people throughout the UK are being subjected to age discrimination and monetary abuse on a daily basis, at the hands of those disguised as car insurance companies and agents.

On average, young people between the ages of 17 and 25 face a cost of anything from £2000 to £4000 per annum to drive a standard 1000cc car on the UK's roads. Along with this high cost, many are often bound by the constraints of a 'black box' to monitor driving skills, with the possible hope of reduction in cost the next time that their insurance premium is due for renewal. The use of a black box also comes with a warning that driving curfew times may be in place, and suggests that individuals will be penalised if they are, for example, night shift workers.

Last year saw a 20% drop in taking driving lessons within the under 25 age group. The blame for this was apportioned to the cost of the lessons. However, research suggests that many young people stated that they could not afford the cost of insurance premiums if and when they had passed the two-part test.

On average car insurance in the UK rose by 8% across all age groups last year, so current promises by the insurance companies of lower premiums for our young people seems unlikely to be achieved, despite the restraints that are placed upon them, yet our European cousins are assessed and charged on the make and model of a specific car, and not on their age group. Charges for age, it would seem, is only attributed to the young people in the UK.

We therefore call upon the GMB to lobby the TUC on this issue, with a view to highlighting this increasing problem faced by young people in the UK, and to look at the possibility of offering an affordable solution led by Unions.

LINCOLN TEC GENERAL & APEX BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region

*(Carried)*

MATTHEW BUCKLEY (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, I would like to call on the GMB to lobby the TUC on the issue of the huge cost and unfairness of car insurance premiums for young people. The TUC will need to get a commitment from a future Labour government to end that unfairness that the unscrupulous insurance companies are inflicting on young drivers.

On average, young people between the ages of 17 and 25 face a cost of anything from £2,000 to £4,000 per annum to drive a standard one-litre car. Along with the high cost many are bound by the constraints of a black box not only to monitor their driving skills but sometimes giving them curfew times, which can penalise, for example, night shift workers.

Last year saw a 28% drop in young people taking driving lessons under the age of 25. Why, with the ever-increasing rise in tuition fees, cuts to maintenance grants, and average insurance premiums rising 10%, they just cannot afford it. To quote one of our branch activists, they paid £1,000 for a car but the cost was a further £2,500, which included the black box. It was payable with a £500 lump sum and then monthly payments. That was the cheapest fully comp insurance she could find. At least Dick Turpin wore a mask! Is it any wonder that one-in-38 vehicles is uninsured and one-in-10 drivers under the age of 25 are uninsured? Young people throughout the UK are being subjected to age discrimination and monetary abuse on a daily basis. Congress, please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Matthew. Secunder?

VICKY WASS (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, as a union we are against all forms of discrimination, age, race, wages, to name but a few. The GMB has been at the forefront of trying to get £10 an hour minimum wage. In other countries, like Belgium, Sweden, Italy, you actually insure the car not the person, based on the vehicle itself instead of the individual. This is a very effective method for families and friends to share the cost. I second this motion and agree that GMB should lobby the TUC and campaign for more affordable premiums for younger drivers. Congress, please support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vicky. Can I call now on Bill Modlock for the CEC to give a response, and can Motions 144, 146 and 149 please come to the front?

BILL MODLOCK (CEC) (Southern): We are supporting both Motion 339 and 340 with a qualification. I think we all know that more needs to be done to get young people into our organisation. It is a big issue for us.

On Motion 339, the motion rightly raises concerns about Conservative Party threats to reduce workers' rights and calls on Congress to make 2018 the year of the young worker in recruiting, retaining, and motivating current and future GMB members and for the TUC to do the same.

A qualification is that the first paragraph suggests that GMB endorse the TUC calls for continued membership of the single market and customs union when our position

was more critical given that the single market is flawed and needed serious reform. GMB members would not vote for more of the same.

On Motion 340, young workers should not be penalised by higher premiums when simply trying to get to and from work. The curfew would unfairly discriminate against night shift workers as the motion states. CEC supports the campaign for equality on premiums but accepts that the number of claims for young drivers is higher than those in older age groups, which is a financial constraint for any insurance provider. Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking you to support both Motions 339 and 340 with the qualifications I have set out.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bill. Does London Region accept the qualification for 339? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 339 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Midland & East Coast Region accept the qualification for 340? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 340 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I now have the mover of 144 to the rostrum, please?

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK**

### **THE USE OF VEHICLE TRACKING TO DISCIPLINE MEMBERS MOTION 144**

#### **144. THE USE OF VEHICLE TRACKING TO DISCIPLINE MEMBERS**

This Conference notes that, as a general Trade Union we aim to protect workers' rights, privacy and human rights in the workplace. Vehicle tracking is, by its very nature, often seen by our members as a technology which is highly intrusive, an infringement upon their right to privacy and another stick used to beat the back of them whilst they undertake their duties in the workplace.

Employers are silently abusing the data captured to micro manage every second of every minute of our members' working day. The increased installation of vehicle tracking has made it easy for drivers to be made scape goats, many drivers are fearful and uneasy behind the wheel knowing that their slightest driving error or behaviours may lead to disciplinary action being taken against them.

This Congress calls on the GMB to investigate the increased threat to our members' employment and privacy rights.

ASHFIELD GENERAL BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region



*(Carried)*

MARY-LOUISE HARRISON (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, vehicle tracking by its very nature is often seen by drivers as a technology that is highly intrusive and an infringement upon their right to privacy, and they are right. Why, because there is no doubt that some organisations are abusing the information that it provides them because they have poor management processes. They tell us introducing vehicle tracking should be a transparent process involving dialogue between employer and employees. Vehicle tracking should be used by both parties in a positive way to help increase productivity, reduce costs, improve customer service, ensure driver safety, and ultimately be used to the benefit of employer, employee, and customer. Employers who install vehicle tracking systems on vehicles driven by employees should ensure that everyone knows and understands what it is and how they intend to use it. As data is collected it not only provides information relating to the performance of the employee but also their identity, the location of the vehicle, the distance it has covered, and information about the user's driving habits, thereby the issue of privacy arises. There will be instances when vehicle tracking is a legal requirement, such as the tachograph in a lorry, but in-vehicle monitoring when not a legal requirement should not be done without an impact assessment to determine whether the benefits justify the adverse impact, such as when private use of that vehicle is allowed by the employer, monitoring the vehicle's individual movement without the freely given consent of the user if the vehicle is both for private and business use. It all sounds very simple, doesn't it, so where is the problem?

Some of our members are telling us a very different story and instead it is being used to attack our members rather than working with them to improve their timekeeping or driving habits, such as to ensure better fuel economy some employers have taken the data collected on individual drivers to penalise them, to hit them with disciplinaries. For example, one of our members in Leicester services was hauled in front of management because after each job she was sitting in her vehicle for 10 minutes. Why, when she explained this was because she was completing the paperwork required of her, they then proceeded to ask her to justify over 100 occasions when she did this. Luckily for her she kept meticulous records. Another example is when a member was asked why he was in his vehicle on a Sunday. He simply moved his van on to the pavement from his driveway so his wife could get her car out. Other drivers are not so lucky. Disciplinaries are going through the roof. We are told that if you have nothing to hide, then you have nothing to fear. This reasoning is often the defence used by totalitarian regimes when they introduce perceived Big Brother surveillance measures and could well add to the frustration and resentment of employees. They tell us it is not designed to stop you nipping in for a paper or stopping you from having a coffee en route, but it will provide a fair and accurate record of your work patterns to help your company manage their vehicle fleet more effectively, but that is exactly what it is happening ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mary, wind up, please.

MARY-LOUISE HARRISON (Midland & East Coast): Yes. We have members who are crumbling under the stress. They tell us ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mary, today, please. Wind up.

MARY-LOUISE HARRISON (Midland & East Coast): Okay. So, Congress, please support this ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Mary, just move the motion. Just say, "I move."

MARY-LOUISE HARRISON (Midland & East Coast): I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder, please?

BEN COOK (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, this is an issue that is becoming more prevalent in all sectors. Employers say that this technology is designed to improve behaviours and improve health and safety. It is designed to control and to constrict drivers, and our members. Whether you are a refuse driver or an Asda home shopping driver, when you step into that vehicle it always comes with a risk adding more stress, increases the risk of accidents in an already high pressured job, drivers are already under pressure trying to finish the route, the run, or to deliver on time without having to worry about being micromanaged and disciplined. Please support this motion and please keep our members safe. Congress, I support this motion. I second. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ben. Mover of 146?

## **CHILDCARE AND WORKPLACE CRECHES MOTION 146**

### **146. CHILDCARE AND WORKPLACE CRÈCHES**

This conference notes that in the 1970s, negotiating with employers frequently included childcare or workplace crèches as part of the bargaining agenda. Despite the strides made forwards in terms of equal rights in the intervening 40+ years, this is no longer the case.

This conference would like GMB to adapt it as policy that childcare return to the agenda when bargaining with employers. Not only would such an emphasis make it easier for women to return to work after having had a child, it would also enable her to continue to breast feed the child should she so wish, after her return.

This conference believes that this would also force major employers to think about bringing childcare facilities back in house and ensure that childcare professionals receive a better wage, as well as comparable terms and conditions to other employees.

The private childcare sector is rife with younger workers being paid below the minimum wage and not having access to sick pay or proper holidays, and this conference believes that Trade Union bargaining can help reverse this trend.

C28 PETS  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

KARIMAH KELLY (Southern): President, Congress, this is my first time as a delegate and first time speaking. *(Applause)*

I know it is getting harder out there in the workplace and for many reasons we can always be supportive with this motion. If you are a parent and you leave your child, I know it is very difficult for you, so if we could force major companies to deliver childcare packages or have in-house crèche facilities not only would that make it easier but I think it would also boost the economy as the best of both worlds could be achieved. New mothers who are breastfeeding could still be at work, relaxed, knowing that their child is nearby and in the workplace crèches also knowing that parents can utilise the support provided financially. This will also allow them back into the workplace without companies having to re-employ or retrain new staff. Also, this potentially will safeguard the child's carer and get benefits deserved, such as holidays or sick pay, and better pay. Congress, I hope you can support this motion. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

HELEN O'CONNOR (Southern): It used to be commonplace for trade unions to include childcare in bargaining, hard won rights are now being rolled back as these demands slip off our agenda. Working class parents are told they have freedom to choose childcare but this is not our experience. New employers have workplace crèches and if some do the waiting lists are long and the manager's kid jumps up the queue. Childcare places are so expensive that parents choose between working for next to nothing or give up work altogether while the kids are young. The marketisation of childcare, lack of good quality, affordable and accessible childcare, carry the hidden costs. Employers end up with less productive workers when parents are worrying about childcare and finances. The young people working in the childcare industry find themselves underpaid, undervalued, and working in overcrowded conditions as wages are driven down to boost profits. As one ex-nursery worker said to me, "I felt like I was herding cats. I wasn't helping the kids. I left." Overcrowded conditions and a lack of attention being given to children causes harm that can last a lifetime. There is a rise in ADD, ADHD, and Asperger's, and self-harm amongst very young people. There is evidence that the children of the poorest in society grow up to become cannon fodder for the prisons, addiction services, and psychiatric services. Raising children is a contribution to the future of society. The GMB must campaign to demand that employers pick up some of the costs and the responsibility for the greater good of society. We all win if working class children get the benefit of decent care and education from a very young age. Let's fight for all in society to be winners and not losers. Support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. 149?

## **UNION RIGHTS FOR WORKERS IN UNIFORM MOTION 149**

### **149. UNION RIGHTS FOR WORKERS IN UNIFORM**

This Conference firmly believes in the right of all workers to join a trade union and the right of all workers to take lawful industrial action. In saying “all workers”, this means ALL workers. This includes workers in uniforms, namely the armed forces and police. Despite the way the State tries to divide us and keep them separate from other workers in order to use against us, the rank and file of the armed forces and police are workers like other workers. And, like other workers, they have suffered job losses and wage freezes. Like other workers, they face bullying and harassment from those in positions of authority. Like other workers, they need to defend themselves and have the right to fight against attacks on their terms and conditions.

Conference calls for the armed forces and police to have to right to join a trade union and the right to take industrial action. The GMB has members who are police support workers and, members who supply and support the armed forces. It's time police officers and members of the armed forces were allowed to join and be active too.

**PARKGATE BRANCH**  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Referred)*

IAN KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Acting President, Congress, the GMB has a proud record in supporting the right of workers to join a trade union and in the right of those trade unions to take part in industrial action, but in supporting those rights there is a group of workers we seem to ignore, those workers are those who wear a uniform, namely, members of the Armed Forces and the police.

As trade unions we have an ambivalent attitude not to say at times hostile attitude to the Armed Forces and the police. Throughout history from Peterloo to Orgreave remember our martyrs creating whenever the state has mobilised their forces against us. Yet within that same history both the Armed Forces and police have taken action over what as trade unionists we recognise as legitimate grievances. From the Spithead Mutiny of 1797 to the Salerno Mutiny of 1943, from the police strikes of 1918 and 1919 to the RAF strikes of 1946, there is a history of workers in uniform engaging in industrial actions. Let's not forget, comrades, that the ideals of this great Movement of ours were articulated by the rank and file of Cromwell's new model army.

This history, coupled with the present day austerity, show that we need to allow the Armed Forces and police to join in and be active in trade unions. I realise, comrades, that some of you would feel uneasy about having the force of the state to join our ranks. For years they have been the Tory's boot boys. I can remember going on marches showing solidarity on picket lines chanting, “Maggie Thatcher's boot boys” but, comrades, we have a unique opportunity to exploit the failure of this Government to keep the police and Armed Forces sweet. With a government that has treated the

Forces' personnel and police officers with the same contempt they have treated all public sector workers. This Government has presided over manpower reductions, increased workloads, and reduction in real pay levels, and then, particularly our ex-servicemen and women, when they leave their career leaving them high and dry.

We now have an opportunity to step in and show the police and Armed Forces that they are workers just like any other worker. We can show them that there is an alternative to them being the tools of a small elite. We can show that they have more in common with us than the bosses who use and abuse them. I am not naïve enough, comrades, to believe that union rights there for members of the Armed Forces and the police are going to solve all problems but, comrades, it is a start. They deserve better than the glorified staff associations that are the Police Federation and the moribund Armed Forces Federation.

Comrades, support Motion 149, let's join countries as diverse as France and Serbia, the Netherlands and Latvia, and give our workers in uniform trade union rights.  
(*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Seconder?

JANINE MOYES (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First-time speaker. First-time delegate. (*Applause*) Following strikes in 1918/19 when British police refused to go on duty, the government at the time introduced the Police Act as well as the Police Federation. The Police Act prohibits police officers from joining ordinary trade unions to defend pay and working conditions, etc. because it is deemed that it would pose an exceptional public safety risk, not dissimilar to the one that we are experiencing across all the public services due to the austerity cuts.

After my research I found that there is a phenomenon apparently known as “the blue flu”. Surely, the hoops that unions have to go through before strike action can be taken would be more easily managed than an unexpected sudden blue flu epidemic. Why are UK Armed Forces not legally entitled to enlist in a trade union or to strike under the Queen's Regulations; again for security reasons. It is strange that our partners in the Netherlands do not believe that unionisation undermines their military effectiveness and some countries have longstanding arrangements for members of the Armed Forces to join trade unions. Some have granted this in recent years, and most have democratically decided that they will not use strike action: democracy. Union rights for workers in uniform. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Janine. I now call on Kevin Buchanan, from the CEC speaker from Scotland, to respond.

KEVIN BUCHANAN (CEC, Commercial Services): Acting President, Congress, the CEC asks you to support Motion 144 and 146 with a qualification in each case and to refer Motion 149.

Dealing first with Motion 144, it is vital that we are constantly vigilant and effective in protection our members against any form of unfair tracking by employers. Our members should not have to worry about getting behind the wheel of the vehicles feeling threatened by possible unfair disciplinary action. The qualification is that the

GMB is already very involved in negotiations with employers across the country around the introduction and usage of vehicle tracking. It is important that we have a clear policy that vehicle tracking should not be misused. However, it is an integral part of industrial relations. Consequently, a specific investigation we believe is not necessary. We should encourage our reps' networks across the union, who deal with these issues regularly, to share their experience with each other in order to develop best practice in dealing with this issue.

Turning to Motion 146, Congress, the CEC fully supports ensuring that childcare provisions should be part of the equality bargaining and negotiation agenda. This is covered in the CEC Special Report to Congress on Equality Organising. Childcare workers are also in the front line of looking after some of the most vulnerable people in our society and should be treated as such. The qualification is to clarify that whilst childcare has a significant equality impact for women, childcare is an issue that matters for all working families, including fathers and same sex parents.

With regards to Motion 149, as has been pointed out by the mover, police officers have trade unions throughout the UK in respect of Police Federations in England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, MoD, British Transport and Civil Nuclear Constabulary. The police are, of course, banned from taking strike action. As was mentioned, the British Armed Forces Federation was also established as a military staff association in 2006 but appears to have had very, very limited utility in recent years. The right of Armed Service men and women to join a trade union is prohibited by Queen's Regulations though these allow service personnel to become members of civilian trade unions in order to enhance their trade skills or prepare for resettlement into civilian life. In view of this the CEC recommends that the motion be referred to allow further investigation before adopting policy. Changes to the bans on strike action for the police and Forces, and indeed prison officers, would require significant changes to primary legislation and may not be high on the list of priorities for an incoming Labour government.

Congress, consequently, the CEC therefore asks you to support Motion 144 and 146 with the qualifications I have outlined and to refer Motion 149. Thank you.  
(*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. Midland & East Coast Region, agree the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 144 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does the Southern Region agree the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 146 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does the Yorkshire Region agree reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against?

*Motion 149 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now move on and ask Helen Johnson to give SOC Report No. 3. Helen.

### **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 3**

HELEN JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President, Congress, moving a Supplement to SOC Report No. 1 Election of President.

Congress, there will be an election for President tomorrow, Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> June. The SOC has been advised that the election will be contested.

The procedure for the election will be as set out in the CEC Special Report. A copy of this process has been circulated to delegates. The outline of the process is as follows:

The General Secretary will announce the names of the candidates just prior to the close of business today.

Tomorrow morning each candidate will be entitled to make an election address prior to the distribution of ballot papers. The number of minutes allowed for this will be up to five minutes.

To allow for this the SOC is recommending that Congress starts 30 minutes early, at 9 a.m. on Tuesday morning. At 10 a.m. the General Member Auditor will deliver ballot papers to each Regional Secretary and the Regional Secretary will issue the ballot papers to each delegate who is entitled to vote.

Ballot papers will be issued to CEC members by the General Secretary via the Executive Officer.

Once completed, ballot papers should be placed in one of the two ballot boxes which will be placed on the platform at the front of the hall. The ballot boxes will be supervised by the tellers.

Voting will close at 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June when the General Member Auditor will take the ballot papers and count the votes. The result will be announced to Congress after this.

Vice President, Congress, I move the Supplement to SOC Report No. 1. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*The Supplement to SOC Report No. 1 was ADOPTED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As the Congress Special Report on the GMB Review of Elections was carried this morning I will now invite the General Secretary to announce the nominated candidates.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much, Malcolm. We have five candidates standing and I will do them in alphabetical order just so that I can remain utterly impartial, of course.

So, the first candidate is Sheila Bearcroft from Wales & South West Region. *(Applause)*

The next candidate is David Hope, North West & Irish Region. *(Applause)*

The next candidate is June Minnery, GMB Scotland. *(Applause)*

The next candidate is Andy Newman, GMB Southern Region. *(Applause)*

The fifth candidate is Barbara Plant, Southern Region. *(Applause)*

They are the five candidates that will be on the ballot papers tomorrow, Malcolm.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you for that, Tim. Congress, as we have a packed agenda and we now have an election to carry out, tomorrow morning's session, if you all agree, will start at 9 a.m. in the morning for the candidates to address Congress.

As reported by the SOC, there will be a bucket collection as you leave the hall in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind, organised by the Scottish Region. Please give generously and could the regional organiser please inform the SOC of the total amount raised so this can be reported to Congress.

The final announcement today is that the security staff at the venue have asked that you do not leave any bags in the hall tonight.

I will now close Congress and see you all at 9 a.m. in the morning. Thank you.

*Conference adjourned.*