

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 THREE  
(Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018)

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## THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2018

### MORNING SESSION

*(Congress assembled at 9.00 a.m.)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Good morning, colleagues. Can we settle down, please? Thank you. Yes? Colleagues, please, somebody is on the floor. Okay, Sarah, go ahead.

### **POINT OF ORDER:**

SARAH HURLEY (London): Thank you, chair. Good morning, Congress, raising a point of order. *(Applause/Cheers)* Thank you. In solidarity, brothers and sisters. I would like to raise a point of order on the SOC Report last night covering the short notice given to cut speeches is difficult for disabled members. No changes were allowed to the report despite a number of people at the front indicating they wanted to speak. The vote did not seem valid and should have needed a teller count. We should be provided with a written report of a revised speaking time as it was difficult to hear the Chair's announcements. Congress, I ask you to support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you, Sarah. Yes, there was a point of order being made and it was allowed and I am sorry for that but the motion, the SOC Report, was carried. Okay. *(General dissent)* Tim is going to speak on this.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good morning, Congress. First of all, I want to start by saying thank you to you all because it has been a very, very long week and it is only Wednesday morning. Let me just take you through procedurally where we are at right now because it is trying to put a quart into a pint pot. Let me explain.

In accordance with the rule book it is the CEC that sets the duration of Congress. It does not say in the rule book that Congress will start on a Saturday or a Sunday, and finish on a Thursday or Friday, it does not say that. It simply says the CEC will set the duration of Congress. Now, the CEC set the duration of Congress in the September meeting last year that said we would start on the Sunday with sectional conferences and we would finish at close of play Wednesday (if possible). That is in the minutes. I have the minutes with me if anyone wants to examine them. That was set by the CEC, not by me, not by the top table, not by Margaret or Malcolm; that was set by the CEC in September.

Cut to February of this year, some four or five months later, we had all the motions in and we had a 30% increase in numbers of motions than we have had in recent years. So, Congress was to run from Sunday, sectional conferences, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and try to get 30% more business into three days, and that is what the top table, that is what the people in my team have been trying to work tirelessly to do.

The reality, Congress, is, and I will be the first one to say I am so grateful for your cooperation with people moving and formally seconding, and the idea of Standing Orders Committee Report yesterday evening was to try and ensure that we get all

business done. This Congress has never had a record of not getting business done and the idea of the Standing Orders Committee Report last thing yesterday was to reduce speaking time, not to stop people moving motions. This is about giving people the opportunity, of course, to move your motion but to do it in a reduced time because we still have 100 motions to get through today, Congress.

I am looking for your cooperation again today because it is going to be a very long day. I make no apologies for that. When we set out the timetable we said that Wednesday would be a full day so we may well go through to half past 5 or 6 o'clock. The reality again is that there are very different views about this. Some people said to me last night, "I am fed up already, Tim, I've had too long a day, I was here from 9 o'clock till 6 yesterday and I want to go home." Other people are saying we should stay longer, we should have even longer time.

The reality is what the CEC has given us in terms of the timetable we have to work within it. I am absolutely grateful for your assistance, your working with us, your response, your help, and that was the CEC Report's intention last night. In terms of it being in writing, Sarah, I think that is a very good point. I went up to the Standing Orders Committee last night and I said to them, "Can we have it writing, please? I can't even remember what was agreed." I remember the three minutes, I remember the formally second, but there were a few bits attached to it. We will work on that, I give you that promise.

Also, Congress, we will work on a number of other things that we have to learn from this week. There is the timing of Congress. We need to think about the timing of Congress. As I have said, there is no set time but if from learning the lessons from this Congress we have to look at extending the time, then the CEC will do that. We do, of course, have the luxury now because you have agreed it that we will not have sectional conferences to contend with in Congress. They will be separate and they will be annual, so that will give us extra time. For example, we could have all day Sunday as well. We will look at the motions that are in, that are statements that don't call for action. We will look at whether we should take those or not. We will look at the length of time the CEC speakers have taken. We will look at everything. I give you that assurance. The one thing that no one on this top table is intent on doing is cutting or stymieing democracy at all. The intention of trying to reduce speaking time is to ensure we get all business done, that everybody gets the opportunity to move their motions, and everybody gets their say.

Thank you again for your cooperation, all of you, it means the absolute world to me, to Malcolm, to Margaret, and to everyone. Look at the successes we have celebrated so far this week from every single corner of this room, amazing successes, brilliant work. We are a family. We are one union. Yes, we fall out, occasionally we fall out, we did last night, but we are not going to go away from Brighton with anything other than a united front so thank you for listening and thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Colleagues, thank you for understanding that. I will just point out that it is the celebration of D-Day. We do acknowledge it and we think of those people that gave their lives for our country so that we could have a democracy to have Congress. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Thank you, colleagues, for making the effort to arrive earlier in the hall than originally scheduled. Due to unforeseen numbers of motions this year we have a lot of motions to discuss today. I am conscious we should do our best to ensure the Congress business is concluded in good time. You will note from the session plan that unlike previous days there is no separate plan for the morning and afternoon session. I want to assure delegates that we will be having a lunch break. The decision for the timing of lunch will have to be taken when we have concluded as much of this morning's business as possible.

Following the SOC Report No. 4, which was carried by Congress at the end of yesterday's afternoon session, I want to remind delegates to comply with the recommended revised speakers' time. Movers will have three minutes to move the motion, seconding will be done formally unless the seconding speech includes pertinent information that the mover did not include. We have one emergency motion from Yorkshire & North Derbyshire, and it will be taken during the motions on International. It is called, The Murder of Three Nestle Trade Unionists in Columbia.

Congress, our next business is the Local Gift but before we start can I first ask speakers on carried-over Motions 247 to 251 to make their way to the front and while you are doing this Standing Orders Committee will take the floor.

## **LOCAL GIFT**

**THE VICE-CHAIR:** This year, the Southern Region has chosen to give the Congress Local Gift to the children's cancer charity Momentum. I call on Paul Maloney, Regional Secretary, to say a few words. (*Applause*)

**PAUL MALONEY (Southern):** I am the first victim of the President this morning, "Make it quick," he said. When do I ever speak and make it quick! Paul Maloney of Southern Region accepting the Gift of Congress to give to one of our local charities, Momentum. Momentum is a charity that prepares children with life-threatening diseases before they go into hospital and they create a warm home-like environment for those children with play areas, musical activities, so those children feel they are not going into hospital, they are moving from home to home. The charity also provides for relatives to be able to come and stay with their child in their critical hours and hours when the child needs them most. Congress, it is a really, really worthy charity and I am proud to accept the gift of Congress to give to Momentum. I am sure they will be very, very pleased. Thank you all very, very much for your contribution. (*Applause*)

**THE VICE-CHAIR:** Thank you, Paul. Helen, Standing Orders?

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

**HELEN JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee):** First, can I report on yesterday's bucket collection, which was by Midland & East Coast Region for the charity, Life for a Kid. The sum raised was £380 from you good people and I am getting the feeling that the region may like to contribute something further? (*Midland & East Coast Region donated a further £1,000.*) (*Applause*)

Could we just mention, please, the SOC, Amendments to Motions:  
The SOC noted that during yesterday afternoon's debate on Composite 7 an amendment was moved from the floor of Congress. Can we remind Congress that this is against the current GMB debating procedure. As is the case with emergency motions, if any region wishes to amend a motion which has already been accepted for debate and placed in the Final Agenda, then the same procedure should be followed as for emergency motions. All amendments must be submitted in writing to the SOC for consideration and a CEC stance sought on the impact of the proposed amendment before it can be heard on the floor of Congress. On this occasion it is the SOC's understanding that the region concerned has agreed to withdraw the amendment and this will be noted in the record of Congress. Confirmed? (*Agreed*) Thank you.  
Vice-Chair, Congress I move SOC Report No. 5. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks very much, Helen. Does Congress agree to the Standing Orders Report? (*Agreed*) All those in favour? Those against? Thank you. That is carried. Thank you, Helen.

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

## **POLITICAL: BREXIT**

THE VICE-CHAIR: I now turn to the business carried over from yesterday. Our first group of motions is on Political: Brexit. Please note Motions 238 to 246 have been debated but not voted on. I therefore call on the mover of 247.

## **BREXIT AND IMMIGRATION MOTION 247**

### **247. BREXIT AND IMMIGRATION**

This Conference notes the debate on immigration currently underway in the context of the Brexit negotiations, with the Tories committed to ending free movement.

Stagnating wages, crumbling services and the housing crisis were caused by government and employers making the rich richer at working people's expense – not immigration. Dividing workers along national lines is the oldest trick in the book.

We need real solutions to the problems facing working people: massive public funding to ensure good jobs, homes, services and benefits for all; scrapping of anti-union laws and stronger rights so workers can push up wages and conditions; and communities uniting across divisions to win changes.

The labour movement is a movement for all workers, regardless of where they were born. We note many struggles where migrants have been central to improving low-paid workers' wages and rights. Our movement must not give an inch to the falsehoods used to turn domestic against migrant workers.

Free movement benefits all workers. Without it, only the rich and privileged can live and travel where they want. Free movement ensures that migrants

have rights. Ending it makes migrant workers more vulnerable to hyper-exploitation, making downward pressure on wages more likely. Workers are much less likely to organise in a trade union if the penalty for standing up to your boss is being deported.

Britain and the EU should welcome migration across Europe and from beyond. Limiting free movement further would damage the economy and hit living standards.

This Conference resolves to campaign to defend and extend free movement; scrap the net migration target; strengthen refugee rights; dismantle the brutal anti-migrant regime built over decades; abolish immigration detention centres; ensure the right to family reunion; end use of “no recourse to public funds”; end use of landlords and health workers as border guards; and reverse attacks on migrants’ access to the NHS. GMB will work with like-minded forces across the movement to ensure that this becomes Labour Party policy.

GLASGOW GENERAL APEX BRANCH  
GMB Scotland

*(Carried)*

USMAN ALI (GMB Scotland): Vice-Chair, Congress, immigration is at the very heart of our nation’s story, our past, our present, and our future. Immigrants to the United Kingdom have made a positive and lasting difference to our economy and for our society, from our manufacturing and commercial sectors to our public services, and for all our communities. Many immigrants have success stories to tell that will inspire us all. Yet we as a country often find it hard to fully hear these success stories and celebrate this positive impact because of hate and grievance. While people’s concerns about immigration was abundantly clear in the EU referendum, the views of anti-immigration Brexiteers continues to become even more extreme and unjust with every target set.

Congress, the *Windrush* scandal confirmed this. The shame of *Windrush* was not just faced by our current weak and unstable Government but was faced by all of us. Congress, I can tell you that this shame was real, it involved real people who made real differences for our country but now feel real hurt and anger because of the British Government’s actions, hurt and anger which I witnessed first-hand when I attended April’s Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting forums in London.

During these meetings I reached out to fellow young leaders and our friends from the Caribbean to take part in a friendship photograph to demonstrate that we would not let our working and personal relationships be stained by the disastrous actions of the British Government. However, they said no to being part of such a photograph. Why, because they wanted the British Government to fully fix their mistake and once again value those who chose to make the United Kingdom their home. Congress, the *Windrush* generation are British, they have always been and that is how it should always remain. *(Applause)*

In Scotland, our demographic challenge means that our economy and our public services need immigration to thrive; therefore, we should be using Brexit negotiations to make the case for the protection of all EU citizens. As we do so, we should seek to recruit migrant labour workers into our union, defending and extending collective bargaining coverage.

So, let us now stand to make a difference by saying loudly and clearly that we value immigrants who choose to make the United Kingdom their home and we celebrate the positive difference that they continue to make. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally second? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 248.

**BREXIT – THE RIGHTS OF EU CITIZENS LIVING IN THE UK AND  
BRITISH CITIZENS LIVING IN THE EU  
MOTION 248**

**248. BREXIT - THE RIGHTS OF EU CITIZENS LIVING IN THE UK, AND  
BRITISH CITIZENS LIVING IN THE EU.**

Congress notes that in their negotiations to leave the European Union, and the signals given at governmental level, Theresa May and the Conservatives continue to gamble British jobs, economic growth, human rights and protection for British workers in their attempts to reconcile the most right wing parts of the Conservative party.

Congress notes that despite reassurances from the Government, EU citizens who have lived and contributed to British society for a number of years, are unable to make firm plans and erroneous letters demanding that people the leave the country are still being issued by the Home Office.

Congress believes that in this atmosphere, trust in the ability of the government to carry out the proper and fair registration of three million citizens after Brexit has been undermined at a national and international level.

Congress further believes that the lives of both British people living in the EU and Europeans living in the UK are being used as bargaining chips - causing unnecessary stress and instability for these people and their families, and weakening the UK's reputation internationally.

Congress stresses that no guarantees have been made by the British Government, with regard to their social security rights, to the 1.2million British people living in the EU who may have to return to the UK as a result of Brexit. Congress reiterates the importance of the Trade Union movement in protecting individuals from discrimination, and points to the importance of the voice of the movement in countering anti-immigrant rhetoric and playing an active role in securing the rights of these individuals post-brexit.

B59 BRUSSELS  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

CHARLAINE NKUM (Southern): Vice President, Congress, Congress notes that in their negotiations with the European Union and the signals given at governmental level, Theresa May and the Conservatives continue to gamble jobs, economic growth, human rights, and protection for workers here in the UK. We note that despite reassurances from the Government, the EU citizens who have lived and contributed to British society for a number of years are now unable to make firm plans and receive erroneous letters to leave the country from the Home Office.

In this climate trust in the ability of the Government to carry out the proper and fair registration of three million citizens after Brexit has been undermined at national and international level. It is further believed that the lives of both British people living in the EU and Europeans living in the UK are being used as bargaining chips causing unnecessary stress and instability for these people and their families, and weakening the UK's reputation internationally. We are fully aware that no guarantees have been made by the British Government with regard to social security rights, to the 1.2 million British people living in the EU, who may have to return back to the UK as a result of Brexit.

GMB reiterates the importance of the trades union Movement in protecting individuals from discrimination and points to the importance of the voice of the Movement in countering anti-immigrant rhetoric and playing an active role in securing the rights of these individuals post-Brexit. Please support the motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Secunder?

A DELEGATE: I will be brief. First-time delegate, last clean T-shirt! *(Applause)* In 2016, my parents – my family is Italian and English – lost everything in an earthquake. The Italian state stepped in and is helping them rebuild their lives. Given a choice about that hostile environment and this one, they have chosen to stay there because that is their home. For my colleagues in the NHS who come here to help, to work, this is their home. Congress, I ask that you stand with family and friends. I second the motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you very much. The mover of Motion 249, please come forward?

**POST BREXIT TRADE DEALS  
MOTION 249**

**249. POST BREXIT TRADE DEALS**

This Conference has no confidence in the present government to negotiate trade deals beneficial to the UK after the country leaves the EU. It believes the government will chase any deal with any country for immediate publicity and short term political gain rather than in the interests of the country and its



people. By chasing deals at any cost, there is a risk of massive a trade deficit. For example, at present, there is a trade surplus with America, given President Trump's rhetoric on "America First", any dealings with the current US administration is likely to be detrimental to the UK. Chasing deals at any cost could lead to safety standards being compromised at home and, given the willingness to sell arms to countries with dubious human rights records, a danger of death and destruction abroad.

Conference, therefore, calls on the Labour and Trade Union movement to argue and fight for trade deals to be that are both in the country's interest and also ethical. It further calls on the next Labour government to follow ethical foreign and trade policies.

## PARKGATE BRANCH Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

PHILIP HILL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, we have no confidence in the present Tory Government to negotiate post-Brexit trade deals that are beneficial to the country they are supposed to be representing. Theresa May seems more interested in publicity and short-term political gains than the interests of the UK. She chases trade deals for her own popularity rather than in the interests of the UK. Is this what we want from Brexit? No.

In June 1970, a time when the size of the British trade gap was front page stuff, headlines screamed about the UK being back in the red. The TV news bulletins were full of it, how Wilson supposedly blamed it for his unexpected defeat at the hands of Ted Heath, along with England's World Cup defeat to West Germany, all this for a trade deficit of £13m. Brexit has moved trade up the political agenda. 43% of UK exports in 2016 went to other EU countries. Business groups are keen to ensure that the forced departure impediments to trade are kept to a minimum. Britain's trade performance with the rest of the UK has been woeful. According to data produced by the House of Commons Library, it has run a trade deficit in goods and services combined in every year since 1999. What is more, the deficit is getting bigger over time, doubling from £41 billion to £82 billion between 2012 and 2016. We need beneficial trade deals, trade deals can benefit both parties but involve heavy negotiation. Each country will try to get a deal which is in their favour. Britain has decided to leave its main trading union and there is a ticking clock on the departure date.

The Tory Party stakes so much of its reputation on securing a deal and puts virtually all its cards into Trump's hands. Trading with Trump and *America First* is detrimental to the UK. What kind of deals does Theresa May think she is going to get with a right-wing capitalist tyrant. Trump has shown his hand and his *America First* approach and is once again preparing his country for war, a trade war, where his first salvo is to place a trade levy on British steel and other imports. The UK is now being told ----

THE VICE-CHAIR: Sorry, colleague, could you close, please?

PHILIP HILL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 250, can the mover come forward, please?

**POST-BREXIT BRITAIN  
MOTION 250**

**250. POST-BREXIT BRITAIN**

This Conference recommends that a massive investment is needed in education, training and infrastructure in a post-Brexit Britain as many workers may be affected by the vote to leave the EU.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

BYRON COOKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): Brexit is something that has and will affect us all. This motion is calling for investment in industries, education, and to invest in people and give businesses a good reason to stay in the UK and to move to the UK. We want the best people and the best workforces and the companies will follow. This will require massive investment, that is true, but the return on the capital employed will be great for generations to come. Congress, I hope you move this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thanks, colleague. Is it formally moved? Formally seconded, sorry? No?

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Okay.

**COMPREHENSIVE SICKNESS INSURANCE  
MOTION 251**

**251. COMPREHENSIVE SICKNESS INSURANCE**

This Conference deplores the fact that, if you are an EU citizen and you would wish to qualify for a right of residence then eventually a right of permanent residence, you have to meet certain requirements, which includes comprehensive sickness insurance.

Following the Brexit vote to leave the EU, it is more important than ever to make sure that our EU friends understand how to meet the current requirements, when applying for a right of residence.

Confusingly, EU citizens and their family members are allowed to use the NHS in the UK, but according to the Home Office the NHS does not count as comprehensive sickness insurance.

Who needs comprehensive sickness insurance?

All EU citizens now according to GMB EU branch members, who wish to apply for residence in the UK!

We therefore call on this Conference to:

1. Seek legal help and advice from the GMB/ Unionline for GMB EU members in helping them clarify the position on comprehensive sickness insurance when applying for residency.
2. Create a crib sheet to help GMB EU members filling in the 85 page document when applying for residence.
3. Plus affiliate to [www.freemovement.org.uk](http://www.freemovement.org.uk)

GMB MID LINCS BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region

*(Carried)*

KAREN MORRELL (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, EU residents wishing to become UK residents have to meet certain requirements, which includes comprehensive sick insurance or CSI. It is really important that our EU friends understand how to meet the current and future requirements when applying for residency. EU citizens residing in the UK are allowed to use the NHS. However, the Home Office has said that the NHS does not qualify as CSI so who does need CSI, all EU citizens and their families that wish to apply for UK residency. Once the UK leaves the EU and its system of laws the EU law for rights of residence or permanent residency will no longer exist in the UK. The British Government and the European Commission have reached a preliminary agreement on replacement rights in UK law known as temporary status and settled status. Only certain EA and EU citizens qualify for a right of residence, which brings with it the right to be accompanied by family members, the right to claim certain benefits, protection from removal from the UK, and the right to acquire permanent residence after five years of a qualifying period.

Who qualifies for the right of residence: workers, self-employed people, self-sufficient people with CSI, and students with CSI. Two of those categories require the EU citizen to hold CSI. So, what counts as comprehensive sick insurance? The rest of the EU uses health insurance to provide the public with healthcare. In the UK, uniquely, we have the NHS which is not insurance-based and can be used at the point of need. Access to the NHS does not count. Access to the NHS is not enough. What may qualify as CSI then? One way is to purchase private health insurance. This is relatively cheap if you are young and healthy. It may be prohibitively expensive or even impossible if you are older or already ill.

Many have found the level at which sickness insurance becomes comprehensive to be something of a mystery. The Government says it means full health insurance, so this is not much help. After reading this and researching it, I am confused myself and English is my first language, so how on earth are you expected to understand if English is not your first language? I ask Congress to support. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*)

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: I call Dave Clements from the CEC, Southern Region, to reply on behalf of the CEC.

DAVE CLEMENTS (CEC, Commercial Services): Morning, everyone. Vice President, Congress, we are supporting Motions 242, 246, 247, 251, with qualifications, and ask Congress to refer Motion 241.

The qualification on Motion 242 is that whilst recognising the positive achievements of the European political culture, it is important to acknowledge that the European Union has failed to meet the full aspirations of working people in recent years and we have deep concerns about the worrying rise of nationalism across a number of European countries. The CEC wants to see continued cooperation with sister unions across Europe and together we will defend and pursue workers' rights, share values and policies in our members' interests regardless of whether we are in or outside the European Union. GMB will campaign to ensure that the UK remains closely aligned to rights and standards underpinned by the EU where they benefit our members. We will also oppose and expose a North American deregulatory model for the future of the UK currently being pursued by a number of Conservatives in government.

Motion 246 is broadly in line with our CEC Special Report on Brexit endorsed at Congress 2017. However, the qualification is that the motion refers to free trade and frictionless borders, and we need to confirm that these terms apply to EU and internal market and not wider free trade models. Furthermore, the motion demands our leadership campaigns to ensure that when we leave the EU customs union we remain within a customs union with tariff free access to the single market. It is not currently clear what sort of customs union this would be but the GMB policy is to seek tariff free frictionless trade within the EU in the future.

There is a wish not to undermine Motion 265, Duty Free, from Congress 2017 but it is recognised that any campaign to restore the UK EU Duty Free was only if we had moved to a British and a hard Brexit out of the single market and customs union and returned to the custom and trade conditions which applied pre-Lisbon and the Single European Act.

Moving to Motion 247, the motion reflects GMB policy in relation to the value of migrant workers and the need to protect their rights contained in the CEC Special Report on Brexit endorsed at Congress 2017. The qualification is that the motion claims free movement benefits all workers and free movement ensures that migrants

have rights. GMB is all too aware that the sad reality of past and present policy on free movement of workers has allowed workers to be widely exploited and used divisively to undercut wages and conditions of the broader workforce. Without checks and protections to counter this, unconditional support for free movement cannot be endorsed. In this context GMB would struggle to campaign for some of the demands of the motion.

The motion also calls on the GMB to work with like minded forces across the Movement to ensure this become Labour Party policy. The motion would need to be more specific about which forces these were. If this involved any affiliation fee or financial support this would be a matter for agreement of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Addressing Motion 251, all GMB members are able to contact Unionline regarding any legal matter as it is their law firm. The qualification is that affiliation to any organisation would require an agreement of the Finance & General Purposes Committee based on the merits of the organisation in relation to meeting the GMB values and policies and requirements regarding cost.

The CEC is asking Congress to refer Motion 241. We acknowledge the Government's position on Brexit has developed and we have cautiously welcomed the Labour Party's plan to seek a customs union after March 2019. However, we do not believe that the substance of the Special Report on Brexit endorsed by Congress in 2017 has been overtaken by events. It is important to continue to monitor developments and if a second referendum is proposed with a frame of reference that benefits our members, we should have the discretion to support it. We therefore ask that this motion be referred to the CEC and the Brexit working group for further consideration over the course of 2018/19.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motions 242, 246, 247, 251 with the qualifications I have set out, and agree to refer Motion 241. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks, Dave. Does North West & Irish Region accept reference back? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Do you accept reference back on 242 as well? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Motion 246, Southern Region, do you support the motion with the qualification? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Scotland, Motion 247, do you support the motion with the qualification? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Motion 251, Midlands & East Coast, do you support the qualification of the CEC? *(Agreed)* Good.

I now put Motions 238, 241, 242, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, and 251 to the vote. All those in favour of those motions? Thank you. Anybody against the motions? Thank you. No. They are all carried. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

*Motion 238 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 241 was REFERRED.*

*Motion 242 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 244 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 245 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 246 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 247 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 248 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 249 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 250 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 251 was CARRIED.*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: EDUCATION & TRAINING**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we now move to carried-over motions on Union Organisation, Education & Training. Can I ask the movers of 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, and 90, to come to the front, please, and can the mover of 79 go to the rostrum?

### **GMB BRANCH CONFERENCES MOTION 79**

#### **79. GMB BRANCH CASE CONFERENCES**

This Conference calls for the GMB to facilitate on-going communication amongst workplace reps that would be focussed on discussing their casework. The aim: to improve competence levels faster, especially in new reps.

This Conference recognises that regions and branches do great work in training reps but suggests that a formal arena to discuss reps' on-going cases could prove beneficial. A member can have a wide range of questions to pitch to their union rep and the road to knowledge is a long one. The chance to ruminate over issues and refine one's knowledge on areas of employment law would surely help.

We understand that case conferences exist in social work and in medicine. While employee representation is a different field, the concept itself would seem to be transferable and worth an experiment.

We call upon Conference to organise – perhaps at regional level – regular conference calls or webinars that seek to discuss reps' cases as they arise. Planning would include the technical set up of facilities, promotional work as well as development of guidelines for participants to ensure that, for example, details of individual members are protected. Care **MUST** be taken when discussing cases.

We urge Conference to support this motion.

**S70 BRANCH**  
**North West & Irish Region**

*(Withdrawn)*

NOEL REID (North West & Irish): Good morning Committee, Congress. I am a first-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* How long have you been a

workplace rep? Do you remember your first few months as a workplace rep? How long did it take you to feel confident enough to handle a case, an agreement, or an investigatory? How would you encourage and assure a new inexperienced and perhaps isolated rep on their training? For new reps it may be several months before they can do the two-week induction course. Isolated reps do not have the mentoring support of other reps in the workplace. For inexperienced reps like myself it may be a lack of applied knowledge and issues. My own Area Organiser is stretched. My Branch Secretary works full-time. I can wade through all the pdfs and books to my heart's content but I need to be able to quickly outline to a member the legalities of an issue, the case law, and what can be done about it?

My branch represents a thousand members in private security in Northern Ireland, spread out over 5,000 square miles. Members and reps both work in small groups and work a mix of day shifts and night shifts so face-to-face support is very difficult hence why we need to develop new ways to support our reps. I am certain that other reps in other industries will identify with the sentiment.

So, what is the possible solution? Case conference is just a fancy term for discussing members' cases in a mixed group of experienced and inexperienced reps, people who can support each other on the spot. Our reps need guidance, information, and good practice, and use of a sounding board from experienced reps to build their competency levels. We can try conference calls, we can try webinars, both inexpensive to set up and run, and with live and instant feedback to reps' questions.

Congress, the issue of privacy is vital. No one will tolerate the identification of individual members or specific details that could identify a company, but this is surely a solvable problem. In fact, yesterday I attended the GDPR workshop at lunchtime. We have already discussed members' issues in the form of online discussion forums, we have done so for years, and a fine example of that is the Union Reps Forum run by the TUC; many of you will know it. No one is proposing that discussion forums will be shut down in this new landscape. We can take the appropriate legal advice, take care and put together guidelines, and talk about how to refer to members' issues in a confidential manner. Folks, this is a simple motion and a simple speech. I hope you support it. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Do we have a seconder? Formally? Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 80.

## **LEARNING EQUALITY FOR ALL MOTION 80**

### **80. LEARNING EQUALITY FOR ALL**

This Conference, Chesterfield C40 Branch asks this Congress to support the following motion outlined below:

The GMB 2017 rulebook states as part of its purpose that every GMB member should have the opportunity to discover and develop their talents, well Congress the education of members is key to this purpose. Also contained in the rulebook under rule 2 item 6 page 8 it states 'to promote training and educating members in relation to the activities they carry out on our behalf, and to provide scholarships to educational institutions for members, in line with conditions set out by the Central Executive Council. Currently Congress GMB members nationally have access to the National Lifelong Learning Fund and also access to the GMB Ruskin College Fund and four regions also have access to regional educational funding for members.

So we ask Congress to address this inequality on behalf of GMB members so that any member that pays the same GMB membership subscription fee that they also have access to regional funding if not already available; so that it is not dependent on regional postcode provision. Congress 2016 created the National Lifelong Learning Committee so the vehicle for addressing any inequality should be taken up by that committee and the regions from where that individual committee member operates from.

#### GMB CHESTERFIELD NO. 1 BRANCH Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Referred)*

AMANDA BURLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Our GMB 2017 rule book states as part of its purpose that every GMB member should have the opportunity to discover and develop their skills and talents. Under GMB 2017 constitution, rule 2, Aims, item 6, it states: "...to promote training and educating members in relation to the activities they carry out on our behalf, and to provide scholarships to educational institutions for members, in line with conditions set out by the Central Executive Council."

Congress, currently within our union we do not have learning equality according to this rule 2. The reason I say this is because we have a union which consists of nine regions and, although our members do have access to the National Learning Fund and the GMB Ruskin College Fund, at present only four regions out of the nine have access to a Regional Learning Fund. Currently, in the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region we have a Regional Learning Committee of which I am the secretary and we also have a Regional Learning Fund which our members have access to via our Regional Learning Committee. The benefits to our Yorkshire & North Derbyshire members is paramount as our members have access to apply for funding for all their educational needs from their branch, our region, and nationally, even if our very own productive learning project cannot support their training needs. This is currently giving our members a learning equality for them all across our region.

Congress, we are asking the other five regions to address this learning inequality within our trade union and to form a Regional Learning Committee and have a Regional Learning Fund so that every GMB member that pays the same GMB member subscription fee also has the same access to a learning fund and the same learning opportunities. In Congress 2016, we saw the National Lifelong Learning



Committee formed. The members of this committee are currently from and nominated by the four Regional Learning Committees. This National Lifelong Learning Committee should have nine delegates, one delegate from each of the Regional Learning Committees to ensure learning equality all across the country. Congress, we should have learning equality for all and we ask you to support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 81.

## **WORKING CLASS EDUCATION MOTION 81**

### **81. WORKING CLASS EDUCATION**

This Conference is dismayed at the lack of availability of education for working class adults. During the last years we have seen the closure of many adult education institutions, attacks on the WEA, reduction in funding for all adult education and the end of funding of Trade Union education through the TUC.

Ruskin College, “The Trade Union College” with a long history of educating activists and leaders, now seems to have cut its links with union studies. It has dismissed all the staff who taught on the highly acclaimed BA and MA in International Labour and Trade Union Studies, thus making the future of the TU education at Ruskin insecure. Two Union AGSs have been expelled from the Board – which has always been managed by TU Leaders.

For the very many Trade Union Activists and members the union movement has provided excellent opportunities for members who may previously have missed out on educational opportunities (partly because of the classbased nature of higher education). Currently the Government is hell-bent on destroying any opportunity for working class people to improve their education.

Therefore Conference resolves to:-

- Challenge the management at Ruskin College and ensure that our membership of the Board leads to a reverse of these decisions, or that we should review our relationship with the college and put our energy into supporting real working class education.
- Support organisations that do deliver working class education (for example: Independent Working Class Education – IWCE and GFTU).
- Create a national fund to assist members to undertake educational courses – both short and long (degree or postgraduate) or skillsbased.

- Offer training to Regional Education Officers so that they can advise members on educational opportunities and offer creative and innovative educational courses.

## LOWESTOFT BRANCH London Region

*(Referred)*

BEVERLEY WOODBURN (London): First-time delegate. *(Applause)* Now, I was proud as a 2010 cohort of the MA in International Trade Union Studies at Ruskin. I looked forward every Thursday evening to the journey to Oxford, every two months, in glorious surroundings and meeting fellow trade union officers and reps, and spending two-and-a-half days presenting, discussing, and addressing the concerns of global labour. It is where I met GMB sisters and lifelong friendships were formed. So, it came as a bit of a shock to learn that the course is being reduced down to one overnight stay and students on the renamed Global and Social Change Course must find the same tuition fees for a course that has been dramatically scaled down.

It is obvious that Ruskin is no longer a home for working class education. I understand that GMB students on the current course should look elsewhere but they are there and we have to support them right now, and I understand that. Working class education is at a crossroads and is under attack. It is now the GMB must look to work towards a national sort of co-trust.

Finally, just to clear things up, the decision at Ruskin was a political decision. The dismissal of a diverse and experienced staff replaced by inexperienced gamma male and stale means that I am not sure that ethically and morally Ruskin is the place to go to meet the educational needs of our members. The MA ran last year with less applicants than the 25 the previous year. This was used as a case to make many redundancies at Ruskin and it is one of the reasons why I left the education sector, because of this kind of sick management manipulation that you see, and it is sad to see that Ruskin has now gone down that road. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 83.

## **PART TIME MEMBERS MOTION 83**

### **83. PART TIME MEMBERS**

This Conference believes that part time members are being deterred from becoming active with the GMB as training courses do not accommodate their needs.

Courses take place over full days which discourage many part time members from becoming reps, especially in education settings where the majority of

members are women with caring responsibilities. Whilst we have almost 50:50 membership female and part time post holders are still a minority.

This has been an issue in our branch/region and was a key discussion point at the 2017 National Women's Conference.

One of the recommendations from the CEC report on training at Congress 2017 stated:

*Identify development pathways that will open up new training opportunities so that existing reps, as well as new reps, can access the training they need in order to be effective in their role.*

We call upon conference to develop as part of the training review, a programme to include courses for part time members.

S85 SANDWELL COMMUNITY BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

SAM FAGAN (Birmingham & West Midlands): Vice President, Congress, our current training programme does not meet the needs of many of our members. In my branch, one of my roles is to go out to schools and encourage members to become workplace representatives. I have had instances where members have been elected as reps but have not been able to go through with their training because the current training courses conflict with their own lives and needs outside of work.

A lunchtime supervisor who worked one-and-a-half hours a day was elected as a rep. She worked those hours for a reason; she also gave care to her son and as a result would not be able to attend a 10-day course where each day of training is a full day. At another school a learning support practitioner was elected but she had her own childcare needs. If she was to travel and do a full day of training, she would have been unable to have taken her children to school and picked them up afterwards. So she was unable to become a rep as well despite being very interested in becoming a rep.

In our union, membership is split almost 50:50 between males and females but when you look at post-holders there does become a gap. Even here today only 37% of delegates are female. While I understand that men also often have childcare responsibilities, it is often women more so who carry out those responsibilities and we need to do more to make courses accessible for all. The same can be said for part-time workers or people who work weekends, who could still prove to be very valuable to our Movement.

We say that we are a 21<sup>st</sup> century union. Delegates, let's show that we are by supporting this motion today calling for a 21<sup>st</sup> century training programme that will include training opportunities for all of our members. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sam. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 84.

## **EMPLOYERS – TRAINING MOTION 84**

### **84. EMPLOYERS - TRAINING**

This Conference calls upon the GMB and Regions to review the GMB@Work training to include 'An Employers Perspective' in the course curriculum thus giving the attendees an overview of the world of work.

#### **CAMBORNE BRANCH Wales & South West Region**

*(Carried)*

TRACEY HARRISON (GMB Wales & South West): Chair, Congress, we understand that there has been an intensive development regarding GMB@Work training materials and a structured approach to what reps need and essential training modules to deliver those skills. This motion takes into consideration the amount of information our reps could benefit from and having an insight into employer perspectives and views. These insights could serve to improve initiative designed to help reps contribute to as well as improve employee terms and conditions, support business growth and the development of the workforce. This would meet the needs of the employers and the employees. Employees' perspectives could also have a joint focus on establishing engagement with apprentices which has become a key focus in recent times. It is essential that we engage employers with training which could build relationships with GMB and maybe gain more positive working together relationships. Having an insight into employers' business objectives could improve workplace organisers' knowledge on some of the impact of business threats that challenge the future of the companies day after day.

Working together on training and having an employer view could look at and help maintain a motivated workforce, look at improving benefit packages and help address employees' health and wellbeing. We are all aware that short-term issues such as absence and challenging business issues maintaining an effective employee benefit package could actually address some of these pressures. Having a module which would highlight and have a greater insight to business needs may give our GMB reps the tools to help strengthen the business and job security of their members. Please support. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tracey. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 85.

**INDUSTRY SPECIFIC UNION TRAINING FOR BRANCH WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES  
MOTION 85**

**85. INDUSTRY SPECIFIC UNION TRAINING FOR BRANCH WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVES**

This Conference resolves to address industry specific training for their GMB workplace representatives to ensure all reps no matter where they work have all the necessary skills to adequately represent their members.

An example of this is ensuring all Police Staff Branches have adequately trained workplace representatives to respond when a member is required to attend a Post Incident Management Suite so that the GMB workplace representative is best able to support and represent the member.

**SOUTH WALES POLICE STAFF BRANCH**  
Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

GWYLAN BRINKWORTH (GMB Wales & South West): Vice President, Congress, much of the work we do as GMB workplace reps is the same regardless of where we work, whether we are a public sector organisation, an Asda store, or even ceramics industry, after all, mental health issues are mental health issues as in employment and equality law. So for the most part our training can be a one size fits all off-the-shelf package, but, colleagues, working in the emergency services sector no GMB or TUC training course has ever prepared me to support a member who is required to attend post-incident management or PIM suite. Let me explain.

A PIM is called after the death or serious injury following police contact. When this happens anyone associated with the incident, be that a police community support officer, a 999 call handler, or any other member of the police staff, they are classified as key police witnesses as part of an independent investigation into the incident. While you are in the PIM these staff have the right to be protected and welfare issues that need to be looked after. As GMB members they have a right to be supported by their GMB rep. GMB reps need not only to understand what goes on in a PIM suite but to know what their member's rights are and what the union procedure is for supporting members who find themselves in these situations. Rights include members having the right to be represented by a solicitor when giving their initial account because sure as eggs are eggs a police officer or Unison colleagues will be.

I could go on to explain the whole process to you but I am sure many of you are wondering why I am telling you all this, and that is really the point of the motion. I have done post-incident management training so I can support my members but this course was paid for by my employer and provided by another union, not something most courses offer their reps and not a course most GMB reps need anyhow. I am sure there are many reps thinking there is training they need specific to their industry, this cannot be unique to police staff branches, so by supporting this motion Congress

will ensure that our reps in every sector are the best trained reps not only in mental health and employment law but in all aspects of the role they do. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gwylan. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 86.

## **GUIDANCE FOR NEW BRANCH POST HOLDERS MOTION 86**

### **86. GUIDANCE/EDUCATION FOR NEW BRANCH POST HOLDERS**

This Conference calls for the writing of a handbook for new Presidents/Branch Secretaries as a reference guide for new incumbents with frequently asked questions and potential pitfalls to avoid.

We have a wealth of knowledge e.g. of how a particular scenario was dealt with successfully and if it would be possible to pool this knowledge and make it accessible to all that can only be a good thing for the members we service.

As well as being in a hard copy that a section of the website be devoted to this area for ease of access.

This is to supplement the existing excellent service already being delivered by the Branch Regional Organisers.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

MARIE McCORMACK (London): This Congress calls for the writing of a handbook or welcome pack for new Presidents and Branch Secretaries as a reference guide for new incumbents to include frequently asked questions and potential pitfalls to avoid. As a union we have a wealth of knowledge, for example, how a particular scenario was dealt with successfully that we could all learn from if we pool the information. So, if it would be possible to pool this knowledge and make it accessible to all that can only be a good thing for the members we serve. As well as being in book form we ask that a section of the website be devoted to this area for ease of access and reference. This is to supplement the existing excellent service already being provided and delivered by the Branch Regional Organisers.

So, picture the scene: “Congratulations, you have just been elected Branch Secretary of your branch.” Handshakes and pats on the back are being delivered. You have waved goodbye to your predecessor and wished them well. Day one: unlock the office door. Open the window to let some air in. What happens next? Every branch official will have their own style and approach. What I am asking for here is the

pooling of expertise and good practice to be shared rather than reacting to problems presented. It would assist in pre-empting situations and could be a go-to manual to supplement the excellent service already being delivered by the Branch Regional Organisers. What I am seeking is like a little Dumbo's Feather to hold on to in those early days within easy reach to flick through and offer an opinion, a suggestion on how to run a branch for maximum efficiency and minimal stress to those actually running the branch.

Let's hope that by next Congress the GMB Guide to Holding Office will be ready to collect. I call upon all our activists to start submitting good practice ideas and tips so that they can be compiled and some kind of book presented for new post holders. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)*

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 87.

## **BRANCH SECRETARY AND BRANCH PRESIDENT TRAINING MOTION 87**

### **87. BRANCH SECRETARY AND BRANCH PRESIDENT TRAINING**

This Conference asks that the GMB make it mandatory for any person taking on the role of Branch Secretary or Branch President to undergo training to fulfill the role before taking post, or within a suitable and reasonable time frame.

HULL NO.1 BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region

*(Referred)*

TONY GRAHAM (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, visitors, the GMB now more than ever is at the forefront of campaigns and issues worldwide than we have ever been, but on our own soil we lack some fundamental home-grown skills in producing competent Branch Secretaries and Presidents. At the end of 2017 I was on a training module in Lincolnshire run by the fantastic education team at Midlands & East Coast and we had a training programme there for Branch Secretaries. Well, it became apparent quite shortly into that that it was not educating Branch Secretaries that had been there for years, it was newbies that had either been an incumbent for a Branch Secretary that had stood down and then covered in for about a week-and-a-half or someone that had been elected that was on the floor running like myself.

Some of the reasons for what I am talking about this morning are these. Our own rule book that covers Branch Secretaries says that there are financial responsibilities but it does not say that the GMB can, if there is any impropriety, take that person to court. Also, it does not explain and never has the Thatcherite rules in the Trade Union Bill which need more understanding when my name as a picketing officer can be put on the list of police sergeants, with truncheons raining over the top of my head.

The last thing is that the new rules under GDPR have not been explained and completely frightened the hell out of me, Vice President. Branch Secretaries and Presidents of all branches can be held accountable not just on those but on ever increasing accountabilities that are not explained under rule 37. So, at what point do we say that we are given a position of trust? The point was mentioned that at that point the GMB becomes an employer and has a duty of care to its employees with regard to new initiatives and their need for training so we do not make mistakes and cannot be compromised as a union. There has to be further training given to those willing to take on higher positions within a branch or further within the GMB structure.

Therefore, I ask the GMB to become active in setting up a national – national – training programme and make it mandatory that any person taking on the role of Branch Secretary or President undergo training so that they can fulfil the position, they can undertake training before taking on a position and a post reasonably given after being elected. The old ways are good but not right. Drag us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and give us the training that we require. Congress, please move this motion. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tony. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 88.

## **COUNSELLING SKILLS FOR UNION REPS AND BRANCH OFFICERS MOTION 88**

### **88. COUNSELLING SKILLS FOR UNION REPS AND BRANCH OFFICERS**

This conference believes that union representatives and branch officers carry a disproportionate role in supporting members who face workplace difficulties, and are very often psychologically distressed. The onus on the union representative to establish a complete and accurate picture of events in order to provide appropriate support can in some cases be challenging. These difficulties can be mitigated against, to some degree, by the use of counselling techniques when interviewing members. We request that the union consider the potential for providing all reps with training in basic counselling skills as part of the GMB training programme.

D30 DORSET  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

SARAH JANE PATTISON (Southern): Congress, the purpose of this motion is to provide training, to request the provision of training in fully basic counselling skills to union reps and officers. It is to provide training in empathy unconditional regard, confidentiality, and so on. The purpose of this is a two-way thing. You have all



experienced the situation where a member comes into the office, maybe, they are angry, they are upset, they may even be hysterical and you get the tissues out, and that is about it. Basically, you need to spend a great deal of time digging deeper into that member's issues to understand where they are coming from and the actual nature, deeper nature, of the problem they have brought to you. So, in terms of dealing with members on an everyday basis, I think counselling skills are absolutely essential.

The second part of this, though, is actually supporting reps, other reps. As reps we deal year after year with effectively soaking up members' miseries and who actually supports the union rep who has spent maybe a decade, or more even, just soaking up those miseries? Who provides the support for them actually to unload that? This motion would aim to give other reps and branch officers the skills actually to assist and support reps who have taken on that burden. In that sense I think there is a great deal to be said for some basic skills in counselling. We are not talking about the provision of detailed courses or whatever, just a very, very basic level of counsel skills. Congress, I would ask you to support this motion and I move it, as such. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 89.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING MOTION 89**

### **89. SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING**

This Conference agrees that with the social media part of day to day life our branch reps need to be trained in how to act online and how to promote the union. We need to advise members on what they can promote and how some far right organisations will use issues such as the NHS, national holidays or events to share their message and promote hate.

We call on the CEC to make sure members can promote the right image for the union and the branch they represent.

### **ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH London Region**

*(Carried)*

MARIE McCORMACK (London): Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, VK, Reddit, Qzone, Weibo, Pinterest, Ask.fm, Tumblr, Flickr, Google Plus, LinkedIn, MeetUp, Odnoklassniki. You will have heard of some or possibly all of those. They are the top 16 social media sites according to Wikipedia. Wikipedia states social media are computer mediated technologies that facilitate the creation, sharing of information, ideas, career interests, and other forms of expression via virtual media communities and networks.

We all agree that social media is part of day-to-day life and is here to stay. We believe that social media when used correctly is a positive, dynamic, real time effective tool that can unite members and get important messages across in an instant. It is fair to say that some of us are more social media savvy than others. This motion calls for GMB to provide social media training so that there is an agreed standard of education in this relatively new and evolving area of communication. This will provide us with tools for the instant dispersal of information for the benefit of our members by way of knowledge distribution and campaign profile-raising. I know that some people already are doing this but there are a lot of us that are not so it will be good to know how to do it to the best of our ability.

There are minimum standards in the area of maths and English. This is a call for a minimum standard when it comes to understanding how social media works. GMB-backed training will reinforce all the positive aspects of social media but also remind us of its inherent pitfalls and dangers. So, while great messages can be instantly distributed, the same is true for bad ones and potentially actual offensive ones. I mean the kind of posts or messages that can bring the union into disrepute as well as damage personal reputations.

In addition, when it comes to actually advising our members, accused of social media work policy breaches, it makes good sense for the reps to know how these sites actually work so that reps can fully and properly support any member facing potential disciplinary action and risk of dismissal. The Chardonnay fingers defence is useless. Once that message is sent it is out there. Support this motion and set aside some funding for training in social media usage for all GMB activists. Virtual reality is a reality, no one should be taken on that virtual reality journey without first familiarising themselves with the rules of engagement, social media etiquette, and the virtual roadmap. I move this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 90.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING MOTION 90**

### **90. TECHNOLOGY AND TRAINING**

The Conference calls upon the GMB and its Regions to fully utilise technology for training, and endeavour to eliminate wastage on expensive colour printing.

CAMBORNE BRANCH  
Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

LINDA MOORE (GMB Wales & South West): Vice President, Congress, it was only a few conferences ago that there was a motion asking for the GMB to use Facebook to promote the GMB to a wider audience. I remember this was opposed by the CEC but they were overturned and now this has been embraced by the union and has been expanded to include other social media sites and is promoted as the best way to get information and messages out to members.

Email and social media are useful tools to contact members and this in turn saves money on paper, printing, and postage, but not every member has the knowledge to be contacted in this way. I for one do not use Facebook as I still do not trust it so I could do with training on how to use these sites thereby getting information on any actions and campaigns quicker than I usually do. The GMB should be encouraging and training members, especially branch officers, to use social media. The problem I had was that it was not possible to go to our local office for internet training as the office did not have WiFi, even after repeatedly asking for this in the branch planning. I do not know if this is an issue in other areas but I feel it is denying Branch Secretaries and other members the ability to access the internet and work in offices. It was announced Monday that the GMB are about to launch online training but it is necessary to know how to use computers to access this training. I call on the GMB to address this issue so as to allow members to take full advantage of training. I move this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call on Bob Welham, CEC North West to respond on behalf of the CEC. Is it to speak against any of the motions? It is. Okay, then, speak against.

KEVIN FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Congress, there is no way I can sit there and hear in Motion 81 the attack on a trade union college that is doing its best in a difficult climate to deliver trade union education. Let's be factual. If you are going to attack it, let's be factual. There is an attack across this country on all working class education. There is an attack on ordinary working people. Colleges up and down this country are struggling. I sit on Ruskin. I am proud to sit on Ruskin and I am proud recently to have agreed to go on the governing body and I also sit on the Audit Committee. If you think I sit on that body without holding them to account, you are in dreamland. You are in dreamland. The same people who are attacking in the media are the same people who actually accepted a deal. They have not complained to the trade union who actually signed that deal with their agreement. There has been no formal reference to that trade union because I have raised it with their own trade union and said, "Did you receive a complaint about what happened?" They are doing incredible damage to the trades union Movement. They are doing incredible damage to trade union and working class education.

It is unacceptable to come to this rostrum and actually try to destroy the good name and the good standing of a college that has worked hard for many, many working people in this country and has achieved a great deal. Yes, it is difficult. Yes, it is

hard, but the reality is they are working hard and there are those of us sat at this stable, and I will tell you what, we have moved the position where the GMB has been one of the key unions trying to steer and develop the work with them. There are discussions going on. Other unions can criticise but they are not doing as much as the GMB has. I am sorry, sister, I just cannot accept that. It is not based on fact. It was wrong. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. I now call on Bob Welham. Bob?

BOB WELHAM (CEC, Manufacturing): You stole my thunder, Kevin. I was going to take the risk. I have to get it out of the way: second risk assessment at this stage, this week.

President, Congress, we are asking for Motion 79 to be withdrawn, Motion 80 and 81 to be referred, Motion 84 to be supported with a qualification, Motion 87 to be referred, Motion 88 and 90 to be supported with a qualification.

Although Motion 79 is well intentioned, there are potential issues in discussing current cases. Even where names are not used individual situations and cases could be recognisable. This poses a risk for the confidentiality of case work and members' trust in the union.

Motion 80 is, in effect, calling for each region to set up a Regional Learning Fund, cutting across regional autonomy. If the motion is referred to the CEC it allows for the principle of equal access to learning funds to be explored by the NLLC within the regions.

Motion 81, Ruskin is still delivering union education and we have an arrangement with them to deliver a range of courses. The BA and MA programmes have not recruited enough students and it may not be possible to resurrect these programmes. Ensuring that Ruskin holds true to our values is something we should support. Reference to CEC and NLLC means that action can be taken on the principles behind the motion.

Motion 84, the CEC is asking Congress to support this motion with a qualification. The specific module on understanding the perspective of the employer is not the best way of ensuring that reps get an overview of the world of work. This can be achieved through other aspects of the course.

Motion 87, the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred to the CEC. We would like the motion to be looked at by the branch working group to determine the viability of making training mandatory for branch officials as this may not be practical in some cases.

The CEC is asking Congress to support Motion 88 but with a qualification, that counselling training can only focus on the softer skills as to go beyond this is effectively to train reps to become counsellors and this is not the intention.

The CEC is asking for Motion 90 to be supported with a qualification, GMB should use all available methods to reach as many members as possible. Training on social

media is available on request and training materials will soon be available for regions to download. The union uses email and text messages as much as possible. However, there will always be times when we need to communicate with members using paper due to not having alternative methods available or regulatory requirements.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking for Motion 79 to be withdrawn, 80 and 81 to be referred, 84 support with qualification, to refer Motion 87, and to support Motions 80 and 90 with the qualifications as I have laid out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bob. Congress, we will now go to the vote. Does North West & Irish agree to withdraw 79? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much for that.

*Motion 79 was WITHDRAWN.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire agree with the reference on 80? (*Agreed*) All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 80 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does London agree reference on 81? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 81 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 83 is supported. All those in favour show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 83 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does GMB Wales & South West agree the qualification on 84? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 84 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motions 85 and 86 are both supported. All those in favour? Any against? They are carried.

*Motion 85 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 86 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Midland & East Coast agree reference on 87? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 87 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Southern agree the qualification on 88? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 88 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 89 is supported. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 89 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does GMB Wales & South West agree the qualifications on 90? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All in favour? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 90 was CARRIED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: ENERGY & UTILITIES MARKET**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move on to our final group of the carried over motions, which is on the Energy & Utilities Market. Can I ask the movers of 356, 357, 358, 359, and 360 to come to the front, please, and 356 to the rostrum?

### **RENEWABLE ENERGY SUBSIDIES MOTION 356**

#### **356. RENEWABLE ENERGY SUBSIDIES**

This Conference applauds the call by the GMB Commercial Services Section for subsidies on renewable energy to be paid for through general taxation.

Conference notes that environmental levies on consumer bills are set to treble from £4.6 billion to £13.5 billion between 2015/16 and 2021/22 according to the office for Budget Responsibility.

Conference further notes that the office for Budgetary Responsibility predicts that as a result that the surcharge the UK's 27m households already pay is set to treble over the next 4 to 5 years to £10 per week for every household for this energy.

Conference considers that this is in effect a thoroughly regressive tax on lower paid GMB members. It is advocated and supported by organisations made up mainly of far more affluent people than our members. Attempts to guilt trip GMB to support this regressive tax should be resisted as should attempts to portray opposition as being anti-renewable energy sources. Conference restates its support for renewable energy sources as part of a balanced, secure and cost effective energy policy.

The average wind farm for example receives roughly half of its income from the electricity wholesale price and half from subsidy via the Renewables Obligation Certificate (ROC) – the cost of which is passed on to consumers through their energy bills. Conference calls on the CEC to vigorously campaign for a policy that where energy subsidies of any sort can be shown to be justified and in the public interest, then the GMB position is that they should be paid for out of basic taxation – which is a much fairer and more transparent system of paying such subsidies.

A stealth tax of £10 per week on every single household is a new unjustifiable poll tax that Conference cannot support and calls on the CEC to win support for its replacement with a progressive system of funding.

## EAST OF ENGLAND WATERWORKERS BRANCH

London Region

*(Carried)*

PAUL BLOCK (London): As I am sure any homeowner will know one of the main costs in running a home is from your energy bill. This is now commonly a dual fuel bill but could still be two separate bills, namely, gas and electricity. In the UK there are around 27 million homes. Obviously, these will all be affected by increases to their bills and the renewable energy subsidy we are discussing today will have the unfortunate effect of trebling the cost of this subsidy. Over the next four to five years, the total cost of this subsidy will now rise to £10 per week, or £520 per annum. I am sure that most working class families will find this another blow in an already difficult financial era. An average energy bill for a three- to four-bedroomed house could be in the region of over £1,150 per annum, according to UK Power. I know you understand “average” means just that. However, we must bear in mind some of our more vulnerable members of society, including the sick and the elderly, who will by nature of their health, age, or both, need to have their homes warmer resulting in much higher than average energy bills.

As I have mentioned, if an average bill is around £1,150 per annum and this subsidy is £520 per annum, it is fairly easy to see that this subsidy is approaching half of your bill. Most of this cost is still yet to appear on your bill so the average bill in four to five years could be around £1,500. However, this does not include the annual price rises that we are all used to from the big six energy suppliers. It is worth noting these increases as well are usually over the suggested CPI percentage pay rises many of our members are forced to accept.

Now, I have dealt with the increasing cost element to a level but I should mention there are people in the industry that believe this subsidy could end up costing as much in the future as the cost of generating this energy in the first place. This would mean another large rise in energy bills, if this does eventually turn out to be correct. I think it is only right as a union we try to protect our members from what is clearly going to be a big increase in these bills. If these subsidies are put directly on to the energy bills, it is going to cause a lot of hardship to members and, as mentioned previously, the vulnerable and poorest members of our communities.

Therefore, the suggestion that this motion is putting forward is to move the cost of this subsidy from household bills and collect this revenue instead through general taxation. This will help our members and the vulnerable and those already struggling to pay these bills if the cost is put through the general taxation system and then will not massively affect the poorest members of society. I would like to ask the CEC to take this forward and campaign to have this subsidy moved to be paid from general taxation. Congress, it is fundamentally unfair to hit hardest those that can least afford

it with these large increases in bills. I ask for your support to move this motion.  
Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 357.

## **CREATING JOBS – UNION IN RENEWABLE ENERGY MOTION 357**

### **357. CREATING JOBS-UNION IN RENEWABLE ENERGY**

This Conference notes that ten years after the global financial crisis, GMB members are suffering falling living standards and their earnings are still buying less than in 2007. Well paid union jobs are still being lost. Every year in tax avoidance, Governments across the world are losing \$500bn from Corporations and a further \$200bn from wealthy individuals.

In developing countries, total illicit outflows are greater than total developing country debt. In the UK over \$1billion is lost in tax. When our Government fails to tax, schools, hospitals and social care suffers. When the Governments of developing countries don't have the tax, their countries are looted and children go to school hungry or not at all. The money is there to improve living standards across the world if tax avoidance is stopped.

Unions across the world have an important role to play in improving living standards by making sure well paid jobs and apprenticeships are created. In the war on coal and oil, California is planning to have half of its energy from renewables by 2030, using tax to create Green solar energy jobs. Founded in 1914, Fresno Ironworkers' Union, Local 155, is providing jobs and training 260 ironwork apprentices for renewable energy. The starting wage for an apprentice is \$22 an hour rising to \$40 at the end of the four-year apprenticeship. This compares to the minimum wage of \$11 an hour. Between 2002 and 2015, 88,000 renewable energy jobs have been created in the San Joaquin Valley, California, adding \$13 billion to the economy. Union membership has grown.

Conference calls on the CEC to campaign for the Government to use tax to create union organised Green renewable energy jobs and apprentices for a future economically and environmentally sustainable future for all.

**ISLINGTON 1 & HARINGEY BRANCH**  
London Region

*(Carried)*

MARIA JENNINGS (London): President, Congress, first-time delegate. (*Applause*)  
In 2018, according to Tax Research UK, there will be over £100 billion in tax that



will not be collected due to tax evasion. The next Labour government should invest that money in creating well paid, skilled, union jobs in clean energy and carbon reduction. Let's learn the lessons from our sister unions in the United States. Dundalk Local 16 Union, in Maryland, led the campaign for 77 offshore wind turbines leading to 9,700 jobs with apprenticeships being delivered by Local 16 Union. Fresno Local 155 union in California is involved in 45 solar projects and they run 260 four-year apprenticeships paying \$22 an hour, double the \$11 an hour paid to porters and caretakers. In California this has resulted in 88,000 new jobs being created and \$13bn added to the California economy.

When Will Thorne founded our union our members had casual work and depended on poor relief just as too many today depend on tax credits and have zero hour contracts. Building a union with a fight for well paid jobs worked for Will Thorne our founder. When Will Thorne fought for an eight-hour day for gas workers many said, no, it cannot be done. Let's not take no for an answer. Let's get this into the next Labour manifesto for the next Labour government. I urge you to put the union at the heart of the clean energy industry. I urge you to put the union at the centre of the fight for good jobs. I urge you to support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: 358.

VOICE FROM FLOOR: Speak against 357

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes

JAMIE DENNIS (Southern): Vice President, Congress, while I agree that we do need to work towards renewable energy sources for the future, the fact remains at the moment there are not a viable solution. Until we have the storage technology to store the power from these wind farms, from these solar farms, it is just not feasible. If any of you have heard of a website called Grid Watch you can go on there directly and you can see exactly which industries are producing how much energy for the country at this present time. At the moment, we have a baseline of nuclear which produces around 25% and we have whatever wind and solar are producing added on top, and we use gas to make up the difference. Gas is doing about 40% today; I think wind is somewhere in the region of about 5-10%, and solar is probably doing something similar. Until we have the battery storage technology to store the power from when we are over-producing on solar and over-producing on wind, there is no point investing any more in wind and solar. We need to shore up what we already have. We need to invest in nuclear because nuclear provides our solid baseline. We need to invest in gas because gas is replacing coal and that is our fluctuation, our barrier, if you like. Gas can increase or reduce the amount of energy they are putting out in the matter of about an hour and the same with coal. Unfortunately, we are getting rid of coal, replacing it with gas, we need to invest in gas and nuclear and battery storage technology before we invest further in solar and wind. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jamie. 358.

FRACKING  
MOTION 358

**358. FRACKING**

This Conference, the reports of the employment opportunities of Fracking has been widely exaggerated. The devastating effects on the environment have been widely under played.

This motion asks that the GMB commissions an independent enquiry on the Fracking Industry not one based on the Fracking Industry's own findings. That GMB backing of the Fracking Industry is suspended until the results of the study are published and voted upon in Conference.

L16 LB GREENWICH  
Southern Region

*(Lost)*

STEVE OAKES (Southern): President, Congress, last year we boycotted the *Sun* newspaper. The next day – wait – we appeared on the front page being praised by the *Sun* newspaper for our position on fracking. Who else are we in agreement with, the Tories. Okay. Last year's energy report argued that the poisoning of the water table and earthquakes would not happen because it would be regulated correctly by the Government, the same government. Do we trust them to regulate education, the NHS, workers' rights, no, we don't but we trust them on fracking. The report was biased and it was inaccurate. This motion asks for an independent report to be written. That costs about three grand, by the way. I think that is money very well spent. We need to have the facts, the pros and the cons. We need to do this for democracy. We need to do this to make an informed choice because as a union we need to be on the right side of history. Please, I urge you, if you believe in democracy, if you believe in having the facts and an informed choice, support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Steve. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Sorry?

SCOTT MACLURE (GMB Scotland): Opposing Motion 358. Congress, I work in the gas industry for Scottish Gas. Last year this Congress adopted a comprehensive report into the continuing role of gas in our economy. As the General Secretary said in his report, our union was formed on the struggle for gas workers 120 years ago. We should never apologise for sticking up for our members, thousands of whom work in the gas industry. Right now, whilst we are debating this motion, our members in British Gas and Scottish Gas are at risk of redundancy; organising and defending these workers should be this union's number one energy policy priority. As the General Secretary also said in his report, many of the high industries represented are manufacturing compounds, including chemicals, paints and plastics, and rely on gas

supplies. Gas is a transition fuel to a carbon economy. Serious climate commentators agree that there must be a continuing role for gas in a balanced and secure energy policy. That is the real question facing Britain, where is our gas supply going to come from? Fracking gas already comes to Britain from abroad. If domestic gas is to be produced then GMB's duty is to organise that industry and ensure the highest safety and environmental standards just as we have done for years and obviously where fracking has been done for decades.

Finally, Congress, on renewables GMB Scotland is part of our union which in BiFab has been winning the fight for unionised UK renewable energies, which invest in jobs here rather than continuing to import wind turbines from Europe. GMB must continue to support a balanced energy policy for Britain and we should never let down our gas members who help found this great union in 1889. Congress, please oppose Motion 358. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Scott.

BRIAN JONES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Speaking against Motion 358. Congress, I am also one of the 25,000 GMB members who work in the gas industry but that is not the main reason why I am opposing this motion. Specifically I work as a gas engineer for a company called PH Jones. It is a national company. It is an organisation that services gas appliances for the poorest citizens across the nation. These are based in social housing across the UK.

I am against the motion for the following reasons. Gas is far cheaper to heat homes than electricity. National Grid has confirmed that gas is central to any plan to decarbonise our economy. Gas is central to any fuel poverty strategy heating the homes of some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Therefore, we need to ensure that we make sure that gas is safe, secure, and in our own hands and not supplied from the hands of dodgy regimes in Russia and Qatar. Can I remind Congress that Congress debated and supported the issues around the importance of gas to our economy and members last year in a special CEC report on energy. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Steve, would you like right to reply? Just a minute Steve, is anybody else wanting to speak against? Come on.

LIAM POLLARD (London): I am not against all sorts of new forms of energy, I am not against those things, but right now I represent about 1,800 people who work in Cadent. They dig the gas, they work the gas, and they do the boilers you use. If you go up to the North West Region and there are about 3,000 members up there, massive big gas branch that works up there. If you go down to Southern there are about 2,500 people working down there. If you go to Scottish Gas there are about 1,000/1,500, maybe more, working up there. If you go to Wales and the West all GMB members, they are all relying on you to help do with their jobs.

Now, we are looking to clean up gas and there are loads of things we are doing, and I would like to watch these people because they are going to have to come into our network. I do not like them. I met with them. There are thousands of jobs on the line, thousands of jobs on the line, our GMB members that are waiting actually for us

to see what you vote today. I hope that you overturn this motion because it will send a message – last year’s message was fantastic. We walked away from here thinking you had faith in us. Now we are thinking it is changing. I joined this union because it is different. I joined this union because it moves forward. I joined this union because it is not frightened to make the wrong choices. It is not frightened to walk into a place and say, “We are going to build Trident. We are going to build warships. We are going to build things.” In the past our union was the way forward. I back this union and I back my gas workers. Please vote against this. Thank you for your time, brothers and sisters. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Liam.

HOLLY FERGUSON (GMB Wales & South West): Opposing Motion 358. I do believe and have confidence that GMB has conducted an objective amount of research into the support of fracking before it decided to support fracking. Like my previous colleague I, too, am a gas worker who has frontline experience of the fact that we are still a nation where fuel poverty is maybe of concern and a real life threat. I do believe that this absolutely needs to be worth exploring. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Holly. Steve.

STEVE OAKES (Southern): Let’s get this completely clear. The motion is not against gas workers. What it is saying is that the energy report was inaccurate, which it was, and it is to make an informed decision. I believe we should support our members, of course we should, but we should do it in a way that is democratic and open. Okay. Scotland Region is quite surprising considering your government does not agree with it either. What we need here is to make an informed choice. So, please support it. The report was full of inaccuracies, we fully checked that out, and an independent report is what is needed here. Thank you. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 359.

## **WATER SHORTAGES MOTION 359**

### **359. WATER SHORTAGE AND RESOURCES**

This Conference recognises that due to long term weather cycles that London and parts of the South East and East of England will experience periods of low rainfall that will result in reservoirs running short of water. This is likely to happen every 20 years or so.

Conference also recognises that there is no shortage of water in Britain but there is a lack of capacity to get the water from where it is plentiful to areas where it can be scarce from time to time.

Conference dismisses notions of a “market” for water for households as irrelevant and calls on all concerned to recognise that water is a natural monopoly.

Conference notes that during the last drought GMB put back on the table plans from the old Water Resources Board, developed in the 1970s to move water from the west of Britain to those parts where it is scarce at times of low rainfall.

Conference notes that the Water Resources Board had identified about fifty potential storage developments including new reservoirs, expansion of old reservoirs and more effective ways of managing existing reservoirs and aquifers. The Water Resources Board established that there is no question that ample resources are available to meet all rainfall patterns.

GMB drew attention to a scheme to enlarge the Craig Goch reservoir in Plymlimon mountain range in mid Wales and to move the water via the rivers Wye and Severn to be pumped into the Thames via the Sapperton tunnel in the Cotswolds canals at times of low rainfall.

Conference notes that the Cotswolds canals are currently being restored for leisure purposes.

Conference calls on the CEC and National Secretary for the Water Industry to get the Government and the Labour Shadow team to recognise the need for long-term practical plan to deal with periodic water shortages in London and parts of East of England and the South East.

There is no current plan in place as no action was taken on the problem since the last drought.

Conference calls for the plans of the old Water Resources Board to be re-examined updated and developed into practical plans by the relevant water companies. Conference calls on all concerned to seize the opportunity of the current restoration of the Cotswolds canals for them to be made ready to be used to transfer water from the Severn to the Thames. This could lead to the restoration of the Cotswold canals being funded by the water companies as well as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Conference also calls on local GMB branches to consider joining the Cotswolds Canals Trust to win support for this scheme.

## THAMES GENERAL BRANCH London Region

*(Carried)*

CLIFFORD RONEY (London): Vice President, Chair, brothers and sisters, I am Cliff Roney from London Region water workers. It is a shame that this was not debated yesterday and talked of yesterday when Jeremy Corbyn was in the room, as it was originally planned to do so. *(Applause)* Thank you. This Congress recognises that due to long-term weather cycles parts of London and the South East will experience periods of low rainfall that will result in reservoirs running short of water. This is likely to happen approximately every 20 years.

After working in the water industry for nearly 40 years, I know that we cannot rely on weather patterns at all. Congress also recognises there is a shortage of water in Britain but there is capacity in several parts of the UK to move the water from West to East. Congress dismisses notions of a “market” for water for households as irrelevant and calls all concerned to recognise that water is a natural monopoly. We desperately need to start to turn around the dreadful damage that privatisation has done to the industry since Margaret Thatcher’s days. Congress notes that during the last drought the GMB put back on the table plans for the old Water Resources Board developed in the 1970s to move water from the West to the East in low rainfall times.

GMB draws attention to a scheme to enlarge the Craig Goch Reservoir in Wales to move water via the River Wye and the River Severn into the River Thames by the Sapperton Tunnel in the Cotswolds. Congress notes that the Cotswolds are currently being restored for leisure purposes so money would not be a problem. Congress, the Government, the Environment Agency, and the privatised water companies have failed to look at the big picture of storing water that falls from the sky – yes, from the sky – and moving it where it needs to be and ignoring the fact that enough water to meet the needs of 20 million people in the UK is lost every day through leakage.

Back into the mid-1980s and late 1980s, I was absolutely privileged enough to stand alongside Mary Turner when we campaigned to prevent water being privatised. Here we are, Mary, we are nearly there. Water bosses in the past five years have taken £58m of your money – you all pay water bills – and put it into their pockets. Over the last 25 years, they have also decimated our members’ T&Cs, shut down our pension schemes. Please, please, please, get behind us with this campaign to bring back the tap, let’s get it back in-house. Mary, God bless. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Clifford. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 360?

## **WATER SHARING SCHEMES MOTION 360**

### **360. WATER SHARING SCHEMES**

This Conference calls on Section Conference “For GMB to oppose any regional water sharing schemes”.

I am aware that water companies are in discussions to enable such schemes to be looked at, not on the scale of a National water infrastructure. In principle, I would not be opposed to such schemes and recognise that work could be created for GMB members. However, I do not believe that whilst water companies allow such high levels of leakage in their own areas, they should be allowed to import water to immediately close to these leaks. The money to be spent on these projects should be spent on existing repair and encouragement of better management by insourcing repairs.

N45 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

ANDY COOPER (North West & Irish): Moving 360 calling for opposition to water sharing schemes. Good morning, Vice President, Congress. As an employee within the water industry for over 33 years, I am aware of the high-level discussions between water companies to set up regional water sharing schemes not on the level of a natural infrastructure but nonetheless to a level which further guarantees the waste of a precious resource. Congress, since privatisation many water companies have outsourced all leakage and repair work to companies whose sole aim is to make a profit and not to maintain our infrastructure. It is in their interests to repair to a level an in-house team would find unacceptable. Ofwat, the water industry regulator, has been hoodwinked into believing that leakage targets eventually plateau at a point where it is not economical or practical to repair further. Leakage is a headline grabber by national and local press. It is not something that water companies have succeeded in getting a realistic grip on for any sustained period of time. The answer, it appears, is regional water sharing schemes. These will involve investment in localised diameter trunk mains where companies from one region that is short of resources can transfer to another via these new connections. Congress, this is not right. Surely, it is not acceptable for one water company that cannot meet their leakage targets to transfer water to another company that also cannot meet their targets. It is like filling the bath with the plug out. Every attempt should be made to ensure each water company focuses fully on leakage as an infrastructure in place that enables minimum waste of water.

A drive to meet the expectations of demand, leak and associated repair work, must be brought back in-house to water companies. The whole strategy of house-building on both local and national level needs addressing. Population numbers in the South East are exploding beyond sustainable levels, which lead to public monies being drained at the expense of other areas, usually in the North.

Congress, I am calling for your support for the GMB to voice their opposition to such schemes. I am conscious that some of our members may be involved in these projects but, as stated, the answer is in-sourcing of these members to more organised workplaces, which our companies usually are. Congress, please support. I move.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Formally second? *(Agreed)*

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I now call on Peter Kane, CEC from Northern, to give the CEC position?

PETER KANE (CEC, Commercial Services): Vice President, Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motions 358 and 360. The CEC is asking for Motion 358 to be withdrawn and supporting Motion 360 with qualification.

Congress, the CEC is urging that Motion 358 be withdrawn. We are a gas workers union, the union of Will Thorne, a gas worker. It has been our role to organise these workers and protect their jobs from humble beginnings of Becton Gas Works to the present day. Domestic gas production has halved over the past decade and UK gas storage is down by 75% following the partial closure of Centrica's site at Rough. We are more reliant than ever on imports and forced to take gas from countries like Russia, Algeria, Qatar, all with dubious human rights and regulation.

Just a few weeks ago a National Grid report said that to meet our greenhouse emissions targets gas will be fundamental to any realistic future energy scenario. The Grid report says that a move to electric heating would require 20,000 new boilers fitted every week through to 2050 and a sevenfold increase in the capacity of the electricity grid, which is neither realistic nor affordable. The CEC knows this is an emotive issue but the status quo does not represent a sustainable future for our companies' energy needs or our 25,000 gas members.

Congress has passed policy statements on energy production including shale gas extraction at both Congress 2015 and 2017. Last year a highly detailed facts-based special report on energy was approved by this Congress. The report was a specialist study which drew on opinions of the Royal Society and the Royal Academy of Engineering, Public Health England, the Environment Agency, the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management, the Independent Panel for Scottish Government, and many others.

Congress, our current policy that fracking should be allowed to proceed with strong safety and environmental safeguards is a measured, sensible, and evidence-based position. If this motion is passed, it would undermine our ability to organise in the sector and would hamper our work to make the industry safer for our members.

Turning to Motion 360, the CEC fully shares the frustration expressed over the water companies' failure to invest in the infrastructure following privatisation. Our qualification is water schemes may make sense in some areas and could lead to job creation, which would benefit our existing members and enable us to expand our union.

Congress, the CEC asks you to support Motion 360 with this qualification, and Motion 358 to be withdrawn. If Motion 358 is not withdrawn, the CEC's position is to oppose this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Peter. Now move to the vote. Motion 356 and 357 are both supported. All those in favour please show? Any against? They have carried.

*Motion 356 was CARRIED.*  
*Motion 357 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Southern agree to withdraw 358? No? Southern are not withdrawing 358 so the CEC's stance is to oppose. All those in favour please show? All those against? That is lost.



*Motion 358 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: *(comments off microphone)* Southern Region have refused to withdraw Motion 358. The CEC's stance on that is if it is not withdrawn we are asking you to oppose. All those in favour please show? Opposing the motion, yes. Oh, all those in favour of the motion please show? All those against? That is lost.

*Motion 358 was LOST.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 359 is being supported. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 359 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 360, does North West agree the qualification? *(Agreed)* Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 360 was CARRIED.*

## **CEC SPECIAL REPORT: NATIONAL EQUALITY ORGANISING STRATEGY**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move on to the CEC Special Report but, Congress, before the debate begins on the Special Report on National Equality Organising Strategy, I would like to advise London Region that Motions 92 and 274 stand in opposition to the report. This is because the CEC position was to seek withdrawal in favour of the report. Therefore, if London Region believes that points contained in those motions are not covered by the Special Report delegates should speak in opposition to the report as the motions themselves will fall and not be heard. This is in line with the guidance to Congress business and on the advice of the Standing Orders Committee. Can I now call on Margi Clarke to move?

## **National Equality Organising Strategy 2018**



### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2008, GMB Congress passed the Equality Through Inclusion strategy. In the decade since, GMB has established the National Equality Forum (NEF), Regional Equality Forums (REFS), Self-Organised Groups (SOGs) and now guarantees representation on the CEC for equality strands. The Women's Task Force has completed its work, and the fruits of that labour are being seen as more women are progressing through GMB structures to be senior organisers and National Secretaries. There is still further to go, but GMB has made huge strides in ensuring gender equality through our structures.
- 1.2 We must now ensure that all equality issues are mainstream in GMB.

- 1.3 That means equality activists being central to the organising agenda, and ensuring all reps are aware of and equipped to campaign on equality issues.
- 1.4 GMB has the power to make real change happen in our workplaces for women, LGBTQ+, BAME, young, disabled and migrant workers, that benefits all of us.
- 1.5 We must use the equality bargaining agenda to recruit, retain, empower and activate membership - working to ensure that all Equality campaigns and activities support the on-going work of building the Union, empowering members, developing activists and delivering change.
- 1.6 Equality should not sit separately to our branch and workplace structures, it should be at the heart of them.
- 1.7 This report sets out the next stage of delivering equality for all at GMB.

## **2. The equality bargaining and organising agenda**

- 2.1 GMB can and does deliver change for GMB members on equality. In workplaces we fight for equal pay, seek to ensure workplace/employment policies do not discriminate against BAME workers and that adjustments are made for people who need support to stay in work. From ensuring equality impact assessments are undertaken when employers make changes, to representing individual members who have faced harassment and bullying, GMB delivers on equality for our members.
- 2.2 This report seeks to formalise, enhance and promote that work as a formal equality bargaining agenda.
- 2.3 In our negotiations with employers, there should always be an equality 'ask' on the table so that we are proactively promoting equality in the workplace, not just reacting when something goes wrong. Where something does go wrong, in line with GMB@work, we should ensure that we tackle the wider issue not just the individual case and build the union while we do so.
- 2.4 GMB nationally must work to support regions and activists to drive this agenda, supplying the resources, training and materials needed to make the workplace a more equal place.

## **3. Equality as mainstream at GMB**

- 3.1 On the back of calls from activists across the country – and a number of motions on equality organising to this congress - the challenge is now to put the resource and support in place to ensure that committed and talented activists have the tools and training they need to be able to practically deliver on equality issues in the workplace.
- 3.2 GMB must ensure that all equality activists have the tools they need to represent members on bread and butter workplace issues when it comes to equality, and that all officers and activists understand it is their role to deliver on the equality organising agenda – it does not sit separately from negotiation, bargaining and representation, but is essential to it.

- 3.3 We must ensure that we not only react when our members face hardship and discrimination, but that we are proactive in seeking real and practical change too.
- 3.4 This section covers:
- Taking stock and planning ahead
  - Making the equality bargaining agenda ‘what we do’
  - Tools to do the job – making sure activists and organisers have the tools they need to recruit and deliver on equality
  - Celebrating success
  - Mainstream within our structures

### 3a. Knowing where we are, so we know where we’re going

1. Taking stock of our current position as a union is important. It allows us to look at where we are to measure progress. In 2017, GMB undertook an exercise to find out more about our membership.
2. We know that while almost half of our membership is female (49%), that figure is not reflected in our rep numbers. Only 28% of workplace and health and safety reps are women, with 37.5% of Learning Reps being female, and 41% of Branch Equality Officers.
3. GMB’s own staff structures show a preponderance of women, with 58% of employees being women. We know that this is not reflected in the most senior positions in GMB. Progress has been made in recent years, the gender pay gap figures showed a decrease in GMB’s gender pay gap from over 30% in 2014 to 25.5% in April last year. The main reason for this is not that we do not have enough women at the higher levels of the union – which is undoubtedly true – but that we have more women than men on lower pay grades. In previous years, the ‘staff to officer’ program has helped to break down the generations old divide between support staff and the officer corps. The make-up of our staff is changing, but those changes, training and opportunities take time to bed in and progress – after all, no new women officers can be appointed where there are no vacancies.
4. Our age breakdown shows that two thirds of our membership is between the ages of 25 -64 years.
5. We now hold information on the ethnicity of 64% of our membership.

Ethnicity	Percentage (of those with identification)
White	82
Chinese	0.1
Indian	2.4
Pakistani	1.8
Black African	1.7
Black British	1.7
Black Caribbean	1
Bangladeshi	0.5

Irish	0.5
Other	7.9

6. 18% of GMB members identify as BAME or 'Other', which means our membership based on the data of those who have declared an ethnicity, is more diverse than the population, by 5%.
7. In every category except White, Irish and Black African, BAME women outnumber their male counterparts (and in the case of the latter two categories, only just), however we should note that women are more likely to let us know their ethnicity with close to 30,000 more women stating their ethnicity than men.
8. Approximately 2% of GMB members have told us they are registered disabled, which is lower than the national average (7%), but this is also only information we requested on a one off basis.
9. Understanding who our membership is, is essential so that we can evaluate if we are reflective of the membership we represent. That is why, with the launch of the new GMB website, all members will have access to a facility to update their records on who they are, and how they define.
10. Taking stock is not just about who are members are, it is also about what we do.
11. A National Equality Organising Strategy needs to look at what we do well, how we can share best practice and where we need to improve.
12. In the next 12 months, we will:
  - Conduct a union wide audit of a) current equality training across the union and b) all industrially focussed equality training that is currently provided.
  - Develop a National Equality Calendar to highlight key events such as Pride, Young Workers' Month, International Women's Day and key equality conferences in order to ensure a coordinated GMB presence with recruitment materials.
  - Use the national Equality Calendar to evaluate the events we hold internally, and how best to schedule them to fit with regional priorities, national resources and external events (such as TUC strand conferences).
  - Look at how we can ensure our training and events are accessible to all in order to address the gender imbalance in the make-up of our reps.
  - Look at how we can use equality data and campaigns to send more relevant, targeted communication to members about campaigns, courses and events aimed at getting more people involved. This includes ensuring we can equality monitor LGBT+ membership and members who wish to declare a disability.
  - Look at retention rates of different equality strands to identify if there is a problem retaining members where we have recruited them – as appears to be the case with many young members – in order to develop retention strategies.

### **3b. Making the equality bargaining and organising agenda ‘what we do’**

1. Real and tangible change can be delivered by increasing awareness of equality issues and methodically approaching equality during negotiations.
2. Equality campaigns can be used to grow GMB, equality mapping and bargaining can be used to understand what equality issues are most prevalent in a workplace and to practically tackle them. On issues where people can relate and can see where bargaining can make a positive difference will motivate them to become active.
3. Too often equality can be seen as ‘an add on’ or somehow separate from the industrial agenda, when it is absolutely fundamental to what we are about as a union.
4. That is why the CEC will ask officers, sections and regions to ensure that the equality bargaining agenda is understood, utilised and promoted.
5. In order to make a practical difference on equality, GMB will:
  - Produce guide to equality and diversity workplace mapping for officers and activists.
  - Develop an Equality Bargaining guide, toolkit and training for officers and activists to use. Where ever possible, there should be an equality ‘ask’ on the table to improve workers’ terms, conditions and work life when negotiating with the employers where we have open access to staff.
  - Develop model policies which can be downloaded from the members’ area of the GMB website to make it as easy as possible for all reps to secure equality and diversity policies in the workplace.
  - Work with Equality Strands to produce strands specific recruitment and organising materials, ensuring that these are embedded in the real lives of our members, working with strand representatives on the REFs and NEF. These should include toolkits on issues such as the gender pay gap, the pay gap for BAME workers, LGBT+ organisation, identifying and tackling modern slavery and highlighting and making adjustment for all disabilities, including hidden disabilities which by their very nature are more difficult to identify and support.
  - The National Equality Team will work with regions pilot different ways of organising and achieving change.

### **3c. Tools to do the job – making sure activists and organisers have the tools they need to recruit and deliver on equality**

1. Achieving true equality is not passive. It requires activists and officers to fight for it.
2. Training and resources are central to ensuring that reps and activists have the skills needed to represent members on equality issues, but also to bargain, recruit and negotiate on equality.

### 3. GMB will:

- Ensure that equality bargaining is covered within GMB@work training, so that reps understand what can be achieved on equality issues for our members.
- Build into every course or event held by GMB Equality, a clear route to becoming a GMB rep or workplace organiser.
- Seek to increase the number of workplace reps from all backgrounds by looking at how we deliver training for members in unorganised workplaces. Not all members have release to attend weekday training courses, and many have caring responsibilities. This is more likely to be the case for women, BAME workers, young and disabled members. This will help us grow the union, and also to bring through talented activists to make our own structures more representative of our membership.
- Encourage equality strand activists to get active in their branches, as Branch Equality Officers but in other positions as well (that is key to making equality a mainstream issue, equality is not just something undertaken only by an Equality Officer). All branch offices should be champions for equality!
- Provide 'off the shelf' equality training courses that can be delivered nationally and in regions as needed – this will empower and support more senior activists and officers to be able to deliver training on equality issues and the bargaining agenda.
- Work with the National Training Officer and Regional Education Officers to make training and events as accessible and inclusive as possible in order to improve participation (investigating the use of conference calls, video conferencing, webinars and e-learning)
- Ensure Self-Organised Groups and Regional Equality Forums have access to training with the intention that each SOG and REF will set up and run a campaign on an industrial issue that involves reps and targets potential members.
- Develop a network of reps and officers who are ready, willing and able to offer translation services to branches and members.
- Continue to work with Unionline to provide materials in multiple languages as appropriate to the workplace.

#### **3d. Celebrating success: leading by example**

1. GMB make a huge difference for our members, be it for the low paid, predominantly BAME women organised at Aramark in Southern region, the migrant workers now on full time contracts instead of agency contracts in Midland and East Coast or dyslexic workers who have new workplace policies to support them.
2. We need to celebrate that success, turn it into best practice and use it to show other workers why they should join GMB:

- Use all communications channels to celebrate success, share best practice and include as many people as possible.
- Through the new GMB website, promote equality campaigns, ensuring there are enhanced resources for activists.
- Review the President's National Equality Award for Leadership in order to reflect our focus on building the union, delivering around equality, recruitment and activism, with a re-launch in 2018.

## **4. Women in leadership**

- 4.1 In recent years, GMB has made strides in promoting women within the union. The measures taken over the last decade were always going to take time to bear fruit, but true equality is not something that should have to wait. On reporting of the Gender Pay Gap earlier in 2018, the General Secretary was clear that the report made 'uncomfortable reading' and must be addressed.
- 4.2 If we are honest, our structures and the composition of our Officer base were such that for women to progress to the most senior positions in the union, it would take time. The traditional structures of the union meant there was an historic divide between 'staff' and 'officers' with staff predominantly being women in support staff roles, and officers being predominantly male and in industrial positions. The 'staff to officer' scheme – which has since been renamed the Employee Development Scheme – provided a route to career progression for support staff in order to break down that divide. That has led to a level of career progression for women in GMB, but going from a support or administrative role to having a sheet does not happen overnight.
- 4.3 Right now, we have more women senior organisers than ever, and more women in senior positions at National Office, but that the progress has not been big enough or quick enough.
- 4.4 In a union with fifty percent female membership, we must do better at helping women to progress through our movement.
- 4.5 Alongside continuing to support, sponsor and promote the Trade Union women's Network – which GMB was instrumental in launching earlier this year - GMB commits to providing leadership training for women at GMB so that we further remove barriers to progression. This must encompass encouraging women to come forward to be leaders in the workplace if we are to see more grassroots women activists progress into leadership roles in the union, as women are underrepresented as reps.
- 4.6 Where we have piloted women only training for activists, the response has been overwhelmingly positive, this is something we must continue to look at.

## **5. Leading through campaigns**

- 5.1 GMB always has and always will lead the movement in campaigning for equality.

- 5.2 High profile campaigns that show what we stand for are important for growing our membership, inspiring and activating members. People will often get active if they see an issue they are passionate about. That should always be at the heart of our campaigning – making a difference, growing the union, getting more people involved.
- 5.3 Campaigns run by branches, REFs, NEF and SOGs on equality issues, provide a great staging post to show people who may never have had contact with a union before, who we are and what we stand for. We must develop better ways and networks to share news of our successes and how we have overcome challenges to really make a difference.
- 5.4 In the coming years we must ensure that GMB remains a high profile campaigner to make a difference in the workplace and in wider society including taking the fight to the far right. We will:
- Challenge hatred and discrimination where ever it may be.
  - Ensure that in our literature supporting equality issues, we always talk about why trade unions are important to advancing the equality agenda, and how people who want to help us should join us!
  - Provide clear routes for those who are passionate about equality issues, to get involved in the industrial work of the union to make a difference for equality in the workplace.
  - Ensure GMB has a high profile in responding to hatred, including using political work to drive the equality agenda forward.

## **6. Events and Structures**

### **6a. Conferences and events**

1. As GMB's equality structures have grown and developed, as has the need for want for events, conferences and ways to get people together to share experiences.
2. In 2017/8, this resulted in the National Equality Team delivering eight separate delegations or conferences, alongside participation in TUC Congress and Labour Party Conference and providing support for the NEF and Young Members' Network. The RMA conference is also an annual event. Regionally, this is complemented by regional women's conferences. These events also sit alongside REF and SOG meetings. Young Members' Summit and Women's Conference have been a success, which has led to calls for national summits or conferences for each strand group. In regions with devolved legislation, there are also Scottish and Welsh TUC and Labour Party conferences to consider.
3. If all strands organise a strand summit or conference, there is potential for 11 national delegations or conferences to take place, alongside TUC Congress and Labour conference participation and the day to day running and meetings of the NEF and Young Members' Network. This presents a challenge in terms of resource.



3. The CEC believes that national events and delegations play a crucial role in informing and driving the equality agenda, and GMB should always participate across the movement and maintain a high profile. In order to ensure we get the most out of any resource we put into equality, a review should be conducted of national events with a view to ensuring that:
  - There is a forum for sharing best practice, experiences and advancing the equality agenda within the Union, movement and workplace for equality strands.
  - Resources are most effectively targeted to building the Union and delivering change for our members, ensuring the equality budget matches our aspirations.
  - The aim of GMB equality events is to deliver real change for our members by growing the union, organising in workplaces and communities and acting in the press and politically to make change through wider society.

#### **6b. A joined up approach in our structures**

1. As discussed previously in this paper, we have vibrant and inclusive equality structures. In regions, SOGs and REFs are driving equality campaigning. Nationally we need to ensure that equality structures are joined up so that members' experience, regional work, congress policy and the priorities of the CEC flow through all aspects of equality at GMB.
2. In the 2019 CEC elections, alongside the women's and race reserved seats, two CEC seats will be created for Young Members, LGBT+ and Disabled members. The CEC seats will sit alongside the work of the National Equality Forum.
3. It is right that our strands are represented on the CEC, and that will ensure equality is always central to GMB's agenda, but it also means that equality will have parallel structures within the union.
4. The National Equality Forum is elected, and comprises of regional and strand reps. They meet quarterly and oversee National Equality Conference, alongside driving forward congress and conference motions to turn grassroots priorities into action.
5. Equality is also covered by the CEC, with the National Equality Officer reporting to CEC and into the Organisation Committee.
6. There is potential for overlap, duplication or – in the worst case – for contradictory activity to take place. For example, a situation could arise that none of the strand reps on the CEC are elected to the NEF, that some strands had the same representatives on the NEF and CEC and other did not.
7. As our structures have developed, and strand representation strengthened, we need to look at how to integrate equality work and representation in the union in the most efficient and common sense way. SMT, NEF and CEC will review the role and responsibilities of branch posts within the rule book to ensure that they fit with the equality organising strategy if this paper is passed by Congress.

8. The SMT and NEF should also review how the different equality strands and structures of the union, particularly the NEF and CEC, work together to ensure equality work is structured, efficient and joined up.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 In the decade since GMB embarked on a proactive equality agenda, the Union has come a long way. This report aims to take it even further, and lays out steps to be taken over the coming years. It will not be a process that last 12 months or even a couple of years, this must be the on-going work of the Union.
- 7.2 In a generation, there has never been greater urgency to having a cohesive, proactive equality strategy. As the rise of Trump in the US and the threat to equality legislation from Brexit show, while equality is mainstream for GMB, it is not mainstream everywhere.
- 7.3 GMB must challenge hatred and unite where others seek to divide. We must embed equality in all we do, within and outside our union.

## **8. Equality Bargaining in Practice**

### **Childcare**

For working parents – or those who would like to work – the cost and flexibility of childcare is often an issue. Good employers offer flexible working and child care support. This can and should be part of the bargaining agenda to improve the terms, conditions and disposable income of GMB members who are working parents.

### **Release for equality training**

In GMB Scotland, one branch has negotiated a full day paid release for every steward once a year, where GMB delivers training, and recently covered the Equality Act and what it means for representing members. This has ensured that all stewards with release have a basic understanding of equality issues and legislation.

### **The Menopause**

A number of regions have worked on producing toolkits and policies for women experiencing the menopause, including London region who also conducted a region wide survey to find out women's real experiences of working while menopausal. A discussion at National Equality Conference brought to the fore a range of ways women could be supported, including small changes in the workplace such as a change of uniform material to make menopausal women more comfortable. That is only a small change, but something that would make a practical and substantial difference to women at that time of life. Wales and South West GMB have worked closely with the TUC to produce a practical toolkit:

<http://wtuclearn.tuc.org.uk/resource/menopause-workplace-toolkit-trade-unionists>

### **Period Poverty**

In Wales and South West Region, GMB made headlines by successfully campaigning on Period Poverty, alongside local volunteers, convincing Rhondda Cynon Taff Borough Council to supply free sanitary products in all schools. Bridgend County Borough Council has decided to follow RCT's lead on free products. The region is working on expanding this across other local authorities and employers – it's a policy that helps staff and pupils too.

This is an issue Birmingham and West Midlands region have also campaigning on with the 'Bleeding Insane' campaign, helping to collect hundreds of donations of sanitary items for those who need them. The region have also put into practice their own campaign, with GMB offices in the region now making free products available.

### **Health and Safety of Women at Work**

The National Health and Safety Team produce a number of guides and toolkits for workplace activists on issues linked to equality. A specific guide for women's health and safety has been produced, which gives background information and practical advice. You can find it on the GMB website <http://www.gmb.org.uk/assets/media/documents/guides/gmbguide-womenshealthsafety.pdf>

### **Mental Health Awareness**

Mental health is something both the National Health and Safety Team and GMB Young Members have focussed on in recent years. A 'one stop shop' on mental health awareness was produced to support activists and reps in the workplace.

You can see that on the GMB website: <http://www.gmb.org.uk/gmbguide-mentalhealth.pdf>

Wales and South West Region have also embarked on a widespread effort to train activists in how to address mental health issues. As of writing, over 150 activists have been trained in Mental health awareness and as Mental Health Champions. Those activists are now tasked with developing a Mental health policy to be adopted by their employers.

### **Helping members with dyslexia**

Not all disabilities are visible, many are undiagnosed. Dyslexia and dyspraxia are two such disabilities that can remain undiagnosed for years, and in the case of dyspraxia, with relatively low levels of awareness around it. London region produced a briefing on dyslexia, with Yorkshire region producing a model policy and bargaining guide to help employers make the workplace more accessible – these policies can be implemented at relatively low cost, and can help the productive of the workplace and reduce the rate of staff turnover.

### **Organising migrant workers**

Exploitation and poor working conditions are more likely to exist where there is a language barrier. A number of regions have done work to make GMB materials accessible in different languages, including in Yorkshire region where migrant workers have recruited over 100 members through their specific migrant workers branch and Polish language campaigning. The region are currently working to increase the capacity of migrant workers reps so that further outreach, recruitment and workplace campaigning can take place.

### **Dying to Work**

Dying to work has become a flagship TUC campaign on the back of work by GMB Midland and East Coast region. Over 600,000 working people are now covered by the dying to work agreement which helps support workers diagnosed with a terminal illness.

More at: <https://www.dyingtowork.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Example-Charter.pdf>

### **LGBT+ organising**

You are more likely to be bullied or harassed at work if you are LGBTQIA+. GMB can show that we are on the side of equality by promoting workplace policies to end discrimination, bullying

and harassment in the LGBT+ community. Steps taken in some workplaces, include LGBT+ equality champions and mandatory training for managers which GMB should promote as best practice. London Region piloted a course on tackling workplace discrimination for LGBT+ workers, holding a summit to promote action in workplaces across the region.

MARGI CLARKE (CEC, Commercial Services): Vice President, Congress, Margi Clarke moving the CEC Statement on Equality Organising. A decade ago Congress passed the Equality through Inclusion Report and that report set in motion changes to our equality structure that put equality front and centre. Since then we have seen our equality strands go from strength to strength. Self-organised groups up and down the country do fantastic work on everything from tackling period poverty to campaigning against the ban on gay men giving blood.

Next year strand seats will be elected to the CEC. We held our first Women's Conference focused on organising and growing our union and on issues that disproportionately impact women, such as tackling domestic violence. Our young members are piloting organising in students' unions recruiting hundreds of members and each and every day activists tackle discrimination in the workplace. The theme of our Congress is GMB Making a Difference and I can certainly say our equality activists do that but a decade on from equality through inclusion it is time to progress even further. We must make sure that equality is even more embedded in the industrial work of our union, organising for equality and through equality to make an even bigger difference every day. We have to find more and better ways to encourage reps to come forward. Despite huge leaps and bounds our reps are disproportionately male.

Our mission of the union is to make change happen with and for working people and that is what this paper is about. It is about setting out how nationally we can support regions, activists and officers, to understand and deliver on the equality agenda, not just marching for change but practically making it happen. This Special Report raised the groundwork for equality to be at the heart of everything we do, an issue for all activists and reps, not just equality activists and reps, because equality, fairness, and social justice is who we are as GMB. I move this Special Report. Thank you.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margi. If regions want to put a speaker up can they call come to the front, please? The first one will be Birmingham.

SHARON YATES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Vice President, Congress, speaking in support of the CEC Special Report: National Equality Organising Strategy. I will start with a simple fact, equality is a workplace issue. Working in a very white and male-dominated industry I have been spoken down to, belittled, treated with disrespect, simply because I am a woman. My husband has faced abuse simply for being mixed race. Fighting this racist and sexist bullying was the reason I became a rep so that other people would not have to suffer these kinds of injustices. Sadly, my experience is not uncommon. There are still many workplaces that do not take equality seriously and it is our job as union to continue fighting against this so that workplaces are safe and fair for everyone. We are incredibly lucky at GMB to have an absolutely brilliant and dynamic young members network, incredible regional equality forums and dedicated self-organised groups who do such important and

amazing work, but we can and we should always do more, push for full equality in the workplace.

In my region just like many others we plan our year of equality events in advance and I believe this strategy should allow us to do even more and plan even bigger events and campaigns that are recognised nationally as we are regionally. At Birmingham Pride just a few weeks ago we took the opportunity to draw attention to the fact that section 28, the disgusting policy brought under Thatcher to stop teachers and local councils from discussing LGBT issues, was repealed 15 years ago; yes, that is right, 15 years ago. Congress, no workplace should be allowed to place restrictions like this on their employees.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can you wind up, Sharon, please?

SHARON YATES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, the union moves as they say in deeds, not words. I hope the report pushes us forward.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Sharon, I am sorry, but we are running behind. Thank you.

SHARON YATES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. London.

PATRICIA PINHEIRO DE VILLA (London): Chair, Congress, I would like to ask for this report of the GMB to raise the plight of the immigrants working in the UK. After Brexit the life of the immigrants has become more difficult and it gets worse with each day that goes by, like not being able to speak their own language during their breaks and the lunchtime, or have the same contract – I am sorry – just because you are an immigrant. Therefore, I would like to ask Congress in the name of all immigrants who work, including myself, for help and our region is considering this point. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Midland.

MARY-LOUISE HARRISON (Midland & East Coast): Speaking in support of the Special Report: Nationality Equality Organising Strategy. Vice President, Congress, the Midland & East Coast Region support the CEC Special Report because it positively moves the equality agenda forward, but whilst it is good on rhetoric it is, we feel, short on any real, positive, and concrete actions, including providing the support this strategy needs to implement it and additional resources to pay for it.

We must be at the forefront of dismantling the institutional inequality that still continues to pervade our society, even today. For example, the gender pay gap with the GMB is nearly 25% and, quite frankly, shocking, but in the private sector it is as high as 94%. Action is needed now and should be better reflected in our National Equality Organising Strategy. Congress, please support this report. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. Northern? North West? Scotland? Southern? South West. Sorry.

EMILY BROTHERS (Southern): Supporting the Statement with some reservations which we would ask the CEC to take into account moving forward as it strengthens our equalities strategy.

The first point is that the equalities strategy, quite rightly, has at the core of it mainstreaming. However, in practice there are seemingly some difficulties. I raised this on the political strategy the other day, that equality and inclusion around representation had not been included. So, the CEC needs to consider how mainstreaming is going to happen, particularly in policy development. Whilst the GMB is not subject to the public sector equality duty, the GMB union could, for example, adopt their voluntary approach to impact assessments; that would be a positive step forward.

Monitoring is also inadequate, particularly for disabled people, around 9-10% of people in the workforce, but in a one-off survey GMB found only 2% of the members. That is something that needs to be strengthened and acknowledged in the strategy. Also, we have some networks which are good around LGBT BAME members but little around disability, except for London who have an excellent ability network. Resourcing, particularly because of the access needs of disabled people, needs to be deployed in order to support those networks.

Very quickly, in conclusion, we also need to see the equalities strategy address people's needs who are at a chronic disadvantage, particularly subsets of mainstream equality strands. That may be, for example, gender identity as part of the LGBT work that we do. Finally, also around intersecting identities and that is, for example, where we have issues of particular pertinence for women from BAME backgrounds or LGBT people who have a disability.

The equalities strategy needs to address those issues in an ever-increasing diverse Britain. That is what Southern Region would ask the CEC to take into account as we move forward together to strengthen equality and to bring about a GMB that is inclusive of all our members. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Emily. South West?

ANN LEADER (GMB Wales & South West): Chair, colleagues, the GMB vision for equality and inclusion is to be recognised as the lead trade union driving equality at work and in our society while reflecting the make-up of our members at all levels of GMB and unleashing potential and inclusion throughout the structures of this union. This report promotes equality bargaining and highlights the essential need to exploit equality impact assessments and ensure they are undertaken for anticipating and identifying potential equality consequences, and ensuring that as far as possible any potential negligent consequences are minimised or eliminated. It should be integral to the policy-making process.

The equality bargaining and organising section of the report explains the need to deliver change for GMB members on equality. This can only be done if there is a clear development of practices that promote the possibility of fair and equal changes for all to develop their full potential in all aspects of life. It is imperative that equality policies are on the table when bargaining and organising.

In our region we have made it the forefront of the REF to ensure policies such as Mental Health Awareness, Menopause at Work, Hidden Disabilities, and Dying to Work policies are incorporated into contracts and workplace best practices. As the report states, there should always be an equality ask on the table so we are proactively promoting equality in the workplace. We have recently had great success relating to the Dying to Work pledge and Period Poverty campaigns. The report also mentions the importance of the equality training ensuring the level of development in education is in place to equip our activists and WPOs. Our region has a structured and ongoing development strategy for all activists. This is essential to ensure the regions' members are represented to the best of our activists' ability and equality is part and parcel of bargaining, with highly developed reps to lead negotiation moving forward. Our region supports. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ann. Yorkshire? No? Thank you. We will now go to the vote. All those in favour of the report please show? Any against? That is carried.

*The CEC Special Report: National Equality Organising Strategy was ADOPTED.*

UNION ORGANISATION: WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am now moving to the motions. Could I ask for Motion 95, 96, 98, C9, C10, Motions 106, 109, 110, 112, and 115 to come to the front, please, and can 95 go to the rostrum?

### **POINT OF ORDER**

A DELEGATE: What is happening to Motion 92? Am I not withdrawing?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 92 fell, according to SOC Report No.1. Once the document had been supported, that falls because it is in contrary, against, and automatically falls; it is in contrary, which I did explain to you earlier on.

A DELEGATE: What if it is not adequately covered? It is not that we are totally against the report as it stands, it is okay, but it does not cover the point in the motion.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That is the ruling before. There is nothing I can do about that. It fell because the report was supported. The only thing to do now is if you want to speak against it, that is fine.

A DELEGATE: Do I have a right to speak against it?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: If you want to speak against it, yes.

A DELEGATE: Yes. Then I would like to.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Right.

A DELEGATE: Now?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: (*Calls from the floor*) No, sorry, of course you can't speak against it. It has been passed. I apologise. No, it fell. Sorry about that. Can I have 95 to the rostrum, please?

## **WORKING PARENTS MOTION 95**

### **95. WORKING PARENTS**

This Conference calls for a change to the use of "working mum" which is:

- Gender specific;
- Ignores the many sacrifices fathers make;
- Is discriminatory to Gay couples bringing children up; and
- Is offensive to people who do not identify with a particular gender.

Conference calls upon the CEC to remodel all policies and documents to include the use of "working parents" instead.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(*Carried*)

BYRON COOKE (Birmingham & West Midland): I am going to get this right because this was given to me by the pastor of our branch so I am going to make sure this is spot-on now.

Some of us may think it sounds daft asking for a change about a phrase, "working mums" but as we all know raising a child is not type or person or gender specific. Any person who has the legal parental right of the child, mum, dad, grandparents, foster carers, to name but a few, and work, are working parents and it is out of respect we call them that. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 96.

## **MINISTER FOR LGBT RIGHTS MOTION 96**

### **96. MINISTER FOR LGBT RIGHTS**

This Congress calls on the future Labour Government to appoint a Minister with sole responsibility for LGBT+ issues.



AVON & WESSEX BRANCH  
Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

JEFFREY SUTTON (GMB Wales & South West): President, Congress, this motion asks for a minister with sole responsibility for LGBT rights issues. You may feel that with the introduction of the Equality Act, same sex marriage, right to change of gender, change in people's attitudes to LG issues, that there is no need for this motion. On the face of it, these are wonderful achievements but all have been fought for by LGBT activists, and their supporters, and it has taken from 1967 to now, 51 years, to get where we are. Still today in 2018 there are areas of the country where LGBT people are subject to attacks both physical and verbal, to discrimination in public and in the workplace, many have to hide who they are and some commit suicide. This is particularly prevalent in the trans community where 48% of trans people under 25 have attempted suicide. One-in-five LGBT people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their sexual orientation in the last 12 months. Two-in-five trans people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months. Four-in-five LGBT people have experienced a hate crime or incident and did not report it to the police. So, things are far from perfect. LGBT people are not asking for anything more or for anything less than anyone else takes for granted today, the right to live their life to the full as the person sees themselves, free of hate and discrimination. That is why my branch feels that there is a need for a minister whose sole responsibility is for LGBT rights. It cannot be right that it has taken 50 years for one section of society to achieve the same level of equality as the rest. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jeffrey. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 98.

**LGBT+ PROVISION IN WELSH SOCIAL CARE  
MOTION 98**

**98. LGBT+ PROVISION IN WELSH SOCIAL CARE**

This Conference is concerned for the ageing LGBT+ community who may need the intervention and support of Social Care within Wales. Particularly for those persons who will require services that are only met within a 'Home For Elderly'.

Therefore we call upon the GMB/TUC to lobby the Welsh Assembly to include a dedicated paragraph considering the additional specific needs of LGBT+ accessing Social Care within Wales into the Welsh Social Care Act.

This should include recommendations in regard to following concerns:-

- Awareness of the isolation caused when an LGBT+ person does not get the comradeship of likeminded companions being mindful to try and set up such older persons social care groups by signposting to a dedicated Day Centre or Care Home.
- Dedicated training on LGBT+ provision to all care workers.
- Dedicated training on supporting LGBT+ clients with Dementia.
- Aim to get dedicated LGBT+ residential provision in all County Boroughs where there is a clear need. Mindful that there is a greater likelihood that LGBT+ persons will not have a robust family support network.

RHONDDA CYNON TAFF BRANCH  
Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

THOMAS EDWARDS (GMB Wales & South West): First-time delegate.  
*(Applause)* Thank you. This motion was identified as a major concern in our LGBT self-organised groups. It was clear that there is a great need for focus, development and interaction with our LGBT community in Wales. Colleagues, this older LGBT community has lived their whole adult lives both before and after the 1967 decriminalisation of homosexuality. They are now reaching their later years. The chances are, colleagues, that every care facility in Wales is now home to someone who identifies as LGBT but the subject is still taboo among older people and some care staff do not always know the individual's identity. There is a great deal of silence because LGBT people tend to go back into the closet when they reach the older age of their lives. They grew up in an era where to be LGBT and to be themselves was either criminal or sinful. If any of the care staff have a particular anti-LGBT faith or culture, this may well impact on their care and individuals do not want to risk that and they do not want to mention it to their peers around them. It is as if, colleagues, they are wearing a paper bag over their head to mask their true identity and it is oppressive. They are not being treated as human beings and able to be themselves. Congress, I cannot bear the idea of older LGBT people in care who may be living in fear of discrimination. We should help make changes now. We must not see these individuals go back into the closet after spending so many years in fear of coming out.

This Congress is concerned for the ageing LGBT community who may need the intervention and support of social care within Wales. We call upon the TUC to join us in lobbying the Welsh Assembly to include a detached paragraph into the Welsh Social Act considering the additional specific needs of LGBT people accessing social care within Wales. Congress, I am GMB. I am proud. I move. Thank you.

*(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally second? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Move on to Composite 9.

**RAISING AWARENESS OF HIDDEN DISABILITIES  
COMPOSITE MOTION 9**

*(Covering Motions 104 and 108)*

104 – To Raise Awareness of the Impact of Hidden Disabilities and Learning Difficulties – Southern Region

108 – Dyspraxia A Hidden Disability – North West & Irish Region

**RAISING AWARENESS OF HIDDEN DISABILITIES**

**This Union notes:**

1.1 That there are many workers and GMB members suffering in silence with a hidden disability or learning difficulty.

1.2 That workers and members with hidden disabilities and/or learning difficulties are often overlooked for promotions.

1.3 That workers with hidden disabilities and/or learning difficulties are subject to terrible abuse and hate crime.

1.4 That there is a lack of support for workers with hidden disabilities and learning difficulties.

**This Union believes:**

2.1 That a national campaign is needed to raise awareness of hidden disabilities and learning difficulties in the workplace including an awareness campaign in the workplace on Dyspraxia.

2.2 That more members with learning difficulties or hidden disabilities need to feel confident to become reps.

2.3 That members would gain confidence to apply for higher graded jobs and put themselves forward for promotions.

**This Union resolves:**

3.1 To drive a national campaign, raising awareness for workers with hidden disabilities and learning difficulties.

3.2 To provide practical support, advice and guidance to members on how to recognise the issues, how the person can be assessed and what support can be put in place to help them overcome the problems associated with Dyspraxia and other hidden disabilities and learning difficulties.

3.3 To recruit more members with hidden disabilities and/or learning difficulties and as reps.

*(Carried)*

SHERINE THOMPSON (Southern): President, Congress, moving Composite 9, 104, 108, driving a national campaign raising awareness of the impact of the hidden disabilities and learning difficulties, dyslexia and dyspraxia, a hidden disability. I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I am standing here having a dyslexic and menopausal moment so bear with me!

Congress, President, there are many workers like myself who have a hidden disability or learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, or dysthemia, to name just a few, suffering in silence. Whilst I acknowledge these challenges are not exclusive to just myself, it is my hope that this motion will make a difference to those whose voices go unheard. Therefore, I rise to the challenge feeling vulnerable yet supported by my comrades. Today, I am passionate not just to share my own personal struggle but to highlight and celebrate the uniqueness and added value people with hidden disabilities and learning difficulties bring to the workplace and the union.

Congress, I became a union rep not to hide behind them for protection but to be a voice for many who have been bullied, overlooked, ignored, or afraid to speak up for their basic employment rights or training and reasonable adjustment. I may only be a black dyslexic woman but I am a proud GMB rep from an ordinary working class background, and supported by my comrades, to make a difference for the many and not just for the elite and chosen few: dyslexic but creative, and able to think outside the box to negotiate a good win-win settlement for my members that I advocate for and proudly serve: menopausal but still able to drop it like I'm hot and place the heat – *(applause/laughter)* – on those who continue to hate and discriminate. I am often overlooked or frowned upon by those in high places because I do not look the part or speak eloquently enough to chair a meeting, despite acquiring a post graduate diploma in Management Studies, but always reminded by the Regional and Branch Secretary that I am as equal as the top CEO around the board table when wearing my GMB hat. *(Applause)* So, that is why I am proud to stand here today as a first-time delegate speaking on behalf of those with special needs.

I ask today that you move and support this motion because there are many who are suffering in silence, who at worst are being exposed to hate crime and they are being ostracised. Please, we need to have more reps with hidden disabilities in the union and we need to have more people with hidden disabilities in high management places. So, please, I am asking you to support this motion today. Thank you very much. *(Cheers/Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sherine. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 10. Sorry?

JOHN MERCER (North West & Irish): I am doing 108.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Okay.

JOHN MERCER (North West & Irish): Morning, Congress. First-time speaker, first-time Congress. Great to be here. (*Applause*) I could do with about two or three hours, is that okay? Thank you. Perfect.

I am also talking about hidden disabilities. Before I say anything here, I know that GMB have helped people lots of times with needs. I have felt supported whenever I have had problems and I have had some really bad problems, but I have not had a disability, as such. What I have done is picked a little thing out from comments about people with dyspraxia and what they said about their unions. I do not have the union name here because I do not want to embarrass them: “In my experience trade unions have a limited scope,” this somebody on the internet, “Unfortunately, it is pot luck with unions. My former branch were exceedingly terrible though I know some are pretty good.” GMB, of course. “Really, unions need to ensure all its representatives are properly trained so you do not have to rely on pot luck.” “My union had no idea what dyspraxia was. He also felt it could not be used as an excuse. I had not declared a disability at the recruitment stage.” “I think it was dyspraxia which affected my misconduct as I overreacted to a chair being slammed down. CCTV showed me jump out of my skin. More awareness is definitely needed.” I agree with that.

Anything we need we will find it online. We have our reps. We have our training. Use the internet to find out everything you can when you are supporting someone, comrades. I move this motion. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. Composite 10.

### **DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING FOR MANAGERS COMPOSITE MOTION 10**

*(Covering Motions 105 and 107)*

105 – Disabled Workers and Reasonable Adjustments – London Region

107 – Employers Must Undergo Disability Training that Matches their Staff Needs – Southern Region.

### **DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING FOR MANAGERS**

This Conference demands that Managers should be expected to understand the disability of their staff before they can legitimately make reasonable adjustments to ensure that all members of the workforce are able to do their job equally to their peers with out barriers and prejudice.

The Equality Act 2010 protects employees from disability-related discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Employers like to take on Disabled members of staff as it meet the criteria for the 1/10 employees should have some disability to show equal opportunities and employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to allow their staff to work effectively. How they do this is not stated.

Disabled people have to fight to persuade their doctors to treat their case seriously and refer them. They have to battle a specialist or consultant to get a diagnosis and to give their problem a name.

Sometimes they have to battle an employer to recognise their diagnosis as a disability and eventually when the disability is recognised it is an uphill struggle to teach the managers about it.

The problem is that employers have no background in meeting the staff's needs, i.e. ramps, workstations that are equipped for that person's disability, wheelchair accessible, large screens and high visible keyboards for visually impaired employees. However, not everybody needs physiotherapy, or a wrist-guard or a slope.

A simple recommendation at this stage is that managers should learn about disabilities of their staff and should be pro-active in their approach.

Every employer that takes on a member of staff with a disability undertakes training to be able to support that person correctly, to ensure that 'Reasonable Adjustment' is met, and The Equalities Act 2010 doesn't have to be bought into force.

This Conference would like to see employers to understand the needs of disabled members of staff and see with understanding and without prejudice that they can be a valued and productive member of the workforce community. Conference therefore calls upon the Union to negotiate with ACAS to change their advice and recognise that there is a need for managers to learn about the disabilities of their workforce and the effects that they have on them.

*(Carried)*

MARK WATSON (London): Vice President, Congress, I have done appeals where a person has lost their job and grievances where a person with disabilities has been treated badly. I have also done many, many sicknesses and I am sure many of you in the room have done the same. There is a statutory duty to make reasonable adjustment. Everyone immediately thinks of physical adjustments but it may be an operational change. You may have to change the quantity of your work or vary it, the timings of your work. You may lose tasks or replace them with tasks more easily dealt with. You may move from the front of the house to the back of the house. Whatever changes are provided for you, it will have to be reasonable. What may be reasonable in a large council office is possibly not so reasonable in a small one.

What is reasonable varies from place to place and varies from manager to manager and there is no real guidance on it. Some managers work with their staff to understand their disability. I know of one manager who attended a clinical appointment on the request of her member of staff, her staff was worried she would not pick up all the details of her problems, but for every one of those there are several others who are sloppy or scared as to how to react. They continue managing, afraid to ask how their member is doing, and with only the vaguest idea of their condition: "I heard it is a foreign-sounding illness. I think it is something arthritic." Yes, it was and it is both but this foreign-sounding illness is an illness called Sjogren's Disease and it has among a harsh arthritic pain a variety of other problems. It could lead to sudden loss of teeth, extreme period pain, fertility problems, and eye infections. Each

disability can bring other hidden problems with it. Not every disability or illness can be solved by a ramp. Many people with mobility problems not in wheelchairs cannot manage ramps. Not every arthritic problem can be dealt with, with an adapted chair or a wrist pad, or a special mouse.

This motion seeks to take the duty to make reasonable adjustments a step further and calls for the manager to understand the disability. It can only benefit everyone and managers that understand an illness can suggest changes that the member of staff may not have thought of or which they have been worried about suggesting. Congress therefore calls upon the union to negotiate with ACAS to change their advice and recognise there is a need to make the managers learn about the disabilities of their staff. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Southern Region to second. Formally? Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 106.

## **ACCESS TO WORK MOTION 106**

### **106. ACCESS TO WORK**

Congress notes the UNCRPD committee criticism of catastrophic and systematic failures by the UK Government in assessing the impact of austerity, resourcing of independent living, ensuring inclusive education and meeting the needs of disabled people to gain, retain or progress in employment.

Congress believes that high levels of prejudice and exclusion experienced by disabled people have been exacerbated since 2010 by coalition and tory cuts to public services, multiple welfare benefit reforms and the erosion of the Access to Work Programme.

Congress resolves to establish a UK-wide network of disabled members to develop policy and deliver campaigns to combat discrimination and advance the civil rights of disabled people.

Congress affirms that GMB should campaign for the strengthening of disability rights by enshrining the UNCRPD into UK law, ESA and PIP assessments replaced by a personalised holistic approach and that Brexit does not undermine social protection.

Congress agrees that GMB prioritises a campaign to develop Access to Work and withstand further cuts, so that disabled people are better supported into work, retain their job with the onset of an impairment or health condition and to progress into their careers.

Congress is committed to GMB working collaboratively with other Trade Unions, Labour Party and socialist societies, as well as disability groups, to advance equality and human rights for disabled people.

## K19 SW LONDON GENERAL Southern Region

*(Carried)*

EMILY BROTHERS (Southern): In August last year, the United Nations Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities criticised the UK Government for its systematic failure on disability policy, particularly in the areas of assessing the impact of austerity resources on independent living and also their failure to include disabled people in education and employment opportunities adequately. That is why this motion today calls on our union to campaign for disability rights to be enshrined through that convention into UK law in the way that the Labour government did with the Human Rights Act 1998. In the light of the UNC findings we also need to see in government policy employment and support allowance and personal independent assessments be changed in terms of how they are assessed, with a more holistic personal process. There are high levels of poverty experienced by disabled people, some 28%, and that is why it is important to support disabled people into work. We are not scroungers. We do want to work and the Access to Work Scheme, which is meant to provide support such as support workers, interpreters, and specialist equipment, is there to support disabled people; unfortunately, far too few of us.

There are, Congress, 3.4 million disabled people in work contributing to the economy. We have a situation where far too few, only 25,000 people are receiving access to work support. However, it has been cut, a cap has been applied, and we are also seeing that although 2,000 more applications in the last year have been approved it is in fact 4,000 lower than the last Labour government provided in 2010, some 15% fall in the last seven years. There are at the moment around about 46% of disabled people of working age in work compared to 84% of non-disabled people, a shameful gap of 37%, which GMB could help to contribute towards. Often the focus is around recruitment but we have a key role in stopping disabled people from losing their jobs, particularly with the onset of disability. By promoting access to work support through various ways, then GMB can make a tangible difference as well as tackling and challenging the systematic cuts to support for disabled people in gaining, retaining, and progressing in their careers.

In conclusion, Congress, this motion is asking for us to take forward a campaign to provide assistance in the workplace. Remember, disabled people want to contribute to society and to work. We need the representation to support us. This is our union too. These are our workplaces too. These are our communities too. That is why we want to contribute to Britain too. I move Motion 106. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Emily. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*



THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 109.

## **DEVELOPING A POSITIVE BLACK HISTORY MONTH STRATEGY MOTION 109**

### **109. DEVELOPING A POSITIVE BLACK HISTORY MONTH STRATEGY**

This Conference recognises the important work of GMB Self-Organised Groups (SOG's), the link SOG's give to our members in terms of making our union relevant to them is invaluable. Moreover, Conference also provides a safe space for our people to come forward and have their first taste of being active in a GMB context.

Black History Month is one such area where the union is able to connect positively with BAME members. Developing outreach initiatives should not just be confined to a single month – but we need to start somewhere.

Conference is asked to:

1. Call upon GMB to develop its own Black History Exhibition with sufficient resources be set aside to allow this to happen. The exhibition can take the form of several pullups focusing on Black individuals. This would allow the exhibition to be mobile.
2. Agree that GMB Race London will work alongside the other regions' Black workers groups and initially take ownership of this initiative.

EALING BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

FEVZI HUSSEIN (London): Good morning, President, Congress. This is about developing a positive Black History Month strategy. Congress, the diversity calendar has come a long way since I became active in the trades union Movement, which was almost 30 years ago. In fact, what we know as Black History Month today was only finding its feet back then. Now, there is a celebration of all kinds of faiths, lifestyle, and symbolic ethnic commemorations.

Black History is rightly promoted and celebrated very widely. Black History Month presents a wonderful opportunity not just to the GMB but to the trades union Movement as a whole. We have heard some good contributions about the importance of mapping, while supplementing this in a huge way is the need to connect positively with our members. We can talk about the GMB structures and how this should reflect the membership it serves but that debate is for another day.

Keeping connected with groups of members making them feel that GMB understands their heritage is so important. Developing a Black History programme or defined strategy around Black History is vital. I know there is qualified support around this motion from the CEC linked to the funding but the good news is that this is not or does not need to be a big financial burden. As an employee of CWU I can tell you

this is something that I have helped to develop in the CWU already. It really presents a wonderful educational opportunity for GMB members to have these exhibits in their workplaces.

By way of an example, they can learn about Equiano Olaudah. He was an African who bought himself out of slavery. He is reported to have paid £40, which he saved up over many years finally to buy his freedom, which was in the year 1766. He then went on to write an autobiography. Equiano is quite a well known figure for those who follow Black History.

You will have also heard of Rosa Parks but did you know about Claudette Colvin. Claudette was just 15 years old and was one of the first black women to refuse to sit at the back of the bus. Claudette was arrested and thrown into jail. She was one of four women who challenged the segregation laws in Alabama. There was a great story why Claudette is not the Rosa Parks. Anyway, I hope I have whetted the appetite. Black History Month should not be sidelined to being promoted for just one month a year. Personally, for me any time in the year is a Black History moment.

Congress, the motion is simple in terms of what it seeks to achieve. It offers flexibility in terms of how this can be delivered. The fact it offers outreach and further engagement with our members is just what our campaigning union is all about. I hope Congress will unanimously pass this motion and I thank you for listening to me. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Seconded? Formally? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 112.

## **LONELINESS MOTION 112**

### **112. LONELINESS**

Congress notes the findings of the Jo Cox Loneliness Commission report published in December 2017, including that:

Nine Million people in the UK are lonely, 50% of disabled people;

For 3.6 million people aged 65 television is the main form of company;

43% of 17 to 25 year olds and 52% of parents feel isolated;

Loneliness costs UK business 2.5 Billion per year and disconnected communities are costing £32 Billion annually.

Congress believes that our futures should centre on connection, kindness and community, not isolation, separation and loneliness.

Congress calls for a cross-government strategy to tackle loneliness, together with a designated Minister to lead a comprehensive programme of work and build capacity with partners, implement a Family and Relationships Test when developing new policies and strengthen the evidence base to enable effective monitoring and review.

Congress calls on business, trade unions, public and voluntary organisations, together with Mayors and Council Leaders, to collaborate in combatting loneliness.

Congress resolves that GMB takes active steps to break the loneliness and isolation of its members and to work in partnership with other trade unions and community groups to connect people.

## K19 SW LONDON GENERAL Southern Region

*(Carried)*

EMILY BROTHERS (Southern): “I will not live in a country where thousands people are living lonely lives forgotten by the rest of us,” the words of the late Jo Cox. Our union comes together this week in Brighton because we have more in common than divides us. We gather to debate policy, move around networking with a purpose, and interact over drinks and other social activities. It is crowded and there is much to do but there are people here, even in this hall, who are lonely and have a deep sense of isolation for a range of reasons.

The Loneliness Commission, which was founded by Jo Cox and taken forward after her death, reported in December last year that nine million people in the UK are lonely; 50% are disabled people. Congress, if there are no lonely people in this room then the GMB is wholly unrepresentative of Britain today: 3.6 million people over the age of 65 have television as their main company, 46% of 17-25 year olds feel isolated, and 52% of parents, too. Loneliness costs the UK businesses £2.5bn a year and disconnected communities £32bn a year. That is why this motion is calling for a cross-government strategy, a minister to lead on a programme of work to develop collaboration between different agencies and also to have a family test to assess policies on the basis of loneliness.

There are ways in which GMB can contribute both in terms of policy and campaign terms but also in the workplace by supporting people who are lonely. If, as the King’s Fund proposes, social subscribing is developed then different ways of connecting people, over tea, for example, as will happen with the Jo Cox initiative in a couple of weeks, the Great Get Together, if we can find ways to support people, to connect them in the workplace, we can improve people’s performance but also we can bring about change on a wider scale in terms of connecting our communities, too.

I know what it is like to be lonely having dealt for many years with a deep sense of isolation because of my gender identity and sexual orientation. That is something that will always be with me all my life but I have developed coping strategies and that is what we need to bring about for so many more people, too. We need to step through

the fear of prejudice but also because of other reasons reach out to each other. That is very much what a union like the GMB is founded upon, a coming together to make sure nobody is left behind on their own.

For me strategies have included, for example, taking up gardening, a pursuit which indeed is lonely but, as Anne Frank said, the best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy, is to go outside somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens to be themselves. Remember, loneliness is something that we cannot solve alone. We need to do it together. We need to reach out and we need also to take forward those words of Jo Cox and the great work she did in raising the initiative. GMB has responsibility and also it is part of our values to ensure that those who are lonely are not forgotten by the rest of us. I move Motion 112. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Emily. Seconded? Formally? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 115.

## **DISCRIMINATORY SICKNESS AND ABSENCE POLICIES MOTION 115**

### **115. DISCRIMINATORY SICKNESS AND ABSENCE POLICIES**

This Conference notes that equal treatment in a sickness and absence policy can be discriminatory.

Equality is not now seen as treating everybody the same. A person with a disability who is more likely to have short episodes of sickness should not be treated in the same way as a person with no health problems. They don't need to be hauled in to have their sickness reviewed or to get letters telling them that they are letting their colleagues down. They already know that they are sick, and they cannot do much about it. New sickness policies are increasingly treating disabled persons unfairly.

Conference calls for any sickness absence related to a workers disability to be treated separately from other absences in sickness absence policies.

Conference therefore calls upon their officers to examine how widespread this practice is across GMB workplaces, what the effects is of these policies on the health of disabled people and if it is proven to be a problem to campaign against the process.

**BARKING & DAGENHAM LGO BRANCH**  
London Region

*(Referred)*

MARK WATSON (London): Vice President, Congress, we used to pride ourselves in knowing what equalities were. In the '80s and '90s they were treating everyone the

same. We know better now. Sometimes it is not enough to treat everyone the same. People's lives are full of inequalities that cause them problems, even before they get to work. A sickness and absence policy that treats everyone the same, sounds fine to the uninitiated. For the bulk of people who are healthy sickness is a surprise. You may have an idea you may get a bad cold in the winter or hay fever in the summer, but incapacitating illness cannot be predicted.

The same cannot be said for persons who may have a disability. When people first find out about their disability they always check it out online. Through online forums and talking with others with the same condition and with their doctors they become experts in knowing what is about to happen to them. To them the one size fits all sickness policy is a waiting menace. I know of people who hide what is a disability. They use their holiday to cover hospital appointments or sickness. Imagine working extra hours when you feel sick in order to be able to take time off to recuperate. They keep away from that system as long as they can. They know that once they are sick for the first time then they are likely to be sick again. The manager, even if he likes them, cannot make an adjustment. Inflexible policy says call them in, do a sickness. They ask if it is likely to happen again and, of course, it is likely to happen again. It is not a cold. It is called disability sickness.

We all know about reasonable adjustments. You could make a reasonable adjustment to a sickness policy. You could bring in a disability sickness or even disability leave. You could increase the number of days off that a person has with a recognised disability before they trigger the system. These are all reasonable adjustments. What is not acceptable is to call them in to terrify them, to convince them that it is their fault, and to make them think this is equality, because it is not.

Congress, this motion calls for the GMB to launch an investigation across workplaces to examine how these inflexible systems work. We need the evidence and we need to hear from the hidden disabled, of whom I know several. If it is a problem, then we need to act to get these policies remedied. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mark. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now ask Kath Slater of the CEC Midland to speak. Kath.

KATH SLATER (CEC, Commercial Services): We are supporting Motion 95 with a qualification, supporting Motion 109 with a qualification, and asking for Motion 115 to be referred.

On Motion 95, whilst the CEC is confident that our policies and documents do use the term "working parent" as the default, it would be helpful to have this as solid policy and for GMB to do an audit of such. The qualification is that the CEC would like to reaffirm its support for working mothers.

On Motion 109, GMB will work to promote Black History Month whenever we can. However, the qualification is that priorities for GMB Race London are a matter for region and the self-organised groups.

Finally, on Motion 115, case law has demonstrated that it will often be considered a reasonable adjustment to vary or waive aspects of sickness absence policies where absence is disability related. Though there is no automatic requirement to do so as it depends on what is reasonable in the individual circumstances of the case, the CEC will naturally be sympathetic to the principle raised and therefore we are asking Congress to refer this motion to allow the union to explore this a little bit further.

Therefore, Congress, we are asking you to support Motions 95 and 109, with their qualifications, and agree to refer Motion 115 for the reasons I have set out.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kath. We are now going to the vote. Birmingham & West Midland accept the qualification for 95 *(Agreed)* Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 95 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motions 96, 98, Composite 9, Composite 10, Motions 106 and 112, are all being supported. We will take them all together. All those in favour please show? Any against? They have carried.

*Motion 96 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 98 was CARRIED.*

*Composite Motion 9 was CARRIED.*

*Composite Motion 10 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 106 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 112 was CARRIED.*

Can I ask if London Agree to the qualification for 109? *(Agreed)* Thank you. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 109 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I ask London if they agree the reference for 115? *(Agreed)* Thank you. All those in favour please show? That is carried.

*Motion 115 was REFERRED.*

## **POLITICAL: IMMIGRATION & MIGRATION**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now go on to Political: Immigration & Migration and can I ask the mover of 271 and Composite 19 to come to the front, please.

## **BRITISH IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTRE MOTION 271**

### **271. BRITISH IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTRE**

This Conference notes that the conditions and the treatment of individuals detained at both Brook house and Tinsley House Immigration centres is both inhuman and deplorably. There are a significant amount of detainees in detention with serious mental health illnesses.

Conference notes that Brook house which is built to the same standards as a category B prison is designed to hold detainees for no more than 72 hours, however the average time detainees are spending there is between three months and 12 months, with some being found to have been detained for over two years.

Conference is asking the NEF put forward a report to the CEC to look at creating and implementing a national campaign to ensure immigrants and all detainees are treated with respect and to lobby for an immediate internal review of the inhuman centres based within our airports.

### **WELSH WATER BRANCH Wales & South West Region**

*(Carried)*

PAUL HUNT (GMB Wales & South West): Vice President, Congress, colleagues, people can be detained under the Immigration Act powers while they either await permission to enter the country or pending removal under deportation proceedings. The vast majority of people in removal centres are those who have been living in the UK prior to their detention, sometimes for many years, but who the UK Border Agency are trying to remove or deport. Many of these people have claimed asylum while others have overstayed visas and have been transferred directly from prison after serving custodial sentences. Around 30,000 people are detained each year without time limit and approximately 10% of the removal centre total population at any one time have been detained for more than 12 months. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, the longest recorded length of detention still ongoing at that point was of an individual detained for five years and four months.

Of the ten removal centres in the UK two of these, Brookhouse and Tinsley House, are based near Gatwick Airport and are visited by volunteers working with Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group. Brookhouse is the larger of the two and holds 426 single male detainees at any one time. During 2011, 3,197 detainees were received at the centre. We know there are approximately 20 detainees who have been in Brookhouse for more than a year, five of whom have been there for more than two years, plus at least another ten who have been detained for more than a year in total, including time spent at other centres. The impact of immigration detention on mental health is an under-researched area partly due to difficulties researchers have in gaining access to detainees. The existing research from around the world unanimously indicates that detention has a negative impact and detainees have increased mental health problems known to be depression, anxiety, and PDS, compared to non-detained asylum

seekers, and found levels of self-harm and suicide significantly higher among immigration detainees than among the prison population in the UK. Colleagues, we must try and act on this deplorable treatment these individuals are facing. I move. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 19.

## **RIGHTS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES.**

### **COMPOSITE MOTION 19**

*(Covering Motions 272 and 273)*

272 – Rights of Asylum seekers – Wales & South West Region

273 – Refugee Rights Campaign for Asylum Seekers Right to Work

## **RIGHTS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES**

This Conference notes that:

- We are now witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world have been uprooted from their homes by war and environmental catastrophes. Among them are nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18.
- 80% of the refugees remain within their country of origin or in neighbouring ones
- Those refugees who reach Britain usually find themselves in dire circumstances. It often takes many years for asylum seekers to be accepted by the system as refugees. They have to go through different screening and interviews for their cases to be heard. Most of these have inadequate language translators and lack of opportunities for the individuals to explain their cases.
- They are also denied the right to work and are forced to live on a bare minimum of £5 per day to pay for their basics such as clothing, food, drinks, transport. Most asylum seekers are living in poverty and experience poor health and hunger. Many families are not able to pay for their basic needs.
- Thousands of children seeking asylum in the UK are being denied access to education, according to organisations who work with refugees. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide education for children waiting for dispersal from initial accommodation by the Home Office.
- Adult education facilities are restricted to certain fields only.
- No advice is given on what health care maybe available and the lack of such of information means that some asylum seekers are made to pay for treatment.



- The UK is the only country in Europe that does not have a limit on the length of time that someone can be detained. There are individuals in detention centres who have been detained for years that are still not given the results of their case.
- In the UK, asylum seekers are encouraged to work within the detention centre for £1 an hour yet they are not allowed to work when they are outside and are forced to look for alternative ways to earn some money to live on. This makes them vulnerable to be exploited by bosses who employ them illegally on slave wages, some on as little as £3 per hour.
- The vast majority of these exploited workers are outside of the organised trade unions movement.
- Until a decision is made the lives of asylum seekers are left in a limbo.

Conference notes that:

- The Refugee Rights campaign was set up by refugee who have decided to come together to organise, campaign and fight for their rights.
- This campaign has participated in national demonstration including the ones on UN International Anti-Racism day, United for Education demo, May Day demo as well as numerous protest including for the closure of Yarls Wood detention centre
- Refugee Rights organises free law clinic with legal representation and provides free advice and access to information.
- Refugee Rights campaign calls for:
  - The right to work ◦ Access to education
  - The closure of detention centres
  - £10 an hour now
  - An NHS free for all
  - Language and adequate medical help – including mental health facilities –for asylum seekers and refugees
  - The right to join a trade union

Conference:

- Demands that asylum seekers must not be treated as criminals or unlawfully held in detention centres. Their fundamental human rights need to be defended.
- Supports the demand to allow the right to work and join a trade union for all asylum seekers/refugees.

- Agrees to affiliate to the Refugee Rights campaign including financial support.
- Calls on all GMB branches to also affiliate to Refugee Rights

*(Carried)*

DAN WALSH (GMB Wales & South West): *(Welsh spoken)* Colleagues, we are witnessing the highest level of displacement on record, an unprecedented 65.5 million people around the world have been uprooted from their homes because of war and environmental catastrophes. Amongst them are nearly 22.5 million refugees and, colleagues, half of these are children. Refugees who reach Britain find themselves in dire circumstances. It often takes many years for those asylum seekers to be accepted by the Home Office as genuine refugees. They have to endure many different screenings and interviews for their cases to be heard. Most of these have inadequate English language translators and the lack of opportunity for them to explain their cases fairly. Colleagues, they are unable to work and are left to survive on £5 per day for food, clothes, and hygiene products. Most asylum seekers are living in poverty and in inadequate accommodation, suffering from hunger.

Thousands of children seeking asylum in the United Kingdom are being denied access to education. There is no legal requirement for local authorities to provide education for these children. Colleagues, this is denying these children opportunities of life development and oppressing them into a future of poverty with no foundations to develop.

In the UK asylum seekers are encouraged to work within immigration detention centres for just £1 an hour yet they are not allowed to work when they are outside and are forced to look for alternative ways for many to live. Many of these are exploited to modern day slavery and, colleagues, this is filling the pockets of the criminal organisations who exploit these people in extremely poor conditions that we are continually fighting against day after day.

Colleagues, we must lobby to get these vulnerable people and children the right to work and the right to access education. Our organised labour Movement, led by the GMB, must fight to stop exploitation and open the doors of our NHS organisations to give free medical access to all asylum seekers who have come to this country for help and support after suffering war, pain, bereavement, and exploitation. Protecting the most vulnerable is a British value and we should always fight for that despite what the right-wing media dogmatic approach to this issue is.

Colleagues, please support this motion and change the way that this country treats the most vulnerable in our society. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dan. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call on Penny Robinson to give the response for the CEC, London.

PENNY ROBINSON (CEC, Public Services): President, Congress, we are asking that Composite 19, covering Motions 272 and 273, be supported with a qualification.

On Composite 19 the CEC absolutely supports asylum seekers and their right to work and join a trade union. However, the request to affiliate to the Refuge Rights Campaign should be referred to the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration to ensure that they are in line with the aims and values of the GMB. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Penny. We will now go to the vote. Motion 271 is being supported. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 271 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Composite 19, does GMB Wales & South West agree with the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Composite Motion 19 was CARRIED.*

## **POLITICAL: RACISM & FASCISM**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move into the Political: Racism and Fascism, and can I ask for 282, 283, 284, and 285 to come to the front, please. While they are coming to the front I will just make an announcement.

Congress, there has been a typographical error on the session programme for delegates: Motion 398, Police Community Support Officers, should appear alongside the motions contained within the Social Policy: Justice section. This will be debated as the last motion in that section.

## **HATE CRIMES MOTION 282**

### **282. HATE CRIMES**

This Conference, we acknowledge the fantastic work done by the GMB in condemning all forms of hate crimes. We call on the GMB to further promote training, education as well as encouraging reporting of all such crimes with our partners and affiliates. Training and education will reinforce why this behaviour is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated in any civilised society.

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region have entered into a partnership with Tell Mamma and this collaboration uses expertise within Tell Mamma to direct campaigns and literature where it is most effective. We call on Congress to develop this partnership nationally to ensure that hate crimes in all forms are eradicated.

GMB ORGANISING BRANCH  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

MEL HARTLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, we acknowledge the absolute fantastic work our union does in condemning all forms of hate crime. We provide excellent education for our newer reps, support and encouragement to challenging equality issues, and support for victims of prejudice. Imagine dreading going to work each day because of the way your colleagues or management treat you. Imagine your mental health suffering not because you have a mental health disability but because of other people's attitudes towards you. Imagine your family life being affected because you cannot switch off from work because it has just been one of those horrible days.

These are only some of the effects of prejudice in the workplace. Add this to the prejudice that can be experienced in wider society and this can absolutely ruin lives. Prejudice is not to be tolerated in any civilised society. A person's gender identity, religious identity, sexual identity, disability, and race, are not reasons for prejudice and this prejudice should not be tolerated. This is a time when working class people are blaming each other for their hardships influenced by right-wing media. People who should be friends and neighbours and helping each other out are blaming each other for their hardships, which is encouraged by a right-wing government, a right-wing media as well.

As a leading trade union we should be really proud of the work we have done so far on equalities but there is always more to do. One thing we can do is develop a national working relationship with an organisation called Tell Mama. Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region have entered into a partnership with Tell Mama and that is an organisation that collects information on anti-Islamic hate crimes, everything from verbal abuse to physical violence. They collect things like public transport incidents, hate mail, and discrimination at work. They gather this information. They encourage people to report these crimes to them. They are collecting information and they want to map the country to see where the problems are and this information is shared with people like the police and social services so they can target their resources. We can also target our resources and our campaigns if we go into partnership with them.

I realise time is running out. Anti-Muslim hatred is on the rise. We as a union should be leading on this. Let's go into a partnership with an organisation that condemns this and is actively trying to support our Muslim community. They even challenge ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can you close down, Mel, please.

MEL HARTLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Yes.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, now, Mel, please. We are running late.

MEL HARTLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Is that formally seconded? Thank you. 283. *(Not formally seconded)*

HASHIM EQUIANO (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, seconding Motion 282. In the 2016/17, for hate crime in England and Wales there were 80,393 recorded complaints to the police. This is a rise of 29% compared to the previous period of 62,518 recorded. Hate crimes target five strands and the percentage breakdown in 2016/17 is as follows: 78% race, 11% sexual orientation, 7% religious, 7% disability, and 2% transgender. We have recently seen diabolical things on our streets like “Punish a Muslim Day”, which has left Muslims in their homes, afraid to leave their houses. Recently, yesterday, there were fire attacks on a mosque and a Sikh temple in Leeds. In Dorset there has been an increase of 8% reporting of hate crimes and recently also the Far Right Movement increased in Rotherham. We also need to address how fewer people in England and Wales are being charged with hate crimes, despite a twofold increase in reports. Congress, I second Motion 282. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hashim. Motion 283.

### **RISE IN ISLAMOPHOBIA MOTION 283**

#### **283. RISE IN ISLAMOPHOBIA**

This Conference notes the events in London, Manchester and the subsequent spike in hate crimes against Muslims, or people perceived to be Muslim. This Conference condemns the attacks in London (Westminster Bridge, London Bridge and Finsbury Park and Manchester O2 Arena.

GMB Race is committed to fighting the far-right and the messages of hate that their actions seek to instil. The far-right is a cancer on society and GMB Race is proud of its record in standing up to groups such as the BNP, EDL, Britain First, Peguida UK and their ilk. This motion recognises the need for greater involvement of grass roots members as we tackle these perpetrators of hate and intolerance. The GMB is open to innovative campaigns for these purposes. Our message must always be that of hope overcoming hate and unity over division.

This Conference agrees that GMB Race will take a lead in devising an updated strategy to ensure that GMB remains at the forefront of fighting the far-right.

We call upon Conference to:

Ensure one of the priorities of the GMB shall be that a report shall be commissioned by GMB Race along these lines, the key objectives will be:

\*1. Pressurising the authorities to take a much firmer stance against far-right groups,

\*2. Greater engagement of grass-roots membership in these campaigns.

\*3. Engagement with likeminded groups so we can collectively drive a strategy that will be fit for purpose.

\*4. To convene a GMB Race Summit in conjunction with London Region.

This list is not exhaustive. A GMB Race Report shall be placed before the National Equality Forum which contains recommendations as to how to move forward.

EALING BRANCH  
London Region

*(Referred)*

FEVZI HUSSEIN (London): President, Congress, on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2013, 82-year old Mohammed Saleem was murdered by a Far Right terrorist on the streets of Birmingham. Mohammed Saleem was singled out and murdered on the very road he lived for over 30 years. He was followed out of his mosque after Friday prayers at around 10 p.m. He was then stabbed three times in the back by the fascist terrorist, Pavlo Lapshyn, was a known terrorist and had been given work placement in the Small Heath area of Birmingham, an area which is well populated by Muslims. In his police interview he confessed to the murder and he stated his intention was to kill and harm Muslims. Mohammed Saleem was not only a father and a grandfather, he worked tirelessly as a baker to make a life for his family, and he was a proud trade unionist.

On 10<sup>th</sup> August 2015, 81-year old Mushin Ahmed was punched, kicked, and stamped on the head which led to fatal injuries as he walked to his mosque in Rotherham for morning prayers.

Maz Saleem, who many of you will know is the daughter of Mohammed Saleem, fights tirelessly against the Far Right and said that the attack on Mushin Ahmed, “brought back memories of my father’s brutal murder in an Islamic terrorist attack.” The rise of bigotry stirred up by Donald Trump and his supporters has given Islamophobia and the Far Right extremists more confidence to perpetrate such hate crimes. Also, biased media reporting and general commentary or the lack of reporting when it comes to Muslim hate crimes and murders is becoming commonplace both abroad and here in the UK.

We need to provide hope for generations to come by making a stand against all forms of hate. In March 2018, brothers and sisters have already referred to this, letters were sent out called Punish a Muslim Day and it was aimed for 8<sup>th</sup> April this year. The aim of the letter was to encourage people to go up to Muslims and rip off burkas from their heads or encourage firebombing a mosque, and they received points and stuff for this type of outrageous terrorist activity.

Our General Secretary, Tim Roache, put out a statement of solidarity standing with the Muslim community against this vile action. I want to put on record my personal thanks to Tim for doing this. He said, “As a trade unionist we stand with you.”

Thanks, Tim. (*Applause*) The GMB, through the London Region GMB Race, organised groups to attend numerous marches and anti-racism events. The last one I went was to protest the Football Lads Alliance marching through the streets of multicultural Birmingham. It was a horrible day. Muslims were having beer thrown over them by these supposed human beings, and they were doing Nazi salutes as well. As trade unionists we must stand with all communities who face this vile hatred so I urge you to please support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Formally second? (*Agreed*)

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 284.

## **COMBATING FAR RIGHT EXTREMISM MOTION 284**

### **284. COMBATING FAR RIGHT EXTREMISM**

This conference is aware of the rise in far right organisations such as the Britain First and the Football Lads Alliance. Extremism divides communities and leads to an increase in hatred and racist attacks. Brexit has exacerbated these issues.

In order to combat extremism, we feel that dedicated training for activists could make a big difference in the workplace. The GMB is already supportive of Hope Not Hate, and this organisation offers superb training called 'Difficult Conversations', aimed at helping activists to discuss hatred and to change minds from a position of understanding without becoming negatively involved in polarised arguments. This conference recognises the benefits of negotiating skills and believes that all of our activists could benefit from this training on many levels. We ask that either all Regions either invite Hope Not Hate to run this training, ideally annually, for activists and Officers, or that our own Education departments incorporate the content into a 1 day training course, mandatory for all activists.

**S71 EAST BERKS**  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID McMULLEN (Southern): Vice President, Congress, comrades, I am calling on Congress to take measures to wipe out the insidious spread of these hateful ideologies. This Congress is aware of the rise in the Far Right organisations such as Britain First and the Football Lads Alliance, and their increasing strength and boldness in perpetrating Far Right extremist views both online and in daily life. Far Right extremism divides our communities and workplaces and leads to an increase in racism and hate attacks. In the wake of the Brexit vote, which has exasperated these issues, racism and hate attacks are again on the rise and the recent *Windrush* fiasco further demonstrated the challenges to nationality and identity under the current Conservative Government.

Our response must be to continue to highlight and celebrate our diversity in the face of such hostile threats, our democratic multicultural society in modern Britain. I urge GMB to support those who face this hostility and hate both in and out of the workplace and I call on Congress to recognise that in order to combat Far Right extremism. Education, communication, and above all dialogue, are our key tools. We feel that dedicated training for activists could make a real difference in the workplace. The GMB is already supportive of *Hope not Hate* and this organisation offers superb training called, Difficult Conversations, which is aimed at helping activists to discuss hatred and to change minds from a position of understanding without becoming negatively involved in polarised arguments. This Congress recognises the benefits of negotiating skills and believes that all our activists could benefit from this training on many levels. We ask that all regions invite *Hope not Hate* to run this training, ideally annually, for activists and incorporate the content into a one-day training course, mandatory for all activists. We seek this as only the first step towards combating Far Right extremism and we call on Congress to commit to developing a further continuing education and training strategy, and to provide us with details on the progress of the framework of this at the next Congress. I hope you will all join me in supporting this motion and supporting a fairer and more tolerant society for all where hate and extremism can no longer flourish. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 285.

### **MORE VISIBILITY AGAINST THE FAR RIGHT MOTION 285**

#### **285. MORE VISIBILITY AGAINST THE FAR RIGHT**

This Conference welcomes the news concerning the recent terrorist related arrests of 6 members of the far-right group, National Action. Conference further notes the seeming disinterest from large parts of the media to cover this story, which is in complete contrast to any news reports concerning arrests of Muslims on similar related charges.

The global landscape has developed an organic climate ripe for the racists to spew their poisonous and bigoted rhetoric. Many Trade Unions have taken it upon themselves to actively support the anti-racism movement. It is more important now than ever before for the movement to stand up as one. It is time for the GMB to increase its continued support against the far right more visibly and vocally, together. The trade union movement has always been at the forefront on ensuring that race equality is always on the agenda and standing shoulder to shoulder against the far right both locally, nationally and globally.



The campaign shall be far reaching and must, as part of its objectives, seek to engage grassroots union members and every part of the diverse BAME communities that we seek to serve.

We call upon Conference to:

1. Ensure a much stronger vocal and prominent visibility against the far right.
2. Be more proactive when the media reports may be regarded as biased on race issues.
3. Ensure that our solidarity is visible each and every time.

EALING BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

FEVZI HUSSEIN (London): Congress obviously welcomes the news as regarding the arrest of six in recent terrorist related incidents, six members of the Far Right group, National Action. We have also seen the news recently where Tommy Robinson has also been sentenced to 13 months. I think we can give a big cheer for that. *(Applause)* Paul Golding and Jayda Fransen have also been arrested so slowly but surely I think the justice system is making it clear that the Far Right is being targeted.

Our communities need the protection from these vile people so the claims of the motion are laid out towards the end. I support the sentiments of the motion and I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Move to the vote. Sorry, Colin. Colin Gunter.

COLIN GUNTER (CEC, Manufacturing): Vice President, Congress, we are asking for Motion 283 to be referred and for Motion 284 to be supported with a qualification.

We are asking Congress to refer Motion 283. It covers important topics and lays out a structure for a report on race. The motion says that the list is not exhaustive, therefore it would be appropriate to refer this motion so that the NEF can determine whether there are more points to discuss in the report.

On Motion 284, we are asking Congress to support this motion with a qualification. *Hope not Hate* do fantastic work attacking extremism and as the motion states have developed high-quality training. The qualification is that training could be made available and developed by the GMB, including in a format accessible online in order to reach as many people as possible, which should not be made mandatory for all activists. In some instances, it could replace the good work regions are already doing

and could also present access problems for those who do not have sufficient release time or access to online learning.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking for Motion 283 to be referred and Motion 285 to be supported with a qualification. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Motion 282 is being supported. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 282 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does London accept the reference back on 283? (*Agreed*) All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 283 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Does Southern accept the qualification on 284? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 284 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 285 is being supported. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

*Motion 285 was CARRIED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: HARASSMENT & ABUSE**

THE VICE-CHAIR: We will move on to the Social Policy: Harassment and Abuse. Can I call on the movers of 306, 307, 308, 309, 312, 313, C22, and also Motion 398. Thank you.

While the movers are coming down to the front can I just tell you that the RMA stall ballot has been drawn. Please collect your presents, if you are lucky enough to get one from the stall. Thank you to everyone who donated the prizes and to all who bought tickets. We raised in excess of £1,000 for the National RMA fund. Thank you very much. (*Applause*) Motion 306, the mover. Thank you.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT MOTION 306**

### **306. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

This Conference will campaign to make all sexual harassment offences, in public or at work, categorised as a criminal offence in its own right.

GMB MID LINCS BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region

(*Carried*)

MARIE-LOUISE HARRISON (Midland & East Coast): Vice President, Congress, the Equality Act 2010 currently covers sexual harassment in the workplace and offers some limited protection but outside the workplace prosecutors must use different pieces of legislation depending on the nature of the offence. This leaves us without a proper definition of the types of behaviour that amount to sexual harassment or clear boundaries. It also makes it near impossible to get an accurate picture of the scale of the problem. So, is it time to make sexual harassment a specific criminal offence?

The underlying issue around sexual language, innuendo, and even harassment, is one of culture. Far too long women have been forced to accept it, to laugh it off, and move on. What we need is a fundamental change because we should not have to accept it. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, hate crime currently falls into five categories: disability, race, religion, transgender identity, and sexual orientation. Police forces can create their own categories and Nottinghamshire have done just that. They record sexual harassment for what it is, a misogynistic incident. If this is taken up by other areas it would be a straightforward way to record incidents and give women the confidence to come forward. Other crimes are prosecuted when race, sexuality, and other prejudices are apparent so gender should be no different. If not a new law, then how does existing legislation hold up. The Equality Act 2010, which offers protection at work, sets out a clear framework and covers what is most people's experience of sexual harassment. The problem with this as it stands, it leaves the victim to do all of the running. They have to highlight the Equality Act to their manager and hope that they are receptive. If they do not get satisfaction, then they have to take it to a tribunal within three months of the alleged act of harassment taking place.

The criminal justice system needs to send out a clear message to everyone that sexual harassment is unacceptable and that it must be taken seriously. The GMB must stand together and campaign to have the law changed to protect women both in the workplace and in society as a whole. Only when we campaign to end discrimination in all its forms could we truly say that we believe in real equality. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 307.

## **SEXISM IN SCHOOLS MOTION 307**

### **307. SEXISM IN SCHOOLS**

This Conference needs to be aware and understand what creates sexism and expose the attitudes.

The attitudes which repeat the patterns of harmful experiences that women and girls face. We need to break the mould that perpetuate harassment and gender injustice. These effects are deeply harmful for girls, boys and school staff. As uncomfortable as it might be, we have to face up to the level of

sexism and sexual harassment in society and what this means for school staff and pupils.

We have a duty and an opportunity to bring about historic shift, to stop schools being places where girls and boys learn that sexual harassment are routine, normal and accepted.

It would transform school life and society as a whole in all schools but requires a commitment to make it happen.

#### PLYMOUTH & DISTRICT BRANCH Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

JOHN SHILLABEER (GMB Wales & South West): Second-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Vice President, Congress, sexism in schools is endemic but not inevitable. Congress, approximately 85,000 women are raped in England and Wales every year. Over a third of female students at mixed sex schools have personally experienced some form of sexual harassment at school. Almost a quarter of female students and one-in-20 male students at mixed sex schools have been subjected to unwanted and physical touching of a sexual nature while at school. Teachers and school support staff have been sexually assaulted in school corridors and classrooms.

Congress, we need to be aware and understand what creates sexism and expose the attitudes which repeat the patterns of harmful experiences that women, girls, and boys face. As uncomfortable as it may be, we have to face up to the level of sexism and sexual harassment in society and what it means for school staff and pupils. It therefore requires a commitment from each of us to make change happen. The reporting of incidents is crucial to providing support to those who experience it. Students and staff need to know that they will be taken seriously and the report acted upon. There is a vicious cycle of under-reporting of sexism in schools. Even when an incident occurs that students clearly recognise as harmful and unwanted, students are currently unlikely to report it; they do not believe the teacher will take reports of sexism and sexual harassment seriously. This contributes to a view amongst school leaders that sexism is not a problem requiring action so the issue is not raised with students. This institutional silence on the matter fuels the perception or recognition amongst students that sexism or sexual harassment is considered to be normal and unimportant. Consistent and ongoing action is required from schools, government, and education bodies to tackle it.

Sexual harassment should be specifically and explicitly addressed through school policy, including clear procedural guidelines which are consistently enforced. All staff should know what the school's policies and procedures are regarding incidents of sexual harassment. All students should be aware of the school's zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment and be supported to report incidents. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Well done. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 308, please.

## **CHANGES TO EXISTING POLICY – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY MOTION 308**

### **308. CHANGES TO EXISTING GMB POLICY - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY**

Currently GMB emphasises the support it provides to those who experience domestic violence. However domestic violence is no longer classified as just physical abuse. It can also come in many other forms such as sexual, emotional and financial abuse.

Sexual abuse to include: Sexual harassment/ pressure, forcing sex after physical assaults, sexually degrading language and rape. Emotional abuse to include: Intimidation, withholding affection and constantly being insulted, including in front of others.

Financial abuse to include: Totally controlling the family income, not allowing you to spend any money unless 'permitted' and making you account for every pound you spend.

The interpretation within our policy needs to be adjusted to reflect the up-to-date definition and contents of what constitutes as domestic violence. Many do not deem financial or emotional abuse as a detriment and assume that this too is just the norm. Therefore, highlighting and referring to these other forms within our policy and definition enables firm recognition, clarity and understanding for both those who are experiencing them and those who are handling a victim of these types of abuse.

L26 LB WANDSWORTH  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

CHARLAINE NKUM (Southern): Vice President, Congress, currently GMB emphasises the support it provides to those who experience domestic violence. However, domestic violence is no longer classified as just physical abuse. It can come in many forms such as sexual, emotional, and financial abuse. The Home Office defines domestic abuse as any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional between adults, those over the age of 16, those who have been or have previously been intimate with others, family members, and regardless of gender or sexuality; sexual abuse to include sexual harassment, pressure, forcing sex after physical assaults, sexually degrading language and rape; emotional abuse to include intimidation, withholding affection and constantly being assaulted, including in front of others; financial abuse to include totally controlling family income, not allowing

you to spend any money unless permitted, and making you account for every penny that you have spent.

People experiencing domestic abuse often feel stigmatised and disempowered. They often do not want to admit or share their experiences because they feel as though it is their fault. They feel ashamed or feel as though they should be dealing with the situation on their own. Research has shown that whilst victims of domestic abuse may be reluctant to disclose what is happening to them, often they hope that someone will recognise the issue and ask them about it. Any early indication can result in an employee being able to deal with their situation effectively. This can enable them to get the appropriate support. The interpretation within our policy needs to be adjusted to reflect the up-to-date definition and contents of what constitutes as domestic violence. Many do deem financial and emotional abuse as a detriment and assume that this, too, is just the norm. Therefore, highlighting and referring to these other forms within our policy and definition enables firm recognition, clarity, and understanding for both those who are experiencing them and those who are dealing with the victim of these types of abuse. I move this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks, colleague. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 309, please.

## **FIGHTING CUTS TO DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES MOTION 309**

### **309. FIGHTING CUTS TO DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES**

This conference acknowledges that the experiences of women and girls on the spectrum of domestic abuse are particularly brutal. Very young women are increasingly becoming targets of abusive and violent behaviour and there are many reasons behind this development including a lack of education in schools about rape and domestic violence. This raises the stark possibility that the only education young men might get on sex and relationships comes from pornography and banter.

Research also shows that women and girls experiencing domestic violence are more likely to suffer the most severe injuries and that 46% of all female homicides were caused by a partner or ex-partner.

Conference recognises that men and members of the LGBT community are also victims of domestic abuse and they must also be treated with compassion, supported and services for all must be protected.

It is necessary to highlight the growing threat to domestic abuse services as refuges are being shut down. In south Yorkshire campaigner Louise Harrison has been victimised and sacked from her job for opposing cuts to domestic abuse services.

Having viable options to leave a violent relationship can be a life or death issue. Tory cuts to the benefits system means that women fleeing to refuges for safety are to be refused benefits and this will accelerate the closure of refuges. The failure to build social housing further compounds the problem and it means that men or women who need to leave a violent relationship are unable to do so.

This conference resolves to:

1. Lobby Labour Party MPs to demand that education on rape and domestic abuse is included in sex education in every school in the country.
2. Issue an urgent press release condemning cuts to refuges and domestic abuse services.
3. Write to all Labour party MPs and councillors who are backed by GMB and call for them to publicly condemn and oppose all cuts to domestic abuse services.
4. Support every GMB branch to have information on domestic abuse on every single union notice board
5. Support and if necessary fund GMB Branches to hold Workshops on domestic abuse so that our representatives are fully informed on the latest facts and research on domestic abuse to facilitate campaigning on this issue.
6. Support and affiliate to the Women's Lives Matter campaign in Doncaster.

W32 WIMBLEDON  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

HELEN O'CONNOR (Southern): There is a real and pressing need for GMB union to escalate the fight to stop cuts to services for women. Groups like Women's Aid have been working with victims of domestic abuse for decades. When women and girls experience domestic abuse it tends to be repetitive, it causes fear, and they lose power and control of their own lives, so the impact of domestic abuse matters in a lot of cases. Size and strength differences between males and females also matter in domestic abuse.

Between 2014 and 2017, the Office for National Statistics reported that 241 women were killed by a partner or ex-partner in England and Wales. Prosecution of offenders rose between 2015 and 2016 and it was found that 92% of abusers were men and 8% of abusers were women. Statistics from the Canadian Report on Family Violence 2000 note that the result of male violence is five times more likely to require medical attention; that women are four times more likely than men to fear for their lives; and that women are three-and-a-half times more likely to be murdered by a male spouse than vice versa.

The question gets asked, why doesn't she leave? When you fear for your life, the life of your children, you are cut off from friends and family and you have lost control over your finances, could you leave? Statistics show that women in abusive relationships are more likely to be seriously hurt or killed by partners when they try to leave. Victims will only come forward if we are educated in the facts and we do not ask questions that alienate them or make them feel stupid.

Specific domestic abuse services for women and led by women were set up because there was compelling and overwhelming evidence that domestic abuse is a gendered crime that predominantly affects women and girls. Refuges offering life-saving sanctuary for women and children are under threat of closure. Domestic abuse is by its very nature hidden behind closed doors. Shame and fear stop victims coming forward to get help. There will be many brothers and sisters hidden in our Movement who are suffering from domestic abuse. There will be many others who have grown up with the sheer terror of living with domestic violence when they were children.

This motion asks GMB to put campaigning to save vital services for women at the very core of our national policy and that we use our political muscle to stop cuts to services for women. This motion asks that the GMB acknowledges the brave struggle of the Women's Lives Matter campaigners in Doncaster who are risking everything to save services that save women's lives. Congress, we call on you to affiliate to this campaign. There can be no ifs, no buts, and no excuses when acting to stamp out domestic abuse because women's lives depend on it and women's lives matter. Thank you. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 312, please.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE MOTION 312**

### **312. SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

Sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation, including in the workplace, are acts of violence against women; a form of discrimination and a violation of human and fundamental rights. This congress recognises the courage of victims of sexual abuse and harassment who have come forward in recent months and years as well as those who remain anonymous.

Congress stresses that this issue is prevalent in all sectors of our society including within our own movement and in our parliaments. One in three women have experienced physical or sexual violence during their adult lives and up to 55 % of women in the EU have been sexually harassed.

32 % of all victims in the EU said the perpetrator was a superior, colleague or customer; and 75 % of women in professions requiring qualifications or top management jobs have been sexually harassed. Finally, 61 % of women employed in the service sector have been subjected to sexual harassment.



Congress strongly condemns all forms of sexual violence and physical or psychological harassment and violence, including online abuse, and underlines the alarming increase in harassment of women online, ranging from unwanted contact to threats of rape and death.

Congress calls on the government to show clear leadership and adopt a zero tolerance approach towards any form of harassment, provide support for victims and offer greater access to training to ensure that employees are respected and safe at work. Congress calls on the government to provide clear evidence of the delivery of these recommendations.

Congress calls for the movement's full engagement in active awareness-raising campaigns involving all members, including a special focus on those in the weakest positions, including those employed on insecure contracts, interns, younger workers and those in temporary jobs.

**B59 BRUSSELS**  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

HORTENSE SILVERA (Southern): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. I worked as an employability tutor and manager for seven-and-a-half years in Croydon until the Tory Government scrapped that contract. During my time as a tutor, I was often sexually harassed by some of the learners. Nevertheless, I put a smile on my face and carried on with my daily activities. Motivating and empowering the learners has always been what I wanted to do so I championed through with that smile. However, the joke was on me as I was left feeling frustrated that my workplace should have done a lot more to protect me and other colleagues from this kind of behaviour. Congress, please bear in mind that not only females are sexually harassed in the workplace and are sexual victims.

Sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility to change how our society behaves and call out those that harass and abuse our members. It is long past time that this Government stand against harassment instead of covering it up and by doing so enabling it to continue. Some people have lost their voice because they are afraid and I strongly say to this Congress that for every member GMB will be your voice, standing with you and supporting you through to get the treatment you deserve.

I cannot change the past but I will do everything I can to change the future. I now ask Congress to support this motion. Enough is enough. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Well done. Motion 398 will be after the Social Policy: Justice. Sorry for bringing you down too soon. I was given that information. Thank you. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 313.

## **INDEPENDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR ALL MOTION 313**

### **313. INDEPENDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR ALL**

This Conference notes that the Harvey Weinstein revelations blew the lid off an age old problem in which harassment had gone unreported in Westminster. The GMB welcome the steps being taken in both parliament and within the political parties to introduce truly independent complaints and grievance policies that will go some way to helping to better protect these employees from harassment. We applaud the Labour Party for appointing an independent external organisation for reporting complaints and to guide and support anyone affected by sexual harassment through the party's procedures.

Meanwhile as those who work in parliament may be able to finally have complaints dealt with in an independent and impartial manner, our members and workers outside parliament, across the country, have their complaints answered by the same company management that often condone, turn a blind eye to, and sometimes even encourage the very misdemeanours complained about. When our members have a grievance about how they are being treated by an employer they have to complain to that employer. They then have the matter investigated and judged by an officer of the employer who frequently have a contractual duty to protect the reputation of that company, and if they appeal, the case is then heard by another manager of the company being complained about who has an equal vested interest in protecting that company. These managers' hands are often tied and because of implications upon the company and are unable to be fair, independent or impartial.

The GMB call on all MP's to take legislative action to provide an appropriate mechanism that gives all workers the same rights as Westminster employees when it comes to how their grievances are handled. All workplace harassment complaints should be decided by an independent arbitrator and all workers should have a truly fair independently heard complaints process. This need for independence has rightly been recognised as urgent requirement for workers in the houses of parliament. Workplace harassment being ignored and covered up is not something new that is only confined to Westminster, therefore the issue must be addressed urgently as a national workplace concern.

**B10 BANBURY NO.1 BRANCH**  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Referred)*

STEPHEN ROBERTSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Brothers and Sisters, comrades, for far too long when it comes to employment law and workplace justice the odds have been stacked against us in favour of the ruling class, the bosses. When our members have a genuine complaint about they have been mistreated and

discriminated against, bullied and harassed, their choices are very limited. They can either suffer in silence, leave and hope to find another job, or they can complain to the company that has mistreated them in the first place. What kind of choice is that? Why do you think the abuse in places like Westminster and Holyrood that went on there was unreported for so long, because the victims knew that to complain was career suicide.

The GMB welcomes the steps that have finally been taken to address this problem in Parliament but these do not go nearly far enough. What about our workers, factory workers, carers, office workers, what about our members in all walks of life, some of whom as I speak will no doubt be suffering at the hands of managers who use their position of power to abuse, exploit, manipulate and harass their employees, who do they turn to, where do they go to get their complaints dealt with fairly and impartially? Where do they go for justice? If they come to us we tell them to raise a grievance to a higher boss who more often than not condones, turns a blind eye, or covers up the very act that is complained about.

Our members can have their complaints answered by the same company management that can be responsible for letting them suffer in the first place. When our members have a grievance about how they are being treated by the employers, they have to complain to the employer. They then have the matter investigated and judged by an officer in the company who has a duty to protect that company's reputation and if they appeal their case is heard by another manager of the company that has been complained about. He has an unequal vested interest in protecting that company and because there are implications upon the company the managers are unable to be fair, independent, or impartial. Like all those in Westminster who said enough is enough, the GMB needs to say the same and try to even out the uphill battle for workplace justice.

This motion calls on MPs to take parliamentary action to provide truly independent complaints and grievance procedures for all employees. It is almost impossible to get a grievance upheld while the judge and jury are the ones that are ultimately responsible for what is being complained about in the first place. All workplace harassment complaints should be decided by an independent arbitrator ----

THE VICE-CHAIR: Can you finish, please?

STEPHEN ROBERTSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Delegates, some people are complaining about the noise whilst the speakers are speaking and they cannot hear what is going on, so could you just try to keep the sound down, please. Thanks. (*Applause*) Formally seconded 313? (*Agreed*)

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Composite 22.

## **SECTION 40 EQUALITY ACT 2010 COMPOSITE MOTION 22**

*(Covering Motions 314, 315, 316, 317, 318)*

314 – Section 40 Equality Act 2010 – London Region

315 – Third Party Sexual Harassment within the Security Industry – London Region

316 – Third Party Harassment Provision in the 2010 Equality Act – Midland & East Coast Region

317 – Third Party Harassment Provision in the 2010 Equality Act – Southern Region

318 – Sexual Harassment Cases – Birmingham & West Midlands Region

## **SECTION 40 EQUALITY ACT 2010**

This Conference is alarmed by the high number of sexual harassment cases being reported following recent accounts in the media and campaigns such as #MeToo.

This Conference notes that unfortunately sexual harassment at work is still common. We saw it at its worst in January this year, when women employed to host a “men-only” Presidents Club Charity Dinner were subjected to groping, sexist dress codes and sexual harassment. Research earlier this year found that 89% of workers in the hospitality industry had experienced one or more incidents of sexual harassment in their working life.

This Conference notes that in January 2018 the Fawcett Society produced the findings of its Sex Discrimination Law Review. This report is the first of its kind, set up to review the sex discrimination laws in the UK.

The report found:

- Violence against women and girls was endemic in the UK;
- Half of all women have experienced sexual harassment at work;
- 64% of women of all ages have experienced unwanted sexual harassment in public places;
- 1 in 5 women aged over 16 have experienced sexual assault;
- In some sexual offences cases a victim’s sexual history evidence is being inappropriately used in Court.

Furthermore the report highlights that women remain consistently disadvantaged in the workplace. Despite the historic equal pay gap wins by the Ford Dagenham women, the progress on the gender gap has stalled and significant changes are needed to close it. It is a sad indictment that in 2018, the centenary year of women getting the vote, the legal system is still failing women.

Sexual harassment at work is a “chronic problem” for women and is causing lasting mental illness. When complaining, you are either told to “shut up and put up” or removed from site and dismissed through SOSR. The process for

Equal Pay Claims at Employment Tribunals is complex, lengthy, and a maze to tackle. The process wears down a claimant affecting their mental health and wellbeing.

Sexual harassment in the workplace and harassment on the basis of a protected characteristic can be perpetrated by third parties. As it currently stands under the Equality Act 2010 Section 40, if an employee is harassed in the workplace by a third party like a client or customer, the employer does not need to do anything unless the harassment occurs more than once. At present these women are legally unable to hold their employer to account.

Section 40 of the Equality Act, introduced in 2010, protected employees from sexual harassment from third parties in the workplace. Section 40 was an important provision that provided protection for employees against harassment by a third party, when employers' ought to have been reasonably aware of harassment as this clause was to protect employees from unwanted harassment by making their employers responsible/liable for incidents enacted by customers/clients.

This Conference is aware that on 1 October 2013 the Coalition Government, under the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, repealed section 40 of the Equality Act 2010, which made employers liable in certain circumstances for acts of harassment of an employee carried out by a third party so employees are no longer protected from sexual harassment at work if they are harassed by a customer, client or contractor.

Their reasoning? The Government thought the existing provisions were a burden on employers which imposed additional liabilities which in these difficult economic times could have a detrimental effect on businesses. Employees therefore are not protected from sexual harassment at work if they are harassed by a customer, client or contractor. It means that organisations can keep turning a blind eye to blatant sexual abuse without facing any consequences and has now exposed employees to the possibility of having no recourse, should this happen.

Sexual harassment can be challenging to prove but this Conference believes that with stronger legal protection, better access to justice and solidarity from GMB it is not unsurmountable. Recent events which have been reported in the news have once again highlighted the importance of this section of the Act but how many more incidents of workers facing third party harassment go unnoticed. This should be a matter of deep concern. Conference asks GMB to highlight this injustice.

We need to protect women Security Officers and other women from harassment at work and tackle sexist and misogynistic culture and the Government must take serious action to address these concerns. Conference believes that the law needs urgent reform, so that all women are better protected within the workplace.

This Conference calls upon this Government to re-instate Section 40 of the above Act.

We call upon Conference to:

1. Work with GMB endorsed MPs to ensure the reintroduction of Section 40 of the Equality Act 2010 to guarantee workers protection from third party harassment, requiring only one previous incident of harassment for the employer to take action, and protection should extend to pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnership status.
2. Lobby the Government to bring back Section 40 of the Equality Act that requires only one previous incident of third party harassment instead of the previous requirement of two or more occasions of harassment to ensure that our members are protected from all forms of harassment.

*(Carried)*

TARANJIT CHANA (London): Congress, in November 2017 a poll by Opinion Research revealed that one-in-five women had been sexually harassed in the workplace. However, despite this, sexual harassment in the workplace is hugely under-reported. The same poll revealed that 58% of women did not report it to their employers. On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018, International Women's Day, a joint letter by IMKAN and other violence against women and girls activists read: "In the last few months we have heard a number of women speak out about their experiences of being harassed, assaulted, abused, and victimised in the entertainments industry. Over and over again we have heard stories of powerful individuals, primarily men, who have abused their position to control women, to violate their bodies, to cause emotional harm, and to threaten their livelihoods. We know that many women have also been silenced in a myriad of ways, which includes being threatened with further abuse, being shamed publicly, not being able to go to work, and not being believed."

For those of us who do this work every day these stories are all too familiar. We bear witness each day to the ways that adult women, young women, and girls, are subjected to violence in every sphere, from the home and the workplace. We know that many women are subjected to abuse, which is not only about sex and gender but also about factors such as their race, their ethnicity, sexuality, their class, disability, age, and many more. We know that this compounds the marginalisation women have to feel. We recognise the ways in which women in the entertainment industry have been silenced and this mirrors the way that women were silenced by individual perpetrators, by companies, by families, by institutions, by communities, and by the state. For each woman in the entertainments industry who has spoken out there are thousands of women whose stories go unheard. This needs to end. These are not isolated incidents, Congress. This is about power, it is about inequality, and it is systematic.

The TUC prepared a report in 2016, *A Bit of Banter*, which made a recommendation that Section 40 should be reinstated, which was removed by this Government. Section 40 of the Equality Act places a duty on employers to protect employees from third party harassment. This means that if an employee is harassed by a customer or a

client, then Section 40 will protect them. The despicable behaviour at the Dorchester Hotel at a Presidents Club event, where some business leaders actually said that it was okay to do that, this is what Section 40 was designed to protect. Section 40 ----

THE VICE-CHAIR: Can you close it down?

TARANJIT CHANA (London): -- it is about common decency. I move this motion.  
(Applause)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks very much. Thank you. Secunder, formally? (Agreed)  
Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: While we are waiting for Viv Smart from the CEC to come down to speak, with the amount of business that we still have to do, it has been proposed that lunch will be from 1 o'clock until 1.45. Thank you for your endurance.

VIV SMART (CEC, Public Services): Vice President, Congress, we are supporting Motions 307, 309, and 311, with a qualifications, and asking Congress to refer Motion 313.

On Motion 307, the qualification is a small one and should add to this motion. Children are socialised in part at school but sexism is part of our society and we as a union can go further and challenge it in the workplace, in schools, in Parliament, and in the media. These parts of our society are just as culpable to influencing children and creating environments that lead to sexism and abuse.

On Motion 309, domestic abuse is an issue that too many people of all genders face and domestic abuse survivors deserve our respect, support, and admiration. The CEC Special Report on Equality touches on some of these issues. The CEC supports this motion with a qualification that requests for affiliation be referred to the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration to ensure that they are in line with the aims and values of the GMB.

On Motion 311, the qualification is that we must be wary of the use of public space protection orders as they can be used against campaigners who are not harassing or intimidating members of the public on such occasions as trade union demonstrations or picket lines. We should be seeking other ways of protecting women from being harassed in these circumstances in addition to public space protection orders.

Finally, we are asking you to refer Motion 313 for these reasons. Following the emergence of widespread allegations in the UK and the US about sexual assault harassment across a wide range of sectors, including Parliament, there have been a number of ongoing developments, including a cross-party report in Parliament, the launching of an inquiry into sexual harassment in the workplace by the Parliamentary Women and Equalities Committee to sit alongside their related inquiry on the sexual harassment of women and girls in public places. The inquiry is due to report later in 2018.

Motion 313 proposes that all workplace harassment complaints should be dealt with by an independent arbitrator. At present workplace harassment is normally initially processed through the employer's grievance procedure and a failure to follow this may lead to a reduction in compensation in the event of a successful claim at a tribunal. The involvement of a third party to investigate will be appropriate in particular circumstances, for example, where allegations are made against a chief executive. Employers often prefer third party arbitrations because it lessens or takes away the right to take legal action and industrial action, and may encourage some employers to insert compulsory arbitration clauses and non-disclosure clauses into contracts to block complaints as is common in the US.

Another motion in the Congress agenda, Motion 312, calls for full trade union engagement in supporting members in the workplace. The recent comprehensive sex discrimination review published by the Fawcett Society in January 2018 recommends that action by employers backed up by stronger legal protection for workers, better access to justice, and strong unions, are all part of the solution in the case of sexual harassment. There is clearly space for new ideas and thinking on how to address the issue and particularly the issue of confidence in any process and the recommendation is, therefore, to refer to allow for further consideration.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motions 307, 309, and 311, with the qualifications I have explained, and to agree to refer Motion 313.

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks very much. Thank you. We will vote on Motion 306, the CEC is in support. All those in favour of the motion please show? Thank you. Those against? That motion is carried.

*Motion 306 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Southern, do you accept the qualification to Motion 309? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Vote on Motion 309, those in favour? Thank you. Those against? Thank you.

*Motion 309 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 312, the CEC is supporting. Those in favour of Motion 312 please show? Thank you. Those against?

*Motion 312 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 313, Birmingham & West Midlands, do you agree to reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. We will vote on Motion 313. Those in favour please show? Thank you. Those against? That is carried.

*Motion 313 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Composite 22, the CEC is supporting. Those in favour of Composite 22 please show? Thank you. Those against?

*Composite Motion 22 was CARRIED.*



## **SOCIAL POLICY: SOCIAL CARE**

THE VICE-CHAIR: We will go on to the Social Policy: Social Care, and call 334, 335, 337, 338, and 397. There has been a query or question about the fringe event. We are sorry about the inconvenience but Congress business overrides the fringes. It is up to you if you choose to go to the fringe, or continue with debate. Thank you.

### **ELDERLY CARE HOMES DEFICIT MOTION 334**

#### **334. ELDERLY CARE HOMES DEFICIT**

This Conference notes care homes in England and Scotland are tethering on the edge of financial meltdown, according to local authorities and care providers. Some care companies have highlighted an estimated £1bn bill for “extra” wages as a result of the UK Government’s so-called National Living Wage.

About 400,000 older people are in care in England and Scotland, but crisis in the care sector would put additional costs on the NHS far beyond those incurred through flu outbreaks or winter pressures on hospitals.

We are increasingly in danger that the best homes will become a preserve of the rich as the numbers of funded for the less well-off are reduced.

Conference calls for GMB to seek clarification on these statistics from councils and government and to campaign to stop them blaming the care crisis on the care sector workers well-earned, and decidedly modest, wages.

#### **SC-G89 GLASGOW NE-SW HEALTH SERVICE BRANCH GMB Scotland**

*(Carried)*

MARGARET BOYD (GMB Scotland): President, Congress, this Congress notes care homes in Britain are teetering on the edge of financial meltdown according to local authorities and care providers. Some care companies have highlighted an estimated £1bn bill for extra wages as a result of the UK Government’s so-called national living wage. There are about 400,000 older people in care in Britain but cases in the care sector will put additional costs on the NHS far beyond those incurred through flu outbreaks and winter pressures on hospitals. Elderly patients face being stranded in hospital wards for months as soaring numbers of care homes go bust every month. Last year more than 12 care homes went bankrupt as owners fought to find the money to cover increasing running costs while being forced to take less cash from councils.

In the past financial year 148 care home businesses entered insolvency, an 83% rise, and with the 81% failing in 2016/17. The figures call for urgent action from the UK Government to tackle the growing crisis in social care. As part of its recommendations they call for an independent body to take charge of care home planning for councils in England and Northern Ireland. The Scottish Government has

been advised to make changes, including requiring local authorities to provide clear information to prospective residents on how the care system works and their entitlements in choosing care homes in their local areas.

Although the Government announced a £2bn package for social care over three years last year, councils are spending £6bn less than in 2010. Cuts have continued this year despite ministers putting in an extra £1bn through council officials. We are increasingly in danger that the best homes will become a preserve of the rich as the numbers of funding for the less well off are reduced. A report by industry analysts says that in the last decade 929 care homes have closed. In the last decade, delegates, the national living wage was not in place then. No mention of the national living wage being a cause of closures, only from a Mr. Strawbridge who stated publicly: “that the national living wage was costing an additional £2m a year and if it continues as it will do into the next year and the year after, the number of local authority clients that care homes can admit across the country will continue to be reduced in everybody’s care homes because you cannot afford to take local authority clients any more.”

Who is Mr. Strawbridge, you ask? He is the managing director of Avery Healthcare Group, who operates 47 care homes across England.

THE VICE-CHAIR: Margaret, will you move the motion?

MARGARET BOYD (GMB Scotland): Yes, I move. Congress calls for the GMB to seek clarification on these statistics from councils and government to stop the care providers blaming the care cases and care sector workers who are on decidedly modest wages. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)*

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 335?

## **NHS & SOCIAL CARE MOTION 335**

### **335. NHS & SOCIAL CARE**

Conference notes the recent Cabinet reshuffle which places responsibilities of Health and Social Care under one Cabinet Minister. However, Conference deplores the spin implicit in this move which does not allow for resources to follow into that brief.

Conference notes the recent cross party and expert calls for a Commission on the Funding of the NHS and Social care and calls on this to be set up very urgently, before this Government allows the whole system to collapse for its own ideological reasons.

C11 CUMBRIA PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
Northern Region

*(Carried)*

MICHAEL CARR (Northern): Vice President, Congress, the NHS is part of the finest example of public services at their best in the UK. As a public service NHS is second to none. In other countries, other systems of healthcare are more costly to operate and often harder to access, if they can be accessed at all. Our NHS was formed by the great Labour government under Attlee. It was opposed then by the Tories on grounds of dogma and since 2010 it is once again being opposed by successive Tory-led governments. Congress, top down reorganisations of NHS have been a blatant attempt at further privatisation by the Tories, billions of pounds focused on reorganisation at the very time when these vital scarce resources should have been focused on caring for people. Once again, the NHS and social care has been a political football. What should be happening is that resources at the front line on health and social care should be focused on patient care and outcomes, not profits and privatised provision.

Too much time and energy is spent on highly fragmented services, fragmentation between health and social care on a system that does not work in harmony with health and social care complementary to each other. In the case of residential social care we have services nearly all in the private sector. The culture of private social care is in many cases one of poor funding, responsibility placed on individual clients and families with budgets, and councils cutting back budgets to make ends meet. Knock-on effect for workers, well, it is a minimum wage industry and zero hours contracts. Meanwhile, the health service and the NHS budgets are being slashed. We have a crisis in such provision. Congress, health and social care should be working together not competing against one another. We need a political consensus if the NHS and social care are to improve as one sector. We need more resources each year, not a series of budget cuts. They need to work together in harmony with health and social care based on outcomes and wellbeing and not profit or profitability. I move.

*(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 337.

## **CARE IN THE COMMUNITY MOTION 337**

### **337. CARE IN THE COMMUNITY**

This Congress deplores the way that social care and care in the community have come under funding strain over many years. Social Care is in a terrible and unsustainable state due to lack of funding and is light years off GMB policy of being funded out of taxation. Congress notes that Social Care is funded as a Cinderella service from local government funding and that funding is being cut, and the Government is forcing Councils to raise Council tax to obtain more resources. Congress notes that Social care is fractured as

a service as neither Health nor Social Care are joined up and fully funded from taxation.

This Congress therefore calls for an urgent review of Care in the Community and its association with social care so that far from the Tories wanting a ridiculous policy of capping and a dementia tax, there is a full assessment of current and future needs.

Congress welcomes the Labour Party's approach to this policy and asks for the Labour Party to adopt this resolution in embedding its policy set for forming a Government.

**D43 DURHAM COUNTY LA BRANCH**  
Northern Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID CLEGG (Northern): Congress, Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State, now looks after both the National Health Service and social care, what a frightening thought this is. The National Health Service and social care under this Government is poorly funded. They can try and spin their lies as much as they want. The Government's proposal for the National Health Service is plain and simple, privatisation. We applaud the Labour Party with its proposals for a national care service that brings together a proper service of care in the community. We know that the hospital trusts are under great financial pressure. The claims from the Tories about increasing efficiency are bogus. Congress, we know that our system of care in the community will only work if it gets the money it needs. We know that the costs are higher in privatised social insurance models. We believe that the Tories will never provide the funds our health and social care services really need. Even now they are still looking at bringing in some form of dementia tax. Congress, we need privatisation to be stopped. We know that the Labour Party means to change the way the system is run so the system has the resources it needs. We all agree that the number of social care beds needs increasing and accident and emergency require a complete overhaul so that their problems are addressed. We need care in the community to mean what it says. We need to keep this one of the greatest country's assets. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you, colleague. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 338, please.

## **RIGHTS OF CARERS**

### **MOTION 338**

#### **338. RIGHTS OF CARERS**

This Conference calls for a working group to be set up to examine the rights of carers and urges:

- Local Authorities to register all carers, adults and children;
- Local Authorities to ensure all carers receive their entitlement to an Assessment under law;
- Local Authorities to provide respite opportunities for carers; and
- Where people are paid by the Local Authority to care for another, the contract shall include; training, support, paid holidays and access to pension contributions.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

PATRICIA GUMBRIA (Birmingham & West Midlands): Madam Chair, Congress, it is estimated that seven million people in the UK currently provide unpaid care to sick or disabled children, or adults who could not otherwise live independently. The Care Act came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 and should have given care rights on an equal footing to the people they care for but it is clear that the Act is not being implemented fully and carers are not getting the support that they need. National and local government, together with the NHS, urgently need to invest in the support needed to ensure that the legal rights for carers are being introduced in all areas. This will ensure that carers will receive the urgent support that they need. Local authorities should work with the carers and service users to develop a self-assessment tool to monitor their progress when implementing the Care Act. Training and resources should ensure full implementation of the Care Act for carers and an urgent review is required for care assessment, waiting times, and recording systems, to ensure that there is timely support that NHS Trusts provide, and the GP practice should also review their policies to ensure that their organisation is involved, and for an order for carers to be identified we should involve and consult particularly with the person they care for being discharged from hospital.

Congress, the Act came into force on 5<sup>th</sup> April and it is quite clear that three years on it is still being implemented in full recognition for carers. Congress, I would like to urge you to let Theresa May know that what she is doing to disabled people and the carers who look after these people is not fair. Theresa May we are coming to get you! It is not fair. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 397.

## **SUPPORTING WORKING CARERS MOTION 397**

### **397. SUPPORTING WORKING CARERS**

This Conference is concerned that there is limited requirement on employers to give consideration to employees with caring responsibilities or to work with such employees to help them remain at work. We call upon the GMB to lobby the Westminster Government to make compulsory provision whereby employers have to consider temporary adjustments and give reasonable time off work, whether it be agreed shorter or a reasonable career break.

To further lobby the government to introduce an “in-work” benefit to help compensate for any loss of income that is directly related to caring responsibilities along the same criteria as Statutory Sick Pay.

**RHONDDA CYNON TAFF BRANCH**  
Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

MAXINE BUTLER (GMB Wales & South West): The motion is clear in its intention and is intended to build upon the GMB workplace model policy for carers that have been voluntarily adopted by those more considerate employers. However, we are concerned that those employers within the public sector or the more user-friendly bigger multi-corporates are the ones taking up the policies and that unless we get the legal requirement for all employers to give this matter consideration then smaller lower paid organisations will not address this issue. This motion should not be seen as another stick to beat a struggling business with yet more interfering legislation but rather an initiative to create a work/life balance that will benefit both an employee that has additional stress of caring as well as employers who should benefit by keeping loyal, dedicated, well trained staff.

It is estimated that one-in-five of us will at some point have to take up a caring responsibility and that this is more likely to happen when we are in our 40s or 50s whilst in the middle of our own working career. Without support from employers such carers are putting themselves at risk by working to exhaustion or losing any form of work/life balance which could then lead to personal mental health issues.

Taking on such caring responsibilities is not a choice but rather comes upon a person suddenly as a loved one becomes ill or infirm and you are the only family member that can be relied upon. Therefore, the situation emotionally compromises you to put another before personal needs or your career. Often people come into the role of caring to provide end of life care and naturally a person would give up their work and life to some extent to provide such 24-hour loving care and then whether it be weeks or months later the looked after individual dies, this often leaving the carer completely isolated and without work or focus in their life. Therefore, we are asking that the Government looks to introduce compulsory legislation to support employees who need adjustment to their contract of employment to remain at work. We should like GMB to campaign for such considerations to allow employees to temporarily reduce or change hours of working, even allowing reasonable time out as a career break

rather than permanent termination of contract. This would then force organisations to keep jobs open, particularly when considering end of life caring situations so that such employees can get back into work and use work to help rebuild their life.

Recognising that it would be unreasonable for all employers to provide an income whilst the person is absent from work due to caring responsibilities, we should further like to see GMB campaign to get the Government to introduce an in-work benefit along the lines of SSP to help supplement some of the loss to a person's income as a direct result of caring responsibilities. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks very much. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: I call on Mary Hutchinson for the CEC to give the CEC position.

MARY HUTCHINSON (CEC, Manufacturing): Chair, Congress, we are supporting Motion 338 with a qualification. The motion calls on the GMB to work with local authorities to better support carers, including foster carers. The qualification is that it is not entirely necessary to set up a working group to advance the cause in this motion. We work with councils across the country and can take this up as an issue within the local authorities. Therefore, Congress, we ask you, please, to support Motion 338 with the qualification I have set out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks, Mary. I will now move to the vote. Motions 334, 335, and 337 are all being supported. Will those in favour please show? Thank you. Anyone against? Thank you. They are all carried.

*Motion 334 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 335 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 337 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Does the West Midlands accept the qualification on Motion 338? Accepted? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour of 338 please show? Those against? Thank you.

*Motion 338 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 397 is being supported. All those in favour please show? Those against? Thank you.

*Motion 397 was CARRIED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: NHS & HEALTH ISSUES**

THE VICE-CHAIR: We will continue on and see how far we get with social policy. Motion 322, 327, 328, 329, and Composite 23, will the movers please come down, and 322 come to the rostrum. Thank you.

**CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUPS (CCGs)**  
**MOTION 322**

**322. CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUPS (CCGs)**

This Conference condemns the wide variation in commissioning by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) of end-of-life and palliative care services in England and calls on the GMB to lobby the Government to support the Access to Palliative Care Bill.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

ZAHIDA ASLAM (London): Congress, the way in which we care for people who are dying is a litmus test for our society. Facing the end of life is hard for everyone involved. People living with a terminal illness or where a cure is no longer possible must have access to high-quality palliative care services in conjunction with other treatments. They must be able to exercise choice about their place of care at the end of their life and to die in the place that they want to, where possible. Congress, good quality palliative care towards the end of life must be recognised as a basic human right. Palliative care is also an important public health issue. It is concerned with the suffering, the dignity, the care needs, and the quality of life of people at the end of their life. It is also concerned with the care and support of their families and friends.

The Marie Curie Institution states that, sadly, one-in-four people in the UK do not get access to palliative care services, so what is the reason for this exclusion? The fact is that the Clinical Commissioning Groups or CCGs in England who are responsible for commissioning local health services are failing to provide and implement a strategy for palliative care needs in their area. Almost half of CCGs are failing to implement a strategy and have no plans to do so. This wide variation in commissioning has resulted in a postcode lottery for families seeking support. This crisis in access to palliative care services is currently being debated in a bill in the House of Lords. It is a third attempt to introduce this bill following the failure of two similar bills in preceding years. Whilst palliative and social care provision should be a concern for all governments, it is expected that the Tories will continue to oppose this bill. On this, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our NHS, we will not give up the fight against the Tories and their forced disastrous reforms leading to the fragmenting and privatisation of our public health services, undermining all that it has stood for. The NHS was set up to provide care from the cradle to the grave. It must continue to do so in all parts of England. No CCG should be able to abstain from the responsibility of providing high-quality care to dying people. Everyone should have a right to palliative care where they need it, regardless of their disease.

This Congress calls upon the GMB to lobby the Government through our supported MPs, public services forum, and networks, to support the Access to Palliative Care bill. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you, Zahida. Formally seconded? London? *(Agreed)*  
Thank you.



*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 327.

**NHS: OPPOSE ‘5 YEAR FORWARD VIEW’  
MOTION 327**

**327. NHS: OPPOSE ‘5 YEAR FORWARD VIEW’**

This Conference calls on Congress to use all sections of the GMB and lobby the Labour party to actively oppose the government’s ‘5 Year Forward View’, including vehicles for implementing this known as Sustainability & Transformation Plans and the Accountable Care Organisations (which are unaccountable bodies) and their model of private-public partnerships being brought in as an undemocratic replacement of a single

NHS. P42 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): The Five-Year Forward View is a radical corporate plan for the NHS the essence of which we know now was written by healthcare multinationals in Davos in 2012. United Health played a key role as Mackenzie & Co, who was then invited by David Cameron to run NHS England. They repackaged the plan as NHS’s England Five-Year Forward View. The Five-Year Forward View sets out a new way of running the NHS. It categorically states that NHS funding will never again be increased and, therefore, services will have to be adapted and shrunk to fit the available funding. Although some aspects of the plan, such as integrated health and social care have been heralded as long overdue, it is essential to note that this restructuring of the NHS is driven by natural constraints over clinical need with no evidence base for the changes proposed.

Amongst much else the Five-Year Forward View emphasises out of hospital care and recommends closing a substantial portion of hospitals that have emergency and acute services. It demands NHS hospitals balance the books even if this means cutting services and our members and staff. It requires the NHS trusts to dispose of land even when it is in use. The Five-Year Forward View institutes a radical new structure for healthcare commissioning and delivering in the form of accountable care organisations through which private companies are being invited to bid to commission and provide all services in a given geographical area. There is no longer a universal comprehensive public accountable service but a system designed to serve the interests of the multinationals. As such, it is no longer recognisable as the National Health Service that over 90% of the population supports. This is precisely why it is being done so quietly as if it were a benign technical necessity rather than a radical political choice. By 2020, this empirical model will be embedded. The most efficient and effective healthcare is a National Health Service which is publicly owned, provided and delivered, and accountable. Private companies by their nature are not as accountable and they must have profit as a priority. Public ownership means oversight, real accountability in care, and profit is not a factor. It is time to reverse

the trend of destruction. Bring back our modern first-class public service. Bring back our National Health Service. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks very much, Dave. Formally seconded? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Motion 328.

## **MALE BREAST CANCER MOTION 328**

### **328. MALE BREAST CANCER**

This Conference calls for the GMB to support and campaign to raise the awareness profile of male breast cancer through the use of a national social media campaign.

Whilst male breast cancer is less common than female breast cancer, there are some similarities and whilst female breast cancer is supported by screening and awareness, there is little awareness of this in males.

All people whether male or female are born with some breast cells and tissue. Even though males do not produce milk-producing breasts, a man's breast cells and tissue can still develop cancer.

Breast cancer in men is usually detected as a hard lump underneath the nipple and areola. Men carry a higher mortality than women do, primarily because awareness among men is less and they are less likely to assume a lump is breast cancer, which can cause a delay in seeking treatment and around 390 men are diagnosed each year in the UK from this disease.

We call for increased awareness of this condition as the single biggest risk factor for male breast cancer is getting older. Most breast cancers are diagnosed in men between the ages of 60 and 70.

**B23 BRANCH**  
North West & Irish Region

*(Referred)*

JO PITCHFORD (North West & Irish): Whilst male breast cancer is less common than female breast cancer, there are some similarities and whilst female breast cancer is supported by screening and awareness, there is much less awareness of this in males than in women. All, regardless of gender, are born with some breast cells and tissue. Even though males do not develop milk-producing breasts, a man's breast cells and tissue can still develop cancer. Around 370 men each year are diagnosed. Breast cancer in men is generally detected as a hard lump and men, sadly, carry a much higher mortality rate than women primarily because awareness is so low and

men, as we know, are less likely to seek medical treatment and more likely to assume a lump is not anything to worry about.

Statistics from Cancer Research UK evidence that almost six-in-ten or 55% of male breast cancer deaths in our country each year occur in males over the age of 75. The chances for successful treatment and survival are best when cancer is found in its early stages, and as proven by the pink ribbon Breast Cancer Awareness Campaigns early detection is vital for all. As retirement ages rise and the single biggest risk factor for male breast cancer is getting older, this is another age onset condition that is going to be affecting more of our members and we would ask the Retired Members Association to work with the GMB to support and campaign to raise the awareness profile of male breast cancer through the use of a national social media campaign. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thanks very much, Jo. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: The mover of Motion 329.

## **THE UNFAIRNESS OF FREE PRESCRIPTIONS MOTION 329**

### **329. THE UNFAIRNESS OF FREE PRESCRIPTIONS**

This Conference notes that many conditions such as diabetes insipidus, thyroid, hormone replacement, cancer and others are exempted from prescription charges. Others such as MS and many forms of heart disease are not.

Without treatment, shortening of life occurs with increased long term disability. Some people on low incomes can apply and get exemptions but why should patients suffer the inequality of applying for life changing diseases?

It is time this injustice and free prescriptions list is updated in line with today's world.

We call on all to support this and get equilibrium in our system for all who suffer permanent health issues.

This Conference calls on the CEC to lobby our Labour MPs to include this motion in the next Labour Manifesto.

**GMB PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH  
London Region**

*(Carried)*

JOHN TOTTMAN (London): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* In 1948 the NHS was formed. Prescription charges were introduced in 1952, two years

after me. They were introduced to prevent “the frivolous use of the Health Service”. I am 68 years young and I am entitled to free prescriptions as a reward for surviving so long. I have had free prescriptions for over 30 years since I was diagnosed with a thyroid problem, which is not so drastic but I cannot understand why some people with serious debilitating, disabling, incurable and terminal illnesses have to pay for vital and essential drugs.

I have two lifelong friends who are twins, Chrissie and Lillian. Lillian is in a wheelchair, she has a 24/7 carer, and the only part of her body she can move is her eyes, and she does not have a lot of time left. Chrissie is reasonably healthy but occasionally has disabling attacks for which she needs medication. Both girls are registered disabled and get a disability allowance, some of which is used to pay for their vital medication instead of improving their way of life because they do not have entitlement to free prescriptions.

There are so many people like Chrissie and Lillian who have no access to free prescriptions. I find this unacceptable, deplorable, and shameful. I hope Congress agrees and I invite Congress to ensure that everyone is treated equally when it comes to health. Thank you. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you, colleague. Formally seconded? Yes? (*Agreed*)

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: We go on to Composite 23.

### **HEALTH CAMPAIGNS TOGETHER AFFILIATION COMPOSITE MOTION 23**

*(Covering Motions 331 and 322)*

331 – National Affiliation to “Health Campaigns Together” – Southern Region

332 – Health Campaigns Together Affiliation – Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

### **HEALTH CAMPAIGNS TOGETHER AFFILIATION**

This conference calls upon the Union, nationally and regionally, to affiliate to ‘Health Campaigns Together’ who work with and support Trade Unions and workers in the NHS including campaigns locally and nationally. This Conference notes the appalling crisis now gripping the entire NHS which is at a direct result of chronic underfunding by central government. We note that our NHS is now the lowest funded health service per head of population in any European country.

We also note with alarm the creeping privatisation of the NHS through the back door. For example the majority of contracts put out to tender for health service provision went to the private sector in 2017. The creation of bodies such as Sustainability and Transformation Plans. Accountable Care Organisations and Wholly Owned Companies are all further designed by the government to undermine NHS funding and create a bridge to the private sector. These plans will directly impact on our members wages and terms and conditions.

However as a trade union we recognise the huge contribution the BHS plays in our member's lives and that we have a vested interest in maintaining the viability and proper funding of the NHS. As such we recognise the important role played by Health Campaigns Together (HCT) in coordinating and organising the campaign to save our NHS. In particular their highly successful national demonstration in London which attracted 250,000 people and the similarly successful conference of over 400 delegates towards the end of the year.

A number of Trade Unions including UNISON and Unite already nationally affiliate to this organisation.

Congress we must do all in our power to join and support the fight to save our NHS and agree the following.

1. To affiliate as a trade union to HCT and appoint an officer to liaise with their organisation
2. To encourage all branches to support and make contact with local HCT affiliated campaign groups with a view to publicising their activities and events as well as to affiliate themselves as branches to HCT
3. To regularly order the HCT newspaper for circulation to members and branches which is produced once a quarter
4. To support where appropriate national events and activities called by HCT e.g the 70th anniversary demonstration on London on 7th July which we should fully endorse and offer financial and practical support to ensure its success
5. To use our influence through the APF to ensure the Labour Party commits to support the aims of HCT in securing proper funding for the NHS and to return the NHS to the public sector.

*(Referred)*

JOHN DONOVAN (Southern): Madam Chair, Congress, and GMB colleagues, the NHS will be 70 years old next month. It was started by Nye Bevan in 1948. The country was broke after the Second World War. He had a vision of healthcare for all, the poor and the rich. He had hope for a brave healthy future where we are living in a free healthy world. If he were alive today, what would he find, a society of the rich, a government of the Tories who believe that money will answer all the problems of ill health and misfortune as long as you have the money to pay for it. We need to fight for the many, not the few. I have heard that said before.

I am a proud GMB rep at the local NHS hospital and also a proud member of a local pressure group called, Sussex Defend the NHS. We are part of a national group called Health Campaigns Together. It coordinates the battle for the NHS with the help of the unions to help keep Nye Bevan's dream alive. The cost is £500 a year to affiliate. We need to do this. We need to put our union at the forefront to save our

NHS. Health campaigns have done marches across the UK and have had conferences in Birmingham and Hammersmith. There is a marvellous book they actually did for it last November. They have bi-monthly meetings to continue the fight for the NHS. There will be a big march on 30<sup>th</sup> June in London; if you can come along the more the merrier. Also, on 5<sup>th</sup> July, which is the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, please celebrate it. It is ours. It belongs to us.

The saving of lives for us and our children is priceless. Other unions are affiliated. We should lead and not stand by. So I ask you all to support this motion for the GMB members, for Nye Bevan, and a free publicly funded NHS which is the envy of the world. Let us get rid of this corrupt Tory government and return the NHS back to the people for which it was founded and which will last while decent people like us will fight for it. Thank you. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you, colleague. Formally seconded? Yes? (*Agreed*)

*The motion was formally seconded.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: I call on Martin Jackson for the CEC.

MARTIN JACKSON (CEC, Public Services): President, Congress, we are asking Congress to refer Motion 328 and refer Composite 23, which covers Motions 331 and 332.

On Motion 328 we recognise that half of the GMB members are male and the ageing profile of GMB male members results in many nearing the age when they may be at risk of developing male breast cancer. However, the reason we are asking you to refer Motion 328 is that the motion is not clear where this information may be found and how we may use it. A referral would give the CEC the opportunity to talk to organisations about the issue and its potential impact and develop an appropriate briefing.

The motions in Composite 23 call upon the union to affiliate to Health Campaigns Together. The reason that we are asking you to refer Composite 23 is Health Campaigns Together is an organisation the GMB has had little involvement with. The referral to the CEC will allow the information to be compiled and an assessment made of whether the GMB and the HCT share common values and objectives. A report could be produced at Congress 2019 and, in any event, any affiliation would need to be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Therefore, Congress, we are asking you, please, to agree to refer Motion 328 and to refer Composite 23. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE-CHAIR: Thank you. North West & Irish Region, do you accept reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Southern and Yorkshire and North Derbyshire accept reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I put the motions to the vote, 322, 327, 328, 329, and Composite 23, all those in favour please show? Thank you. All those against? That is carried. Thank you very much.

*Motion 322 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 327 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 328 was REFERRED.*  
*Motion 329 was CARRIED.*  
*Composite Motion 23 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE-CHAIR: That is the end of the session. Remember, there is a bucket collection in aid of the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice on the way out, and we will see you all back at a quarter to two. Thank you.

*Conference adjourned.*

**WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION**  
*(The Session commenced at 1.45 p.m.)*

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

THE VICE CHAIR: Congress, come to order. The North West & Irish bucket collection for the Northern Ireland Children's Hospital has resulted in a total of £411.94p. So we are hoping that the North West & Irish Regional Secretary will put some more money to it.

**CEC RULE AMENDMENT 13**

THE VICE CHAIR: I call on our Vice President, Malcolm Sage to move Rule Amendment 13 on Rule 65.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, I move CEC Rule Amendment 13. Congress, this rule amendment allows branch elections to be conducted electronically, and this follows an initiative in GMB Scotland. It does not replace the normal rule for branch elections in rule 35, but it enables regional committees to agree to a digital voting to suit individual or special circumstances. Thank you.

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Malcolm. That is formally seconded. I now move to the vote. Those in favour of the rule change, please show? Those against? That is carried.

*CEC Rule Amendment 13 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE CHAIR: It is my privilege to call in our new Nationally-elected President, Barbara Plant, to the rostrum. *(Cheers and applause)*

**ADDRESS BY BARBARA PLANT**

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I am so very, very proud to have been elected as your President. Thank you seems inadequate to say, but those two words come from my heart. Your kindness and support for my election has been overwhelming, and although "President" is just a word, I am Barbara, the girl from Catford, brought up on a council estate, the first in my family to go to university and a teaching assistant. *(Applause)* A TA who wouldn't have said "Boo" to a goose until the head tried to

change our job descriptions, and I found my voice and the GMB. There was no way that I was going to let management push me or my colleagues around.

I would like to think that my son, who I told you died in 2015, and my 11-year-old daughter who died in 2004 — the bit I did not tell you about — are with Mary, proudly looking down on their mum. For my other two children, thank you for your support and your love. I can't wait to open the Proseco tonight when I get home.  
*(Applause)*

Malcolm, I look forward working with you following Congress, and to Sheila, June, David and Andy, you were all worthy candidates.

Comrades, this is your Congress. You are the heroes of our Movement. I know that you will be back at work tomorrow representing, defending and organising our members and challenging management. I hope that you go back reinvigorated, uplifted and stronger from spending these four days together with your GMB family.

As President, I look forward to visiting all regions, meeting members and reps and attending your events. Solidarity really is my favourite word. There is nothing I like better than a good picket line. So if I can get there, I will.

I would like to end on these words from a poem which sums up my view of the world, I suppose.

*“Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow;  
Don't walk behind me; I may not lead;  
Walk alongside me as my friend”.*

I am so lucky to have you all as my new friends, especially, you, Kathy, because you got me into this. Thank you. Have a safe journey home. Thank you so much. *(A standing ovation)*

## **INTERNATIONAL**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now go into the International Debate. I ask for the movers and seconders of Motions 393, 394, Composite 17 and Emergency Motion 1 to come to the front, please. Would the mover of Motion 393 come to the rostrum.

## **SOLIDARITY WITH ROHINYA MOTION 393**

### **393. SOLIDARITY WITH THE ROHINGYA**

This Conference notes that the Myanmar conflict has seen the violent disposition of 800,000 Rohingya from their home and into Bangladesh. Living in dangerous unsanitary conditions after fleeing murder, torture and rape, there is now a repatriation operation commencing before the monsoon season starts, causing more danger to the Rohingya people. Although repatriation sounds like a peaceful operation, it is not. The Rohingya people are not legally recognised in Myanmar, they cannot leave their villages, attain certain jobs, enter higher education and are denied healthcare. They are not citizens



in their own country and so fear returning to more murder, torture and rape. Myanmar has also refused independent monitors from the UN, media or NGOs, and humanitarian aid has been prevented by Myanmar authorities.

This Conference believes all countries have a shared responsibility to prevent and respond to the most serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Following the Holocaust, the subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur, we cannot stand by and watch another genocide unfold if “never again” is to mean anything, and yet the UN warning in December that genocide may be taking place in Myanmar has been met by an awkward silence around the world.

This Conference calls on GMB to help the Rohingya people gain their status and safe return to Rakhine, through building international solidarity with organisations which labour for their welfare, and lobbying the Government to take their duties seriously. While we welcome the Government’s ban on arms and military training with Myanmar, the Government must put more pressure on all EU states to do the same, and use their position in the EU to put international pressure on Myanmar – ending the systematic discrimination against the Rohingya, having the Rohingya people be legally recognised, their human rights returned and safety ensured.

X39 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

*(The Motion was formally moved and formally seconded)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Formally? Thank you. I call Motion 394.

## **TURKEY STATE OF EMERGENCY MOTION 394**

### **394. TURKEY STATE OF EMERGENCY**

This Conference notes the oppressive lawless state of emergency inflicted by a tyrant dictator President Erdogan to “rule by decree” branding everyone as a terrorist, trampling democracy, imprisoning political opposition parties, violating human rights, crushing liberties and free speech, imprisoning over fifty thousand people, removing trade union activities with threat of imprisonment.

We call upon the CEC to:

- Campaign for the immediate unconditional release of all political detainees including the Kurdish Leader, Abdullah Ocalan.
- Agenda this motion at the TUC, both internationally and Nationally

- Campaign and lobby government to stop selling arms to Turkey and issue economic sanctions.

CAMDEN APEX BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

VIVIEN THOMAS (London): Congress, I move Motion 394: Turkey State of Emergency. In Turkey in 2016 there was a failed coup. This was used as a tool by the President to issue a state of emergency, to dissolve Parliament and rule by decree. By doing so the dignity and well-being of its citizens are at critical levels with deliberate intent to force trumped-up charges of terrorism, leading to false imprisonment. Members of a political sister group of Labour, the HDP Party, for freedom of speech, have been given sentences of up to 147 years all in solitary confinement. He has also removed the country's judicial and political system by imprisoning over 4,000 judges together with opposition Parliamentary MPs by way of bogus trials, implying they are all members of terrorist organisations. This has been echoed by stifling the trade unions, removing their rights to represent or demonstrate, arresting over 100,000 Kurdish citizens, violating human rights and unlawful killing. The Kurdish leader, Abdullah Öcalan, has been imprisoned on an island for 20 years. The British Government, since the 2016 coup, has sold £1 billion of arms used on the Kurdish people, obliterating all chances of peace talks. We all know that arms lead to wars. Our Government is assisting in this process. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally second? *(Formally seconded)*  
Thank you. I call Composite 17.

### **TRUMP OFFICIAL STATE VISIT COMPOSITE 17**

*(Covering motions 229 and 230)*

229 — AMERICAN PRESIDENT — Wales and South West Region

230 — TRUMP — London Region

### **TRUMP OFFICIAL STATE VISIT**

This Conference notes with disappointment the decision of the American people to elect the divisive figure Donald Trump as President of the United States of America.

It further notes that the Conservative Government is in talks with President Trump about an official state visit. This Conference is aware of the odious, vile racist behaviour and comments and tweets of Donald Trump and believes the invitation to him for a state visit was a major error and an insult to the vast majority of the UK's population.

Conference requests therefore that the GMB expresses its total opposition to such a visit and encourages its branches and members to actively oppose it should such a visit take place and that this resolution be forwarded to the Prime Minister and the American embassy. Further, this Conference calls on the CEC to organise a public demonstration should a state visit take place.

*(Carried)*

VIC POULINO (London): Congress, I move Composite 17, which talks about the official state visit of the American President. Colleagues, we all know that protesters are in readiness for the most incredible protest in our history to coincide with Donald Trump's planned visit on 13<sup>th</sup> July. Remember that date — 13<sup>th</sup> July! Plans for a large-scale protest have been underway since May first invited Trump to a state visit within days of him being sworn in as President. The proposed visit sparked the creation of the "Stop Trump Coalition", which is organising the protests which are being backed by musicians, activists, TV celebrities and, basically, all of England, I hope.

Colleagues, it is our duty as trade unionists to speak out. We oppose this visit and must show this in unity and commit ourselves to one of the biggest demonstrations in British history to make it clear to the Government and to the world that this is not in our name. Trump is a man who describes Mexicans as rapists and criminals. He bragged about grabbing women's genitals. He faces multiple accusations of harassment and assault. He describes women as pigs and dogs, and he once suggested imprisoning women who had abortions. He calls entire nations "shit holes". He calls white supremacists "very fine people" and demanded a total ban on Muslims entering the United States, eventually targeting several Muslim-majority nations.

Anti-Muslim hatred in the US is soaring under his Administration. He has attempted to ban trans people from serving in the US military. Yet, because he is the world's most powerful man, we risk becoming worn down.

Whilst he fanatical followers revel in the vulgarity of his hatred as a way to drive back gains won by women and minorities in the LGBT community, the small amount of progress made by the Obama Administration regarding lifting the embargo against Cuba has been halted, making life more difficult for the Cuban people and more difficult for them to obtain goods from other countries.

It is interesting to know that in 2016 Trump hotels and casinos hired a consulting firm to explore business opportunities in Cuba. Because the business trip violated the embargo, the consulting firm, Seven Arrows, advised the Trump organisation to describe his payment to them as a "charitable project". Presumably, Cuba is not an issue with Trump when he is looking to line his own pockets and the pockets of his family. Let us not forget the decision to move the American Embassy to Jerusalem and the devastation that caused. That makes me so angry. Sixty Palestinians were killed, including eight children under the age of 16 killed, 2,400 wounded and 1,360 by live fire, the rest from shrapnel and gas inhalation. What was Trump's tweet of the day? "Great day!" Was it a great day? For whom? Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Formally second? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I now call Emergency Motion 1.

## **THE MURDER OF THREE NESTLE TRADE UNIONISTS IN COLOMBIA EMERGENCY MOTION 1**

## **EM1. THE MURDER OF THREE NESTLE TRADE UNIONISTS IN COLOMBIA**

This Congress is shocked and condemns the brutal murder of Christian Andrés Lozano, Luis Eduardo Dominguez and Gilberto Espinosa on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018.

Three Nestle trade unionists fighting for recognition in their factory in Bugaligrande Colombia.

GMB calls on Nestle to recognize the trade union SINA TRAINAL.

Nestle should immediately enhance measures to protect and ensure the security of Nestle workers.

Nestle must also use its leverage in the community and in Colombia to ensure the peace process has real affect.

**YORK ROWNTREES & ASSOCIATED BRANCH**  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

**BRIAN GOULDING** (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I am a national convenor for Nestle in my region, moving Emergency Motion 1: The Murder of Three Nestle Trade Unionists in Colombia.

Congress, the brutal murder of three Nestle trade unions in May is truly shocking. All three were on a death list sent to the trade union. These incredibly brave men have been fighting Nestle for recognition for many years. Nestle's own corporate business principles state: "We uphold the freedom of association and effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining". Well, those words are worthless! Actions speak louder than words. *There's your business principles. (Torn up) (Applause)* Nestle should immediately recognise the trade union SINAL TRAINAL. It should immediately put measures in to protect Nestle workers and trade union representatives. Nestle should immediately use its influence in the community and in Colombia to ensure the peace process has real effect.

I intend to raise this issue with Nestle senior management tomorrow at our national meeting, supported by our National Officer, Steve Kemp. I will also be raising this matter at the European level later this month at the European Works Council meeting. The message is clear to Nestle. We demand that they recognise the trade union, protect its workers and trade union representatives. Finally, I ask that all branches affiliate to Justice for Colombia. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Secunder? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I now call on Michael Husbands (CEC Race Reserved) to respond. Michael.

**MICHAEL HUSBANDS** (CEC, Commercial Services): Newly elected President, I salute you. Vice President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motion 393: Solidarity with the Rohinya. We are asking that Congress supports this motion but with the qualification. It is difficult to argue with the sentiments expressed in the calling of an end of the appalling treatment of the Rohinya people,

and to recognise the sheer responsibility of the international community. We express our solidarity with those organisations which labour for their welfare. But — this is the qualification — we have limited influence in helping the Rohingya gain their status and effect a safe return to their community. With that qualification, Congress, we ask that you support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Michael. We now move to the vote. Does North West & Irish agree with the qualification to Motion 393? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 393 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call for the votes on Motion 394, Composite 17 and Emergency Motion 1, which are all being supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They have been carried.

*Motion 394 was CARRIED.*

*Composite 17 was CARRIED.*

*Emergency Motion 1 was CARRIED.*

## **CEC STATEMENT: TRANS RIGHTS**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move to the CEC Statement on Trans Rights. Can I ask Cathy Murphy from CEC Scotland to move.

### **CEC Statement on Trans Rights**

- a. GMB represents all workers. We stand against bullying and hatred. That is core to our values, and will continue to be so in the defence of trans workers.
- b. Many employers do not adequately understand trans issues, nor do many working in services that trans people rely on.
- c. The debate about when someone can identify with a specific gender (or none) is one that has attracted much debate, not least within the Labour Party, about whether a gender recognition certificate is required to stand as a woman candidate.
- d. We must look at the world in which our trans members live.
- e. TUC Research from 2017 showed that almost half of all trans workers had experienced bullying or harassment at work. 30% of trans workers had had their status revealed without their consent. Seven in 10 trans respondents said that their experience of workplace harassment or discrimination has a negative effect on their mental health.
- f. As of the end of 2017, one Gender Identity Clinic has a waiting list of 30 months for the first appointment, with others having waits of between 1 - 2 years. There are 7 such clinics in the UK. Trans workers who already have costly travel expenses to and from clinics, often look for private treatment avoid waiting lists. The financial barriers - not withstanding the medical and emotional barriers - to obtaining a Gender Identification Certificate in order to legally reassign your gender, are significant.

- g. No gender identity journey is the same. GMB understands that intersectionality means members may face different challenges or have different needs based on BAME status or faith. A white middle class woman may have a completely experience to a working class BAME woman - that is not to say either is easy or without challenge, but that each challenge and personal experience is different.
- h. GMB supports our trans members, condemns transphobia in the strongest terms and commits to continuing to practically support and campaign alongside the trans community.
- i. As a union, we believe that trans members should be able to participate in our structures without a Gender Recognition Certificate, and on the basis of self-definition. We also believe that self-definition should be accepted within the Labour Party.
- j. We understand that different cultural, faith and gender issues in different communities require more than a one size fits all' approach to inclusivity. GMB will work nationally and regionally to provide training, advice and guidance - that builds on our Trans Workers Toolkit - in conjunction with specialists such as Stonewall, in order to support trans workers, their branches and reps.
- k. Alongside this, we will work nationally to look at how potential changes to legal definitions of gender could impact on all GMB members in terms of employment law and equality legislation to ensure that all members are protected in the workplace and in society more widely.

CATHY MURPHY (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, I move the CEC Statement on Trans Rights. I am proud to be speaking to this statement on behalf of the CEC. The GMB has always been at the forefront of campaigning and chanting for reform. We have a solid history of fighting against discrimination in our trade union, whether it be against bullying, harassment, equal pay or fighting against the rise of racism and Islamophobia. We believe in dignity and respect for all at work, and this must include our trans and non-binary members. We recognise many barriers and the significant challenges that our trans members often face in the workplace, from harassment, bullying and victimisation in the workplace, sometimes being denied something as simple as being called by your own name — a sign of disrespect — that we all demand. Trans and non-binary members have reported a significant impact that a non-supported workplace has had on their wellbeing and health. Members report transphobic and mysogenous bullying that many members have experienced, sleeplessness, anxiety and isolation. Whilst facing victimisation at work, some of our members are also facing derision within their families as their loved ones simply cannot accept or understand.

The process of change or transition can also be a difficult one. It may be financial and costly, emotionally exhausting and does not happen overnight. We must celebrate the changing attitude and acceptance in our union and beyond, including the breadth of experience and different journeys that our trans members may be on. Unfortunately, we see that the themes of harassment and exclusion of trans and non-binary members are re-occurring. Our members are not alone as this Statement states.

Research from 2017 shows that almost half of all trans workers have experienced bullying and harassment at work. Thirty per cent of trans workers have had their status revealed without their consent. Seven out of 10 trans respondents said that their experience of workplace harassment or discrimination has had a negative effect on their mental health. Our union supports all workers and will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with trans activists, continuing to support and campaign alongside the trans community. We have already produced a toolkit for organising in workplaces for trans members and we will continue to work nationally to advance this important work. As part of that support from GMB, we should accept self-definition of gender as standard without structures.

The CEC welcomes the Labour Party's recent decision to support self-definition of gender. We do not believe that there is a queue of men or women seeking to redefine their gender for political gain, but significant measures have been put in place by the Labour Party. Congress cannot stand by discrimination and harassment for any member. As trade unionists we remember that an injury for one is an injury for all. We condemn in the strongest terms transphobia and discrimination against trans members. We stand together for human rights and dignity at work. Congress, please support this Statement to condemn transphobia and to support our trans members. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Cathy. We will move straight to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

*The CEC Statement: Trans Rights was CARRIED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: JUSTICE**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move to Social Policy: Justice. Section 16 covers Motions 297, 298, Composite 21, 301, 302, 304, 305 and 398. Will the movers come to the front of the hall, please. Can the mover of Motion 297 come to the rostrum.

### **HILLSBOROUGH LAW MOTION 297**

#### **297. HILLSBOROUGH LAW**

This Conference calls on Congress to continue the 27 year fight in seeking justice for the families of those who died in the Hillsborough Disaster and to ensure the abhorrent way in which families and communities have been treated in recent years never happens again.

After the conclusion of the second Hillsborough inquests in April 2016, the families called for a lasting legacy to prevent other families having to go through what they had suffered over more than 27 years. The Public Authority Accountability Bill codifies duties of candour on public authorities and officials and private entities that are public-facing, such as owners of sports stadia, shopping malls or social housing. If enacted, the law would require that officials would have to come clean about wrongdoing and failures and cooperate proactively with investigations, inquiries and inquests. The draft law

provides victims and their families with a legal ‘toolbox’ to enforce such transparency and new criminal offences would apply to senior managers who wilfully failed to comply or covered up institutional and individual failures. The law requires institutions to have ethical policies and it would empower ordinary officials to require their organisations and managers to be transparent. The second part of the Bill provides for parity of provision for victims with the public authorities involved in inquests and inquiries.

The bereaved families of the Birmingham Pub bombings, the victims of the Blood Contamination scandal and the Child Abuse inquiry are all examples of where official failures have arisen and may have been covered up. The recent appalling tragedy at Grenfell once again highlights the urgent need for a candour law to ensure truth and justice prevail over institutional defensiveness and the culture of denial which has been shown to pervade various disasters and scandals.

This motion asks that Congress support the bill and pressure MPs across all parties to bring this into law without further delay.

K28 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

PAUL RICHARDS (North West & Irish): Congress, I move Motion 297: Hillsborough Law. *(Applause and cheers)* I stand here today frustrated, angry and disappointed as someone who attended Hillsborough on that fatal day, a day that changed my life forever and a day that devastated so many others. I am frustrated because almost 30 years on I stand here seeking justice. I am angry because my voice and the voice of thousands of others were ignored in favour of lies and corruption at the highest level. It is with a heavy heart that I report to you today that almost 30 years and many senior authorities and politicians need to hang their heads in shame in delaying and obstructing the passing of the Hillsborough Law. This is not unique to the Hillsborough disaster. The appalling tragedy at Grenfell Tower highlights the urgent need for this law.

I would like to finish on one point and one message. The point is that as a GMB member of 36 years I was so proud to have moved last year’s motion called “The Real Truth” in banning the rag that is known as *The Sun* at all levels within this union. *(Applause)* I was shocked and saddened to find out that one of our officers had engaged with this poisonous rag. However, I would like to thank my regional secretary and our General Secretary for swiftly dealing with my complaint.

My message to Theresa May is this. You say you want to tackle injustices. Then stop colluding with the press and peddling lies through the media to the detriment of those who you are supposed to serve. Please support the Hillsborough Law to end the injustice, to empower the victims and to empower their families. Justice delayed is justice denied. Thank you. *(Applause)*



THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 298.

## **WOMEN IN PRISON MOTION 298**

### **298. WOMEN IN PRISON**

This Conference notes that the Ministry of Justice Report revealed statistics in December 2017, following a written parliamentary answer to questions asked by the Labour Party. The disclosure in an article in the Independent on the 27th December 2017, revealed figures for prisoners jailed for less than three months.

The statistics show that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men were jailed in 2016 for under a month. It was also noted that the overwhelming majority of women jailed have committed a non-violent offence and half are in prison for that.

Each prison place costs £47000 a year.

It is a known fact that a few weeks in prison is enough to lose your home, children, job and cause harm to mental health. Because women are often the primary carers, when a mother is sent to prison in 9 out of 10 cases, her children will either be placed in the care system or placed with relatives.

Women in Prison say that it is possible to halve the female prison population from around 4,000 to 2,000 but “we must act now”. This is the aim of its 2020 Ambition Campaign to reduce the women in prison population to no more than 2,000 by 2020.

We call upon Congress:

1. To work with Labour MPs on this issue
2. To support Women in Prison 2020 Ambition campaign by raising awareness whichever way it can.

**EALING BRANCH**  
London Region

*(Carried)*

**KIM HENDRY (London):** Congress, I move Motion 298: Women in Prison. Delegates, as you will see from your motion, the statistics show that one in four women and one in six men were jailed in 2016 for under one month. It was also noted when these figures were revealed that the vast majority of women who are jailed have committed a non-violent crime and half were imprisoned for that crime, so for non-violent reasons. Those statistics which came out in late 2017 were only revealed by the Parliamentary Labour Party. They had to be asked in a Parliamentary question because they wanted to establish what those sentences were and the pattern of statistics for women in prison. Again, the Government is hiding this kind of

information. They are not being transparent or open about it. Really, the point that the people who moved this motion wanted to make is that we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and we are still locking up people for minor offences like our Victorian ancestors. So around half the women on remand do not receive a custodial sentence, which means, effectively, that they were wrongly imprisoned for the time that they were kept on remand. They cannot get back that wasted time or the damage that was caused to their lives whilst they were in jail.

When women are sent to prison for minor crimes, not only does it often have long-term damage to their wellbeing and their chances of rebuilding their career, it can also have long-term damaging effects on their families, especially the children. So, effectively, we are punishing children when it is not their fault. Quite often the reasons for the non-violent crime that their parents are in custody for, and imprisoned for, is abuse that they received in childhood, so it is a continual pattern. It needs to be stopped.

This motion does is two things. It calls upon Congress to work with Labour MPs on this issue and to continue to work with them on all the good work that they have already done, and to support the Women in Prison 2020 Ambition campaign, which is a voluntary campaigning organisation, whose object is to halve all women in prison by 2020, by raising awareness in whichever way we can. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kim. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Composite 21.

## **INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT COMPOSITE 21**

(*Covering motions 299 and 300*)

299 — INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT — London Region

300 — THE “SNOOPERS” CHARTER – DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS? —  
Midland & East Coast

## **INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT**

This Conference notes:

1. The GMB campaign against blacklisting; the compilation of records of union and civic society activists of individuals and their use in employment processes.
2. The increased use of employers in the use of government databases e.g. the Criminal Records Bureau as part of employment processes.
3. The exposure by Edward Snowden of the illegal mass surveillance of the US NSA and their 5 eyes, including GCHQ in intercepting private telecommunications traffic.
4. The passage by the Conservative Government of the Investigatory Powers Act also known as the snoopers charter which:

- a. Extends the intelligence services right to intercept electronic and internet traffic
- b. Retains “economic security” of the nation as a reason for intelligence and police activities
- c. Legalises mass surveillance
- d. Allows access to these records on the basis of police or senior manager warrants

Conference believes:

1. The Investigatory Powers Act contravenes the European Convention on Human Rights, specifically Article 8, the right to privacy.
2. The Investigatory Powers Act has been declared in contravention of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights Charter
3. The Investigatory Powers Act will be used against trade unions and their right to organise.

Conference resolves:

1. To continue the campaign against private sector blacklisting
2. Seek support from the TUC to oppose the legislation of mass surveillance
3. Support legal challenges to the laws where GMB has standing
4. To raise awareness of the “Snoopers” charter, and what it means to our members and their families.

*(Carried)*

ZAHIDA ASLAM (London): Congress, I move Composite 21. We have a proud tradition of defending workers’ rights to organise and associate, free from surveillance and illegal discrimination.

In 2016 Parliament finally passed The “Snoopers” Charter, otherwise known as the Investigatory Powers Act. This Act legalised the previously illegal surveillance taken by the intelligence services. At the centre of this law is the view that data on all citizens and residents can be collected without cause in case one might commit a crime. The law gives access to these records to middle-ranking officers of 28 organisations. In addition, every local authority and health service organisation can also access these records. These organisations are our employers, our bosses. The law maintains that the protection of the economic security of the nation is a legitimate purpose for the activities of the intelligence services. Economic security is not about

the chasing of fraudsters, prosecuting low-pay employers or defence against inter-company industrial espionage. It is spying on and harassment of trade union activists.

It is highly questionable if this data should be collected for everyone without cause. The Human Rights Court says no. However, the crucial attack on our rights is the failure to regulate police and civil authority access to the records created. The lack of testing of need is serious.

We should also remember that the UK threshold of serious crime has a remarkably low threshold. We must campaign politically through the Labour Party and the TUC to ensure that the police and intelligence service activities respect our rights of privacy and are subject to human rights' laws. The law provides no protection for the professional privilege of lawyers or doctors, so allows the spying on the union and its members' legal advisers. Congress, this Act offends our rights to privacy, our rights to a fair trial, our rights to organise and our rights of freedom of association. Some may argue that we need these laws to protect society against terrorism and even to provide adequate child protection but, in the case of terrorism, we have the sad proof in London and Manchester that the surveillance machine is not enough.

Following a challenge from the critics, the High Court has ruled that this law is incompatible with European law and, hence, the Government must shortly re-write its mass-data surveillance legislation. Where we have standing, we should use the courts to defend our rights to privacy and our rights to organise. We should publicise the policy to our members. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Zahida. Formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 301.

## **THE ABORTION ACT MOTION 301**

### **301. THE ABORTION ACT**

This Conference calls upon the GMB to add the strength of its voice to the voice of the Women's Equality party – to join our voice to the millions of women who are petitioning Amber Rudd, the Home Secretary, to get rid of this outdated and patronizing law.

In 1967 the Abortion Act was passed. Yet here we are, 50 years on, and women in England, Scotland and Wales still have to seek the permission of two doctors to access abortion – a requirement not applied to any other medical procedure.

It is within our Government's power to make a change to this outdated legislation.

M15 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

(*Carried*)

LORRAINE WINSON (North West & Irish): Congress, I move Motion 301. In 1967 the Abortion Act was passed. Yet here we are 50 years later and women still have to seek permission of two doctors to access abortion, a requirement not needed for any other medical procedure. It is within the Government's powers to change this outdated legislation. When the law was drawn up in 1967 it was believed that consulting two doctors meant that the decision to have an abortion was considered seriously by doctors and the woman. The doctors have to agree that the woman's physical and mental health are at risk if she carries on with the pregnancy. Sometimes this requirement causes delays in accessing abortion services. Along with the widespread closure of family planning clinics across the UK, the results limit access to services. Delays are experienced during GP referrals. There are no other situations where either competent men or competent women need permission from two third parties to make a personal healthcare decision. Doctors are quite able to provide an assessment without the need to consult another doctor.

In Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and The Netherlands abortions are available on request up to the end of the third trimester. There are calls for the laws in Britain to be liberalised along with these European states.

I agree with the CEC stance on this motion. I am not asking GMB members to start voting for the Women's Equality Party, but I am asking the GMB to raise its voice alongside other campaigning groups to get rid of this outdated and archaic regulation. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine. Formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 302.

## **PARENTAL EQUALITY MOTION 302**

### **302. PARENTAL EQUALITY**

This congress is concerned that suicide is the biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK and recognises that the epidemic of Fatherlessness is a significant contributing factor to male suicide and male mental health problems.

This congress is concerned that more than 1 in 3 children never see their father again after their parents separate and that there are over 3 million children in the UK right now that are living in fatherless homes.

This congress believes that this is an injustice of epidemic proportions and is one of the largest inequalities in our society today that is being allowed to go on largely unnoticed and unchallenged, whilst causing endless misery to our children, our colleagues, and our country's parents.

This congress urges the GMB to be a leading voice for the voiceless, and proposes that we lobby our politicians and our government to protect our children and to change the law so that children and parents are given the protected right to see each other.

This congress urges the GMB to establish a working group to campaign nationally on this matter by:

- Working in partnership with the TUC, other Trade unions and organisations that are desperately trying to overhaul our archaic family courts.
- Lobbying the government, and the Labour party in achieving an end to this barbaric and gross inequality within our society.

S69 SECAMB BRANCH  
Southern Region

*(Referred)*

MARTHA DE BRUXELLES (Southern): Vice President and Congress, I move Motion 302: Parental Equality. This is a very contentious motion because it is asking our members to look into the situation of a divorce, separation or custody and 95% of the cases the child continues to be cared by the mother. Some of the time or most of the time the father faces restrictions. Our members have asked us to consider the fact that at the moment there is a high proportion of male suicides, and one of the reasons is because of this period of separation and the father does not have access to his children.

When it comes to access after a divorce or separation, normally the court will grant permission, and if the permission is for the child to be able to see the father, which is encouraged as far as possible, and for that access to continue, so be it, but we are not asking for us to allow a father to see a child if the courts say it is not allowed, because that would be dangerous. We respect the court's decision. However, if the court says that the child is allowed to see its father, we should encourage that. The reason is because the lack of a father figure in a child's life can have a hugely detrimental effect on the rest of that child's life. It is something that is not just going to impact tremendously during the child's infancy, but the detriment occurs when they are teenagers and through adulthood. I have seen that in my work with a school. I was a TA for 21 years. It is really said, when you are sitting in a classroom, when you hear boys and girls talk about their fathers in a negative ways because they have listened to that negative information at home. They have been used as a bargaining chip and pulled to pieces

I know that it is very contentious and I know that lots of female members have gone through really traumatic occasions with their partners — I understand that — but if you think and feel it is safe for a child to see their dad, there is no reason that they should not. On the contrary, we should encourage that. The more they have the two people present in their lives who have created them, the better for them. I ask you to take a moment to think about it and see it from a different point of view. Thank you for your time. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martha. Formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 304.

**REDRESS OF P.P.I.  
MOTION 304**

**304. REDRESS OF P.P.I.**

This Conference calls upon the CEC to lobby the Government to demand banks and credit card companies to pay compensation to their customers who have fraudulently been forced to have PPI instead of individuals having to claim. This conference calls on all relevant parties responsible to make companies pay automatically before August 2019.

R35 JCB GENERAL BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

ROGER MANDER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 304: Redress of P.P.I. This Conference calls upon the CEC to lobby the Government to demand banks and credit card companies to pay compensation to their customers who have fraudulently been forced to have PPI loans instead of individuals having to claim.

I don't know about you but cold calling and TV adverts gets on my nerves touting for business and taking a share of what is legally entitled for the customer, who is our member. Banks, building societies and credit card companies know who they are and should pay us accordingly if they owe us rather than having to make the individual efforts ourselves.

So this Conference calls on all of our bargaining powers and all the relevant bodies responsible to make these companies pay automatically before the August 2019 deadline. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roger. Formally second? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 305.

**CHILD SEX DOLLS OR ROBOTS  
MOTION 305**

**305. CHILD SEX DOLLS OR ROBOTS**

This Conference calls for the owning of a child sex doll or robot to be made illegal.

Since 2017 it has been illegal to import a child sex doll or robot into the United Kingdom. The law has not been tested further. At the moment it appears legal to own one and to use one.

Conference therefore calls upon the Union to campaign to make the selling, ownership and use of a child doll specifically for sex illegal.

BARKING & DAGENHAM LGO BRANCH  
London Region

*(Carried)*

GARY PUSEY (London): Congress, I move Motion 305: Child Sex Dolls or Robots. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* What I am going to talk about in this motion may shock or upset people. I apologise, but this needs to be discussed.

The motion I am moving is to ask Congress to campaign to have any loopholes in the law surrounding this outrageous subject. So far several individuals have been successfully prosecuted when caught in possession of these child-like dolls. Even though convicted, an argument was put forward in their defence, but the judge saw sense and upheld his decision on the sentencing but had no legal guidelines to refer to.

At present you can be sentenced to anything from two years to seven years for possession but no clear guidelines exist. This highlights the grey area in the present law. Child sex dolls are the next trend for these certain individuals to carry out whatever they wish to do in the safety of their own home. These child sex dolls cost between £500 - £1,000 depending on what you require. Also it has a range of accessories, such as wigs and clothes and also has a USB port which can be used to warm the doll up. Various companies advertise these dolls on their websites, eBay and Amazon just to name two. These are sold in the Far East but, most probably, on other sites that only this type of person would know.

Good news. The BBC investigated Amazon and now they have removed these items. At present over a hundred of these dolls have been seized in the UK by the National Crime Agency and Border Force, but no clear guidelines are available for them to refer to when bringing a prosecution. Are they legal or not? The NSPCC and Barnados have already started to campaign for the Government to criminalise the distribution and possession of these dolls in the same way as having indecent images of children. Whilst we all agree that owning one of these child dolls is wrong, an argument has been put forward in support of these dolls.

Juliet Grayson, the Chair of the Specialist Treatment Organisation for the Prevention of Sexual Offending — STOPSO — is the chair of this charity which prevents sexual offending through therapy. She has suggested, just as methadone is used to treat recovering heroin addicts, that these dolls could be used to treat people convicted of acts against children. Last August the *Liverpool Echo* reported that the same charity suggested that these dolls should be free on prescription.

You might be wondering how I know so much about this. *(Laughter)* It is all in the papers, thank God! It made research easy. Congress, I urge you to support this motion to apply pressure on the Government and all parties to look at this subject and to close loopholes in the law to support agencies to pass legislation —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Wind up, please, Gary.

GARY PUSEY: Thank you, Congress. I move the motion and we formally second the motion. *(Applause)*



THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gary. Is the motion formally seconded?  
(*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 398.

## **PCSO (POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS) MOTION 398**

### **398. PCSO (POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS)**

This Conference condemns the decision in Norfolk by the Police and Crime Commissioner to withdraw the entire PCSO workforce of 150 for the whole of the county, also reducing public enquiry counter staff alongside some police stations.

Conference calls on all GMB Regions, branches with the support of the CEC to campaign against any similar cuts (elsewhere) in other counties.

### **EAST DEREHAM BRANCH London Region**

(*Carried*)

JAN SMITH (London): Newly-elected President, Vice President and Congress, I move Motion 398 — PCSO (Police Community Support Officers). This motion highlights what has happened within my county of Norfolk. Hence, why this motion was submitted by my own branch. The Crime Commissioner at the end of last year announced that within the whole county of Norfolk 150 of our PCSOs would be disbanded. He felt there was no further need for them. He claimed that the crime levels had gone down, which is a load of rubbish, and they have, in the past, done wonderful and great work, walking our streets, helping to keep the area safe and looking after the youngsters who are out late at night.

At our Public Services Conference on Sunday, we heard our General Secretary, Tim Roach, mention how important the PCSOs are and also the role that they are playing within our society. In doing away with 150 PCSOs within the county, we are also going to suffer closure of police stations and also reductions within the counter services, so if you have a problem and you wanted to go and speak to someone, the chances are you won't be able to do it any more. You will have to ring the 101 service. Hopefully, you will get someone. If it is a crime that needs dealing with quickly, they will take on board the importance of it. So in bringing this subject forward, I am making you aware of the situation because, honestly, other counties will be monitoring this and it could happen in your area.

Also, which is sad — well, it's sad to us and disgusting — our county councillors, at the same time as we are suffering major cuts in all services kindly awarded themselves an 11% pay rise, and it was backdated. On top of that, they had their normal 2% pay rise, so this year they have had a 13% pay rise! Congress, please support this motion because our PCSOs have done work which allows the police to carry out other important duties. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Is this formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I will now ask Eddie Marnell from the CEC and North West & Irish Region to respond. Eddie.

EDDIE MARNELL (CEC, Manufacturing): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking Congress to support Composite 21 and Motions 301 and 304 with qualifications and refer Motion 302.

On Composite 21, the qualification is that any legal challenge would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

On Motion 301, the Women's Equality Party stands candidates against the Labour Party, so we would not campaign jointly with them, but we would take the issue up as GMB is within Labour and by lobbying the Government.

As to Motion 302, whilst the CEC is sympathetic to the anguish that parents face in court, there are instances where children are appropriately protected. This is a very complex and sensitive area of policy which is outside the union's core activities. It should be referred to the National Equality Forum.

Finally, Congress, on Motion 304, the qualification is that the GMB would be better placed to lobby our Labour MPs rather than calling on all the relevant parties.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking you to support Composite 21, Motions 301 and 304 with qualifications and to refer Motion 302. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Eddie. I now go to the vote. Motions 297 and 298 are being supported. All those in favour, please show? Is anyone against? They have carried.

*Motion 297 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 298 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As to Composite 21, does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Composite 21 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: On Motion 301, does North West & Irish accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 301 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: On Motion 302, does Southern support the reference back? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 302 was REFERRED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: On Motion 304, does Birmingham & West Midlands support the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*Motion 304 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motions 305 and 398 are both supported. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They have carried.

*Motion 305 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 398 was CARRIED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: HOUSING**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can we now move to the Social Policy: Housing debate. I ask for the movers of Motion 361, Composite 25, Motions 370 and 371 to move to the front, please. I call the mover of Motion 361 to the rostrum.

### **GRENFELL TOWER MOTION 361**

#### **361. GRENFELL TOWER**

This Conference notes that Grenfell Tower has been a ticking time-bomb. Lots of things have been said about this awful tragedy. Time after time, coming out of the media has been suggestions that if a sprinkler system had been installed many more lives would have been saved and things would have been a lot different.

After many months of continued media reporting it is now known that all new builds of this kind that fall into the same category as Grenfell Tower would **NOT BE FITTED WITH A SPRINKLER SYSTEM?**

After such a disaster as this, with such a huge loss of life is unacceptable that these kinds of buildings are not up to the much needed safety standards that we now know are needed.

We the GMB must put pressure to bear on all Government, local authorities and HM opposition to ensure that in future, better fire retardant materials and used and sprinkler systems are fitted to existing and new builds where multiples of people live.

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

*(Carried)*

ALAN LAW (London): Congress, I move Motion 361: Grenfell Tower. I've started so I'll finish. People do matter. It has now nearly been a year since the awful

Grenfell Tower disaster and lots of things should be going on now to make tower blocks much safer to stop the tragedy ever happening again.

A fire-safety expert who was contracted to work on the Grenfell Tower reported that sprinklers would have stopped the fatal fire from spreading. Sprinklers would have given people a 99% chance of survival and would have stopped the flames from taking hold. However, Kensington & Chelsea Councils said that it would not commit until the public inquiry had taken place. It has only just started to hear evidence. Victims want answers.

There has been little attempt to revise the safety codes since 2006, despite fatal fires in multi-storey housings over the past 12 years. In 2009 a fire at Lakanal House in London killed six people. Following a 10-week inquest, Coroner Judge Francis Kirkham had written to the Committee's secretary at the time, Eric Pickles. He also wrote to Southwark Council and the London Fire Brigade with a serious of recommendations, which include that the Fire Service visits the high-rise blocks to learn their layout, that landlords consider blocks with a sprinkler system and fire-resistant doors and better information for the residents.

With Government help they could start bringing the fire regulations up-to-date and then police it. When refurbishing these high-rise blocks, they can add things in to give people more time to evacuate buildings; such as fire-resistant panels, fire walls, fire doors and smoke detectors.

Trying to contain a fire to its starting place, following the recommendations of 2009 and to fit sprinkler systems into flats, schools and public buildings, a London Assembly report recommended that sprinklers should be required by law in new care homes, sheltered housing and blocks of flats higher than six storeys. Also that the installations should be mandatory in existing tower blocks where refurbishing work is being done. The more time you can buy, could save lives and property.

On 21<sup>st</sup> June —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can you wind up now, please?

ALAN LAW: Yes, I can. But just one more minute —

THE VICE PRESIDENT: No, no. Now! Everyone else has had to do it. I am sorry.

ALAN LAW: I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Composite 25.

## **PRIVATE LANDLORDS LICENCE COMPOSITE 25**

(*Covering motions 368j and 369*)

368 — PRIVATE HOUSING — RENTED SECTOR — LICENSING SCHEME —  
London Region

369 — PRIVATE SECTOR LANDLORDS' REGISTER — London Region

## **PRIVATE LANDLORDS LICENCE**

This Conference is concerned at the high level of private sector landlords who flout the housing and environmental laws when it comes to letting property that needs health and safety enforcement, has chronic overcrowding, ever increasing financial costs in rents, or letting property that is simply not fit for purpose.

This Conference applauds the licensing scheme brought in by Newham Council to rid the Borough of rogue landlords who exploit young people and others by cramming them into rooms no bigger than a broom cupboard.

London Borough of Newham have taken on the responsibility in enforcing a private sector landlords' register where landlords have to sign and pay for to allow councils to introduce strong enforcement including dawn raids to catch these landlords and stop them demanding high rents and giving out poor and dangerous accommodation at extortionate rents. Last November, the Council's Private Rented Sector Team was joined by our General Secretary, Tim Roache and London Regional Secretary, Warren Kenny, on an extremely well-publicised raid, as part of the Council's campaign to highlight these overcrowded Dickensian living conditions, and the extortionate amount of rent these landlords charge.

The scheme in Newham requires all private rented properties in the Borough to have a licence and landlords involved could and should face financial penalty notices of up to £30,000 per offence, with the money generated being ring-fenced to improve the living conditions of tenants. Conference believes that the scheme should be replicated throughout the UK and therefore calls upon Government to bring forth legislation to this effect.

The GMB therefore is calling for a campaign to get all local councils to set up a register for all private sector landlords, and get out into the areas unveiling any abuse and prosecute any landlords who are abusing the clear housing and environmental legislation, and retaining the fine to invest in support of administration of such schemes, making them self-financing This can be linked across local councils working together to combat this scourge on vulnerable people.

The campaign must also include the fact that rents are being increased, and many are threatened with losing their deposits, or simply pressured to leave the accommodation when they complain, we need to highlight by naming, shaming and fining these landlords

*(Carried)*

SANDRA SMITH (London): Congress, I move Composite 25 on Private Landlords Licence. Vice President, I believe passionately in there being truly affordable homes for all. Since Thatcher's time, attacks on council housing have been incessant, and 8% of people are now so housed. We have a housing market that is solely for the greed of wealthy property speculators and landlords — the Tories! There are nearly

150 Acts with 400 regulations for the private rented sector covering 4.7 million households in England. There was little enforcement before 2013, when Newham became the first local authority to introduce borough-wide licensing for all privately rented properties. The scheme led to 1,225 prosecutions and banned 28 of the worst landlords.

Our General Secretary has already described the exploitative conditions he witnessed when he took part in a dawn raid on an overcrowded property by Newham Council. It is a long time since I lived in Newham. I was born there. I played amongst the bomb sites as a child and grew up living in a post-World War II prefab in Plaistow. At aged 10 I moved with the family to Oxfordshire to return to London aged 19. When looking for accommodation, I stayed at one of those bed-and-breakfast hotels which used to house families, long-term, but with no cooking facilities and the landlords avoided security of tenure by providing a very poor breakfast. I later moved to Southend to witness social dumping by the London boroughs in similar bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

The 2016 Housing and Planning Act aims to destroy what is left of council housing, and as a tenant and activist I urge support to defend council housing. Only a Labour government will build council homes but for now we must try to extend Newham's lead on private licensing. Labour MP, Karen Bucks Steele, attempts to protect tenants has stalled, but there is now a new Government database on landlords convicted of providing bad housing and health and safety offences. Only Newham has provided assistance to this database. Newham has made a great initiative. Other councils must be prepared to follow. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sandra. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 370.

## **REHOUSING OF RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES MOTION 370**

### **370. REHOUSING OF RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYEES**

This Conference is aware that that residential staff employed for the better performance of their duties, living in tied accommodation due to the housing crisis, face eviction and possible homelessness after their employment ends for whatever reason.

We call upon the CEC to review all local agreements to ensure our members are accommodated on a like for like basis.

CAMDEN APEX BRANCH  
London Region

(*Referred*)

MARIA JENNINGS (London): Congress, I am a first-time delegate, moving Motion 370: Rehousing of Residential Employees. (*Applause*) Congress, can it be right for a worker to lose their home when they lose their job through no fault of their own? On Sunday at our Public Services Conference Tim Roache, our General Secretary,

rightfully condemned Camden Council for their treatment of a school caretaker who was made redundant and reorganised out of his job and his home. The story was on the front page of the *Camden New Journal* for all to see, a paper delivered to every home in the Labour borough. Other public sector workers, such as on-site sheltered and supported housing workers, are also at risk of losing their homes if they lose their job through no fault of their own.

But it is not only public sector workers. It also affects domestic staff working in the hotel sector and in private homes. Hotels are providing accommodation in order to attract and keep employees because low wages means that those workers cannot secure a home in many UK cities. Charity and voluntary-sector workers are also affected. Inequality has grown. Real wages and disposable incomes have fallen and the number of wealthy people who have domestic servants has grown. These people have housekeepers, nannies, gardeners and more. Many homes in London are now being built with staff quarters. I am sure you agree that residential employees should never, never be made homeless if they lose their job through no fault of their own. It is time for our union to investigate this matter thoroughly. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Maria. Is it formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 371.

## **PROPERTY SALE REGULATIONS MOTION 371**

### **371. PROPERTY SALE REGULATIONS**

This Conference notes that in today's property market it is getting nigh on impossible for first time buyers or people wanting to move up the property ladder to do so. When many properties come on the market they are snapped up by landlords on buy to let or cash payment before the general house hunter is even aware that the property is on the market. We believe that this is keeping prices of properties and rents artificially inflated in many areas.

Conference would like new legislation put in place that states that any property entering the sales market, whether new build or older properties, will be made available to general public for say – 12 weeks – before it can be bought by a landlord or large organisation for future rental. This would allow people a) time to view the property, b) time to make an offer and c) keep more properties on the market for the general public.

**HAVERING BRANCH**  
London Region  
(*Carried*)

WENDY WHITTINGTON (London): Congress, I motion Motion 371: Property Sale Regulations. Vice President, I think that this motion is quite self-explanatory but I would like to expand on it slightly. Like all motions they come from the heart and from colleagues', families' and friends' experiences., and this one is no different. It became very apparent when trying to help my son get on the property ladder due to years — years — of renting and having to move so many times through no fault of his own. I was like Mr Fix-it. Each time it costed money. Agents' fees are now

astronomical. They are up to £600 or £700 up front, plus the deposit and/or key money. Each time you have to move you have to pay this all over again.

Once we were in a position to look at properties, he would arrange a viewing for the weekend due to being an agency worker for a local authority. That's for another day. He could not take time out or he lost money. Each time the property was sold by the Saturday, having only come on the market that week. So that is where this motion has come from. Before you all jump on me, I am not suggesting that everyone wants to become a home owner or can even afford to, especially down our end of the world at this time. If there had been long-term tenancies with security, it wouldn't have been such a problem. If we had rent caps, it wouldn't have been a problem. As we know, many people are now in rent poverty. I mean, how can you pay rent of £1,200 a month for a studio flat when your take-home pay is £1,600 a month? I'm not good at maths but I know this doesn't work.

It is reported that the average British by-to-let landlord made a staggering £87,000 profit when selling their rental properties in 2017. In London this rose to an average of £250,000 profit. You only have to look at the boards outside properties. They all used to be "For Sale" but now they are all just "To Let" boards.

We are all aware that we have a broken housing market. We all know who introduced the right-to-buy scheme but this should have come with provisos, such as the extent of time you should have to live in the property before being able to profit from selling it. Along with this, the local authority which sold it should have had a first option to buy it back when it came on the market to keep this cycle going. All we are asking is that your average, everyday house hunter, young or old, gets a fair crack of the whip and has a fair chance to step up to a property that they may take a liking to, without racing Mr Landlord, Chinese or Russian equity firms, Lord Fauntleroy or Lord Farquhar to the finishing line.

I would like to ask you to support a campaign for new legislation that would give house hunters a fair chance to buy properties by imposing an amount of time that properties, whether old, new or off plan, would be on the market before landlords etc can get their grubby and greedy hands on them to add to their portfolios. Thank you.  
(*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Wendy. Formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I now ask Dean Gilligan from the CEC and London Region to respond on the motions, please.

DEAN GILLIGAN (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, before I respond, can I just say solidarity and love to Gary Doolan and Tony Warr. Get well soon, brothers. (*Applause*) Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking Congress to refer Motion 370 — Rehousing of Residential Employees. This is because the CEC believes that members who have accommodation tied to their employment should be supported into some sort of like-for-like accommodation if they leave their job. However, the CEC would further like to investigate the scale of a potential review into this issue. If we were to review local agreements in the public sector, there are 20,000 schools in England alone. We may have to trawl to see if there are members who have tied accommodation. This is on top of any other local



public service agreements. The CEC would be willing to look into this issue to see if GMB could draw up appropriate model agreements that regions can use in order to protect such members. It is an important issue which does not have to end in members being left having to find a new home without support. However, the CEC would like to investigate this issue further to see how a review could be done in a more manageable scale and that it should be referred to the Public Services Section in the first instance. Therefore, Congress, please, agree to refer Motion 370. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dean. Does London Region accept the reference back on Motion 370? (*Agreed*) Thank you. We can now take the vote on Motion 361, Composite 25 and Motion 371, which are all being supported. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*Motion 361 was CARRIED.*  
*Composite 25 was CARRIED*  
*Motion 370 was REFERRED*  
*Motion 371 was CARRIED.*

#### SOCIAL POLICY: WELFARE

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to Social Policy: Welfare. I ask for the movers of Composite 26, Composite 27, and Motions 388, 389, 390, 391 and 392 to come to the front, please, and for the mover of Composite 26 to the rostrum.

#### **UNIVERSAL CREDIT COMPOSITE 26**

*(Covering Motions 382, 385 and 387)*

382 — END THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT ON HOUSING — Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region.

385 — UNIVERSAL CREDIT — Northern Region

387 — UNIVERSAL CREDIT & ASSOCIATED BENEFITS — Northern Region

#### **UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

This Congress believes that Universal Credit (UC) needs a radical overhaul so that people who are amongst our most disadvantaged communities, are not stigmatised for falling on hard times. The Benefits system is a safety net not a punishment. This Congress deplores the inhuman and impersonal treatment handed out to claimants to bring in an ill thought UC system.

This Conference notes that whilst the consequences of universal credit on recipients is well publicised, there have also been unintended consequences on housing providers. Not only are families suffering hardships by having to go 6 – 10 weeks without money, there is also a knock on effect to social housing providers. Many of these providers are waiting for large sums of money from those awaiting universal credit payments. Rent arrears that are caused by the universal credit debacle are causing cash flow problems, meaning no money to pay wages. Many arm's length local authority housing companies are making people redundant. Some face bankruptcy. Unemployment is fast rising in already low paid and overstretched services. Private landlords are reluctant to take those on universal credit as tenants due

to the wait for payments. A number who invested in buy to let as a means to a pension after the financial crash of 2008, are also being affected.

Conference calls for an end to this vicious circle of delayed payments leading to rent arrears, leading to job losses in housing providers, leading to more on universal credit. Conference accepts the need for a Welfare and Benefits system fit for the 21st Century but Universal Credit is not the answer. For the sake of preventing homelessness and stopping the destruction of housing providers, universal credit must stop.

This Congress calls on the Labour Party, as part of its manifesto to overhaul the system so that we get back to the system where the benefits system, whilst making work pay, does not penalise and demonise those who for whatever reason are unable to work or finding it hard to obtain work.

Further, this Congress calls upon a future Labour government to fully overhaul Universal Credit and other state benefits which has proved a policy disaster upon implementation, with all claimants in receipt of the above benefits having the right to elect for weekly or monthly payment of such benefits as have citizens receiving the state pension. Such a proviso would enable claimants to budget effectively to suit their individual needs and lifestyle.

*(Carried)*

NATALIE WALLAGE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Composite 26. I am a first-time delegate and a very nervous first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Chair and Congress, Universal Credit is one of the most controversial policies rolled out by the Conservative Government in recent years. I am a housing officer for a local authority and I experience on a daily basis tenants who have and are now being affected by the changes to the existing benefits. In October 2018 changes brought in a new benefit system of Universal Credit.

Universal Credit is to replace housing benefit, jobs seekers' allowance, child tax credit and child benefit. People will receive their benefits on a monthly basis and this is to include their rent which they need to pay directly to their landlord. I, personally, have dealt with this within my role by seeing a young gentleman being evicted from his home due to having to wait for this direct payment from the Universal Credit authorities. He is not the only one that Universal Credit has had a direct impact on. Universal Credit is going to affect everyone who is claiming any kind of benefit.

Once the Universal Credit comes fully into force we will see, as we are seeing, more and more people turn to food banks and loan sharks and not being able to give children food for school due to the school meals being cut.

To apply for Universal Credit you have to apply online and have a bank account. The problem is that not everyone has a computer or a bank account that allows for the payment by direct debit. People receive their Universal Credit monthly and people are struggling as most people rely on weekly benefits. Universal Credit is about cutting the social security bill, meaning millions will be worse off. Also once implemented it will be easier to sanction people and force them to live off nothing.

This will see more and more people behind with their rent and more and more people being taken to court for possession of the property they are living in.

What needs to change? There has to be a reduction in the long delay before people receive their first payment, make it easier for people to have their rent paid directly to the landlord and, most importantly, replace Universal Credit. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Composite 27.

## **GMB GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT COMPOSITE 27**

*(Covering Motions 384 and 386)*

384 — UNIVERSAL CREDIT — London Region

386 — GMB GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT –  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

## **GMB GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

This Conference resolves to fight the iniquitous attacks on the low-paid, under-employed and unemployed through the implementation of Universal Credit. The single monthly payment which replaces the six current working age benefits, is to be fully implemented in the coming period. Where the full service Universal Credit has been rolled out evidence has shown considerable financial hardship for the many people moving on to the new system of payments. Members are forced into claiming because the government would prefer to subsidise employers rather than insist on them paying a living wage. Where existing claimants of ‘legacy benefits’ are migrated over many hundreds of thousands of working people will be in receipt of Universal Credit.

The measure is used to control and discriminate against non-UK citizens, to discourage single mothers with children under school age from working, to discourage the illiterate, innumerate and those with no access to IT/internet, to prop up the zero hours culture and the “gig economy”, those who have been made redundant and never claimed in their lives but are also caught by the rise in retirement age. People who would previously have been able to claim immediately (if made redundant) through contributions, now have to support themselves for 6 weeks. In short, it appears to be one almighty mess that serves only to attack claimants and discourage people from part-time or low-paid work. By paying the benefit all in one pot to the “head of the household” it will also lead to a greater risk of domestic abuse. Many workers who would be entitled to payments do not claim because they don’t understand it or fear it. In addition it has only been “rolled out” in some areas, so many of us do not yet understand the ramifications.

GMB will therefore:

- Embark on a programme of research to ascertain the implications of Universal Credit for our members and numbers eligible but not claiming.

- The Union's officers to both provide workplace representatives with a thorough briefing on Universal Credit and its consequences for members
- Set up education sessions about this benefit for GMB officers and volunteer activists.
- Send out publicity to all our branches explaining Universal Credit and where members can get help (e.g. CAB).
- Developing plans to support and campaign alongside members and their families having problems with the new benefit
- Combat the inherent racism and discrimination of the benefit.
- The Union to use its political influence to gain support from MP's to lobby against the roll out of Universal Credit in the Houses of Parliament.
- Campaign for the Universal Living Income.

*(Carried)*

MATT LAKE (London): Vice President and Congress, I move Composite 27, which calls for guidance on Universal Credit.

Congress, the roll-out of Universal Credit has been a catalogue of disasters, management failures, IT blunders and design faults. The system was damned from the start. The idea of trying to roll-out all benefits into one system and then make people have to claim the benefit online is, for some people, impossible. Around 2.5 million low-income households are more than a thousand pounds a year worse off. We need research on the implications of this on our members. Our stewards and reps need to tell members where to go for advice or be able to support them.

We are calling for union education and training. We know this is a specialised area, and we welcome resources, such as the annual Labour Research Department's State Benefits Guide, which GMB members can access on line and gain assistance from specialist organisations, such as the Child Poverty Action Group.

Congress, last year a similar motion called for assistance with helping members with benefits and advice, so we are waiting to hear the progress of Motion 51 by Midland & East Coast Region. Also we are waiting to see if the training review has identified any rep training in this area.

There have been a number of changes introduced by the Government, but they are too little, too late. We call for a Campaign for the Universal Living Income, which is GMB policy. A universal non-means tested or citizen's income is the only way forward. It should be a level that guarantees that everyone's basic needs are covered by a weekly payment. That would eradicate existing benefits and ensure that anyone who takes paid work would be better off financially because means-tested poverty traps would disappear. Congress, thank you. I urge you to support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Matt. Formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 388.

**BASIC INCOME  
MOTION 388**

**388. BASIC INCOME**

This Conference is asked to agree to campaign for a “Basic Income” meaning a flat, non means tested payment to every citizen.

Basic income is an idea that has been around for years and is becoming more of a political reality around the world with Finland, Switzerland and places in Holland either debating the issue or experimenting with a trial period of monthly basic incomes.

Basic income is a humanistic idea that would strengthen humans against the systems of inequality, ageing global population and the advancing new technologies that are competing humans against computers year after year, resulting in mass unemployment.

Therefore I ask Congress to use all its influence within their political arenas and through the TUC to campaign for an introduction of a BASIC INCOME unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without any means test or requirement to work.

- A “basic income”, is an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without any means test or requirement to work.
- It is paid irrespective of any income from other sources.
- It is paid without requiring the performance of any work or the willingness to accept a job.
- Advocates say it will allow people to genuinely choose what sort of employment they take and to retrain when they wish.
- Its proponents also claim that a basic income scheme is one of the most simple benefits models and will reduce all the bureaucracy surrounding the welfare state, making it less complex and much cheaper to administer.

**B19 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region**

*(Carried)*

*(Motion 388 was formally moved and formally seconded)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call Motion 389.

## **FAIRER BENEFITS AND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT MOTION 389**

### **389. FAIRER BENEFITS FOR DISABLED AND THOSE UNABLE TO WORK**

This Conference calls on the GMB to:

1. Challenge the government to cease the practice of systematically targeting the most vulnerable members of our society
2. Demand that the social model, in which the disability is understood to be the result of barriers preventing the inclusion of people with impairments, and not the impairment itself be used as the foundation for development.
3. Accelerate the recommendations made by The UN's committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities report (which made a scathing attack on government policy towards disabled people) and commission a full review.

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is the out-of-work benefit paid to people who are unable to work due to a long-term health condition or disability. The process of claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is long and complicated. Following a Work Capability Assessment (WCA), a judgement will be made as to whether a person is fit for work and if they are declared 'unfit' they are assigned to the Work Related Activity Group or the Support Group. Those in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) are expected to be able to eventually return to work and are consequently expected to make steps to prepare for this. Like Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA), they are obliged to sign a Claimant Commitment which details the 'work related activity' they are expected to undertake.

Changes in the 2016 Welfare Reform Act meant that those who open a new claim and are placed in the ESA WRAG are now paid the same amount of benefit as JSA recipients, and the equivalent "limited capability for work" component in Universal Credit will be abolished. This has reduced the level of benefits for new ESA recipients from £102.15 to £73.10, a cut of nearly a third. Those in the ESA WRAG have been medically assessed as currently unable to work because of their disability or health condition. Is it proper to introduce conditionality and sanctions?

**P42 BRANCH**

North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Congress, I move Motion 389. April of this year marked one year since the Government brought in one of the most controversial welfare policies, cutting the benefit of people too ill to work by £30 a week. Like hundreds of thousands of other disabled and chronically ill people, my brother-in-law was and continues to be collateral damage. Still in his 40s with a young family, Mark has a debilitating disease that leaves him weak and depressed. He

needs heavy-duty pain killers to get through the day and doesn't know from one day to the next whether he will be physically able to get out of bed due to the nature of his condition. Previously, Mark was a successful electrician and doing well in his career. Such is the extent of his illness, his wife has had to surrender her own employment to care for him full-time.

From its inception, the cutting of sickness benefits was always one of the grubbiest austerity measures, one that played on the idea that scrounging disabled people need tough love to force them out of bed to get a job. It is amounting to little more than knowingly starving the sick. In 2015 research found that the unemployment disability benefit rate was already so meagre it was leaving a third of recipients struggling for food.

The Tory Government cut it, anyway. Shame on them! (*Applause*) But look again. This is about more than one nasty policy. It is part of a wider pattern of falsely removing unemployment benefits from disabled people. Since the infamous Fit-For-Work-Assessments were first rolled out, the faulty testing has seen tens of thousands of severely ill people thrown off benefits, a system so darkly inept that this month a woman handed over her mum's ashes to the Department for Work and Pensions after they asked to assess her for work a month after she died.

Meanwhile, the benefits sanction regime has been found to be discriminating against disabled people. Disabled job seekers are 53% more likely to have their money docked than a claimant who is not disabled. Only last month the National Audit Office found that the Government has falsely underpaid 70,000 disabled people on ESA. The National Audit Office knew about this in 2013 and did nothing.

Mark's condition continues to deteriorate, not because his disease is worsening but because of the worry, stress, indignity and slog of trying to survive through the benefits system. I am sad to report that such is the extent of the ordeal that he has had to face in recent months, he has made attempts to take his own life.

I will end with a message to the Tory MP who is responsible for these cruel policies: Shame on you for punishing the most vulnerable; shame on you for driving families into poverty; shame on you for acting like cowards and not acting to reimburse the 70,000 people, and shame on you for driving my brother-in-law and countless others like him into unnecessary misery and, in some cases, an early grave. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 390.

## **WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE MOTION 390**

### **390. WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE**

This Congress notes that the general election was a clear thumbs down to Tory austerity, and Tory attacks on young, middle aged and older people. The Tories wanted to scrap the Winter Fuel Allowance. Labour wants to keep it. This Conference applauds Labour Policy and calls on our CEC to lobby for

the retention of the Winter Fuel Allowance from All Main parties and pledges to campaign against any politician seeking to place pensioners in poverty by scrapping winter fuel payments.

## F10 ROWNTREES INDUSTRIAL BRANCH Northern Region

*(Carried)*

COLIN HENWOOD (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 390: Winter Fuel Allowance. The last general election result made it very clear what the electorate thought of the prospect of the Tories returning with a big majority on their own. If you were young, middle-aged or old, it was fair that the Tories were going to attack you. Their policy on scrapping the Winter Fuel Allowance was a blatant slap in the face for elderly people who were already racing a dementia tax. The Tories still want to bring in a form of dementia tax. My bet is that they will try to scrap or reduce the value of the Winter Fuel Allowance.

Congress, we want the Winter Fuel Allowance to be kept so it keeps the vulnerable warm at a difficult time of the year. It was right that a Labour government brought it in and it is right that the Labour Party wants to keep it. At the last election, the only party giving people hope was Labour. The only leader who gave and gives people hope is Jeremy Corbyn.

Congress, it was very clear what the Tory's attitude to the Winter Fuel Allowance is. The toffs don't need the allowance but most people do get help from it. Congress, if ever there was a symbol of Tory austerity it was in the decision of the Tories to scrap the Winter Fuel Allowance in their manifesto. Labour should be applauded for continuing to say that they will keep it. Like with so much else, they are on our side.

Congress, let us do our bit to call out any politician who wants to put our people into poverty. More importantly, let's campaign to get rid of them at the next election. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Colin. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 391.

## **CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES MOTION 391**

### **391. CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES**

This Congress calls for greater resourcing so that the time taken to diagnose children with learning disabilities is drastically shortened and so the support needed is improved. All the evidence suggests that children and their families benefit from the earliest possible diagnosis and intervention, but unfortunately, due to budget cuts, the various agencies are struggling to maintain services and as a result waiting times are increasing.



Congress calls for far greater focus on diagnosis and support so that those who are at their most vulnerable are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

## C17 METAL BOX CARLISLE IND BRANCH Northern Region

*(Carried)*

DAVID RIDDLE (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 391: Children with Learning Disabilities. Since 2010 the way that austerity has hit our society has been tragic for many people. One of the forgotten areas within the system is that of diagnosing a child with learning difficulties and for that child to receive the help and support during the time when they will vitally need it. This is through their early years and into primary and secondary education. We know that we have lost generations in the past and those generations were shaped by the education system of its day. For example, the 11 Plus, which defined young people for the rest of their lives by virtue of an exam. This took place at the end of primary education.

At the present day, we know that learning needs and abilities have a wide spectrum, of which many people have some need of support. But the Tories changed the system on what would seem to be a way of saving money, not helping young people and their families. Now that the public sector and public agencies are under so much pressure, we find young people are, again, being left behind. The system is failing to give young people their human rights, which is the opportunity to be the best version of themselves that they can be.

At the present time, children with learning disabilities and/or behavioural problems which need support right through to diagnosis of the condition and the support systems available to help are being put at risk due to funding cuts. We know that Labour wants to put this right and we know that Labour is committed to the many and not the few. But we also know that this Government, with its focus on pulling up the drawbridge is failing yet more young people and their families due to their total lack of understanding of what is required to put things right and help people who are struggling. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 392.

## **PROTECT SERVICES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS MOTION 392**

### **392. PROTECT SERVICES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS**

This Conference is called upon to condemn cuts by local authorities to services to those suffering domestic violence. These services provide refuges, help to access benefits and housing and, more importantly, a chance for a new life without fear of injury or death. Cutting services to victims of domestic violence is a false economy. They give an opportunity for, mainly, vulnerable women protect themselves and their children. It helps to re-build personal confidence and self-esteem.

This helps to identify and remove themselves from abusive relationships. By helping with self-confidence and self-esteem, those helped become not victims but people who can fulfill their potential. It helps to remove children from situations where violence is the norm, stopping a further cycle of domestic violence. The blame for these cuts lay with central government. The austerity measures of the past 8 years threaten not just libraries, parks and other council provided services but, threatens lives. This cannot be allowed to go on.

Conference calls on the government, as a matter of urgency, to make adequate funds available to local authorities to enable these essential services to continue.

**DONCASTER CENTRAL BRANCH**  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

PAMELA DALTON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I am a first-time speaker, shaking like a leaf (*Applause*) moving Motion 392: Protect Services for Domestic Violence Victims.

Last year there were 1.9 million reported acts of domestic violence between adults of 16 to 59, and this does not even include child-on-parent or parent-on-child. One-in-four women and one-in-six men will experience domestic violence. Two women a week are killed by their partners, and one-in-three domestic violence deaths are men killed by women. So it is not just a women's issue.

Men are the fastest-growing group of domestic violence victims but they are not yet up to the levels of women. So what are the Government and local councils doing about this? They are cutting funding to this very vulnerable group. Leeds City Council has cut its funding for this very vulnerable group by 59%; Bradford, 56%; Wakefield, 50%, and Sheffield 52%! If you want a refuge in Newcastle, don't bother because there aren't any left. Councils now want to make it so you cannot pay for your place in a refuge using Housing Benefit. This is forcing abusive sufferers to go back into an abusive situation. Believe me, if you are suffering abuse and have nowhere to go, the violence escalates.

A lack of funding is forcing refuges to close. Last year, on one day, 94 women and 90 children were turned away from refuges due to lack of space. In this day and age, surely, that cannot be right! Let's force the Government and councils to provide adequate funding to people who are so beaten down that they can't fight back.

To my violent ex, who said that I would never be anything, look at me now! I move the motion. (*Applause and cheers*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pamela. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Pamela, happy birthday! (*Cheers*) I will now call on Dean Gilligan to speak in response for the CEC. While is coming to the rostrum, let me explain that

every delegate has one of *these* postcards on their table and it is for the *Young Members: Wages not based on Ages Campaign*. They are asking if you can sign it, pass it to your regional secretary and they will pass it on. Don't worry if you don't know your MP because the young members will fill the postcard in for you. If you could do that, that would be appreciated. Dean.

DEAN GILLIGAN (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking Congress to refer Motion 383 and support Motions 384 and 386 and 388 with a qualification. On Motion 383 — Universal Credit — the proposal in the motion would move more benefit assessments from the Department of Works and Pensions to local authorities. While the CEC supports the efforts to maintain local government administrative levels, this would have direct consequences for our sister union, PCS. They have a significant membership within the DWP and would not want to affect the jobs and union membership of workers in government. By referring the motion, the CEC would be able to assess the impact of jobs and union membership on those working in the DWP.

Motions 384 and 386 are similar motions asking for GMB support in briefing reps, members and officers in the complexities of Universal Credit. The roll-out of Universal Credit has been particularly disastrous and it has become a complicated system. GMB can work with Westminster colleagues to oppose the full roll-out of Universal Credit and work with the Labour Party to ensure that policies on welfare and social security are fit for purpose.

The qualification to both motions is that Congress 2017 passed a motion — Motion 51: Organisation of Welfare Rights within the GMB Structure — calling for us to affiliate with organisations which can assist with helping members with their benefits. There are points in both motions which the GMB would find difficult to resource, such as researching the number of GMB members entitled to Universal Credit but not claiming it as proposed in Motion 384.

A thorough briefing, as proposed in Motion 386, for reps on Universal Credit, would require a considerable amount of expertise that is not currently held in the GMB, and certainly not by officers. With regard to the request to draw up plans to support and campaign with members and their families affected by these changes, this, again, is out of our reach in terms of resource.

Motion 384 also references a Universal Living Income, also known as Universal Basic Income, as something for the GMB to campaign for. We would also see this as a qualification on the motion which I will discuss in further detail when speaking on Motion 388. On Motion 388 we are also asking for this to be supported with a qualification.

Existing GMB policy already supports the principle of Universal Basic Income. However, the CEC believes we should not commit to supporting every form of basic income, given the wide variety of levels it could be set at and different methods to pay for it. We need a much more detailed debate in the UK and a distinctive agenda which recognises that working people and their trade unions have a different set of priorities from some of the policies of cheerleaders on the libertarian right. The CEC

strongly believes that Universal Basic Income cannot be an attack on dismantling social security, leading to anyone becoming poorer or leading to higher taxes for working people. We recognise there needs to be a lot more work to adequately identify the additional funding required for a decent level of basic income, while recognising that the top priority for an incoming Labour government must be to rebuild our public services from the wreckage of Tory austerity.

GMB will, therefore, research the opportunities to fund Universal Basic Income to a decent level without workers having to pay for it through higher taxes, lower social security support or by diverting much-needed resources needed for rebuilding public services. Alongside this, GMB will seek to evaluate the opportunities for trade union organising and collective wage bargaining from the Universal Basic Income trials.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking you to agree to refer Motion 383 and to support Motions 384, 386 and 388 with their qualifications for the reasons I have laid out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dean. We will now go to the vote. Does North West & Irish accept the qualification on Motion 388? (*Agreed*) Thank you. That means, then, that Composite 26, Composite 27, Motions 388, 389, 390, 391 and 392 are all being supported. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They have carried.

*Composite 26 was CARRIED.*

*Composite 27 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 388 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 389 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 390 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 391 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 392 was CARRIED.*

## SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now move on to Social Policy: General. Could I ask for the movers of Motions 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 292, 293 and 296 to come to the front, please. Would the mover of Motion 286 come to the rostrum.

### **TIGHTER REGULATION AND CONTROL OF ONLINE GAMBLING MOTION 286**

#### **286. TIGHTER REGULATION AND CONTROL OF ONLINE GAMBLING**

This Conference is calling for GMB to lobby MP's and the Government to campaign for legislation to further regulate and control the fast rise in online gambling and its effect on gambling addiction.

A recent report by the Gambling Commission estimated that more than 2 million people in the UK are either problem gamblers or at risk of addiction. This represents an increase of a third in three years, suggesting that about 430,000 people suffer from a serious habit.

A15 ASDA BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

LINDA PAYNE (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 286: Tighter Regulation and Control of Online Gambling. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

President and Congress, problem gambling can have serious impacts on the physical, emotional and financial health of individuals who gamble as well as their families. Gambling addictions very often lead to job loss, failed relationships, severe debt and are often associated with mental health problems, such as depression, mood and personality disorders. Congress, the fast past of instant gratification associated with online gambling makes it far more addictive than other types of gambling. Casino gambling is a social activity usually conducted in the company of family and friends. Online gambling is a solitary and anonymous activity, with 90% to 95% of online gambling done alone. Online gamblers, who acknowledge that they have a problem, are usually younger than the traditional gamblers but may have built up a large amount of debt in a shorter time than traditional gamblers.

The facts are these, Congress. A recent report by the Gambling Commission estimated that more than two million people in the UK are either problem gamblers or are at risk of addiction. This represents an increase of a third in three years, suggesting that about 430,000 people suffer from a serious habit. This Government or the industry are doing nowhere near enough to tackle this problem. We need to campaign to the Government and others. We, as trade unionists, care passionately about protecting our members and their families. We will do more with a shared purpose to erase addiction. The pace of change today is not good enough or fast enough. We need to do more. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 287.

**RECOGNISING ALL ANIMALS AS SENTIENT BEINGS  
MOTION 287**

**287. RECOGNISING ALL ANIMALS AS SENTIENT BEINGS**

This Conference recognises that the UK Government is tasked with adopting EU laws directly after March 2019. In November 2017 our MP's voted to dismiss animal sentience. Animal sentience became EU law in 2009 via the Lisbon Treaty.

Sentience, or a lack thereof, suggests that animals are incapable of feeling pain or emotion. We as a union need to recognise and have it part of our policy that animals are sentient beings. Not because science has conclusively proved this, but because we as a compassionate and intelligent species need to give another species the benefit of the doubt.

**BRITISH GAS BRANCH**

Wales & South West Region

*(Carried)*

HOLLY FERGUSON (GMB Wales & South West): Congress, I move Motion 287: Recognising All Animals as Sentient Beings. The word “sentient” means a capacity to feel, to perceive fear, to enjoy life and to be conscious and aware of surroundings. To anyone with a caring and compassionate bone in their body, the question of whether animals are sentient beings is beyond question. That being said, it is hardly surprising that in November 2017 every Conservative MP voted against including an amendment clause in the EU Withdrawal Bill — Article 13 of the Lisbon Treaty. Voting in favour of this clause would enshrine the word “sentient” into UK law post Brexit. The reason they gave was the robustness of the Animal Welfare Act but, crucially, this Act only protects against the mistreatment of animals by those responsible for them, such as their owners or carers. It is about a relationship between individuals and animals. It does not cover the same as Article 13, which is a constraint on government policy.

The Act only applies to domesticated animals and those animals involved in the agricultural industry. For example, wildlife and lab animals are not covered by this Act.

The UK does have a higher standard of welfare than a lot of other countries, so measures such as installing mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses, increasing sentences for animal cruelty and banning the sales of ivory are all issues that animal welfare campaigners have championed for years. These are all now part of European law, but that does not mean we can take a step back and claim that enough has been done. It is difficult to reduce the stress and fear endured by animals going to slaughter or being used in sport, entertainment or even, sadly, by human companions. It is likely that we will face even more difficulties if the law does not recognise animals as sentient beings, whose welfare we must pay full regard. Unless animal sentience continues to be recognised in law, it will be even more difficult to deal with people who compromise animal welfare.

The Government debates back and forth the issues of compassion for everyone and everything we share this planet with. I ask that the GMB recognise animal sentience as part of our policy. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Holly. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 288.

## **NUISANCE CALLS MOTION 288**

### **288. NUISANCE CALLS**

This Conference notes that nuisance calls have reached a new high.

These are calls, for example, that are saying, “sorry to hear that you have had a car accident”.

These calls are a nuisance for most of use, and what we do is to listen and politely say no thanks, or you don't listen and just hang up.

But for some they can cause real distress. Calls that say, sorry to hear that you have had an accident and we would like to help, can send more vulnerable members of the public into a panic, thinking, for example, that one of their loved ones has been in an accident, the person answering the phone does not think for a minute that the person on the other end of the phone is someone from a company trying to sell them car insurance. This can happen to someone who answers the phone in any family who has health concerns and could cause more ill health for them.

It is known that some phone companies have a service for stopping the nuisance calls but we know they still get through.

It is these calls that give cause for concern that have to be looked at.

Conference calls on the GMB to lobby MP's and the government to look at the companies that are using scaremongering to try and get a sale, with no concern to whom they are speaking to.

SC-G95 GLASGOW NURSES BRANCH  
GMB Scotland

*(Carried)*

SAM MULLIN (GMB Scotland): Congress, I move Motion 288 on Nuisance Calls. Congress, we have all been bothered by nuisance calls at some point. You know the sort. You have heard it all before. "I'm sorry to hear about your recent accident" or those made by aggressive selling agents asking what you would do if your heating broke down. They are pressurising vulnerable people into taking out more cover on a product than they need or could ever benefit from. This is not just a nuisance. It's a racket. Cynical attempts to bamboozle people into parting with their money for services that do not exist or works that are not relevant to the customers they are calling. Many of us will simply hang up or, with a bit of attention, be able to spot a dishonest caller.

However, many of our GMB members working and caring for the elderly and other groups know that this is not the case. For every one, many vulnerable people are lonely and isolated. Their phone may be the only way they can speak to relatives, and as such it is a trusting form of communication. It is all too easy for such people to be confused or to think that a loved one has had an accident, or they must pay for something extra, in order to continue the simple service they need, such as a utility or insurance product.

GMB has campaigned for some time against these exploitative callers, and this motion is about re-doubling that effort until we force all of these misleading and unscrupulous companies to hang up from preying on the vulnerable for ever. Thank you. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sam. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 289.

## **SUPPORT FOR THE RAINBOW LACES CAMPAIGN MOTION 289**

### **289. SUPPORT FOR THE RAINBOW LACES CAMPAIGN**

This Conference acknowledges the support given by many British sporting organisations to the Rainbow Laces campaign. This campaign aims to show solidarity with and bring awareness of issues affecting those who are LGBT, via the wearing of rainbow coloured laces. Conference, in particular, notes the support given by the main football organisations in this country.

However, despite its statutes being explicitly opposed to any form of discrimination, FIFA has awarded the 2018 and 2022 World Cup Final Tournaments to Russia and Qatar, respectively. In both countries, LGBT people are suffering discrimination. For example, in Russia, vigilante executions of those identifying as LGBT are tolerated by the authorities, whilst in Qatar, homosexuality is illegal. Discrimination, oppression and persecution are unacceptable in any country, let alone ones entrusted with a major international sporting tournament.

Conference calls on the England team competing in the World Cup in Russia, to show solidarity with and highlight the plight of those suffering discrimination by the wearing of rainbow coloured laces in their matches. Conference also calls on the Home International teams, should any or all qualify for the World Cup Final Tournament in 2022, to wear rainbow coloured laces in Qatar. Further, Conference calls on the GMB to support the Rainbow Laces Campaign and asks branches and Regional Equality Forums to engage with professional and semi-professional sports clubs in their area, particularly but not exclusively football and both rugby codes, to ensure the campaign is carried on throughout the season rather than highlighted for just one match.

### **PARKGATE BRANCH Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region**

*(Carried)*

JOHANNA EARLY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 289: Support for the Rainbow Laces Campaign. Vice President and Congress, Leeds United, my team, supports Rainbow Laces Campaign and the LGBT+ community. For the first time, Leeds United will be a sponsor of this year's Leeds Pride. When this was announced, there were mixed responses on the Leeds United Facebook page. Some comments were vitriolic, but I will share with you some of the less abusive ones. "This is an embarrassment. If it's true, I won't buy a season ticket"; "It's an abomination" and "Why don't we have a 'Straight Pride Day'?" To that question, I would say because it is a straight pride day every single day of the year. You'll never be bullied at school for being straight. You won't be refused service in a restaurant or a room in a hotel because you are straight. You won't be beaten up or murdered because you are straight.



Justin Fashanu became the first black footballer to command a £1 million transfer fee in 1981. He made history again in 1990 as being the first professional footballer to come out whilst playing at the top level. He was also the last. Twenty years ago, on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1998, he took his own life, and he was just 37. It is estimated that there are at least 20 footballers in the Premier League who are gay, but nearly 30 years after Justin's very brave step players are still afraid to come out. There is a long way to go before we have acceptance in our own country, let alone oppressive and restrictive regimes around the world, like Russia and Qatar. This month the World Cup in Russia will be watched by half of the population on the planet in a country where visiting LGBT fans have already been threatened with violence. During the England games, there will be a very simple and strong statement, showing their support for LGBT plus equality and inclusivity at what is one of the biggest global events. I ask the GMB to support the Rainbow Laces Campaign. I ask the beautiful game to support the beautiful people.

I came out in early 2015. I know I would not be here today without the support of my region. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Johanna. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 290.

#### **SMALL PRINT MOTION 290**

#### **290. SMALL PRINT**

This conference calls on the CEC to make it law that the font size on food packaging, street signage, and contracts to be made large enough for everyone to be able to read. This continues to be a source of discrimination.

One should not have to squint or use a magnifying glass to access important vital information. It is a form of discrimination and we could use the might of the union to get the law changed in this regard.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH  
London Region

(*Carried*)

MARIE McCORMACK (London): Congress, I am moving Motion 290 on Small Print. This is quite a simple motion. Effectively, we want to be able to see what we are purchasing, what we are reading and what is on the packet. Not everybody has good eyesight and we should not need to have a magnifying class to see what is there. I want to be able to say "It does what it says on the tin" but if I need a magnifying glass that is not always possible. Effectively, please support this motion. It is not equal opportunities to have some people able to see things and other people not. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 292.

## **FOOD BANKS MOTION 292**

### **292. FOOD BANKS**

This Conference calls for individual branches and Regional Councils to make contact with their local Food Banks to invite speakers to future meetings on the plight of the poor and dispossessed.

**W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH**  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

SHARON YATES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 292: Food Banks. Vice President and delegates, it is an extremely sad fact that we have come to accept food banks and many people rely on them. Attending a food bank is a hard thing to admit and it has been seen to many as an admission of failure. Talk to those who use the network of distribution centres across the country and they will tell you that it is a very hard thing to admit, and is seen to many as an admission of failure. Attending a food bank is not an easy option. The shaming levels of inequality and poverty are rife in our cities today, but it is an indictment we have come to accept and now barely raises a comment. Benefit cuts, delays and the casualised economy which relies on people accepting insecure and poorly-paid work are pushing households to the brink and beyond. We cannot and must not tolerate this. It is unacceptable.

The one glimmer of hope around food banks is that so many people are willing to give up their time to help out their local distribution centre and so many people are willing to distribute food that they have donated. Congress, it should not have to be this way, not in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and not in one of the world's richest economies. The reality of the benefit cuts introduced since 2011 is not the headline "Money lost to the cities", but in the everyday lives of ordinary people struggling to get by, robbing Peter to pay Paul and queuing for a carrier bag of free food to tide them over or sitting in unheated homes, dodging creditors, juggling bills and worrying about how to get by. This is harsh reality, Congress. It is no wonder that there is a huge body of evidence linking death, poor mental health and poverty to a range of health problems. People should not have to live like this in a modern world. I am convinced that most of us here today share the view. As trade unionists we should never be accepting this and will endeavour to campaign and highlight the bleak grim facts that affect people in our society today who are, unfortunately, suffering constantly from the devastating cuts made by this unfair, selfish Government.

There could be people in our branch who want to help or donate food yet don't know how to or where the nearest food bank is. This motion is designed to help these people. By inviting speakers to allow members to know about food banks and what they do to help people, it will let members know where the nearest food bank is so we can help those in need. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sharon. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 293.

**FOODBANK SUPPORT  
MOTION 293**

**293. FOODBANK SUPPORT**

This Conference believes that the use of foodbanks shames this country and us as human beings. We call on the GMB to lobby Government to put in place legislation that would make all supermarkets donate food to foodbanks that is past its sell by date instead of disposing of it.

**BASF CHEMICALS BRANCH**  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Referred)*

MICHAELA MURRAY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 293: Foodbank Support. I am a second-time delegate but a first-time speaker.  
*(Applause)*

A priority for the rising number of food-aid organisations is to cut the millions of tonnes of goods that we throw away. Labour, as is in the past, selected food banks for Opposition Day debates in Parliament. They must now go further by demanding legislation that requires surplus supermarket food to be donated to food banks. Some of the grocery trade have given support to food banks. Tesco sponsored a national neighbourhood food collection run in conjunction with the Trussell Trust, but many supermarkets do nothing. People have lost jobs, their pay has been cut and the benefits system has been butchered by the Tories. Naturally, more people are feeling the pinch and the household food budget is under strain. The huge increase in the number of food banks is clear evidence. Ten years ago there were hardly any. Today there are more than a thousand and new ones open every couple of weeks. The Trussell Trust says that usage has trebled in the past few years. They have grown rapidly in numbers precisely because they represent a practical expression of human solidarity and charity. People have responded enthusiastically because food banks satisfy many of our charitable instincts.

However, when people buy groceries to donate to supermarkets, they also increase supermarket sales. While shoppers are encouraged to buy a bit more to help the needy every day, good food will be thrown away.

Congress, if the big grocery chains are sincere about food poverty and serious about the level of food waste, they must do something about it. The statistics for waste are staggering and an affront to common sense and human decency. In Britain 15 million tonnes of food is wasted annually. Nearly half is thrown away by us in our own homes, but farmers, manufacturers and supermarket retailers account for the rest. On the Trussell Trust website, existing chairman, Chris Mould, says that food poverty in a rich country is a national scandal. He says that the situation is getting worse and berates the Government for the lack of a policy response. Unions, charities and Labour politicians claim that the fact we need to have food banks is a cause for

national shame, so wouldn't an impartial observer looking at food poverty and food waste wonder why it is that, in a society like ours, cannot organise itself better so that surplus food is used to feed the hungry. It seems obvious. Congress, the law must be changed to stop this waste. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Michaela. Is that formally seconded?  
(*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 296.

## **PETERLOO MASSACRE MOTION 296**

### **296. PETERLOO MASSACRE**

This Conference calls upon the GMB to support the campaign for a permanent memorial to be created in Manchester to commemorate the Peterloo massacre which took place in Manchester on 16th August 1819.

This massacre of ordinary working people by government backed forces led eventually to the working class getting the vote and helped to lay the foundations of the trade union movement.

2019 marks the 200th anniversary of this barbaric attack by armed yeomanry on unarmed and peaceful men, women and children causing the death of 18 people and injuries to 700 more.

It is time that a memorial was created to mark this pivotal event in working class history.

M15 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

(*Carried*)

LORRAINE WINSON (North West & Irish): Chair and Congress, on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1819 the area around what is now St. Peter's Square, Manchester, played host to an outrage against 60,000 peaceful, pro-democracy and anti-poverty protesters. Eighteen people, including four women and one child, died from sabre cuts and 700 people were seriously injured. The crowd had gathered to listen to a political speaker called Henry Hunt. The stage was a simple cart and the space was filled with banners, much like our demonstrations today. Magistrates who were watching began to panic at the size of the crowd and they read the Riot Act, but the crowd was so big it was not heard. Standing by were 600 Hussars, 300 infantrymen, an artillery unit, two 6lb guns, 400 cavalry men and 400 constables. They were not messing about.

The magistrates ordered the local yeomanry into arrest the speakers. The local yeomanry were, essentially, a paramilitary force drawn from the local mill owners. The crowd linked arms to prevent them from reaching the hustings. The yeomanry started to strike them and their banners with swords. The magistrates then ordered in the Hussars. By 2 p.m. it was over. The field was left full of the injured and the dead. The speakers faced a charge of high treason. The Hussars were congratulated by the Prince Regent.

Peterloo was hugely influential in ordinary people winning the right to vote and for the rise of the Chartist movement, from which our own movement, the trade union Movement, grew.

After the event, the poet, Shelley, wrote the poem *The Masque of Anarchy*, which says:

*“Rise like lions out of slumber,  
In unvanquishable number,  
Shake your chains like morning dew,  
Which in sleep has fallen on you.  
We are many. They are few.”*

It was banned from publication as it was deemed to be inflammatory. There is a small plaque on the side of the Radisson Hotel which people pass by every day and don't notice. I ask the GMB to join its voice with other campaigning groups and lobby Manchester City Council to erect a statue, standing tall, proud and unmissable in St. Peter's Square, as a lasting memorial to the Peterloo dead and a pivotal event in working-class history. I move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I now call Bob Welham (CEC, North West & Irish) to respond.

BOB WELHAM (CEC, Manufacturing): Vice President and Congress, Bob Welham speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are supporting Motion 290 with a qualification, and asking Congress to refer Motion 293.

On Motion 290 we believe that all documents should be accessible. However, there is no official definition of what “Small Print” is and there are some documents which cannot always be printed in large fonts. We must take these issues into account.

On Motion 293 — Foodbank Support — we do not believe that legislation is the whole answer. The Government must not duck out of its moral obligation to end food banks by ending austerity. Therefore, please support Motion 290 with the qualification I have set out, and agree to refer Motion 293. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bob. Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire accept the qualification for 290? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire accept the reference back on 293? (*Agreed*) That means that Motions 286, 287, 288, 298, 290, 292, 293 and 296 are all being supported. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They have carried.

*Motion 286 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 287 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 288 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 289 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 292 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 293 was REFERRED.*

*Motion 296 was CARRIED.*

## INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: GENERAL

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move to Industrial & Economic Policy: General. I ask the movers of Motions 171, 172, 177, 178, 181, 182 and 184 to come to the front, please. I call the mover of Motion 171 to the rostrum.

### **BANK HOLIDAY FOR ARMISTICE DAY MOTION 171**

#### **171. BANK HOLIDAY FOR ARMISTICE DAY**

This Conference calls upon the CEC to lobby government and campaign to get Armistice Day recognised as a Bank Holiday on November 11th to commemorate the work that has been done to make our country a safe and democratic place to live, especially as 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1.

#### **CAMBRIDGE 2 BRANCH London Region**

*(Carried)*

DAVE REID (London): Congress and Vice President, I move Motion 171: Bank Holiday for Armistice Day. We need to ensure that Armistice Day becomes a recognised Bank Holiday from this year onwards, as this year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this remarkable day. Armistice Day is commemorated on 11<sup>th</sup> November and marks the armistice signed between the allies and Germany in France. We all know how difficult it was in World War One. So many of our brave soldiers lost their lives for our freedom and the freedom of our parents and grandparents. This day must be remembered and celebrated with respect to these soldiers and the soldiers of all the wars since then.

The date of 11<sup>th</sup> November is a national holiday in France and so should it be in our country. We all know the UK has less Bank Holidays than the rest of Europe. In some countries Armistice Day coincides with Remembrance Day and Veterans' Day and other public holidays. If we establish one more Bank Holiday it will be to honour the people who deserve to be remembered. Don't you, delegates, think it is more important to remember that day, a day that ended the most lengthy and brutal war? Of course, every country has differences, but even Germany puts that day as a day of mourning. That can only tell you how important it is for them.

Members of our union and all nations, including Scotland and Wales, will have the opportunity not only to enjoy one extra Bank Holiday but also have the chance to celebrate something very important.

Finally, we all know the long period the August Bank Holiday and the Christmas Bank Holiday where we don't have a Bank Holiday, so we need an extra day off, as we all work too hard without a break. I now call on all delegates to get behind this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 172.

**ALL OUTLETS TO BE CLOSED ON BOXING DAY  
MOTION 172**

**172. ALL OUTLETS TO BE CLOSED ON BOXING DAY**

This Conference acknowledges the extraordinary long hours performed by retail workers in the run up to Christmas and that they deserve to have a decent amount of family time to enjoy festivities like everyone else.

All large shops over 280 sq. meters must close on Christmas Day and we are calling for this legislation to be extended to Boxing Day, giving all retail workers two days off. Surely the January sales can wait one more day?

A15 ASDA BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(*Carried*)

GABRIEL DUFFY (Birmingham & West Midlands): Good afternoon, Vice President and Congress. I move Motion 172. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*)

From Monday to Monday 99% of retail stores are open long hours. For two days in the year — Easter Sunday and Christmas Day — when stores are shut, it actually gives the staff no time to enjoy the festivities with their families. Wasn't it only a couple of years ago that a retail supermarket ran a Christmas advert showing at the end how it was so important — so important — to spend time with your family but that excluded their staff because they were expected in on a Boxing Day? Retail staff are expected to serve and service the public on a Boxing Day regardless. What's wrong with being together — families, friends and loved ones — over the festive period? It is so wrong that some big retail companies want to open on Boxing Day, thus depriving families of special time together. I move for the return of Boxing Day to be recognised as a Bank Holiday and not deemed just another day by retail giants. Thank you (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gabriel. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I call Motion 177.

**THE TAYLOR REVIEW  
MOTION 177**

**177. THE TAYLOR REVIEW**

This Conference notes that the Government commissioned an independent review of modern working practices by Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive of the Royal Society of Arts, the report from which is known as The Taylor Review.

This Conference believes that while the seven principles outlined in the Review do not go far enough in fixing the problems of the labour market and

gig economy, some of the recommendations would be beneficial to GMB members if the Government were to take them forward. In particular, ending Swedish Derogation, extending the remit of the Low Pay Commission and extending sick pay and holiday pay to dependent contractors. The Tory government ordered the review, now they should look to implement these recommendations.

This Conference therefore calls on GMB to lobby the Government to implement the positive recommendations of the Taylor Review.

X39 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

*(The Motion was formally moved and formally seconded)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call Motion 178.

## **NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY MOTION 178**

### **178. NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**

This Congress calls upon the present and all future governments to commit to and pursue a national industrial strategy, covering both the public and private sectors of British industry, especially in the field of exports. Such a strategy to include a national training programme for apprenticeships in the technical, commercial and graduate fields of all industries.

B05 BARROW BRANCH  
Northern Region

*(Carried)*

STEPHEN IDDON (Northern): Vice President, I move Motion 178. I am a first-time speaker and a first-time delegate. *(Applause)* Congress, previous governments have tried and failed to produce a national training programme for apprenticeships. We have been receiving increasing reports of employers labelling existing apprentices just so they can get the Government funding, and it smacks of exploitation. Why? Because, as usual, unscrupulous companies are just taking the opportunity to take the funding but give nothing in return. This is only made worse by the educational establishment in Whitehall who continue to treat vocational training as a second-class option. This situation needs to change and it needs to change fast.

It is time to take a new approach to apprenticeships. We need to provide the highest standards of skills and expertise in order to grow as a nation. In our region alone, there are huge opportunities with investment in public and private sectors; everything from transport to making our goods fit for purpose and, of course, providing the public services that we all use and need. It is vital for our future that we have a national training approach to apprenticeships. It is time for the Government to ensure



that apprentices are getting the practical education they deserve in technical and commercial skills. Apprenticeships must be one of the priorities for the future of our country.

For us to be successful and to grow as a nation, we need to devote much more time and energy to support our young workers in whatever way we can, and by having a nation training scheme apprentices will finally be treated as equal citizens. Comrades, please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you, Stephen. I call Motion 181.

## **THE ROBOTS ARE COMING WILL THEY TAKE OUR JOBS? MOTION 181**

### **181. THE ROBOTS ARE COMING WILL THEY TAKE ALL OUR JOBS?**

This Conference asks the CEC to now take the lead on this topic by creating a new post within the GMB Trade Union to investigate this ever changing and sophisticated technology and how it might impact the working lives of our members.

The robots are coming according to a report from the Centres of Cities published this year. This isn't the humanoids robot takeover promised in science fiction, but it is an increasingly sophisticated automation that will remove many roles in shops, administration and warehouses.

We know that it is coming. By 2030 the same report estimates that we will have lost more than three million jobs across the UK. It estimates that the greatest loss will be in towns with a lower proportion of high skilled workers such as Mansfield, Sunderland and Wakefield.

We are not luddites. We cannot stop automation in many industries and across shops and retail. We benefit all the time from the automation within supermarkets and banks. However, we can plan ahead. We know when this change is expected to have happened and we know the industries that it is likely to hit. We also know where it will probably be at its worst.

This Conference calls for the GMB to establish a new post to specifically deal with the problems created for our members by the automation that is to come. It is only 12 years to 2030, we must not be left behind.

## **BARKING & DAGENHAM LGO BRANCH London Region**

(*Referred*)

BRENDAN DUFFIELD (London): Congress, I move Motion 181. The Robots are Coming. Will they Take our Jobs? Ten or 12 years ago you probably saw the first self-service scanning device in a supermarket. Did you think, "That's a great way to get through the till fast?", or did you think, "That's taking jobs away from cashiers"?

These are the robots that I am talking about. We did not see the scanners coming. Do we know how many cashiers the scanners replaced?

The Centres of the City published a report this year estimating that we will have lost three million jobs in the UK to automation and artificial intelligence by 2030. Look at other parts of the world to see where work is being done. If it has ever worked somewhere else, it will eventually work here. Already there are stories of prototype stores where everything you buy is automatically debited from your bank account. Therefore, we do not need cashiers. The robots are coming, whether we want it or not. We must be prepared.

This motion calls upon the GMB to establish a new post to specifically look at the problems that robots may cause to our members by artificial intelligence and automation. There are only 12 GMB Congresses until 2030, so we need to get this going pretty quick and find a way round it. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 182.

## **INDUSTRY 4.0 AUTOMATION MOTION 182**

### **182. INDUSTRY 4.0 AUTOMATION**

This Conference notes with concern, that there are fewer threats that are potentially ruinous as 'INDUSTRY 4.0 AUTOMATION'.

Automation is a real and profound challenge that trade unions can ill afford to take lightly.

Reports indicate that 850,000 public sector jobs could be lost by 2030 and up to 30% of UK jobs at risk of automation by early 2030.

It is now clear that it is not only manual occupations at risk, white collar workers are predicated to share the brunt of technological change.

We can see it graphically in the retail sector. Electrical car manufacturer TELSAs has concrete plans for a factory with no blue-collar workers and where production is set at speeds beyond the reach of human beings.

There have been strikes in Korean shipyards and German engineering, resisting unbridled automation. This Conference calls upon the G.M.B. to develop a practical comprehensive industrial and political response in dialogue with our shop stewards and activists on automation.

In the short-term with our shop stewards we must develop a comprehensive risk register putting new technology on the bargaining agenda.

This Conference calls for technology to work for everyone and not just through re-skilling but demands practical legislation change that can help to protect jobs and deliver shorter working time.

This Conference realises that this latest technological transformation will may well leave us a stark choice, either automation will work for the benefit of our members or the change will profit the elite and the employers.

**Z48 SUNDERLAND 1 ENG BRANCH**  
Northern Region

*(Carried)*

DALE FLITCROFT (Northern): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I am moving Motion 182: Industry 4.0 Automation.

Congress, industry is commonly referred to as “the fourth industrial revolution”. A huge amount of work is taking place in places like America and Germany in this area of change. It is vital to workers across the board bearing the brunt of this huge development that we have a comprehensive register that puts technology on our bargaining agenda.

Typically, new technologies will mean that we have to protect existing workers as well as appealing to the younger and more diverse workforce. Traditional notions of having an office and a desk will be challenged and diverse locations used as well as difficulties of bargaining and organisation for isolated workers who may be on individual contracts in the so-called gig economy. The fundamental need for the GMB to defend workers’ rights will remain, but we face a huge reduction in public sector jobs by 2030 as well as nearly a third of UK jobs are at risk of automation.

As pressure grows on workers it will be the unions, like the GMB, that will need to adjust working conditions. Collective bargaining is one of the most effective tools. We must consider addressing the Industry 4 matters in collective bargaining agreements. Successful collective bargaining is part of the union’s power. It acts as a balancing item to the power of capital.

Having a risk register will help us meet the challenges of Industry 4. Meeting that challenge will help in our collective bargaining to advance the interests of today’s and tomorrow’s workers, to help our families and communities. The broader society depends on them. We must not let the rich exploit change at the expense of the workers. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dale. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 184.

## **GMB RESONSE TO AUTOMATION MOTION 184**

### **184. GMB RESPONSE TO AUTOMATION**

This Congress notes that there is currently considerable hype about automation, with alarming predictions of mass unemployment, and demands for radical, and sometimes impractical, political solutions.

This Congress notes that throughout the last three hundred years there have periodically been huge changes in the workforce due to technological and social changes. In the past the agriculture, domestic service, and mining were all massive employment sectors, but are all now marginal in the British economy. Economic growth and technological development opened up new employment sectors to replace these jobs.

Congress believes that some of the hype about automation is self serving from companies who seek capital investment based upon presenting themselves as innovative and revolutionary high tech businesses. For example, Uber present themselves as the developer of a high tech app, while the reality is that their business model is based upon cost cutting and evasion of regulation, operating at a loss seeking to drive competitors out of business.

Congress believes, that some of the hype simply exaggerates the impact of highly visible changes, for example the self-check out machines in supermarkets remain costly, require human supervision, and have faced customer resistance. Automated kiosks in fast food outlets have not led to job losses, as they have led to increased sales volume and a compensating increase in back end staff.

Congress believes that some of the hype, for example over the potential automation of legal and accountancy services, ignore the prospect that reduced costs of such services may lead to job growth in companies who benefit.

Congress notes that automation can expose certain workers and sectors of the economy to risk of job losses, and resolves to continue to defend those workers and advocate their interests.

Congress believes that despite the hype, for the foreseeable future, wage labour will continue to be the bedrock of the economy, and that collective bargaining by organised workers is the most effective way of maintaining and improving the living conditions of working people and their families.

Congress resolves to monitor closely the impact of technological changes and automation in the economy, and to respond appropriately.

Congress resolves to treat with scepticism the more exaggerated claims about automation, and to oppose any political or social measures that might weaken the bargaining position of trade unions, or that deflect from the importance of collective wage bargaining.

W15 WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON  
Southern Region

*(Carried)*

JULIE CLARKE (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 184 on GMB responses to automation. I am a first-time delegate. *(Applause)* Congress and Vice President,

The topic of automation and the way it is changing the world of work is creating a great deal of debate. Writers, such as Paul Mason, have suggested a vision of the future where the digital economy and 3D printing will reduce the costs of producing goods down to almost zero so that work and human labour is no longer a driving force of the economy. This is linked to people arguing that it is new technology driving us towards the gig economy and casual work. These fashionable commentators draw conclusions which, if adapted uncritically, would weaken trade unions. For example, promoting the idea of universal basic income, given to everyone whether they work or not, which would make it easier for employers to force people to take jobs at low wages while the taxpayer picks up the bill.

There is a very welcome recent report issued jointly by the Scottish TUC and the Scottish Government which looks at some of these claims with a critical eye. It concludes that it is the UK tax system, not new technology, that has driven the gig economy, bogus self-employment forwards and that firms are more reluctant to replace people with robots than fashionable journalists have suggested.

There has always been change in the economy. A century ago hundreds of thousands of women worked in domestic service and hundreds of thousands of workers were employed in agriculture and coalmining. Those whole industries have been replaced by other jobs. GMB will always defend workers whose jobs are affected by technological change. We will also always seek to organise workers in new developing sectors of the economy. These are the good old-fashioned trade union values that have served us well in the past and which will continue to serve our members' best interests in the future. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Julie. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) Thank you. I ask Neil Collinson to speak on behalf of the CEC. While Neil is coming to the rostrum, I ask for the movers of Motions 354, 355, 116, 118, 124, 125 and 126 come to the front of the hall. Thank you.

NEIL COLLINSON (CEC, Public Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking Congress to support Motions 177 and 184 with a qualification, and refer Motion 181.

On Motion 177, whilst most of the Taylor recommendations did not go far enough, it is important to put on record that some of the recommendations were actually harmful and unhelpful. For example, the proposal that the gig economy workers could opt-out of the minimum wage is something that we need to permanently oppose.

On Motion 181, the Insecure Work Special Report, adopted by Congress in 2017, commits GMB to monitor and research the impact of automation. This motion should be referred to the SMT to determine if such a post as outlined in the motion needs to be created in the future.

On Motion 184, our qualification is that we are at an early stage of assessing the potential effects of automation. There are a range of forecasts that come to very different conclusions on likely job losses or job creation. It is important that we continue to research and monitor the likely impacts of automation on our members.

Therefore, Congress, the CEC is asking you to support Motion 177 with the qualification, to refer Motion 181 and to support Motion 184 with the qualification for the reasons I have set out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Neil. Does North West & Irish accept the qualification on Motion 177? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does London accept the reference back on Motion 181? (*Agreed*) Finally, does Southern accept the qualification on Motion 184? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

So Motions 171, 172, 177, 178, 181, 182 and 184 are all supported. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? Those are carried.

*Motion 171 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 172 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 177 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 178 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 181 was REFERRED.*

*Motion 182 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 184 was CARRIED.*

## **SOCIAL POLICY: EDUCATION & TRAINING**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call the mover of Motion 354.

### **HELP FOR VETERANS MOTION 354**

#### **354. HELP FOR VETERANS**

This Conference notes the lack of help for those leaving the armed forces, some of whom have served this country for 20 years and more. Because of the way they are treated whilst in the services, many have difficulty adjusting to civilian life. They have had years of having their needs catered for, such as access to a doctor, dentist, housing and schooling for their children. Once they leave that bubble, they often have a lack of understanding of how to register with a doctor and dentist, how to find work and how to get a child into school. This lack of knowledge can lead to ex-forces families ending up in expensive privately rented accommodation. The stresses caused can lead to family break-ups and homelessness.

Conference believes that a re-settlement programme would help those leaving the armed forces. This would teach ex-service personnel how to access services and how to write a CV and apply for jobs. Conference, therefore, calls on the government to provide a properly funded programme for those who have given a service to the country. Our service personnel deserve a decent life with a decent chance of employment, housing, medical services and education for their children, after leaving the armed forces.

A re-settlement programme would give them a chance of that decent life.

DONCASTER CENTRAL BRANCH  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

GRAHAM JARVIS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 354: Help for Veterans. Homeless charities believe there are thousands of servicemen and women living rough and in desperate need of a roof over their heads. An estimated one-in-10 rough sleepers is thought to be from a service background. They have limited access to healthcare and over-stretched treatment programmes for PTSD. We, as a nation, are failing our veterans, around 3,000 of whom require urgent PTSD treatment.

The Armed Forces' Covenant and Community Covenant were introduced in 2012 as a contract stating that Britain's veterans should take priority when it comes to affordable housing. All 407 local authorities signed up to it, but they are not working. Many mentally ill ex-servicemen and women still scared by the horrors of foreign wars are waiting for up to two years for medical help and therapy. Some have attempted suicide. Tragically, many are successful. This can be tough for veterans to deal with, and the culture of the armed forces can make seeking help for mental health problems difficult. Medical experts are now openly criticising the effectiveness of the NHS and Government-funded organisations to care for homeless veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. A loophole exists because of the wording of the covenant, which says local authorities "should" give priority to veterans instead of "must".

The charity Veterans' Association UK is now demanding that this loophole is closed, and when it comes to council homes priority must be given to those who have served their nation.

Congress, we need to promote the recovery and independent living of veterans within the community. Local authorities should consistently check if someone seeking help or support is a veteran and provide them with plans that respond to their needs. We are deeply concerned that vulnerable veterans, often with complex physical and mental health needs, are not being properly cared for by the country they have served.

We urge the Government to assist veterans with whatever they need to have a decent life. They have stood up and answered the call for our country. Let's do the same for them. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Graham. Is that formally seconded?  
*(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 355.

**FAKE DIPLOMAS CIRCULATING IN THE UK — ARE YOU REALLY  
SEEING A PROFESSIONAL?  
MOTION 355**

### **355. FAKE DIPLOMAS CIRCULATING IN THE UK – ARE YOU REALLY SEEING A PROFESSIONAL?**

This Conference is concerned by recent news, indicating a “staggering trade in fake Diplomas”.

We ask the GMB to lobby MPs and the Government to investigate this dangerous trade, and to root out all providers and users of these false documents.

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

*(Carried)*

**KERRY HUMPHREYS (Midland & East Coast):** Congress, I move Motion 355: Fake Diplomas Circulating in the UK — Are You Really Seeing a Professional?

Vice President and Congress, with the staggering trends in fake diploma certificates every increasing by the day, it is imperative on us, as trade unionists, to eliminate this trend. Imagine going to see a doctor and later finding out that they had bought their diploma. If we do not address the problem of fake diplomas, we will increasingly see people jumping the queue, and this may affect your ability or your children’s ability to secure long-term employment. Imagine, after all your hard work, dedication and study, losing a job to someone who had purchased a diploma for as little as £200 on line. This trend could impact the employment opportunities of anyone from any walk of life. We need to make sure that fairness is at the heart of our education system and not just a sale to the highest bidder. We, the GMB, must work with government to secure the future of our children, our future and our children’s future with verified diploma qualifications. Together we can stamp out this fraudulent trade.

Let me make it clear: it is legal to buy one but not to use one. To use a fake diploma would amount to fraud by false representation. Let’s be real about this. Why would someone pay sometimes upward of £400 for a diploma they would never use? It’s not going to happen. The purchasing of these diploma should be unlawful and the process of verifying diplomas should be available for employers. I am standing here with a Doctor of the Tardis and a Master of the Jedi. Congress, please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Thank you, Kerry. I will go straight to the vote. Both Motions 354 and 355 are being supported. All those in favour, please show? Anybody against? They are carried.

*Motion 354 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 355 was CARRIED.*

### **EMPLOYMENT POLICY: HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT**

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** I call the mover of Motion 116.



## **TIGHTEN UP RIDDOR REPORTING MOTION 116**

### **116. TIGHTEN UP RIDDOR REPORTING**

This Conference calls for the CEC to lobby the Health & Safety Executive to strengthen and improve the protections afforded to our members via the process of RIDDOR reporting. Our water sector, in particular, has seen an increase in reports of the manipulation of the current process via misrepresentation of accident details and their effects upon the injured party.

This practice brings into question the level of scrutiny and benchmarking now offered via current data. We must maintain our safety standards throughout these times of enforced austerity.

LEICESTER WATER BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region

*(Carried)*

JASON EVANS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 116. Changes to Riddor reporting made by the HSE in 2003 included the requirement to report accidents which result in the incapacitation of a worker for more than seven days. This is defined as where an employee is away from work and unable to perform their normal duties for more than seven consecutive days. These events are often referred to as “lost time incidents”. Reports to the GMB at the National Water Forum and beyond suggest that this reporting process is often open to manipulation through employers looking to pass the blame for workplace accidents on to the injured party through claiming their injury is as a result of a pre-existing condition rather than a direct result of unsafe working practices. Resulting from this, our members who are injured are then relentlessly questioned on their possible medical conditions or their previous occupations and activities, all with the aim of reapportioning blame and avoiding the need to report.

I have personal recent experience of a member who suffered a significant back injury through being forced to work unsafely whilst lifting 25 kilogram bags of tarmac. He needed to take a number of weeks off to recuperate. He was instantly then met with accusations of having played rugby as a younger man and it was this that may have weakened his back. He had already suffered pain and a loss of earnings, only then to be confronted with attempts to be made responsible. These LCI rates are often hardwired into company executives, bonus metrics and, hence, the manipulation of such events can also be lucrative. We ask the CEC to use its influence with the HSE to ensure that such reporting loopholes are addressed so that our members can be truly protected by this process and employers are truly held accountable for unsafe working practices and are not allowed to appear as being safer than they really are. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jason. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 118.

## **WORKPLACE DEFIBRILLATORS MOTION 118**

### **118. WORKPLACE DEFIBRILLATORS**

This Conference calls upon the GMB to support a campaign to highlight the inadequate provision of working defibrillators in our workplaces.

We call upon this conference to lobby and participate with the Government, regulators and industries for all companies to demonstrate their commitment to mandatory provision of defibrillators.

**YORK GENERAL BRANCH**  
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

*(Carried)*

PAULINE KIELY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 118: Workplace Defibrillators. This Conference calls upon the GMB to support a campaign to highlight the inadequate provision of working defibrillators in our workplaces. We call upon this conference to lobby and participate with the Government, regulators and industries for all companies to demonstrate their commitment to mandatory provision of defibrillators.

A defibrillator is a device which gives an electric shock to the heart through the chest wall to somebody who is in cardiac arrest. Defibrillation is an essential life-saving step in the chain of survival. Defibrillators are available in public places, such as train stations, shopping centres, airports and leisure centres. In fact, there are two in this building as we speak. They are becoming more prevalent within the wider community. However, a number of workplaces have voluntarily invested in this equipment. It is estimated that up to 60,000 people die each year in the UK through sudden cardiac arrest, with less than one person in 10 surviving if a sudden cardiac arrest occurs outside of hospital. Evidence suggests that where defibrillators have been used the outcomes are far more favourable for an individual who suffered a cardiac arrest than if it is delayed until the arrival of the emergency services. The best chance of success by resuscitation will be when defibrillation and other first-aid procedures are carried out with minimum delay; ideally, within the first three minutes. The chances of a person surviving fall by at least 7% to 10% with every minute that defibrillation is delayed. So there is a very real advantage in having a defibrillator available on site.

Figures of 75% survival have been reported when defibrillation is performed within three minutes of someone collapsing, a timeframe rarely possible for the Ambulance Service. Using a defibrillator cannot make the victim's condition worse. The device would only discharge a shock if the victim's heart rate would lead to death if they do not receive that shock.

The Resuscitation Council's UK guidance informs us that defibrillators are easy to use, compact, portable and very, very effective. They are designed to be used by lay persons. The machines guide the operator. They are safe and will not allow a shock to be given unless the heart really requires it. As a frontline paramedic, I know how

important having a defibrillator in a workplace is. To save a life is the best feeling ever. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pauline. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. Motion 124.

## **ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION FORM MOTION 124**

### **124. ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION FORM**

This Conference calls on the relevant bodies within the GMB to implement a generic Accident Investigation Form to enable workplace reps to carry out this function.

R35 JCB GENERAL BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Referred)*

ROGER MANDER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 124: Accident Investigation Form. This Conference calls on the relevant bodies within the GMB health and safety to implement the generic Accident Investigation Form to enable workplace reps to carry out their functions of safety reps.

When asked at any health and safety course what else would we need to improve the role of the reps, one of the most common questions asked is about the correct way of investigating an accident in the workplace. The answer is that there is no correct way but there are correct procedure to follow. At a bespoke training session, it was obvious that although investigations were being carried out, each and everyone in the session were doing it their own way. After a short discussion to understand the legalities, the whys and wherefores of the list of priorities was drawn up and a document loosely based on the health and safety guidelines formed a well-balanced investigation policy. Not every accident would need all the investigating kit, but it refers back to root-cause analysis, showing the reasons for the accident happening in the first place.

The first draft was compressed into a smaller work-size document, which I think would be a real value to safety reps throughout each region. It allows us to record and gather information, the when and whom. With this info, analysis and findings, the aim is to identify and implement risk-control measures. It is a simple piece of kit, and I hope it can help eliminate more practices that allow the repetition of some of the same incidents occurring. It is simple and efficient. Rather than everyone going on on their own tangent, it would draw all the efforts into improving health and safety. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roger. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Motion 125.

**WINTER WEATHER — DRIVING TO WORK  
MOTION 125**

**125. WINTER WEATHER – DRIVING TO WORK**

This Conference resolves that more should be done to protect members' wages and terms and conditions when there is travel disruption caused by winter weather, which will ultimately keep members safe.

According to statistics, approximately 140 people a year are fatally injured at work, however GMB has often highlighted that these figures do not include deaths caused by Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) and that figures would be dramatically higher if they did. RTC's often occur when people are travelling to/from work, or even travelling during the working day and RTC's can be caused by work pressures to get a job done in a certain time or meet certain targets/demands.

In adverse weather conditions, particularly during winter, members will be pressured both directly and indirectly to risk their safety and travel to work. Members will fear disciplinary action if they don't turn up for work, or may simply not be able to afford to not travel in, as they will be forced to take annual leave or unpaid leave. Taking forced annual leave could have a particularly negative affect on working parents, as this could lead to them having to pay for more childcare during school holidays due to the loss of annual leave, whereas unpaid leave could stop our members from putting food on the table altogether, especially when so many working people are already relying on welfare such as benefits and food banks. Public transport is often limited or suspended altogether during adverse weather conditions and many members may not live within walking distance or their workplace so are forced to drive and put their lives and the lives of others at risk. To ensure the safety of our members and the wider population, Congress calls for GMB to campaign for members' pay and annual leave to be protected where it is unsafe for them to get to work, relieving members of the pressure to put lives at risk and call for GMB to lead by example and ensure this protection for its own employees.

S85 SANDWELL COMMUNITY BRANCH  
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

*(Carried)*

*(The Motion was formally moved and formally seconded)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call Motion 126.

**AIR QUALITY (AN EXPECTATION OR A GIVEN RIGHT)  
MOTION 126**

**126. AIR QUALITY (AN EXPECTATION OR A GIVEN RIGHT)**

This Conference recognises that worldwide, diesel oil is widely used as a fuel in diesel-powered cars, lorries, trains, power generators, aircraft, ships and

heavy industry. It is regarded as being more efficient than petroleum, resulting in lower fuel consumption. World Health Organisation (WHO) says that many people are exposed to diesel exhaust in everyday life, both through their occupations and in the ambient air. Diesel fuel contains no lead and emissions of the regulated pollutants (carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides NOx) are lower than those from petrol cars without a catalyst. However, when compared to petrol cars with a catalyst, diesels have higher emissions of NOx and much higher emissions of particulate matter.

In 2012, a decision was taken by the WHO's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a panel of experts that co-ordinates and conducts research into the causes of cancer and develops cancer control strategies. Under its classification scheme, the IARC reclassified diesel engine exhaust as 'carcinogenic' (IARC's Category 1). This category is used when there is sufficient evidence that a substance causes cancer in humans. The IARC said there was sufficient evidence that diesel exhaust is a cause of lung cancer. It is also associated with an increased risk of bladder cancer, although the evidence for the latter is more limited.

It based its decision on several studies looking at miners' exposure to diesel engine exhaust and the increase in risk of them developing lung cancer. Although these studies were in workers who had been heavily exposed to diesel fumes, the WHO pointed out that previous studies of other carcinogens such as radon, indicate that initial research showing a risk in heavily exposed populations are later found to be a risk for the general population. It says that action to reduce exposure to diesel exhaust fumes should encompass both highly exposed workers and the general population.

Exposure to diesel engine exhaust can cause irritation of the eyes, throat and the upper respiratory tract. These effects are mostly due to the irritant gasses or unburnt hydrocarbons in the exhaust. Acute exposure may also cause neurophysiological symptoms such as light-headedness and nausea, and respiratory symptoms such as cough or phlegm. People who already have asthma may find their symptoms are exacerbated if they are exposed to diesel exhaust. Long-term exposure to diesel exhaust particulates, usually measured as the air concentration of Elemental Carbon, can cause cancer. When the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) identified diesel exhaust particulate as a cause of lung cancer (sufficient evidence) it also noted a positive connection (limited evidence) with an increased risk of bladder cancer. IARC classified Diesel Exhaust fumes along with asbestos, benzene and ionizing radiation as a known carcinogen (group 1).

*(Info from = "Safety & Health Practitioner Online")*

There are probably about 500,000 people exposed to diesel engine exhaust particulates during work in Britain. About half of the most highly exposed are employed in land transport jobs but about a third are employed in the construction sector, often exposed from off-road vehicles.

Exposed workers may be driving diesel powered vehicles such as fork-lift trucks, railway locomotives, buses and lorries or may work in environments

where diesel engines are operating such as warehouses, locomotive depots, ferries, garages, vehicle testing sites, fire stations and so on. Outdoor workers in cities such as traffic wardens, postal workers, police officers and others are also exposed. There is a diverse range of occupations where workers are exposed to diesel engine exhaust.

**Q Aren't workers protected under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations?**

Yes, it's true that the COSHH Regulations apply to diesel engine exhaust particulate because of the hazardous nature of the particles and the gaseous emissions.

Employers have a duty to carry out an assessment of the risk to health for workers who use or are in the vicinity of diesel engines used at work. General advice when carrying out these types of assessment is to make an evaluation of the magnitude and duration of the exposure and to compare this with the relevant workplace exposure limit.

*!! However, there is no limit value for diesel engine exhaust particulate that allows us to judge the acceptability of the risks for cancer or non-malignant respiratory disease. The HSE has recommended using the level of carbon dioxide (above 1,000 ppm) but this is not specific to diesel engine emissions and such measurements are only likely to identify the very worst situations. This needs to be changed!!*

It is possible that the European Commission will set a limit value based on measuring elemental carbon when they revise the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive which is currently under discussion.

In the meantime, we need to adopt a different strategy, one of progressive improvement in the degree of control based around the principles of good contract practice set out in

COSHH. L45 BRANCH  
North West & Irish Region

*(Carried)*

JOE SMITH (North West & Irish): Vice President and Congress, I move Motion 126: Air Quality (An Expectation or a Given Right). We all know there has been much improvement since the 1960s, but air quality still falls well below expectations for 2018. The latest figures published in May 2018 show air pollution could cost £5.3 billion by 2035. In the last year alone, Public Health England has suggested that the cost of air pollution to the NHS and social care in England was estimated to be £157 million. The researchers claim that these figures are based on the cost of GP visits, medical prescriptions, hospital treatment and social care due to long-term health conditions.

According to Public Health England there could be around 2.5 million new cases of coronary heart disease, lung cancer, childhood asthma, chronic obstruction, diabetes, low birth rate and dementia by 2013 if pollution levels persist.

Haulage companies will have blood on their hands if exhaust emissions do not improve. Strict rules introduced to reduce deaths linked to toxic nitrogen oxides means every lorry above 3.5 tonnes must be fitted with a filter on their exhaust system, but this comes with a cost. Many firms, desperate to cut costs, are paying £700 a time to disable the device by the onboard computer. Despite nitrogen oxide being linked to 23,500 deaths a year in Britain, hauliers attempted to break the law because of to repair or replace faulty filters can cost up to £5,000 to fix, plus the cost of having the vehicle off the road for a week or two.

We must not forget the Muppets who run our country. They have no need to talk because they have scrapped plans to electrify three major rail lines: South Wales, between Cardiff and Swansea; East Midlands Railway, between Kettering, Nottingham and Sheffield, and our most-loved Lake Line between Oxenholme and Windermere. It does not make sense to travel from Manchester across the north-west under electric wires, and then when you travel the last 12 miles through beautiful countryside, we know what happens. I was on a train coming back from York the day the new timetable kicked in. I am sure on that day Northern Rail was making a film called *Carry On Trains*. My train arrived in the platform on time only still to be there 45 minutes later with the engine running. It was fumes from the train that people were complained about.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Come on, Joe. Finish. You've got the red light.

JOE SMITH: Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, indeed. Is that formally seconded? (*Formally seconded*) I ask June Minnery of GMB Scotland to reply. While I am asking June to come to the rostrum, I ask for the movers of Motion 134, Composite 11 and Composite 20 to come to the front, please.

JUNE MINNERY (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is asking Congress to refer Motions 124 and 125. On Motion 124 the CEC seeks referral because the development of an accident form to assist an investigation could prove a useful tool for GMB health and safety representatives. However, we need to consider if a generic form is appropriate because every incident is different. We would need to consult extensively with lay members to ensure that the final product is fit for purpose as this is, potentially, a long-term piece of work as a result.

Lastly, on Motion 125, as the motion rightly states, death and serious injuries arising from road traffic collisions are currently under-reported. We agree that putting pressure on members to risk their personal safety when travelling to work is unacceptable. However, some of our members carry out socially-vital functions during adverse weather conditions, working with the emergency services, utilities and local authorities. An adverse weather policy would need to take account of workers

in these circumstances. Congress, I ask that Motions 124 and 125 are referred as requested. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, June. Does Birmingham & West Midlands accept reference back on Motion 124? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Birmingham & West Midlands also accept reference back on Motion 125? (*Agreed*) Thank you. That means Motions 116, 118, 124, 125 and 126 are all being supported. All those in favour, please show? Anybody against? They are carried.

*Motion 116 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 118 was CARRIED.*

*Motion 124 was REFERRED.*

*Motion 125 was REFERRED.*

*Motion 126 was CARRIED.*

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: Plastics

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Motion 134, please.

## **PLASTIC BAGS AND PLASTIC PACKAGING MOTION 134**

### **134. PLASTIC BAGS AND PLASTIC PACKAGING**

This Conference is concerned that the current pressures to curb the use of plastic bags and plastic packaging could easily lead to unforeseen problems. This is because not enough is known about the environmental and other costs of the possible alternatives and is against the backdrop of some studies suggesting that plastic bags are better than alternatives.

Conference does not want to see any repeat of the situation 20 years ago where Parliament and the EU in seeking to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions adopted measures for a switch to diesel vehicles only to later realise that this has led to increases in deadly nitrogen dioxide emissions. This is now seen to have been a costly mistake.

The DEFRA study of six years' ago on the rivals to plastic bags should be updated. This showed for example that the run off of fertilisers from cotton production in cotton bags was worse overall for the marine environment than plastic. We need to know whether the conclusion of another 2005 study by the Scottish Government is still valid that "paper bags had more adverse impact than plastic bags for most of the environmental issues considered".

Conference should consider that it is essential to get proper studies and assessments of alternative packaging before Parliament legislates further and this should be reviewed in the light of current consumer pressures to reduce plastic packaging. Introducing levies and charges on hard pressed consumers without a full understanding of the environmental and other costs of the possible alternatives is simply not acceptable.



EAST DEREHAM BRANCH  
London Region

*(Referred)*

JAN SMITH (London): Congress, I move Motion 134 on plastic bags and plastic packaging. My branch submitted a similar motion on paper and plastic bags at Congress in 2016. This was referred to develop a firm position. Howsoever, much has happened in these last two years. Yes, the introduction of the 5p carrier bag has seen a rise in the use of reusable bags, and now the Government are extending this to the smaller retailers. When the charge was introduced there was an expectation that the money collected from this 5p charge was to go good causes, charity causes, but not all retailers let the public know where and how much is donated. We should know this because it is our 5ps that they are collecting.

We have seen huge publicity and pressure on society to protect the environment and reduce waste. Supermarkets and manufacturers have been shamed in their use of plastic and unnecessary packaging and are pledging to reduce waste. However, we don't just want warm words. We need action! We need to transform our packaging.

Our motion is calling for proper studies and assessments to look into alternative packaging and, of course, ensure that any of our members — I repeat, any of our members — who work in the packaging industry do not lose their jobs. We would consider companies paying towards collecting and recycling the waste they produce.

We are pleased that the CEC has decided to refer this motion, yet again, and would be happy to work with the section and department to progress this motion. Thank you.  
*(Applause)*

THE VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Jan. Is the Secretary of the RMA. Well done.  
*(Applause)* I call the mover of Composite 11.

**PLASTIC POLLUTION  
COMPOSITE 11**

*(Covering Motions 128, 130, 131 and 132)*

128 — PLASTIC POLLUTION — Southern Region.

130 — TIME FOR GMB TO THROW ITS WEIGHT BEHIND STOPPING  
PLASTICS BEING DUMPED IN THE SEA AND OCEANS — Birmingham & West  
Midlands Region.

131 — END OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC — Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

132 — PLASTIC — Southern Region.

**PLASTIC POLLUTION**

This conference is well aware of the enormous damage that plastic is having on our environment, particularly in our oceans and rivers and to our marine life. David Attenborough's work, amongst others, has assisted a growing awareness of this crisis and is shaping a new understanding of our urgent need to use less plastic and to use better packaging or less packaging. The damage to the environment, the polluting of our rivers, waterways and oceans through to the more sinister aspects of plastic particles entering the

food chain is seriously disturbing. The potential long term damage to working people and their families is an unacceptable situation.

This Conference is to agree to campaign against plastics being dumped in our seas and oceans.

Plastics production has increased twentyfold since 1964, reaching 311m tonnes in 2014, the report says. It is expected to double again in the next 20 years and almost quadruple by 2050.

Despite the growing demand, just 5% of plastics are recycled effectively while 40% end up in landfill and a third in fragile ecosystems such as the world's oceans.

Much of the remainder is burned, generating energy, but causing more fossil fuels to be consumed in order to make new plastic bags, cups, tubs and consumer devices demanded by the economy.

Decades of plastics production have already caused environmental problems.

The report says that every year "at least 8m tonnes of plastics leak into the ocean – which is equivalent to dumping the contents of one garbage truck into the ocean every minute. If no action is taken, this is expected to increase to two per minute by 2030 and four per minute by 2050.

"In a business-as-usual scenario, the ocean is expected to contain one tonne of plastic for every three tonnes of fish by 2025 and by 2050, more plastics than fish (by weight)".

Plastic particles have been found in metal ores and, more worryingly, plastic is contaminating the world's oceans. Even in the deepest depths of the sea, plastic has been found in sea creatures. Every type of creature, from the plankton to whales, has been adversely affected. It is believed plastic is contaminating the milk of female whales, causing the poisoning of calves. The delicate balance of the ecosystem is under threat. The age of plastic must be brought to an end.

A carelessly discarded plastic bag can break down in the sea, especially in warmer waters but the process releases toxic chemicals that may be digested by fish, sea birds and other mammals like seals and whales etc. and end up in the human food chain.

In order to take responsibility for our own impact on the environment, we call on the GMB to take prompt and urgent action at every level of our organisation to reduce plastic waste wherever possible. This could well include training staff with responsibility for procurement, actions such as avoiding all use of non-recyclable plastic lined drink cups at conferences and in offices, to changing suppliers based on their use of responsible products or packages, or to actively contacting existing suppliers to request that they use more ecologically sound goods or packaging. We request that an update on

all changes and improvements to our ecological responsibility are given at next Congress.

It also calls on the government to incentivise plastic re-cycling and to invest in the research and development of alternatives to plastic.

Conference also calls on the GMB raise awareness and to take a look within the union of single use plastic products and, work with suppliers to end their use. By working with providers, and working with other partners and political allies to ensure we find solutions and take actions to drastically reduce the damaging effects of a world over-producing and over-reliant on plastic we should be able to lead the way and build a sustainable world for our children. It is time to raise the profile of this issue; the GMB would be the ideal organisation to do this.

*(Referred)*

ROY PERRY (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move Composite 11. When the facts of this motion finally sink in, it makes for a frightening read. Five per cent of plastics are recycled effectively while 40% end up in landfill and a third in fragile ecosystems, such as the world's oceans. It is the plastics and rubbish that end up in the ecosystem that are doing the most damage. More than eight million tonnes of plastic are dumped in our oceans every year. We have developed a disposable lifestyle. Estimates are that around 50% of plastic is used just once and thrown away. The motion states that at least eight million tonnes of plastic leak into the ocean, which is equivalent to dumping the contents of one garbage truck into the ocean every minute. If no action is taken, it is no wonder that the oceans are rising. It's not global warming. It's dumped rubbish.

You may be thinking "Where does GMB fit in all of this?" We have to get the message out and educate our members, politicians and workplaces that we have to recycle more and more. Five per cent is a poor return for a nation as big as ours. Campaigning, organising and publishing is what GMB does best, so let's utilise our resources and join in this long fight to clear up our oceans. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Composite 20.

## **PROVISION OF DRINKING WATER COMPOSITE 20**

*(Covering Motions 133 and 259)*

133 — SINGLE-USE PLASTIC CONTAINERS — Southern Region.

295 — WATER POINTS OR FOUNTAINS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN PUBLIC PLACES AND SCHOOLS — London Region.

## **PROVISION OF DRINKING WATER**

This Conference calls for the provision of water points and water fountains in public places and schools.

Britain consumes 3bn litres of bottled water per year. Typically bottled water retails at up to 500 times more than the price of tap water. Plastic bottles require petroleum and water in their production. Only 35% of bottles made are recycled and most end up as landfill. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) campaigns strongly suggest that bottled water is not only environmentally unfriendly but also a waste of consumers' money. These are only a few of the surveys and statistics that show it is necessary for a change.

This conference congratulates the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan on his initiative to make free drinking water available for all Londoners. As well as the building and maintenance of twenty public water fountains, he has also sought to implement a scheme whereby local businesses make tap water available for public use, and therefore people on the street can refill their bottles with safe drinking water rather than buying expensive and wasteful bottled water.

This conference believes that as well as the obvious health benefits involved in ensuring access to drinking water, this will also clamp down on the use of single-use plastic water bottles, which are being used in the United Kingdom at a rate of 38.5million per day, only half of which are recycled. This means that 16 million bottles are thrown away, sent to landfill or just dumped every single day in the UK alone.

2017 saw campaigns for the end of the use of plastic drinking straws and coffee cups that are not easily recyclable. 2018 should see the beginning of a campaign against the single use water bottle. Making water freely and hygienically available in public areas would go a long way to breaking our dependence on a bottled product that is freely available in every business and home in the country.

This conference encourages other local authorities to follow London's lead and explore initiatives to make free drinking water available for everyone, whether with a system of public fountains, or a network of local businesses making their tap water accessible, as has also been very successful in Bristol.

This conference would also like to see employers making an effort to make drinking water available to their employees, both for the benefit of their health, safety and welfare at work, and for the benefit of the environment too.

*(Carried)*

BRENDAN DUFFIELD (London): Before I start, Congress, the funding for this shirt that I am wearing has been cut now so could you ask your branch secretaries and regional secretaries if they could donate to *Show Racism the Red Card* because they need all the help they can get. Thank you. *(Applause)* I move Composite 20: Provision of Drinking Water.

President and Congress, drinking water has been freely available across the United Kingdom for at least the last 80 years. Despite this state of affairs, we drink three billion litres of bottled water per year. This water sells for up to 500 times more than

tap water. The water is sold in plastic bottles which the public find cheaper and lighter than glass. Of these bottles, only 35% are recycled. Most of them end up in landfill sites.

This Congress congratulates the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, on using initiatives to make drinking water available for Londoners with the building of 20 public water fountains. He has also sought to implement a system which will allow Londoners to refill water bottles in local businesses. This Congress believes that the health benefits of such a system are self-evident and encourage other local authorities to follow London's lead. In providing safe and free drinking water we also begin a clampdown on the use of single-used plastic water bottles. 2017 saw campaigns for the end of the use of plastic drinking straws and coffee cups that are not easily recyclable. Let us make 2018 the beginning of a campaign against the use of single-use water bottles. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. Is that formally seconded? *(Formally seconded)* Thank you. I call Ken Daniels to respond on behalf of the CEC. Whilst Ken is coming to the rostrum, let me say that after we have taken the vote, there will be two videos, one from London and one from Northern, and a speaker from the Midland & East Coast.

KEN DANIELS (CEC, Public Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are asking Congress to refer Motion 134 and Composite 11, and to support Composite 20 with a qualification. The CEC is asking you to refer Motion 134 as GMB is not aware of any plans to introduce further legislation on plastic-bag charging. A similar motion — 215 — was referred in 2016, and for consistency it would make sense for this motion also to be referred.

The CEC is asking you to refer Composite 11 because a ban on single-use plastic could have severe implications for our members in the plastics and chemicals industries. The CEC is supporting Composite 20 with a qualification. On Composite 20 we believe that GMB should campaign for clean water to be available for all. The qualification is simply that the provision of drinking water to employees is already a legal requirement under regulation 22 of the Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992, so there is no need for GMB to campaign for employers to do so.

Therefore, Congress, please agree to refer Motion 134, refer Composite 11 and please support Composite 20 with the qualifications that I have just set out. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ken. Does London accept reference on Motion 134. *(Agreed)* Thank you. Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire accept reference on Composite 11? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Does London accept the qualification on Composite 20? *(Agreed)* Thank you. All those three are being supported. All those in favour, please show? Thank you. Is anybody against? They are carried.

*Motion 134 was REFERRED.  
Composite 11 was REFERRED.  
Composite 20 was CARRIED.*

VIDEOS: Northern Region and London Region

THE VICE PRESIDENT: There will be now two videos, one from London and one from Northern, and then we have a speaker from the Midlands. Thank you.  
*(Videos were played followed by applause)*

I will now ask Richard Oliver to speak on behalf of the Midland & East Coast Region.

RICHARD OLIVER (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am the Regional and Political Officer for the Midland & East Coast Region. Many of you will already know about the *Dying-to-Work* campaign and our efforts to protect terminally-ill workers. You will have heard the story of GMB member Jacqui Woodcock, who was forced out of her job after she informed her employer that she had terminal breast cancer. Jacqui had the strength to put her own difficult circumstances aside, stand up and demand that protections were put in place to make sure that nobody else has to undergo such stress and strain as they approach the end of their lives. We still have a long way to go but we have made more remarkable progress this year. 600,000 people in the UK have now been protected by our voluntary charter. Big companies, such as Rolls Royce, Bombardier, Eon and many more have now signed up. We also have considerable public sector support, including support from the entire Labour-led Welsh Government, who have also signed up to our charter. I am confident that by the end of the year we will meet our aim of having one million people voluntarily protected. This is possible because we have just begun work with the Department of Work and Pensions on an exciting new initiative.

The DWP has 6,000 employers registered as part of their Disability Confidence Scheme, and they are now working with us to develop a training package, support and resources which will be made available to each of those employers. Moreover, they are encouraging them all to sign 'our' voluntary charter. This is a campaign which so many people have helped to deliver. The leadership and unwavering support provided by our Regional Secretary, Andy Worth, and the Midlands & East Coast Regional Committee, has made this campaign possible. Our partnership with the TUC has helped to mobilise the entire trade union Movement behind our campaign and shows our collective labour Movement at its best, and our officers, branch secretaries and reps who have supported terminally-ill members, taken our charter to employers and who have pressed managers and HR departments to make this important commitment to their staff.

Whilst we are proud in the Midlands & East Coast Region to have helped lead this campaign, this is a campaign which we should all be proud of. Colleagues from every region have been getting employers to sign up to the charter and have been lobbying elected members to help get the law changed. Thank you for all the work you have put in and for the work you will continue to do to drive the campaign forward.

I believe that one day soon we will deliver the change in the law that Jacqui, rightly, demanded and I hope she will still be with us to see her law enacted. I have confidence because of the support this campaign has had in Westminster. We now have close to 200 MPs who have supported our campaign, and this support does not just come from the Labour benches. Tories, Lib-Dems, Dems and SMP MPs have all shown their support. In fact, our campaign has reached beyond Westminster. Despite

Brexit looming, we have made huge strides forward in Brussels, in no small part down to the work and dedication of Rory Palmer, our Labour and GMB MEP for the East Midlands, who has been a champion on this issue. We now have a group set up in the European Parliament led by Rory to take forward this campaign across the EU, bringing together MEPs from different political groups of Member States. Tomorrow, in the European Parliament's Employment Committee, MEPs will vote on a report which includes a ground-breaking endorsement of the *Dying-to-Work* campaign and its aims. Terminal illness has now boundary and neither does our campaign.

Congress, inclusion, this campaign represents the best of our union, inspired by members, led by members and delivering important changes for our members. This is a 21<sup>st</sup> century campaign for a 21<sup>st</sup> century union and I look forward the Congress where we can report back to you that the job is done and terminally-ill workers have the protection they deserve. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Richard. Before we move into the formal close of Congress, I have a quick announcement to make. Can I, please, ask Regional Secretaries to ensure that regional banners are removed at the close of Congress.

## **CLOSING PROCEDURE OF CONGRESS**

### **OMNIBUS VOTE OF THANKS**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We are now commencing the closing procedure of Congress, which will start with the Omnibus Vote of Thanks to be given by Margaret Gregg, CEC and North West & Ireland.

MARGARET GREGG (CEC, Commercial Services): I am very proud to have been asked to give this Vote of Thanks. This Congress has been a very emotional one. We opened with a fitting tribute to Mary, 'Our Mary'. No one, I believe, has ever given as much to our union as she did, and left such a lasting legacy. Love, respect and admiration were the result by all who came into contact with her, especially at Congress where she welcomed and supported all new delegates, but ensured the smooth running of the highlight of her year, presiding over Congress.

We thank Lisa, her granddaughter, for her presentation and all the family who looked on with pride. She will never be forgotten.

Thanks to the members from Midlands & East Coast Region for carrying in the National Banner. You did a great job.

So to our Vice President, Malcolm. What can I say? He has done a wonderful job in presiding over Congress, the election of a new President and contentious motions. Malcolm has taken over a lot of responsibility this last year and has done so without complaint. GMB is a family, and like all families we have our differences, but under Malcolm's guidance we were able to debate them, respecting each other's opinions, giving delegates the opportunities to put their point of view forward, as long as they stay within the time. (*Chuckling*) Malcolm has shown his years of knowledge and experience and dedication to the GMB. He is a stalwart and a proud friend. My

personal thanks must also go to him as he supported and helped me during the last week.

Our General Secretary, Tim Roache, has settled well into his role, as he has shown this week in the political and trade union field, defending jobs, terms and conditions, in unique and challenging time with Brexit, the threat of the erosion of workers' rights, changes to European and industrial laws, new working patterns and increasing privatisation. So those are just a few of the things to do this year, Tim. Many of them we have debated this week, but thank you for already highlighting the GMB as a campaigning, and the best union, for steering the union forward and for your leadership this week. GMB is making a difference!

We welcomed our guest speakers, Daniel Yates, the Labour Leader of Brighton & Hove Council. I was glad to hear that he is looking forward to working with the union and I am sure that Southern Region will hold him to it, especially as he is now a GMB member.

Jeremy Corbyn promoted the renationalisation of the water industry with the *Take-Back-The-Tap* campaign, but also stated Labour's position on a Customs Union and a soft Brexit. He congratulated our Young Members on their activities. We look forward with interest to the forthcoming months and the outcome of Brexit negotiations.

Thanks must also go to our Standing Orders Committee under the guidance of Helen Johnson and Barry Smith. I think Helen has been chairing the SOC committee for 11 years, but you have carried it off with your expertise and knowledge of the GMB. So well done, Standing Orders.

As I have been closer to the action this year, I have realised what a demanding role the Congress team carry out. Thanks must go to Steve Short and his Executive team. We have lost the expertise of the past Executive staff this year, and a new team — Anna and Lawrence — have assisted Tim, Malcolm and myself. Along with Lynsey and Paula, our thanks must go to them. (*Applause*)

The National Office team have all taken on roles with Lisa Johnson, as director of external relations and training, and give 110% to the Political, Equality, Legal, Training, Pensions, Health and Safety — all the departments — working together towards ensuring a great Congress and successful section conferences. Thanks to all the National Secretaries and National Officers.

Regions have all played their part in sending out communications, arranging travel and ensuring that delegates have all the necessary documentation. Thanks to all the regional PA's and staff. (*Applause*)

Media and communications, video presentations and platform staging have all been first class, to which we say thank you. Coverage has been outstanding with online, YouTube and Facebook all covering Congress.

Thanks to the verbatim shorthand writers for recording every word said this week.



The stalls play their import role at Congress. They provide materials, books, magazines, leaflets and access to knowledge to ensure that GMB delegates have all the tools they need to carry out their roles back home in their respective companies. We thank you for giving up your time.

Thanks also must go to the stalls co-ordinator for bringing together such a variety of stalls.

I am sure delegates, like myself, enjoyed your free tea and coffee, which takes me to the staff at the Brighton Centre. I would like to thank you for all your service this week. *(Applause)* Ensuring our safety, especially nowadays, is a priority, so we would like to give a big thank you to our GMB stewards for looking after us so well this week. *(Applause)*

The heart of any Congress is you, the delegates. Your commitment to the GMB ensures the continuing success of our union. Thank you for your input, your participation, your speeches, sharing your knowledge with workers and the barriers they face every day in the workplace. That proves we have the best activists, and decision made this week by you will ensure that the union is on the right track.

Finally, my best wishes go to our new President, Barbara Plant, for a very successful term of office. To my region and the CEC, thank you for giving me the opportunity of being the Vice Chair this week. It has been challenging but enjoyable. Safe journey home, everyone. *(Applause)*

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Congress, I now call on the General Secretary, Tim Roach, to speak.

**THE GENERAL SECRETARY:** Thank you very much, Malcolm. Good afternoon, everybody. I won't be very long because it has been a long week, and it's only bloody Wednesday! I echo exactly what Margaret has said, particularly in relation to the fitting opening of Congress. It was a wonderful and thoroughly deserved tribute on behalf of 'Our Mary', and thank you to you all for your support. It just hasn't been the same this week without Mary. Frankly, we miss her desperately and dearly, and wasn't Lisa, her granddaughter, and her family, so brilliant on the day. So well done. *(Applause)*

Congress, this week we have done an enormous amount of business and set our agenda for the coming year. We have moved an unprecedented number of motions, special reports and statements and even got Jeremy Corbyn's support for our *Take-Back-The-Tap* to nationalise water campaign. We have also elected our new National President, Barbara Plant. Huge congratulations, Barbara. I look forward to working with you. Commiserations, too, to Sheila, David, Andy and June, who were all excellent candidates and we look forward to working with you all, too.

Congress, we have relied heavily on your goodwill and your co-operation. Typically, you have given us that generously. To reinforce what I said this morning, we will look at how we can do things better and smarter, including the length of Congress, motions, statements, qualifications and CEC speaking times, all with a view to making things run even more smoothly. An email survey is coming out to all

delegates for your feedback, and I will also ask regional secretaries to feed back from their committees so that we can get things right for next time. But we got there, Conference, and that was a remarkable achievement.

I want to thank my national team, of whom I couldn't be more proud, as they have worked until 9 o'clock for many nights for months in the run-up to Congress. They got here on Thursday to set up so that the venue, exhibition area and this Conference hall looked as good as it did, and they will be working again late tonight taking everything down and working again tomorrow to get it back to London. They have worked until midnight every single night this week updating the agenda, writing speeches and the Chair's scripts. So Anna Barnes, Steve Short, Laurence Turner, Charlotte Nicholls, JPD, Cath, Kevin Panton, Lisa, Allan, Alex, Sarah, Emma, Tom, Sue, Lauren, Paula, Hills, Lindsey, Dan, Rehana, Justin, Jude, Mel, Ross, Monica, Barry, Helen, Gary and Karen, thank you, so much for your fantastic efforts.  
(Applause)

I also want to thank the brilliant Standing Orders Committee sitting *here* in the front, chaired magnificently by Helen again — congratulations for your 12 years— and to Barry Smith, as the secretary, and all of the members for your hard work, often in challenging circumstances this year. Thank you, graciously, so much.

I want to thank T5 for the brilliant stage set, the screens, the lights and the cameras. Just as Margaret said, the venue staff have always been cheery with a smile and helping us on our way. The GMB volunteer stewards have ensured that everything has been safe and secure. And I give thanks to the CEC for your speeches this week and your unstinting and incredible support of me through the last 12 months.

I thank John Swainson, the General Member Auditor; to Phyllis and Michael, our verbatim shorthand writers. How on earth they sit and take all this down and produce the transcript, I just do not know. It is an incredible achievement. I also want to thank my PA, Wendy, who is my right hand and my left arm for every single working day. She is so loyal, so professional and such a true friend. Wendy, thank you so much. (Applause)

I want to thank our brilliant Vice President, Malcolm Sage, for getting us through this enormous amount of business, despite your own personal difficulties this week. You never complained about. In fact, you never even mentioned it. Thank you so much, Malcolm. (Applause)

Thanks must go to Margaret for stepping up as Vice Chair when we needed someone. She did so so graciously, with such care and such gentleness. Margaret, you are an absolute pleasure to work with. I am so proud of you and so is your union.  
(Applause)

There is someone else I want to thank because it is their last GMB Congress. It is the retiring Regional Secretary for the Midland & East Coast Region, Andy Worth. (*A standing ovation*) Andy has not only been a fixture at GMB Congress as a regional secretary for many, many years. He was a delegate back in the day for many years. He was often controversial and often having a go but always fighting for the gas members he represented then, and always since then has fought for his members in

the Midland & East Coast Region. Have a long, happy and health retirement, mate. You bloody deserve it! (*Cheers and applause*)

A delegate asked me last night, saying, “Tim, do you get nervous when you speak?” I said, “Do you know, you always get nervous when you speak when the people you are speaking to really matter and you know them?” So, of course, I am always nervous when I come to the rostrum to speak to my friends and colleagues in GMB Congress. But this year I have had added pressure, the added pressure of my daughter, Ellie, working away in the Midland & East Coast Regional crowd, so thank you sweetheart. It’s been a pleasure to see you all week. (*Applause*)

Congress, we have had a brilliant year, growing our membership again and we are back where we need to be, bucking the trend. Our finances are in a stronger place than they have ever been before. Now, we have an agenda that you have set to take us on to the next level for the coming year. Like all and everyone of you, sometimes this job can be tough. It can be very tough. That’s where the love and support from my gorgeous wife, Mandy, has meant so much to me; always giving for me, always giving for our union, and even being here this week despite our son, Nick, doing his GCSEs as we speak. Yesterday and today she is and has been here and he was up in Leeds doing his exams. Thank you, darling! I love you so much. (*Applause*)

I want to finish by thanking you, all of you, everyone of you, for your warmth, for your help, for your support, for your advice and for your friendship. I have sat *there* and I have watched as you have come to the rostrum quaking, with your knees knocking, but then as you grow and deliver your speech with such passion, professionalism, skill and pride, but it is me who is proud, proud that you are here representing our brilliant and loyal members; proud of what you do for our members day in and day out; proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with sisters and brothers in this hall and across our brilliant Union.

As we prepare for Congress 2019, back here in Brighton, please, leave here invigorated. Leave here and walk 10ft tall in the knowledge of the brilliant and incredible work that you do for our members day in and day out. We are a force for good. You are a force for good with the incredibly good work that you do. But many of you will see me before Brighton next year. You will see me in your regions or your workplaces as I am the activist General Secretary talking, yes, but listening, more importantly, to you, our members. Our brilliant strength is that this week we have worked together. We debated together, we stood together and that is how we will always go forward, exactly as Margaret Gregg said, as a family; forward with utter recognition and respect of our traditions; utter recognition on the shoulders of giants on whom we stand. We have used that bedrock to meet head on the threats and challenges that our members face day in and day out.

Have a wonderful year, a safe journey home and let’s build a 21<sup>st</sup> century union together. Thank you. (*A standing ovation*)

**THE VICE PRESIDENT:** Congress, the next part of our Closing Ceremony is in two parts. We will, first, have a short slide showing some highlights of Congress 2018. (*Video shown*)

Congress, now, as a tradition, we will formally close Congress with the singing of *The Red Flag*. (*The Red Flag was sung*)

*The 2018 Congress concluded.*