

GMB

CONGRESS 2011

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

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Held in:

**The Brighton Centre,
Brighton**

on:

**Sunday, 5th June 2011
Monday, 6th June 2011
Tuesday, 7th June 2011
and
Wednesday, 8th June 2011**

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**PROCEEDINGS
DAY ONE
(Sunday, 5th June 2011)**

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FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS

SUNDAY 5TH JUNE 2011

MORNING SESSION

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning all. To delegates and visitors, welcome to Brighton. I ask all delegates to check that their mobile phones are off, otherwise there is a fine. It is going up with inflation this year.

Congress, this year we will be starting Congress with a video montage showing regional and national events and some of the campaigns from last year. Please dim the lights. *(Video Montage shown) (Applause)* Congress, that shows only part of the campaigns that we have had. That's our big society, looking after each other.

BANNER CEREMONY

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I now move to the next part of the agenda, and this year we have asked London Region to form the Banner Party. I call Congress to order and be upstanding for the Banner. *(Congress was upstanding for the Banner)* I have two young friends with me, Scarlett McNicol and Hamish McNicol.

I thank each and every one of the Banner Party and my region, the London Region, for doing such an excellent job.

I now ask you to look at the details of the fire, safety and evacuation procedures on page 115 in the Final Agenda and Congress Guide Document. Please take time to look at these and familiarise yourself with your nearest exits. Once again, I thank all delegates and, in particular, new delegates who are here, who we have a vast number of this year. Our visitors in the public gallery, welcome to each and every one of you.

I now introduce you the platform. On my right is my Vice President and saviour, Malcolm Sage. Also sitting next to him is Kathleen Walker-Shaw, our European Officer, who will be helping Malcolm with the lights. So watch yourselves. Welcome, Kathleen. You do a great job in Brussels. I don't know where we would be at times without you.

On my left, I don't think you know the man but I will introduce him all the same, is our General Secretary and Treasurer, Paul Kenny. *(Applause)* Sitting next to Paul is Dolores O'Donoghue, our Executive Policy Officer, and she and our team puts us altogether in one piece for this week. I would like to say thank you to all staff who are involved.

We do have some various guests and visitors. We have the General Member Auditors, when I find out where they are. I would like to welcome Ian Burkett, Steve Dery and Albert Haynes – they are all from the Midland & East Coast Region – who will count all the votes.

I welcome now a very special guest, who is an ex-regional secretary and a great number of you know him, John Cope from the London Region. Welcome, John. *(Applause)*

I now welcome the man who left the President standing on the sidewalk this morning, I welcome Vic Baines, from the Midland & East Coast Region. You'll pay for that, Vic, I'm telling you. We have also got as a regional guest Vinny Bloor from Birmingham & West Midlands Region.

Of course, we would be nowhere without our verbatim shorthandwriters – how they distinguish the speakers sometimes, I do not know – Michael Thear and Phyllis Hilder. Welcome. That completes the announcements.

The Congress Hall has an induction loop system fitted, and to use this facility you will need to set your hearing aid to the “T” position. Let's call it the “Turner” position, so you will remember that. There have been no requests for signers this year.

Firstly, could I extend a warm welcome to everyone again. I remind all delegates that Congress sessions are transmitted on GMB Congress TV. This means that your speech will be transmitted live over the internet through the GMB National website. Please make sure you remember to state your name and region clearly. This is especially important this year as we hope to show your name up on the screen. Please also mention if you are a first time speaker.

I ask delegates to take a moment to check that you have three important documents. The first is a one page Outline Programme. The second is the Income & Expenditure Statement. These show the annual accounts. The third document is the Final Agenda & Congress Guide. As last year, the Final Agenda & Congress Guide have been combined. This documents includes: motions and CEC rule amendments remaining on the agenda; Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1; SOC guidelines for Congress business, including time limits for speakers; representation statements for Congress; composite motions and fringe meetings, exhibitions and seating plan. All documents are printed on environmentally friendly paper and there are recycling bins in the Hall for paper and plastic.

Congress, there is free Fair Trade tea and coffee throughout Congress for all credential holders available from 2 Bar in the Exhibition Area. Please remember to show your credentials badge.

I would like to thank our sponsors Pellacraft for all the Congress refreshments; Thompsons Solicitors for the delegate bags; Simpsons Solicitors for the lanyards and Digby Brown Solicitors for sponsoring the GMB Internet Café in the Exhibition Area.

ROLL CALL

THE PRESIDENT: Would Regional Secretaries please notify the Congress Office of any changes to your delegation.

Could I inform Congress that the names of the Regional Tellers who have been appointed are now shown on the screen. *(Pause)* Can I remind Tellers that they have

to stay in the Congress Hall during all sessions, and that delegates must be in their allocated seats when a vote is taken.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now give a demonstration on eligibility for voting. I would like everyone in the hall to put your hands up, please. Could the following now please put your hands down: visitors, guests, auditors, full-time officials, regional secretaries, national officers and section secretaries, GMB staff and members of the CEC. Only those of you who still have your hands up now are allowed to vote. Thank you.

The members of the Standing Orders Committee and the CEC Observers to the Standing Orders Committee are now being shown on the screen.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. Could I please congratulate Helen Johnson on her election as Chair of the Standing Orders Committee for a fourth year. Very well done, Helen. (*Applause*)

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1

THE PRESIDENT: I now call Helen to move Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1, which begins on page 21 of the Final Agenda & Congress Guide document.

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Standing Orders Committee Chair, Midland & East Coast Region): I formally move SOC Report No. 1. President and Congress, you will find a copy of SOC Report No. 1 in your Final Agenda starting at page 21. I formally move adoption of that report and in doing so the SOC would like to thank delegates and their regional secretaries for agreeing 23 composite motions that also appear in your Final Agenda, starting at page 92. Would colleagues please note that one further composite motion has been agreed, Composite 21, covering Motions 45 and 46. A copy of this composite will be distributed to delegates later today.

Would colleagues also please note the long-standing guidelines for Congress Business on page 15 of your Final Agenda. This will help all of you, especially new delegates, in understanding the procedures and the guidelines that the President and the SOC work to.

Withdrawn motions. The SOC has been informed that the following motions have been withdrawn: Motion 5, Union Democracy, standing in the name of Midland & East Coast Region; Motion 6, Accountability and the NAU, standing in the name of Midland & East Coast Region, and Motion 206, European Court of Human Rights, standing in the name of South Western Region. Would Congress delegates please note that if any further motions are to be withdrawn during the week, the following procedure should be adhered to. (1) Notify your regional secretary; (2) The regional secretary should then inform the SOC in writing that the motion has been withdrawn; (3) the SOC will then report the matter to Congress so that all delegates will be aware of the position and will be able to follow the Congress Agenda.

Existing policy motions. President and Congress, in 2008 recommendation 14 of the CEC Special Report on the *Framework for the Future of the GMB Moving Forward*, which had been carried by Congress 2007, came into effect. Motions which were

existing policy were endorsed by Congress without the need for debate. This procedure has continued since then. Therefore, the Central Executive Council has advised the SOC which motions are in line with existing policy. The SOC has accepted this advice and is recommending that these motions are put to Congress to be endorsed without the need for debate. You will find that the existing policy motions are listed in SOC Report No. 1 at page 23 of your Final Agenda. You may also find it helpful to refer to the detailed report from the CEC, which is at page 108 of the Final Agenda. This explains when the policy in question was reached. The letters “EP” also appear by the side of each such motion in the Final Agenda.

Motions out of order. The SOC has ruled that the following motions are out of order for debate: Motions 21, 22, 23 and 24 all concern the political work of the GMB. They propose formal structural changes to the way in which this work is carried out. The motions would all require rule amendments to put them into effect but no rule amendment has been proposed and the motions are out of order for this reason.

Motion 26 – Reserved Seat for Equality on Regional Committees. The motion calls for a reserved seat for equality on Regional Committees, which would also require amendment to rules 19 and 20. There are no proposed rule amendments and this motion is also out of order for that reason.

Motion 30 – RMA Conference. The motion refers to the rules governing retired member visitors to RMA Conference. In accordance with the guidelines for Congress business, the subject matter of the motion ought to be considered by a more appropriate body, the RMA Conference.

Motions 140, 141 and 143 all concern very specific elements of the terms and conditions of members working for particular employers. In accordance with the Guidelines for Congress Business, the subject matter of the motions ought to be considered by a more appropriate body. In the cases of motions 140 and 141, this should be the NHS Advisory Committee. In the case of Motion 143, this should be the Southern Cross Advisory Committee.

Motion 205 – Policy. It is not clear from the wording of the motion what it means and what it is seeking to instruct the Union to do. The motion is incomprehensible and is out of order for this reason.

Emergency motions. The SOC has accepted the following emergency motions as being in order for debate. Emergency Motion 1: Con Dem’s Broken Promise to Protect the Low Paid, standing in the name of South Western Region. Congress will be advised when this will be heard.

DVDs. The SOC has given permission for a DVD to be shown: The European Report Video Greeting From Our MEPs.

President and Congress, I formally move adoption of SOC Report No. 1.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Does anyone wish to speak on the Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1? (*No Response*) Do you all agree to accept the Report? (*Agreed*)

Standing Orders Report No. 1 was Accepted.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, I now call on our President, Mary Turner MBE, to address Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Congress. As I have already welcomed you, I would like to do that again.

This is the first Congress we've had since we agreed to add more delegates, which we did to give more activists the chance to come to Congress and to better reflect the diversity of our Union. It's terrific to have you with us this week. The weather has been glorious so let's hope it lasts, especially for President's Night on Wednesday, which is on the pier, not the one that burnt down. That's got to be repaired.

Congress, we've got a packed agenda this week and it's a very important agenda, important because of the challenges facing our members and our public services.

I said to Congress last year: watch out for the Tories. I said that the Tories want to move us into austerity, to decimate the public sector, and to strangle the recovery. And what's happened in the last 12 months? Billions of pounds have been slashed from public spending on services and welfare. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have been put at risk, with hundreds of thousands of low-paid council workers – teaching assistants, secretaries, school dinner ladies and other support staff – still waiting for the £250 that Cameron and Clegg promised them. “Well protect the low-paid from the pay freeze”, they said. Well, that was a ruddy lie to start with. Meanwhile, the economy has now completely stalled, thanks to the cuts, as we knew it would.

I was in Ireland just last week where the cuts started in 2009. Has the austerity worked there? No. Are a lot of people suffering? Yes. But can I just say thank you to everyone in Ireland, who made me extremely welcome, including David Kearney and all our representatives and members for doing so, while back home, Congress, the Con-Dems are carrying on regardless. It's death by a thousand cuts, including cuts to Sure Start Centres – and the NHS, one of Labour's greatest achievements.

Congress, I told you that the Tories were still the nasty party, nothing has changed, and now they are the very, very nasty party indeed.

The CEC's Statement on Public Services, which is due to be discussed later this week, makes it clear that it is the vulnerable who suffer the most from the spending cuts, because it's the vulnerable who rely most on our public services. The Tories used to talk a lot about “Victorian values” and Thatcher's values. It's the Victorian England that they're trying to take us back to – to a country where there is no welfare state, where there are no public services and where the Devil takes the hindmost. What an absolute disgrace! This is just what Thatcher did to our members in the 1980s and 1990s. Some people in this hall will be too young to remember, but it's important to know what Thatcher's privatisation actually meant. It mean removing worker's rights. They sold off the cleaning and catering first and our members' pay was

slashed. Do you think that was fair? They took away their holidays? Do you think that was fair? We don't. They took away their sick pay. Do you think that was fair? No, it wasn't. They cut their hours, but the cleaners still had to do the same amount of cleaning. Do you think that was fair? We don't. They took away the retaining fee from our staff working in schools, leaving them in limbo over the summer when the schools were closed. Do you think that was fair? No, we don't. Well, no, it wasn't fair and it isn't fair, but that is what it meant to be in Thatcher's Britain. Still today there are people on poverty pay who are expected to deliver a first-class service, and our people really do deliver a first-class service.

This is what "Victorian values" amount to: No public services, only charity, if you're lucky. Do we need to remind David Cameron that we don't want to rely on charity for treatment when we're sick, and we don't want to rely on charity to provide an education for our children. Congress, the fact is that we don't need David Cameron to tell us about the big society because we are the big society. It's called the working class. We've always given up our time, we've always fought injustice and we've always looked after one another. This Union is second to none in the work it does, which was demonstrated in the video that you saw this morning, from George Dove and his family, and which is demonstrated by Maggie Hughes and Richard Moore, who we will hear from later in the week. All of this good work sits alongside our public services. It doesn't replace them. But for the Government it's just about cuts, cut and cuts. We soon saw David Cameron's true spots when he got the keys to No. 10. We heard no more "Call me Dave", no more "Hug a hoodie", just a Bullingdon Club flashman, who's tricked his way to the top. As for Clegg, what a hope! I laughed when he was caught on the microphone saying to Cameron that, "They won't have anything to bloody disagree on" at the next election, because that's all true. Clegg would sell his party to keep in power. In fact, he's sell his granny to keep in power. He is now trying to tell us that he's going to save the NHS. What a joke! So why did his Clegg and his bloody cronies vote for the Bill in Parliament if they so cared about our NHS? It's because Clegg is a Tory, a Tory through and through. He will do whatever the Tories tell him if it helps him to stay in Downing Street.

Do you remember, Congress, that last year I sang the song by Rolf Harris, his "Two little boys" – those of you who were there may remember it – Cameron and Clegg:

*"Do you think I would leave you crying
When there's room on my horse so blue?"*

Well, Congress, it's now a pantomime horse that they've got, and it's obvious who's bringing up the rear and who's got his nose up the other one's arse. (*Laughter and applause*)

This week, Boris Johnson – he says he didn't get a ticket for the Olympics. Not much he didn't – has just put in a petition to Downing Street about dangerous dogs. Well, he went to the right place to give in that petition on dangerous dogs, because the two most dangerous dogs are going to accept the invitation – Cameron and Clegg – or else the Tories are the rottweilers and the poodles are the Lib-Dems.

Seriously, Congress, we've got some very important debates to get through this week, including CEC Statements on the economy, which I would ask all of you to read – it will take time, but it is a document you need to read – the political situation, public services and the future of our NHS.

One of the issues we have to confront is this Government's privatisation of our schools and hospitals by the backdoor. The point is that they are ratcheting up the number of academies and free schools and watering down the school admissions code. Those schools are not free. The money for them is going to be taken from our local schools, so before we know it, we'll have selection through our backdoor. Meanwhile, the Government has announced a pause on the health reforms. Well, if they think we believe that, they think we'll believe anything, because there's been no pause. They've carried on. It's a so-called "pause" before they let private equity get their paws on our NHS. In fact, the feeding frenzy has already begun. We've heard Cameron's advisor boasting to American healthcare companies about the NHS being shown "no mercy". He means it. After all, look at what's happened in Southern Cross, after the care homes got exploited by privatisation and private equity. Look at the worry and anxiety now facing some of the most vulnerable elderly in our society. This isn't a reform of the NHS, Congress. It's the destruction of our NHS, and we have to campaign and campaign to stop it happening.

The Tories may have sold off the council houses but our public services are not for sale. Remember, the bankers' crisis was made in America but the NHS was made in the UK. We don't need advice from American healthcare. When they provide free healthcare for all their people, then they can give us advice and not before. In fact, we don't need any lessons from the US. In the United States working people are lucky to get two weeks' holiday a year, and no maternity or paternity leave, which is what deregulation brings you.

Congress, we want to work with the Labour Party to undo the damage that the Con-Dems are doing, with a Labour Party that isn't afraid to stand up against the media barons, a Labour Party that can reconnect with working-class voters, which the last election showed it needs to. We want to work with a Labour Party that can deliver real jobs, a living wage, justice on pleural plaques and Cammell Laird, more homes and a decent education for all. We've got to help to carry on the fight for the sake of the vulnerable, and we've made a start.

I want to thank every single one of you who attended the demonstration on 26th March. I want to thank all those who couldn't get to London but did it regionally, and those of you in your communities who did a great deal. On behalf of myself and our Union I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. It was the proudest day and it outdid any previous march, but we are going to do more, and we've got to do more. Colleagues, our public services should be run by the people, for the people and not for profit. Thank you. Now lets move on and do the job. (*Applause*)

VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. I would now like to call on Audrey Harry MBE, Midland & East Coast Region, to give the Vote of Thanks to our President.

SIS. A. HARRY MBE (CEC, Manufacturing): Congress, I am a CEC member of Midland & East Coast Region. President and Congress, I am highly honoured to be moving the Vote of Thanks to our President, Sis. Mary Turner. For those of you who

know me, you will know that I don't mince my words, so I'll say it straight from the heart. Mary, I have not known you for a very long time, but in the short time that I have known you it is clear to me, as it is to others, that you are a very special friend indeed. Your kindness is far-reaching, your hand of friendship extends not only across the GMB but across the world. Your consideration towards others from all walks of life is measured in everything that the GMB stands for – democracy, equality, fairness and, above all, improving the quality of life to all our members and their families. I am sure that everyone here today will agree with me that you will push aside obstacles and barriers to help anyone in need, whether it is work-related, a personal crisis, campaigning for any just cause or just simply being a friend to someone.

Mary, from a dinner lady to President of the GMB is an outstanding achievement in itself, never mind your enormous contribution to the trade union movement. For those of you here today, who can't remember Mary as a dinner lady, let me tell you she fought tooth and nail for free school meals for thousands of children across the country. Mary, I can't imagine how many parents have poured their blessings on you. If every there is a good cause to fight, rest assured that Mary will be there.

Mary, I am sure that your tireless involvement in the GMB has only been possible with the tremendous love and support you received from your husband, Denny, and your family. A very big thank you goes out to them for sharing you with the GMB. At this point, I had better also thank my husband, Gideon, for sharing me with the GMB.

Mary, your Union honours you today and bestows the glory on you that you so well deserve. It gives me great pleasure to present you with a small token of appreciation from the Midland & East Coast Region for the good work you are doing for our Union, the GMB.

Congress, please join me in saluting our President, Mary Turner, Member of the British Empire. *(A presentation was made amidst a standing ovation)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Audrey, for that very welcome address.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, thank you very much, indeed. I am extremely proud and I thank my region who have supported me all the way down the line, as you all have. I regard everyone of you as friends. Sometimes we disagree about issues, but that's life. My family have been very supportive, and I couldn't do this job and neither could any of you out *there* without the support of your families. We are dedicated and they come along with it. Audrey, thank you for those lovely words, and that very pleasant surprise gift from your Region. Andy, thank you. Vic, you're forgiven. *(Laughter)*

I want to tell Congress something. After Congress last year, and as you know Audrey mentioned it, we have led a campaign on obesity, free school meals and diabetes. This, to me, is a very important campaign for our Union. It is our young children who are suffering and we need to protect them. As you know, I am not a dietician, I have never professed to be one, but I knew it was wrong what we did with the privatisation of our school meals. So we as a union, a general union, took the mantle and we

decided that we were going to campaign on this matter because it was right. Last year I was asked, on behalf of the British Dietetic Association, if I would accept the honour on behalf of my union as their honorary president. It was their tribute to you and the Union to say thank you for the work that we did to keep obesity and healthy free school meals on the agenda. They were extremely proud, and I was proud to accept that honour on your behalf. So thank you on behalf of them. *(Applause)*

OBITUARIES

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I now call on a very sad time in our Congress to stand in silence as a mark of respect to all departed colleagues. The names will be shown on the screen.

(The Congress stood in silent tribute)

Congress, I would like to pay a special tribute to Mrs. Desai, who sadly passed away last December. Mrs. Desai was a true inspiration to us all. GMB honoured her by presenting her with the Gold Badge of Congress here in Brighton in 2007. It was awarded to her as a recognition of her outstanding dedication and determination during the dispute at George Ward's Grunwick photo processing factory in North West London in the 1970s.

The dispute started in the summer of 1976 when Mrs. Desai and her son resigned from the factory after refusing to work compulsory overtime. Mrs. Desai set about picketing the factory and encouraging workers to sign a petition for trade union recognition.

The predominantly Asian and East African female workforce at the factory were subjected to harassment, violence and intimidation during the two-year dispute. She and the strikers were members of APEX the union, which later amalgamated with the GMB.

To this day the Grunwick dispute is still seen as an important landmark in the history of British industrial action and the struggle for equal rights. She had a presence and a passion for fighting social and economic injustice in whatever form it came. I am privileged to have spent time with Mrs. Desai during that dispute as well. Her passing will be mourned but her inspiration and her life will be celebrated. For a small woman she was a giant amongst men.

Conference, before we begin our first debate, I would like to explain a point of procedure. To save time, I will take motions in groups. When I call the groups you will come up to the chairs in the front to speak on your motion. There are two rostrums, one on the right and one on the left, with chairs in front for the movers and seconders to wait for their turn to speak. Please use both rostrums. I will then ask the CEC speaker to reply to groups, rather than deal with each motion individually. The daily session Programme will show the grouping. Where the CEC is supporting a motion I will advise Congress of this. Where the CEC's position is something other than straight support, for instance, support with qualification, support with a statement, seek withdrawal or reference, I will call on someone to give the CEC's recommendation as a reply to the debate.

Could I remind Congress that a large “X” in front of a motion in the Final Agenda and Programme means that the SOC has ruled the motion “Out of Order” as reported in the Standing Orders Report, Number 1. Existing Policy motions are marked in the Final Agenda with a large “EP” against them. These, as outlined by the Standing Orders Report No. 1. It will be listed in the detailed programme as they will not be debated.

Just to remind delegates, when I call your name, please come down to the front straightaway ready to speak. If we change the agenda, I will give you plenty of warning and ask for your agreement, naturally, as Congress. If you do not come to the front there is a penalty to be paid. You will not be paying it but your regional secretary will be paying a fine, out of his own pocket. If you don’t want him to pay a fine, please make sure that you are at the front. If you do want him to pay a fine, then all well and good. The penalty is high, is it not, Andy? Malcolm?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, President.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RULE AMENDMENTS

PAYING EXPENSES (CECRA1)

COMMISSION QUARTERAGE PAYMENTS TO BRANCHES (CECRA2)

PAYMENTS TO BRANCHES (CECRA3)

CECRA1 Rule 33

Delete Clause 2 of rule 33

Rule to read:

Rule 33 Paying expenses

1 The Central Executive Council will set scales of payments for expenses, fares, subsistence and loss of working time for members, representatives and officials who carry out our business.

CECRA2 Rule 34

Delete Rule

Rule to read:

Rule 34 Commission quarterage payments to branches

Rule deleted by Congress 2011

CECRA3 Rule 35.5

Line 2, at end of first bullet point add after “or payments”

“otherwise provided for in these rules”

At end of clause 5 add

“, in line with financial rules set by the Central Executive Council.”

Clause to read:

5 Branch funds must not be used:

- to pay benefits or payments otherwise provided for in these rules;
- to fund activities which are meant to go against policies; or
- for any political object or purpose.

The funds can be used to make special payments (honorariums) to branch officials, in line with financial rules set by the Central Executive Council.

(Carried)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, these three rule amendments are of a technical nature, tidying up the Rule Book. CECRA1 and CECRA2 give effect to the decision of Congress 2007 to bring all branches into a common payment system. CECRA2 is the old rule 34, which is abolished, as it dealt with the old system of expenses and branch commission. The Rule Book since 2007 has stated that the old rules would fall away from the first quarter 2011. These rule changes now formally delete the old rules.

CECRA3 corrects a line in the Rule Book which did not make sense after we translated the Rule Book into plain English. Thanks to Braintree & Bocking branch for pointing this out. The new rule brings back into the Rule Book the old definition of what payments can't be made by branches, and makes specific reference to financial rules laid down by the CEC for branches. Congress, please accept CEC Rule Amendments 1, 2 and 3.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I have the rule changes formally seconded?

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: I formally second.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to speak on those? *(No response)* Does Conference agree? I will put proposed rule changes 1, 2 and 3 to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

CECRA1, CECRA2 and CECRA3 were CARRIED

**UNION ORGANISATION: CONGRESS
CONGRESS PAPERWORK
MOTION 1**

1. CONGRESS PAPERWORK

This Congress asks the CEC to make available paperwork (General Secretary's Report and other relevant documents) on the GMB website during Congress, to enable webcast users to participate fully in proceedings.

YORKSHIRE COAL STAFFS BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire

(Carried)

BRO. L. SIMPSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, this is a simple motion with a short speech, and you will all be glad about that. The motion has been put forward to allow members to have access to Congress paperwork online and that having this would ensure that members are able to follow proceedings more closely. While we understand the qualification is that fully participating members need to follow the same procedures as we all have when we put ourselves forward for election, I think the sentiment of the motion may have been slightly misunderstood.

The motion has been put forward to enable members watching the web cast to understand what is going on, to enable members to read documents being debated, and really to feel more included in what is happening. The GMB Congress is vitally important and I believe that many members do not really understand what happens here.

I attended Congress for the first time last year and, as such, encouraged our members to watch Congress TV. The feedback we received as a branch is that members did not really understand what was happening. They said that they felt it was a lot of people talking and that they could have benefited from having access to the same information that we have here. This is why I wanted to put this motion forward as I believe that members should know that there is a lot more done in this Union than the day-to-day activities that members see. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

SIS. A. HORSMAN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I second Motion 1, Congress Paperwork. I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I believe that from having the experience of watching Congress on the internet that having the availability of Congress paperwork would enable members to follow closely procedures and understand what is happening. Congress is probably the most important date in the GMB calendar and members should be encouraged to engage in the internet broadcast to enable them to understand the importance of the debates held. Having access to all the documents that we have here would make it easier and more interesting to follow. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I ask Paul Kenny to reply on behalf of the CEC.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good morning. My knees are playing me up already. God knows what they will be like by Wednesday.

This is actually a really good resolution, because over the past five years we have sought to try and expand the democracy and accountability of the organisation. This actually picks up on a particular point. There is no reason, it seems to me, why we cannot publish the agenda and the other items so that people can follow it on the web cast, but I do want to make the qualification that if people want to participate fully, and I mean those who are not in the GMB, the answer is to get in the GMB. That is the best way that you can participate in the activities of our union. There is a web cast. Both the mover and seunder were talking about the web cast. People are watching it live now, but when you go back you can look at your own speeches. All of those are available. All the documents from previous Congress can be looked up.

The key point about this is that there is no reason, frankly, and it is a very simple task, why we cannot put up these documents alongside, on *there*, so that people at home can read them. It is a very good idea. Thank you very much for that. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) Can I put it to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried. Thank you, Paul.

Motion 1 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, Motion 5 has been withdrawn, as you are aware from the Standing Orders Report, as has Motion 6. I now call London Region to move Motion 7.

**UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL
RULE BOOK
MOTION 7**

7. RULE BOOK

This Congress says on the produced new Rulebook in 2008 on response to the CEC document, Congress agreed a copy and amendments would be sent to branches as there are branches who are not on email.

Congress asks why this is not happening?

EAST DEREHAM BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. J. SMITH (London): President, General Secretary and Congress, when the new English and easy reading Rule Book was approved, I moved the CEC Statement on this and accepted it on the basis that I had an amendment about the Rule Book. Anyhow, at that Congress I moved within that statement that the Rule Book be forwarded on to branches because not all branches are on the internet. At that time, it was agreed in the reply that this would be done. Congress, on two occasions I have requested the amendments accordingly for my branch and to date they have not been forthcoming. I ask you to accept this resolution and I would like to know the reasons why this is not happening. I move.

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): Congress, I second Motion 7 – Rule Book. My branch is a small branch. We do have email facilities, but I am sure there are other branches that do not have these facilities. Therefore, getting hold of copies of any new inserts of new rule changes, however minor, is of great importance to the branches and officials. We are led to believe that the amendments were sent out. If this is not happening, then it should be. Without the amendments, how can we get things right? That is what it is about. Congress, I second this motion.

UPDATING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORMS MOTION 14

14. UPDATING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORMS

This Congress calls for the updating of both paper and electronic membership application forms in order to gather essential information for the better servicing of members, particularly on equality issues, and to re-emphasise the importance of personal contact details (and the need to inform the Union of changes thereto).

Valuable time is lost by both Officers and Lay Officials in the pursuit of missing basic information on members, and, with the Union's increasing focus on gender, sexuality and disability issues, there is a growing need for the sensitive gathering and application of such data if we are to respond accordingly.

Congress therefore instructs the CEC to initiate moves to redesign membership application forms which may, after appropriate consultation be introduced as soon as possible.

NORWICH GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. K. BARKER (London): President and Congress, I move Motion 14 – Updating Membership Applications Forms. This motion will, hopefully, be supported by Congress because it makes common sense. Basically, this motion is asking for the Union to collect more information about members. I feel that the more information we have, the better we will be able to support our members. After all, when I started as a shop steward it was drummed into me that at my workplace I had to learn my members, learn their weaknesses and strengths. If we update this membership form, then all we will be doing is going back to basics, learning more about our memberships and finding out about their needs. Information gained by updating the membership forms will help enhance Norwich General Branch's ability to help its members. Being a general branch, our members are from all kinds of employment – care workers, National Grid employees and a simple factory worker like me. It is a branch with around 1,600 members from all over East Anglia, comprising of a large number of workplaces which have a few or even individual members in them. The branch would surely gain from more information. The more information we have, the better we will be able to judge the needs of our membership, particularly initiatives like equality. It wouldn't take a lot of expense if we start by updating the electronic membership form. Why not start with the electronic membership form and then move to the paper forms. By starting with the electronic forms, we could gain information, gauge and, I believe, show that extra information will enhance the service we give. This information could be key to opening doors to more membership. The main purpose of the information for the Norwich branch is to get a better picture of our membership within the branch to make it easier for things like our website to give relevant information to our members. We have even just added a Facebook and Twitter link to our website to try and give the membership a better service. More information would also aid accompanying reps when they represent individuals, not only in Norwich General but in all branches. These lay officials may – no, I will go as far as to say “will” – be called on more and more in this economic climate. The information will greatly aid them. Surely, this motion is asking the GMB to go and get more information so we can map and plan the membership and use this information to highlight our strengths and weaknesses. So let's improve our membership forms. Let's us get the more information we need and go forward to

grow this Union, thereby securing the GMB's future for all our members, new, old and future generations. Please support this motion.

BRO. A. ROBERTS (London): Congress, I second Motion 14. I will not take long at the rostrum. I ask you to deliberate on what my colleague who moved the motion said. We, as a union, are always forward thinking, and I must admit that we do try hard to stay ahead of the game. Our membership forms have been around for quite a while, and I believe it is time we looked at the form and put a few more details on it to help stewards do a better job. Also, what with the internet and the electronic age we now live in, I feel it is time we moved on. Thank you.

ICT AND THE 21ST CENTURY MOTION 15

15. ICT AND THE 21ST CENTURY

Congress we request that the ICT of each region is to be brought fully into the 21st Century, some regions have very easy to navigate websites to use with up to date information; while some have very poor information for members that is, in places, years out of date or so confusing they are impossible to use.

We also ask that branches and more importantly branch secretaries are asked what they want or need in the design of the websites. There is so much information out there and so much that is now legally able to be sent by email which will save the GMB and branches great amounts in postage, this should be a priority especially if we want to be the forefront of unions for our members and potential new members.

B40 BOURNEMOUTH BRANCH
Southern Region

(Referred)

Motion 15 was formally moved and formally seconded

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does Conference accept reference back? *(Agreed)*

Motion 15 was Referred.

THORNE CREDIT UNION MOTION 16

16. THORNE CREDIT UNION

This Congress calls for the CEC to actively promote membership of the Thorne Credit Union to all GMB members.

All regions of the GMB should have the same access and benefits to this Credit Union, controlled and managed by GMB members.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Referred)

BRO. M. COPPIN (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 16. President and Congress, first of all a quote: "No institution except the Church does more good for people than credit unions." That quote was said by Wright Pattman of the

Federation of Credit Unions. Congress, in 1844 Rochdale workers and weavers created a democratic consumer co-operative, establishing the first credit union on the same principles we use today. We have moved on a little since 1844, and since the inception in 1999 of the Thorne Credit Union, hopefully some day to be known as the GMB Credit Union. Although the users and uses of our credit union have developed, and the strengths and safeguards have advanced, the principles remain the same today. It's our bank, it's our money, it's ours and it belongs to GMB Credit Union members. We help ourselves by helping our own. I can't understand why any GMB member would use a bank or a building society, and I certainly don't get why anyone would use loan sharks like Wonga with its thousands of a per cent interest.

All of your normal day-to-day money uses, including your GMB branch moneys can be sorted by the GMB Credit Union. The credit union provides low interest loans, pays the dividend on your savings, better than the average high street brokers, gives a pre-loaded credit card, pays BACS payments and allows you to save up to £85,000 at the moment, and I should think that that would easily cover most of us. We continually recruit and retain GMB members. You can't be in the GMB Credit Union unless you are a GMB member or a GMB family member. We are fair and ethical, unlike the banks. We have a membership of almost 2,000 and currently hold £2 million of members' money. We have so far lent £10 million to our members, we are owned by GMB members and regulated by the FSA. All your money is protected. We get discounts on consumer products, you get £5 for introducing a new members and free life cover, online banking and so forth.

For your branch, branch commission accounts can be managed fully transparently and recorded. There is full access by internet and phone, branch growth and retention, full financial flexibility is at the end of the phone or email, all of which is accounted and available by you to print off and attach to your quarterly returns. It is simple. The list goes on. We already have two regions involved and two others are interested. Please ask your region to have a look at us and you will come on board. The most important rule behind the credit union is the common bond. You must be a GMB member or a GMB family member. Thank you.

SIS. C. HARWOOD (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am a first-time delegate to Congress. (*Applause*) Instant access loans with huge percentage payback costs are, again, on the increase. As you might expect, GMB members are not exempt from financial hardship. Difficult times can come to us all. The most popular loan these days is not a mortgage or a car loan but it is a get-me-through to pay day loan of a few quid at a time. These are the type of loans that inscrutable sharks are looking for and making obscene profits as well. Our credit union can give a better type of service which benefits our most vulnerable and puts a small profit back in to pay towards savers as a dividend. It's a no brainer. We encourage saving, self financial management and we help our own. As well as our credit union, we use the best option for individual savers and borrowers. The credit union is by far the best place for our branch finances. Given that our branches hold £7 million, the credit union is completely safe and fully transparent.

Finally, although the motion asks the CEC to help promote our own credit union, now you have all heard a little of what we are all about, all you need to do is to approach

your regional secretary today and mandate him to conduct our office for a visit. I guarantee you will be welcomed on board. Thank you. (*Applause*)

LOCAL TUCs

MOTION 17

17. LOCAL TUCs

This Congress is proud of the long tradition of links that the GMB and its predecessors have built up and maintained with Trades Union Councils across Britain, over more than a hundred years.

Congress:

- Recognises the unique role local TUCs have occupied, and continue to occupy, in representing our movement within our communities.
- Believes that the part they can play, and are playing, in localities in the current struggles against cuts in public services is distinctive and deserving of our fullest support and involvement.

Congress therefore:

- Calls on our General Council, Regional Committees, officials and branch officers to make a concerted effort to ensure that local branches of the GMB join their local Trades Union Councils, send delegates to meetings and pay the appropriate affiliation fees.

LA Staffs Tayside APEX BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. C. ROBERTSON (GMB Scotland): Congress, I move Motion 17, Local TUCs. Congress, I am truly delighted to be moving this motion, and I am delighted to say a few words in support of such a great and historic organisation that are the Trade Union Councils. Since the 1850s they have the forum for trade unionists to gather in solidarity to debate and campaign for important issues of the day, from the basic workers' rights, the nine-hour day, the 53 hour week and the repeal of the Masters and Servants' Act, through to health and safety improvements and the National Minimum Wage. Trade Union Councils have been at the forefront of trade union campaigning. Their importance is no less significant today. As a trade union we fight to oppose the savage ideological cuts of this Tory Government. This union in solidarity with trade union councils, the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, have led the fight against modern Fascism, turning the tide against the BNP and EEL.

Trade Union Councils are at present, and are present, in consultations with local councils, emergency services and the local public services, ensuring that the voice of working people is loud and clear when decisions are being made. It is the trade union councils that keep alive the ideas and history of our Movement and our communities, organising May Day events and International Workers' Memorial Day celebrations. They support the trade unions and the work of our Union and others through recruitment, to leafleting and campaigning. Trade union councils are the prime example of the basic tenets within our Movement. We are stronger when we work together. It is only in solidarity that we can change our communities and our country for the better. This important work is often done on a shoestring budget but,

delegates, they put in long hours and hard work for little personal reward. Without their dedication the trade union Movement would not be the important force it is. Without them the voice of working people would be much quieter and our politics much the worse. For these reasons and the many more that I don't have time to mention, I ask Congress to give their support to this motion and make clear our Union's enduring support for Trade Union Councils.

SIS. A. DRYLIE (GMB Scotland): Congress, I second Motion 17 on Local TUCs. Congress, not only do the local TUCs support the trade unions at the local level but they also bring community issues into the fold. In these days where public services are being viciously attacked, local TUCs are playing an ever-increasing role, fighting cuts that have affected the most vulnerable in our society. Unfortunately, the local TUCs can't function without financial and people's support from the affiliated trade unions. I call upon the CEC to ensure that all regions identify the local TUCs and actively encourage all branches to affiliate the appropriate amount and send delegates to participate in this vital group.

THE PRESIDENT: Annette, on behalf of the Union, I want to thank you and your team for giving us a great welcome in Scotland and also to the trades council. Let me tell Congress that you and your group spent nearly two days in getting to the march. You left one night, travelled all day, and it took you until the next day to get home. We are very proud of you.

SIS. A. DRYLIE (GMB Scotland): You are welcome. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, before we take the votes on the motions we have been discussing, I would like to hear the next two groups. Then I will be calling Allan Garley to give the reply from the CEC.

RULE AMENDMENTS

RA282 – RULE 6 APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERS

Rule 6 Appeals Procedure for members

1 Any member who wants to complain must do so to their branch secretary, who will take the matter to the branch. If the member is not satisfied with the branch's decision or the branch decides it does not have the authority to deal with the matter, the member can appeal in writing to the regional committee within one month of the branch meeting. The regional committee will make the final decision.

2 At each hearing before the branch or the regional committee, the member will have a reasonable opportunity

- to present their case orally or in writing**
- to support their case with written statements or by using witnesses**
- to hear the evidence against their complaint, to answer it and to question witnesses.**

RA282

Amend:

- "1. Any member who wants to complain must do so to their Branch Secretary, who will take the matter to the Branch. If the member is not satisfied with the Branch's**

decision, the member can appeal in writing to the Regional Committee within one month of the Branch meeting. The Regional Committee will make the final decision.

2. If the Branch decides it does not have the authority to deal with the matter or the complaint is in relation to an employee of the GMB the Branch Secretary will forward the complaint to Regional Committee who will hear the matter. If the member is not satisfied with the Regional Committee decision, the member can appeal in writing to the CEC within one month of the Regional Committee. The CEC will hear the appeal and make the final decision.
3. At each hearing before the Branch, the Regional Committee or CEC, the member will have the right to have a representative of their choice if they so wish
 - to present their case orally or in writing
 - to support their case with written statements or by using witnesses
 - to hear the evidence against their complaint, to answer it and to question witnesses.”

B49 BIRMINGHAM CYP&F BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Lost)

BRO. G. MATTHEWS (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, this rule amendment is about rule 6 of the GMB Rule Book. This motion is about the lack of a proper appeals process within rule 6 of the Rule Book. When a branch secretary cannot resolve a matter for a member or it is viewed to be beyond the branch's remit, the member can then pass the matter to the regional committee. Then the regional committee would hear it and try and resolve it. This would be the first stage. If the member then is happy with their decision, they then should have the right to a proper appeal. The CEC should be scrutinising reasons for the decision taken by the regional committee in order to uphold fairness around the process and how it reaches its decision. It should then create a resolution of the matter so that both the organisation and the individual situation is properly finalised. Public organisations, even including mine, which is Birmingham City Council, which is not known for its fairness in these matters, have an appeals process. In its grievance procedure, like other local authorities, it has two appeals processes. Private organisations, mostly, have appeals in their grievance disciplinary procedures, which are observed and scrutinised by employment tribunals. If and when cases are further initiated against them, a modern forward-looking organisation like the GMB should be doing at least the same. It is important to remember that appeal processes see and look at issues differently because they are examining previous decisions. This situation often happened in tribunal appeals and issues in the High Court and County Courts. The GMB should adopt an appeals procedure in rule 6, not only to increase its fairness for members but to maintain protection for itself, not only on an organisational level but on equality issues as well.

I, as a full-time rep, have won many appeals for members in their workplace because of inequalities, breaches of procedures and bad decisions of first committees and many times the appeals have corrected the situation. At the end of it all, even FIFA has an appeals process within itself. I rest my case and ask Congress to support this amendment.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is there a seconder?

BRO. S. ROBERTSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): I am seconding this motion because there was a good debate on this item in our region, and nobody else has come to the rostrum to second the proposed rule change. It was not because nobody agreed with it but it may not be so popular with the powers that be. We've no gripe with the Union's regional committees. I am sure they make the right decisions and that most of them are of sound judgment, most of the time. Is there anyone in this hall who has not made a mistake or a wrong judgment? I don't think so. I've made plenty. I ask you to support this motion because it, plain and simply, and more importantly our members, gives our members the right to an appeal when they may think themselves justified in raising a grievance about something that has happened within their branch or region and they want to appeal against the decision made by the regional committee.

Today, more than ever, we need to be better than those who we condemn, the bosses. We need to be seen to be open and transparent and beyond reproach or criticism. It is for that reason that I ask this Congress to support this motion and show that we are better than the unscrupulous employers who we fight against every day in the workplace. Let's lead by example, and let's be honest, fair and give members the right to an appeal. Thank you.

RULE AMENDMENT 289

Rule 15 Electing a general secretary and treasurer

2 The Central Executive Council will ask branches for their nominations six months before the existing official's term of office runs out (or, if there is a vacancy, as soon as possible after taking account of any relevant matters). Branches should send their nominations to a returning officer appointed by the Central Executive Council.

RA289

Clause No.2, Lines 7,8,9

Insert:

"Following Branch nominations, the Central Executive Council will publicise a list of potential candidates to allow branches to nominate in line with thresholds set out in by-laws."

CIBA CHEMICALS BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Lost)

BRO. A. IRVING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, I move rule amendment 289. Good morning. Following the recent re-election of our General Secretary, my branch asked me about the procedure for electing people into this key position. I went through the process and questions were asked about how members know who has been nominated. They went on to say that it is difficult to support a candidate if they are not aware that they have been nominated. The rule change we are proposing is simply to publish a list of prospective candidates to allow branches to nominate in line with whatever by-laws the CEC set out. If potential candidates do not meet the threshold then they would not be eligible to stand in an election. We

believe that this will not cost an excessive amount of money, or time, but will make the process more transparent and inclusive to members. (*Applause*)

BRO. B. GOLDING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I second rule amendment 289. We believe it can only improve transparency in the election process and engage members in the election. We are not asking that potential candidates be allowed to canvass but that all branches and members are aware of who has been nominated. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate, from 7, 14, 16, 17, RA282, and RA289? If you do, please come forward now. (*No further speakers indicated*) Can I now call Allan Garley?

BRO. A. GARLEY (Regional Secretary, South Western Region): President, Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC responding to Motions 7, 14, 16, and RAs 282 and 289. Motion 7, colleagues, asks why branches are not being sent a copy of the rule book, and amendments. Colleagues, the CEC is happy to support the motion with the qualification that Congress in 2008 agreed to send the rule book out if a branch requests a copy. The up-to-date rule book is available on the website but if any branch needs a hard copy the obligation is upon the region to supply one.

With regard to Motion 14, this motion seeks a redesign of the application form aimed at picking up in more detail particulars about members with regard to helping the union deal with gender, sexuality, and disability issues. Congress, the CEC cannot emphasise enough the importance of gathering accurate data on members. Time spent on this issue is never wasted. Congress should be reminded that members now can go direct to their membership record via our website to change their details; 8,500 members did this last year alone. The application forms do already allow for a substantial amount of information to be provided. There is a slight problem when on occasions the simple fact is that the information requests are left blank. However, I think the motion is a good motion. We will review the forms and the CEC supports the motion with that qualification, that adding additional fields will in fact incur additional IT costs, which of course the CEC will need to take account of.

Motion 15, President, has been referred back so there is no point in me making comment in relation to that.

With regard to Motion 16, this asks the CEC to promote the Thorne Credit Union, which has been operating very successfully, I understand, for a number of years in the Midland Region but, Congress, the CEC believes that this is a matter for individual regions to decide whether to promote that credit union or any other credit union, and therefore we are asking that the movers refer the motion to allow for wider consultation.

With regard to Rule Amendment 282, this seeks to reintroduce the first of two appeal stages beyond the Regional Committee for stage 6 complaints. This actually was removed from the rule book as long ago as 1997 and the amendment wants this stage to come into play when the branch has decided it does not have the authority to deal with the matter or the complaint if it is about an employee of the union. Congress, we asked the movers to read the guidance on rule book disciplinary grievance procedures

issued in November 2008, which states: “If a grievance raised by a member under rule 6 involves or gives rise to a complaint against an officer, the Regional Secretary should follow the procedure set out in the HR Policies and Procedures for Officers.” Congress, please oppose this rule amendment; it actually takes us backwards.

I agree with the mover when he said that the GMB is a modern forward looking union but then the mover actually said that we should go backwards by supporting the amendment. Congress, why on earth would we want to go backwards? Under the leadership of Paul Kenny, the GMB has spent the last five years driving forward into a fighting force that is recognised as a campaigning union in the whole of the UK, a union that does not cave in to pressure from government or business interests. The CEC believes that the GMB needs to continue its progressive drive forward and therefore we ask you to oppose the amendment.

Finally, Congress, Rule Amendment 289 appears to want to introduce a two-stage nomination process for branches for the election of General Secretary. You will see the amendment says that the CEC will publish a list of potential candidates to allow branches to nominate for General Secretary. I have to say that is all a little bit confusing and, of course, colleagues, you have to ask yourself the question, where does the list of potential candidates come from if it does not come from the branches? I also ask myself the question, why do we need to change the present system? I actually think it works. I just put to you that any system that can elect Paul Kenny to three consecutive elections, actually, is a pretty good system so I don't think we need to change it. Therefore, I would ask that the Congress oppose amendment 289.

Therefore, Madam President, I urge you to support Motions 7 and 14 with the qualification, refer Motion 16, and oppose Rule Amendments 282 and 289. Thank you, President.

THE PRESIDENT: Allan, could I ask you to stay with us in the event members come up and challenge you. Thank you. London Region, do you accept the qualification on 7 and 14? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I ask on 16, Thorne Credit Union, does Midland Region accept reference? (*Agreed*) Congress agrees? (*Agreed*) Motion 17, Local Reps, GMB Scotland, you are supporting that issue.

Can I now put Motions 7, 14, and 17 to the vote, all those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 7 was CARRIED.

Motion 14 was CARRIED.

Motion 17 was CARRIED.

Motion 16 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I ask the movers from Birmingham Region of 282 and the movers on 289, do they wish to reply to the CEC?

BRO. A. IRVING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am responding to the CEC on my rule amendment. The point is that when people are nominated by the branch to go forward for the election of General Secretary nobody else knows about it so how do they get 30 branch nominations? All I was asking for is that that list be published to

allow branches then to give them 30 nominations. It just makes the process more transparent. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Colleagues, RA282, the CEC is asking you to oppose. All those in favour please show? Those against? That is lost.

Rule Amendment 282 was LOST.

THE PRESIDENT: RA289, the CEC is asking you to oppose. All those in favour of the resolution please show? Those against? That is lost. I have been to SpecSavers!

Rule Amendment 289 was LOST.

THE PRESIDENT: Allan, can I have a word, please, just for a minute? Congress, you have just heard Alan speak on behalf of the CEC. Allan has been a stalwart of this union and it is with great sadness, as I have worked with him from the day he came in and very proud to do so -- I was very proud to have visited his region on a number of occasions -- I have to tell you Allan is retiring at the end of the year. This will be Allan's last Congress. Allan, on behalf of Congress, I want to say thank you to you, and to your family, for giving so much time to us. Thank you for all the support you gave to Paul, myself, and Malcolm, during the down years. Thank you very much, Allan. I ask Congress to stand and show their appreciation. (*Standing ovation*)

BRO. A. GARLEY: Thank you, Mary. I would just like to say a couple of words. Obviously, thank you to your good self, the General Secretary, and to the CEC, for many years of support. I know that whatever happens in the future, apart from the challenges that are going to face everyone, the fact is that I am confident you will all ensure that we keep the GMB flag flying. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Allan. We will miss you. He thought he was getting away without that. Okay, can we now move on to Item 18, National Organising Department Report (pages 5-7)?

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT NATIONAL ORGANISING DEPARTMENT REPORT

NATIONAL ORGANISING DEPARTMENT

Our union faces some of the toughest challenges we have faced since the mid 1980's with the wholesale attack on our members jobs and livliehoods launched by the Tory lead Government. The size, and speed of the cuts in public spending forced through since the last GMB Congress put Thatcher's efforts in the shade.

With over 250,000 public service jobs threatened in Local Authorities and the NHS, pay cuts, pension taxes and a struggling economy, the need for a strong campaigning response to build our unions membership in the workplace has never been clearer. Now more than ever we need the unity and organisation within the union that GMB@Work has delivered since 2005.

GMB@Work is far more than a nice logo – GMB@Work is for life not just for Congress. As a set of ideas and policies focussed on re-building the membership and structures of the GMB workplace by

workplace, it aims to use the attacks our members face as a means to grow the union rather than as an excuse to manage our decline

Central to the GMB@Work policy is our belief that the future size and strength of our union is a question of choice and not chance.

We can choose to respond to the attacks on our members by recruiting and organising new members in new workplaces threatened by cuts, bringing on new workplace organisers and taking the fight to the employers.

Or we can convince ourselves that there is nothing we can do except batten down the hatches, cross our fingers, hope for the best – and take our chances on a change of Government.

GMB members deserve better than that from us. The GMB@Work policy aims to make sure we learn the lessons of the 1980's and provide a better response this time around than a dented shield. Continued growth or decline – the choice is ours not David Cameron's.

In the last year the National Organising Team has amongst other things: consolidated our membership in the care sector, in particular Southern Cross care homes, co-ordinated the fight to organise school staff facing conversion to Academies and continued to develop our membership with ASDA stores. The review of our workplace organisers training has continued and has delivered a training programme to new GMB Reps controlled by the GMB rather than outside consultants and contractors and so more relevant to their needs and up to date than ever before.

GMB membership remains stable at 610,000 despite the attacks on our union from Government and employers alike. The 15% membership growth achieved since we adopted GMB@Work has been sustained to date throughout the bankers recession and the cut backs they caused.

Congress 2010 asked the National Organising Department to put into effect three motions: organising a campaign against the exploitation of tied pub tenants by the Pubco's, mobilisation of retired GMB members to actively support GMB campaigns; and to review the impact on organisation and recruitment of Union Learning Fund supported projects.

- * The Legal, Political and Communications departments have co-ordinated the campaign against the Pubcos and this will be reported to Congress in their respective sections of the General Secretaries report.
- * The RMA National Committee have launched an appeal to retired members and expect to have a database of 200 activists by Congress 2011, and a number of actions planned and accomplished.
- * Based on continued monitoring of recruitment of new GMB members as a result of ULF projects, a formal review of the impact and value of ULF on the objectives of the GMB can be undertaken.

(Adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: Can I call Martin Smith on pages 5-7.

BRO. M. SMITH (National Organising Officer): Formally.

THE PRESIDENT: Formally moved. Formally seconded? *(Agreed)*

The Report was formally moved and seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to make any comment? No? Page 5, 6, 7? Agree to accept, colleagues? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

The National Organising Department Report (pages 5-7) was ADOPTED.

UNION ORGANISATION: RECRUITMENT & ORGANISATION

AID FOR BRANCHES WITHIN THE NHS FOR RECRUITMENT MOTION 18

18. AID FOR BRANCHES WITHIN THE NHS FOR RECRUITMENT

This Congress we ask for support to be given to all branches within the NHS to recruit members using the GMB@work model. As there can be many unions targeting the same workers within each trust as potential members the GMB can be at a disadvantage, as we are not often seen as the union to join for NHS workers. All help that can be given should be, especially as the NHS will be a target for recruitment.

KEIGHLEY AND AIREDALE GENERAL BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. JACKSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, this motion was proposed by Keighley and Airedale General Branch and as most people know I am from Barnsley Health Branch. Yorkshire Region in general welcomes the fact that the GMB has recognised that the NHS has a massive potential for recruitment. Thirty to 50% of NHS employees are non-union members, depending on where you work. By becoming a national target the NHS has become a hive of activity within the GMB. Airedale Trust was a sleeping giant with a new, inexperienced, but massively motivated and committed, branch secretary. She represents her members really well and her branch is growing massively.

This motion was put in prior to Airedale becoming one of Yorkshire's target hospitals within the GMB target areas. The GMB now has a huge profile in Airedale and it has the literature, freebies and recruitment material that Airedale branch wanted and needed so much. Not only is the Airedale Trust receiving national and local literature but they are also being taught and developed in how to produce their own recruitment materials in the form of newsletters, and also being instructed on how to develop websites and other recruitment materials. Yorkshire Region welcomes the NHS being a national target and Airedale in particular reaping the benefits. We hope that the national recruitment team recognises the benefits of NHS recruitment materials and that these will be produced and distributed as soon as possible.

We also have one or two further sleeping giants within the region and a massive barrier to recruitment is that these hospitals do not give recognition to the GMB. The barrier to that GMB recognition is not the employer but other unions, particularly Unison. When they are blocking us getting recognition, they go out and tell the members who we have recruited they should not be in the GMB because they do not have recognition and so cannot provide representation. An aid to recruitment and retention of GMB members would be to get rid of this opposition from Unison and make sure that we get recognition in every hospital trust. Thank you. (*Applause*)

SIS. A. BURTON-KEEBLE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Bear with me, I am a first-time speaker and I definitely need to go to the toilet! (*Applause*) I second Motion 18. I just wanted to highlight some of the problems branches within the National Health Service face and what kind of support is needed as a result of this. The three main problems, in my opinion, are: one, the GMB is not seen as the union to join for NHS workers; two, union recognition; and three, attacks on facility time.

Recruitment within the NHS is a problem due to the GMB not being seen as the union for NHS workers. What can we do about this? The GMB needs to be more visible in the health service, whether this is through the simple addition of photos of hospital workers on the GMB website, and promotion material, or to more specific materials being produced specifically aimed at NHS workers. Recognition is still a problem in our health service and areas without recognition need serious help with that. Recruitment within the NHS is a GMB target this year. How are we supposed to recruit without the basis of recognition within the workplace? I think our comrades in those NHS trusts without recognition are doing a sterling job. Let's show them how much they are appreciated by getting the GMB recognised in those areas. Times are getting tougher thanks to the Con-Dem Government. I am sure most of us have facility time at the moment. However, hospitals are having to make cuts and our facility time is seen as an easy option for those cuts. What are we going to do about it? We are going to support our members but we need adequate time to do so. We need more facility time, not less.

To conclude, you may be sat there thinking, "We don't need any national or regional support. We are fine as we are." Fair enough, but please bear in mind those branches that do need that additional support. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Well done.

YOUNG MEMBERS MOTION 19

19. YOUNG MEMBERS

This Congress calls upon the CEC to encourage growth amongst young members by providing additional resources and funding to promote the GMB@Work Organising Agenda.

LEEDS SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. McLEAN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): This Congress calls on the CEC to encourage growth amongst young members by providing additional resources of funding to promote the GMB@Work organising agenda. Congress, this motion is not just about asking for extra money, it is also about sharing ideas on how we get young people involved in branch activities. We all know that for us to grow we need young members joining us but the problem for my branch, and many others, is that we struggle to get anybody to come to branch meetings on a regular basis, never mind the young. We are supposed to have a youth officer in every branch. My youth officer has just found lust – sorry, love – and has not been to a meeting since. The problem is that of the 18 or so regular people that come to my branch meetings not one is under

30, and a couple of us are just over 50. I know looking round this conference hall that could constitute a young members' branch for some delegates here but where do I get youth officers, someone who knows young people and what young people's interests are, and what they need?

Congress, we are missing a trick somewhere because as recent events have shown us students can get themselves out of bed and away from breakfast TV, travel down to London Town and march in protest at the raising of their tuition fees. They did not just stop there. In most university cities they marched on a weekly basis; they had sit-ins, banners and posters on bridges and public buildings, etc. If they can be reactive why is it that we cannot attract significant numbers into the GMB? Congress, we need to put in more resources of funding to encourage growth amongst young members but also we in the branches and in the regions need to be sharing resources and successful ideas with each other. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. N. COLE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): This Congress believes that children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way. It is hard to speak about this motion without stating the obvious. If young people do not join the GMB in sufficient numbers, then the GMB does not have a long-term future; not just join, but also get involved in our organising agenda, too. Young people have shown the way over the last 12 months in leading the demonstrations against student fees and hitting the streets in defiance of the Tory-LibDem cuts. They have also led the way in highlighting corporations like Burtons, Boots, and Top Man, the tax dodgers. Again I state the obvious: we need to harness their raw energy, their drive and their passion to ameliorate our relationship with them.

The motion calls upon the CEC to provide additional resources and funding in order to promote our GMB@Work organising agenda to encourage growth amongst young members. We are not suggesting simply throwing money at this; we need a well thought through strategy with involvement from the CEC and the national organising team where we look at our national strategic targets. We need to think, how do we make GMB especially attractive to young people? Congress, young people are our future. Please support. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Anyone wish to come in on the debate? No? Okay, can I call Pam Hughes on 18 and 19?

SIS. P. HUGHES (CEC, Public Services): Good morning, President, Congress. The CEC is supporting Motions 18 and 19, each with a qualification. Motion 18 asks for support to be given to all branches within the NHS to recruit members using the GMB@Work model. The union has recommitted itself to work with regions, branches, and workplace organisers to find new ways to build our membership within NHS workplaces. All regions are involved and 120 NHS workplaces have been targeted as a start. The qualification is that any direct assistance to branches will be considered following their submission of a completed branch organising plan. Regions are asking to work with NHS branches, in particular, to develop branch organising plans that contribute to building membership within the NHS.

On Motion 19, the qualification is that further work needs to be done to analyse our recent success in signing up thousands of young workers online via the GMB website before we can take a clear view on the size and type of additional resources needed to promote GMB@Work even more effectively towards younger workers. What is clear already is that young workers are responding well to the campaigning, active and grassroots organising union that GMB@Work has delivered.

Congress, please support Motions 18 and 19 with the CEC qualifications. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pam. Does Yorkshire Region accept the qualification in 18 and 19? (*Agreed*) You do; thank you. Can I now put 18 and 19 to the vote? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 18 was CARRIED.

Motion 19 was CARRIED.

UNION ORGANISATION: COMMUNITIES

GMB INVOLVEMENT IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY MOTION 38

38. GMB INVOLVEMENT IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

This Congress calls upon all regions of the GMB to adopt the best practice set by the Yorkshire Professional Drivers' branch in branding the GMB as the union for the Asian community.

Two years ago the region responded to a request from private hire drivers to represent them in relation to a number of issues, as well as successfully realising many of their aims, the GMB has also provided learning centres using Union Learning funding and is currently providing training for both established and newer community leaders utilising UM3 project funding.

By demonstrating a willingness to represent this section of our community and also to work together providing training and education the GMB can fill a gap that has been open for too long and bring about mutuality beneficial to both parties.

YORKSHIRE PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS' ASSOCIATION BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. L. SIMPSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, please let me start by saying what this motion is not asking for. What we are not seeking is the setting up of an Asian section of the GMB or for our proud union's logo to include the strap line, *The Union for the Asian Community*. We all know and accept that the GMB is a union for all communities, for all sectors and for all industries. My region and this motion do not seek to interfere with or change that for one moment. What it does do, however, is to recognise the fantastic work my region has done in organising particularly in communities in Sheffield with migrant workers across Yorkshire, professional sports people, and, yes, with taxi drivers, the vast majority of which are Asian. In doing so we have to make ourselves relevant to each community group and that is where the motion calls for us to be branded, *The Union for the Asian Community*.

Colleagues, the sentiment and the total meaning of the motion is exactly the same as when we are out recruiting. You will all know what I mean when I say, GMB the union for school support staff, GMB the union for Southern Cross workers, GMB the union for Asda employees. This motion means nothing more than that. It encourages us to get into the communities and to organise in new and different areas and use the strength that is our diversity when doing so, and to band ourselves as appropriate to make us as relevant to those who we target.

Congress, I implore you, please do not see this as a motion that is trying to change the name or to create a new section of our proud union. This is not the intention for one moment. The title of the motion says it all, *GMB involvement in the wider community*. That is all this motion calls for, and with this qualification which I am happy to give, I will ask for your full support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

SIS. N. SHARPE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, colleagues, first-time speaker and delegate. (*Applause*) I am speaking to second Motion 38, GMB in the wider community. As a trade union we have extensive knowledge, skills and expertise to organise in our communities. Developing organisation within communities has been paramount in the Professional Drivers Association. The work of the Professional Drivers Association has and is expanding to other areas across Yorkshire. Whilst acknowledging that working with communities means developing and building trust, once achieved the results are immense and encourage recruitment, community leadership, diversity within the union, and increase the profile of the union. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done. Before I call Mark, does anyone wish to come in on the debate? No? Thank you, Mark.

BRO. M. BARTLETT (CEC, Commercial Services): President, Congress, the motion draws attention to the best practice set by Yorkshire Region Professional Drivers Branch in recruiting and representing private hire drivers from the Asian community. Yorkshire Region has done commendable work with Asian taxi drivers, migrant Polish workers and young disadvantaged community groups, which has yielded over 1,000 members. The CEC had strong reservations about the wording of this motion, which calls for the GMB to brand itself as *The Union for the Asian Community*. Congress, the GMB is a union for all communities as ably demonstrated by the region in its successful recruitment in a range of communities.

The CEC has been made aware that the intent of the motion is not for separate branding but to reflect the region's successful recruitment in communities and in recruitment materials. Congress, the CEC is therefore asking you to support this motion but with the qualification that the CEC will not accept separate branding of the GMB as a union for any specific community. With that clear qualification, Congress, we ask you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Does the region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I now put it to the vote? All those in favour please show? Those against? That is carried.

Motion 38 was CARRIED.

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT
SOUTH WESTERN REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT**

SOUTH WESTERN REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	49,736
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	12,680
MANUFACTURING SECTION	8,965
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	28,091
Grade 1 members	32,062
Grade 2 members	12,553
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	5,121
Male Membership	25,500
Female Membership	24,236
Total number recruited 1.1.2010 – 31.12.2010	4,852
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2010 – 31.12.2010	568
Membership on Check-off	31,720
Membership on Direct Debit	11,923

The South Western Region continues to fully appreciate the hard work and endeavours of Branch Officials, Shop Stewards, Staff Representatives, Activists, Full Time Officials and Staff.

The GMB continues to be a campaigning union, working in all parts of the economy and defending both Public and Private Sectors against the Coalition Governments cuts. There is an alternative to the cuts and that is to pursue policies to get Britain growing again; boosting tax receipts, helping to close the deficit, the Banks and the very rich should be paying their fair share. Cuts will not support the recovery, they will hinder it.

Employment plays a key role in our communities and if the Government continues on the road to fragmenting work, destabilising employment and reducing people's confidence in the future, surely more and more people will question the values of the system and who it is meant to serve!

It is a sad reflection of our times that the present Government seem hell bent on replacing the caring society with a society based on "self first self last, and if there is anything left over let it be for self".

The challenges ahead, wherever they come from will be met head on by the Union and Region, and to those who continually strive to protect the interests of the GMB members, your endeavours are highly valued and the Region says to you all, well done, keep the GMB flag flying.

The Annual General Meeting of the South West TUC took place on the 23rd and 24th April 2010 in Croyde Bay, North Devon, attended by Rowena Hayward, Bristol based Organiser and GMB Representatives, Adrian Baker, Sarah Cook and Chris Price. Wendy Weston and Shamin Baloo, GMB Representatives from Bristol City Council were elected on to the South West TUC Women's committee and Race Committee respectively. The GMB's motion to the conference called for free school meals for primary aged, children, which was unanimously carried.

The South Western Region is proud to acknowledge the continued efforts of Brian Legg, relentless campaigner on justice for pleural plaques sufferers, on winning the Congress Regional Outstanding Achievement Award 2010 and Helen Davies and the South Wales Police Branch, who was presented with the Award for the Most Inspirational Equality Project for Organising at Congress 2010.

New Labour Leader, Ed Miliband made a good impression on GMB representatives from the Region when he met them in Bristol the run up to the Leadership Election. GMB Organiser, Ken Baker led a group of Gas Industry representatives when they met with Mr Miliband. They were seeking assurance with regard to the Ofgem Price Control Review, and the effect it might have on their pension schemes. Tony Williams and Ian Highton from Wales and West Utilities were impressed with the former Energy Minister's knowledge of the industry and his ability to answer questions.

New figures show that a pioneering Welsh Assembly Government Scheme to support companies through the economic downturn has so far helped keep 9,000 people in work. The data shows that ProAct, which helps business fund training to boost workforce skills, has so far supported more than 200 companies to the tune of over £20 million. In all, 9,023 people at 203 companies are being supported through ProAct and to date it has committed £23.3 million to companies across Wales, while 208 apprentices working at 34 companies have also been supported.

The initiative, which is an all Wales European funding project, was the first of its kind in the UK. The Labour led Welsh Assembly Government has listened to the social partners by extending the programme, which was initially available until March 2010, and is intended to be an investment in the development of the skills for our future economy. An initiative proposed to the Welsh Assembly Government by the Wales TUC with the GMB South Western Region as a prominent player in the discussions.

Pembroke CCGT Power Station in South Wales has become a brilliant success story for the NAECI and has proved that contractors can work in harmony with GMB to build an £800 million project on time and within budget. At Pembrokeshire, GMB members and major construction contractors have worked together through the NAECI to ensure that conditions for all workers are consistently fair. This modern approach shows that co-operation and negotiation are much better than the old fashioned control and command style of management.

Brendan Stack is a full time GMB and National Engineering Craft Committee (NECC) accredited workplace organiser at the site. He has regular meetings with management to make sure that issues are resolved quickly, to keep workers safe across all areas of the project. GMB's workplace organisers have done a brilliant job and the relationship between workers and management has led to high levels of productivity and low absenteeism. This example is proof of how valuable GMB workplace organisers and the NAECI are and shows why GMB urges all major contractors to use the NAECI as a matter of course on every major project in the UK.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

Recruitment initiatives and campaigns in all geographical areas of the Region and in all three Sections have been on going throughout the year and the South Western Region is pleased to report that the Region has continued to consolidate and increase its membership. The GMB@Work organisational strategy remains central to the union's membership growth. The thanks of the Region are extended to all Activists and for the efforts and endeavours of everyone involved in recruitment initiatives, undertaken during 2010. The regional in house education training programme has surpassed all expectations and is held in exceedingly high regard by Shop Stewards and Activists within the Region. Well done to everyone involved. Keep up the good work.

The issue of Equal Pay Claims has continued to generate interest and a steady flow of members continue to be recruited into membership. The Region and its Solicitors are looking at how the Employment Tribunal could speed up the process of hearing the thousands of claims that are still awaiting consideration. The huge number of claims submitted, under resourcing of the judicial system

and the delay tactics used by the legal representatives of Welsh Local Authorities have all delayed progress being made.

GMB still believe that many Local Authorities will find it hard to defend their male only bonus schemes. Local Authorities will use the genuine material factor defence to argue that they do not discriminate on grounds of sex. If the Employment Tribunal decides that this defence has failed, it is expected that Local Authorities would reconsider offering settlements to those GMB members who have registered claims.

The Region believes GMB members should feel optimistic as a similar tribunal in Birmingham recently found in favour of several thousand female equal pay claimants. Although each claim was fact specific, it is believed that the circumstances of the employer in question were broadly similar to those of Welsh Local Authorities. GMB assures that it will continue to seek a resolution for all outstanding historic equal pay claims and also ensure that every Local Authority introduces equality proofed pay and grading structures in compliance with their legal obligations and the 2004 National Implementation Agreement.

Overview of Region's economic and employment situation

Following the election of the Coalition Government in May 2010 no one could have foreseen the effects of the new Government's policy to reduce the deficit by targeting public services. Among the devolved countries, Wales especially will be worst hit. The principality's budget is being slashed by 3.1% a year for each of the next four years. In simple terms, Wales will receive £1.8 billion less by 2014-2015. This bad news follows the finding of the independent Holtham Commission, which reported that the Welsh economy is already suffering from a lack of funding.

The South Western Region is engaged with the Welsh Assembly Government at various levels and will be fully consulted as the Assembly strives to protect essential Public Services and jobs while formulating its next budget.

Additionally the Region will be at the forefront in discussions with local councils throughout the Region in Wales and the South West in an attempt to challenge and address the impact of the cuts in funding.

It should be noted, the Coalition Government has conveniently used the deficit in finances to distort and exaggerate the problems in public finances for their own ideological objectives and now Public Services employees, who have made a vital contribution in helping people and businesses through the recession are being rewarded with a cocktail of job losses and increases in the amount they must contribute to their pension schemes. GMB is facing up to the harsh realities of the review but will not give up the fight for Public Sector improvement, based upon the key themes of democratic accountability, effective service delivery, and fairness and equality at work.

More than 9,000 people in the South West have been out of work for more than a year, an increase of 127% since the start of the last recession and many more jobs are set to disappear in 2011. The TUC analysis of official employment statistics reveals the number of people in the Region claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for more than 12 months was 9,375 in November 2010, up from 4,130 in December 2007, the start of the last recession. Official Jobcentre Plus redundancy figures released in November 2010 show 7,561 jobs went in the South West between September to November 2010, an increase of six per cent on the previous three month period.

On the 26th November 2010 the Wales TUC held a Special One Day Conference in Cardiff. GMB Officers and Delegates from the South Western Region were in attendance when the main subject matter for discussion was the proposed cuts to Public Services by the Coalition Government. The Conference discussed motions put forward by all unions and agreed a campaign strategy of events for 2011, to be organised in conjunction with other affiliated unions.

One of the first casualties of the cuts is the cancellation of a development of a training college at RAF St Athan, South Wales. The cancellation of this defence project has dealt a savage blow to the Vale of

Glamorgan jobs market which would have given a major boost to employment in the Vale of Glamorgan and the surrounding area. The development would have provided:

- Up to 2,500 training and support jobs
- Up to 1,500 construction
- A construction contract worth £700-800 million
- £60 million annual expenditure by the defence training college
- Approximately £500 million annual boost to the Welsh economy from operation activities
- Between £27,000 and £540,000 to local tourism

The Labour led Welsh Assembly Government had spent £5 million in support of the redevelopment plans for St Athan, which includes an Aerospace Business Park. The Coalition Government's decision to cancel development of the Defence Technical College (DTC) means that the Vale of Glamorgan will not see the promised benefits to local businesses and the jobs market. Welsh Assembly First Minister for Wales, Carwyn Jones said, "This decision is a huge disappointment and will be an immense blow to South Wales. The project would have led to the creation of thousands of training, support and construction jobs and would have seen significant opportunities for local suppliers." The Government's decision goes directly against repeated assurances that were made in the run-up to the General Election, when Tory politicians claimed they were committed to the project. The DTC would have provided significant help to the local economy of the Vale of Glamorgan and South Wales. Instead, the Coalition Government has betrayed the small businesses and local suppliers that had hoped to benefit from this investment for years to come.

Sweeping cuts to public spending and the GMB fighting to protect workers' rights might bring a strong sense of déjà vu to those members who are familiar with the history of the trade unionism in Britain. A century ago, when the Welsh trade union movement was still in its infancy, the people of the Rhondda fought for a pay rise of a halfpenny extra a week. They were supported by unions, but their claims were met with violence from their employers, the police and the state. Riots followed in the streets of Tonypany and troops were sent in to break the strike and evict people from their homes. As the strikers resisted, one man was shot and killed.

While remembering the sacrifice of our forefathers and mothers, who enduring so much to provide us with the type of country and work places that we now have, we as GMB members must also remember that the fight still goes on today. The Coalition Government may not be planning to send in the troops any time soon, but we cannot forget that this is exactly what Margaret Thatcher did only 25 years ago.

From the Tonypany strike to the fight against Thatcher's pit closures in the 1990's we know only too well the brutal realities of fighting for the rights of ordinary people. Faced with savage cuts inflicted on people who were not responsible for the greed and incompetence that caused the financial meltdown, we must remember the past, consider the present, and work with GMB to build our membership and branch organisation so that we can support each other through the tough times ahead.

To end this section of the regional report, below is poem by a "would be poet" from the Region.

The Last Shift

*Once again I glance at the clock
Willing it to stop its relentless tick, tock
I then cast my mind back over the years
Of a lifetime's work with my friends and peers*

*How different it was as a fresh faced youth I entered the gates
To begin my employment along with my mates
Knowing that we would be paid a wage at the end of the week*

To help the family income to eke

*How proud I was handing over my wages to my mother
Just keeping a little back in my pocket for luxuries to cover
Life seemed so simple back then
Through the eyes of us young men*

*Many years have passed in what seems a blink of an eye
Cannot believe how time can fly
I remember friendships made and lost
Before an unseen hand changed lives with such devastating cost*

*What will the future now behold
Now that the factory will fold
Will there be other work to be found
Or does the death knell of employment finally sound*

*As I shake myself back to reality
I must get back in the world of normality
I have no control over the situation I find myself in
But must look towards a different life to begin*

*How quickly these last few minutes of the shift draws near
I make a vow that life in the future should hold no fear
Dawn will break and the sun still rise tomorrow
And I am determined not to face the prospect with sorrow*

*The final bell rings and we all file through the gates at last
And I take one last glance back at my past
As one chapter closes on my life
With luck and faith I will face the morrow without strife*

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	2
Membership Development Officers	3
Regional Organisers	10
Organising Officers	4
No. of Branches	153
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	
Branch Youth Officers	

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	Nil
Total Disablement	4,000
Working Accident	1,423.60
Occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Funeral	16,075

4. JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

The Region has continued to play a considerable role in many issues affecting our members in the South Western Region and has played a significant role in the Welsh Assembly Government's Economic Summit meetings which encompasses all in Wales in the Private and Public Sectors. Rowena Hayward, GMB Officer attended a meeting of the South West TUC Executive/Public Services Summit meeting which took place in March 2010. The Region's involvement in these areas has proved to be extremely advantageous through the publicity and campaigning the Region has participated in and has continued to be reflected in recruitment successes, despite the downturn in the economy and contraction of the manufacturing base. The Region will continue to maintain its involvement in this area in what is envisaged to be a difficult period in terms of encouraging and sustaining economic growth for the future in the Region.

The Region continued in its endeavours to be a lead union in all campaigns in relation to the decline of manufacturing in Wales and support of the Public Services in Wales and the South West. The Region has continued with its involvement with the National Assembly for Wales, the Wales TUC, South West TUC, the Welsh Labour Party and South West Labour Party.

The Region continues to maintain its established contacts with all areas of the media and utilising the press releases generated from National Office and responding to regional issues that affect GMB members to maintain full exposure via the media wherever and whenever possible.

The Region has been actively involved in the Wales TUC and Welsh Labour Party and equally in the South West TUC and South West Labour Party.

The combined National and Regional magazine Nexus, which is distributed to all members in the Region, has continued to be successful and well received by our members. The production of this magazine is an important tool to maintain contact with our members and provides them with information that is of importance to them in their workplace, their lives in general and is also a useful recruitment tool.

The Region continues with its policy of using determining factors with regard to sponsorship being granted, with the main factor in granting requests for sponsorship are publicity for the Union and the promotion of Union membership. The Region continues to maintain a strategy of a reduced and careful budget for sponsorship and advertising.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
352	352

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
268	84		£3,848,507.44		£3,848,507.44
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2010		353			

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	264
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
110	40		30 £57,636.36		£57,636.36
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2010		154			

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages / Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010

6. EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

During 2010 all areas of equality continued to be perused and progressed using the structure at our disposal in getting equality issues over to our members, via Branch Officials, the Equality Forum and through our regional magazine Nexus and the Region is pleased to report that even more of our Branches are now producing their own newsletters where equality issues are highlighted and several branches have set up their own websites to progress all strands of union activities.

The Region continues to be involved actively on all the Equality, Race, LGBT and Pan Equality Committees in the Wales TUC structure and South West TUC, along with having a good representation in the Welsh Labour Party and the South West Labour Party.

The Region continues to hold the Black and Ethnic Minorities seat on the Wales TUC General Council and on the Wales TUC Executive Committee.

In line with the GMB@Work initiative, new Shop Stewards are encouraged to attend and take active roles in regional conferences, speaking and supporting motions on all aspects of race and equality in the workplace. The GMB continues to have good representation, attendance and participation at all events encompassing equality such as Wales TUC Challenging Racism Conference, Wales TUC Women's Conference and the LGBT Conference.

The Region's Equality Forum has nine members, four female and five males, with one of the male committee members of ethnic minority. From this Regional Forum, one of its number now represents the Region on the National Equality Forum.

7. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (9 days)	6	34	16	50	450
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)					
GMB@WORK (2 days)	12	74	46	120	240

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student

					Days

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Risk Assessment (3 days)	1	5	3	8	24
Trade Union and the Environment (3 days)	1	7	1	8	24
Accident Investigation (3 days)	1	4	2	6	18

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
	9			27	243

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The South Western Region has maintained its policy to provide a valued Education and Health and Safety Service, to our Representatives and Members in the Region in line with the organising agenda.

Regular distribution of up to date health and safety information and literature is distributed to all Branches and Health and Safety Representatives and topical information is included in the Region's regional magazine Nexus. The Region has actively continued its policy of promoting the importance of the issue of health and safety in the workplace in recruitment initiatives and campaigns.

(Adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: I now ask Alan Garley to move the South Western Region Report, pages 150-157. Alan?

The Regional Secretary's Report: South Western Region (pages 150-157) was formally moved and formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Page 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, and 157? Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

The Report of the South Western Regional Secretary was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to the next item of business. Colleagues, it gives me great pleasure to ask our next speaker to address you. I would like to welcome our friend Vaughan Gething, a longstanding GMB member who has been elected as an Assembly member for Cardiff South and Penarth at the 5th May elections. Vaughan was a Cardiff councillor from 2004 to 2008, former President of the NUS Wales, and former President of the Wales TUC. Vaughan, it gives me great pride to ask you to address Congress. *(Applause)*

ADDRESS TO CONGRESS BY VAUGHAN GETHING, WELSH ASSEMBLY MEMBER

VAUGHAN GETHING AM: Good morning, Congress. Thank you for the kind words of introduction, President. Delegates, it gives me great pleasure to address you as a member of Cardiff & District Branch and now as a member of the Welsh Assembly representing Cardiff South and Penarth. I am, of course, the first black Labour Assembly member but I tell you I wish not to be remembered simply for the colour of my skin. (*Applause*) I want people to remember me as a good Assembly member who kept his promises and represented his constituency well.

I am proud and happy to be able to confirm that May 2011 was a good set of results, a good set of results for Welsh Labour and the GMB, but above all a good result for the people of Wales. Thirty Labour Assembly members were elected out of 60 seats equal to our best ever result. Were it not for the additional list system we would have a clear majority as we won 28 out of the 40 constituencies. The GMB group of Labour Assembly members will also be boosted. Gwenda Thomas and Rosemary Butler return but they are being joined by Mick Antoniw, a former partner at Thompsons solicitors, like myself, and of course me as a fourth GMB member. Gwenda is yet again the Deputy Minister, Rosemary is our new Presiding Officer watching over all of us and making sure we behave ourselves, and Mick has perhaps the most demanding constituency in Wales for now as Alan Garley is one his constituents.

None of this, none of our achievement at the ballot box happened by accident and none of this was certain, either at the start of the year or at the start of April and the short campaign. This Welsh election was unlike any other. For the first time ever since devolution we have a UK Tory Prime Minister and of course a Tory Deputy, but the contrast between Labour values in 2010 and Tory values and Tory promises was not as clear as we would have liked. The Tories spoke, of course, of voting blue and going green. They talked of fairness. They said they were the party of the NHS. A year or so ago some people were taken in by that. Some people were tired of us in government. Now, not just in our own core supporters but many families in the middle of Britain all the way across the piece feel badly let down and see the reality of Tories in government. That feeling of being let down by the Tories and angry at what they have done does not guarantee Labour votes at the ballot box.

In Wales and Scotland, in particular, we know that there is a nationalist alternative with a very different agenda from us, very different values from us, but they are there to compete with us for votes at every single election. Looking at our opponents, if you start with Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalists, it was a bad result for Plaid Cymru and deservedly so. For four years before this election we had a Wales coalition government and it was by and large a successful government, a coalition between us and Plaid Cymru. I do not say that I enjoyed that coalition with any real relish, I want a Labour government delivering Labour values, but actually we had a successful term and our values ran that government. We can be proud of what we did in those four years. Plaid, however, spent their whole election campaign attacking Labour, saying you could not trust Wales with Labour; you could not give Labour a majority.

The other thing they spent a lot of time doing was refusing to rule out a deal with the Tories. They got their comeuppance and they deserved it. One of the best results on election night to election morning was seeing Llanelli return to the Labour fold from Plaid Cymru; a fantastic result for a hardworking campaign involving, of course, the whole spectrum of the trade union Movement. Plaid now are where they belong, the third party in Wales after losing a number of seats. Oddly for the Tories it was not a bad result, they kept almost all of their constituencies and took one off Plaid, and one off the LibDems. The one seat they did lose at constituency level was a big Labour gain in Cardiff North with Julia Morgan, the former MP, returning to the Assembly and delivering their would-be leadership contender, Jonathan Morgan, a fatal blow.

The LibDems were the other story of the night. We lost many of our votes over the last two election cycles to the LibDems. Many people who felt they could not or would not vote for us were taken in by LibDem activity in communities by promises to do whatever they wanted at the time. That all changed. It is not just that people do not trust Nick Clegg or his apologists, the point is they fundamentally lost trust with many, many people who never wanted to see a Tory government. Those people who see the Tories as anathema in Wales, a party they would never vote for, could never vote LibDem again. That was a message we heard loud and clear on the doorsteps. That is why they lost two out of three of their constituencies. That is why they are in freefall and that is why I can tell you, Congress, they will get hammered at next year's local government elections. (*Applause*)

One of the best sights of the night and as it became morning on polling day was to see lots of disheartened LibDems when they realised they were going to lose Cardiff Central. They lost Cardiff Central to Labour by only 34 votes, half a street's worth. So every single one of us, every GMB member that went to Cardiff Central and worked will know that everything they did made a difference. The LibDems actually won five seats but they are down to only three at the moment. There is a little local difficulty because two of them have been disqualified. There is a police investigation so I cannot tell you exactly and fully what I think but it is a matter for the law to operate. I think I can tell you, Congress, if I had signed my nomination papers and I did know that I could not be an Assembly member at that time, I am not quite so sure how much pity the LibDems would show me.

When we look at what happened in the election result it is also important, I think, to look at the fringe parties. Many fringe parties thought they would have a seat in this election and one of those who came really close in 2007 was, of course, the British National party. The British National Party ran candidates in every list seat and they were telling anybody who would listen that they would have an Assembly member. I am glad to tell you, Congress, that they do not have an Assembly member. They got nowhere near having an Assembly member. They have gone backwards at this election and people in Wales faced with a Tory government have woken up and realised you have to be serious about this; if you want somebody to stand up for you that means being real about who is going to take decisions on your behalf. That is part of the reason why people came home to Labour and, frankly, the BNP really, really, are now what I believe is a busted flush. People are not interested in an ideology of complaint, racism, and disagreement with anything that happens on your street. When I went and knocked doors the people who said they might vote BNP

looked me in the face and said they did not want people that looked like me, and Eastern Europeans, in their city. Those people are not there now. Those same people did not have someone to vote for, and they could not and they did not put their crosses in those boxes.

On election night walking round with people with BNP stickers I felt distinctly uncomfortable. I felt, I know those people do not believe that I should exist. I know those people do not believe many people in this hall deserve to be called Britons, deserve to be part of our country. I am glad the people of Wales took a stand and I am glad the BNP got a shoeing right where it hurts, right in the middle of the ballot box. (*Applause*)

In contrast to the other parties, Welsh Labour was clear that we would stand up for Wales. In the new reality of a Tory government you had to be serious: who do you trust to look after the Assembly, who do you trust to look after your family, who do you trust to ensure that the Tory plan to destroy the Health Service in England does not seep over the border, and who do you trust to make sure the families are not saddled with a generation's worth of debt from tuition fees? It was very clear the people thought about trusting Labour. We had a clear programme of five key pledges speaking to everyday priorities of families up and down the country. When we knocked doors people were prepared to listen. I know from the tough days in 2007, 2008, 2009, and even 2010, not everybody wanted to listen to us, not everybody would open the door and speak to us.

This time round people were there; they were prepared to listen. Those people heard a clear message, they heard a clear message of difference and they heard a clear message of Labour values, Labour values that run through our manifesto that I was proud to stand at the front of. I was proud to tell people, this is what you will get if you vote Labour. If you vote Labour in large enough numbers you will have a Labour team of Labour ministers delivering this programme. That is exactly what we have, an all-Labour Cabinet listening to the people of Wales, and I believe will deliver for the people of Wales.

Trust is such a big issue for us. We had so many cynical people on the doorstep. Not every one of them was impressed that I had been a lawyer before I decided to try and be a politician. I had never been an estate agent so I had some way to go. Trust is such a big issue because once you lose it, it is so difficult to win it back. Some people give you a chance because you are new; some people, though, will never forget what we have done in the past. When we look at all the great results we had, we have to remember that actually nearly 60% of the people of Wales did not take part in this election. For all that we do now we have to remember that we want those people to go to the ballot box in five years' time and to think it is well worth having a Labour government. We saw the difference it could make, and did make, in making our country a fairer place, a better place, and an example to the rest of UK what Labour can deliver in government.

I now want to finish by saying a few thank you's on my own behalf. I know that I would not be here without friends, colleagues, and supporters within the Labour Party and, of course, the GMB. I started off when I went through young members meetings, I went to the black members, the race conferences, and there are many

friends across this hall that I recognise from that time. I also know there are plenty of people I saw then that could have gone on to do more but have not, and it is not through lack of talent or application, I believe, but it is about the reality that life pulls you in different ways. I am fortunate to still be here, I am fortunate to have come through and had a good job and now have an opportunity to represent and help people from every part of my constituency and community, but that would not have happened without my union, the GMB.

I have been a shop steward for the GMB, I have looked after workers in my day job with the GMB, and I have had help and support to get me here from the GMB, not just Mal and the team across the region but I should say thank you to my agent, Mike Payne, who is a GMB organiser and who made sure I did not break the law and get disqualified, but in particular who reminded me of the privilege that it is to stand here and to represent a community of people. None of us come here on our own. My experience is the support and encouragement we receive is what brings us here, what guides us, and what keeps us honest as well. I am no different.

I am delighted to report on a successful election campaign for Labour, for the GMB, and the people of Wales. I am proud to say that I am a Labour representative of the people of Wales and I am proud to say that I am a member of the GMB. Thank you, comrades. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, can I say that Vaughan has done extremely well and he has represented the GMB at every level. I have known him from boy to man, let's put it like that. Can I say on behalf of the GMB that this is in recognition of your achievements and the fact that you are here today, so that you will have a memory — and here's the stuff that goes in them!

(Presentation of a gift amid applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we now move on to item 23, which is Political: Democracy & Constitutional Reform. Motion 200 has been withdrawn so we move on to 201, Regional Government, Northern Region to move. Motion 202 will be next, Local Government, Northern Region again.

**POLITICAL: DEMOCRACY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
MOTION 201**

201. REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

This Congress condemns the Coalition Government's proposals to scrap Regional Development Agencies such as One North East. Congress calls on the Government to put in place in the Northern Region a proper framework of regional governance that is democratically elected and with the type of devolved powers that exist in the nations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

SUNDERLAND NO 9 ENGINEERING BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. SISTERSON (Northern): President, Congress, first-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, the Tory-led coalition government has made a scandalous decision to scrap Regional Development Agencies. In the Northern Region we have two RDAs that have contributed to the regional economy. A decision to replace them with Local Enterprise Partnerships, regional growth zones and enterprise zones means more red tape, not less. It costs more money, not less. For instance, Congress, in Sunderland the former Vaux Brewery site was left derelict for years because Tesco bought the land and then banked that land. The local council could not break the deadlock but the RDA was able to help bring in the funding to ensure there was movement on the site.

Congress, the scrapping of the RDAs puts back the agenda for democratically elected forms of regional government. Politicians believe in the centralisation of power. The Northern Region is losing out on funding as it is taken away from the local government, which is a key driver in the Northern Region. If we had the powers in the Northern Region that the devolved assemblies have, we would be able, at last, to determine our own destiny. We need local people in the Northern Region to have a say in their future. We are not going to get fairness from the Con-Dems. Regional government is back on the agenda. Congress, I urge you to support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

BRO. G. MANUEL (Northern): President, Congress, the last Labour Government gave the idea of regional government a lukewarm response; at worst they were accidentally or deliberately cack-handed. Congress, you do not get the support of regional voters by ringing them up at 3 o'clock in the morning with an automatic telephone message asking for a Yes vote for regional government. That is what John Prescott did. However, the decision to do away with the regional bodies that gave a focus for generation, for job creation, and inward investment, means that it will be dog-eat-dog again. This is perfect for the Coalition Government; they can hand out their baubles to their areas. Congress, there is absolutely no evidence that the Tory-led Government replacement for the Rural Development Agencies will help our regions. It certainly will not help the Northern Region. Leaving it to the free market will take decades.

Congress, the scale of cuts means that central government has turned its back on the regions. The debate on regional government needs to come back so that we can look to determine our own future just as devolved administrations have. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MOTION 202

202. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

This Government is appalled at the Coalition Government's cuts in public spending announced in October 2010 and notes that such cuts fly in the face of the same Government's announcements about local decision-making. Congress calls on the Government to fully resource local decision-making by devolving power to local councillors. Congress calls on the Labour Party to enshrine in its policy-making a proper commitment to localism by decentralising

resources and power away from Whitehall to locally elected representatives and their communities.

NEWCASTLE CITY LA BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. McALLISTER (Northern): Congress, the UK has the most centralised state of developed countries. This has become worse under the Coalition Government. The Tories talk the talk of localism and decentralisation. However, their actions are, firstly, to tell local councils what to do. Secondly, they deny councils resources and then they say it is up to the local councils what they decide to do with their services. Congress, we have massive cuts in the local councils that affect some of the poorest in our communities. It is no good Eric Pickles saying it is up to the local councils if he ties one arm behind their back by cutting funding. What sort of local decision-making is that over the services that are provided? Let's be clear, Congress, this Government wants to carry out the dream of Nicholas Ridley, that is, councillors turn up once a year, give out their contracts, and then go home. The Tory dream now supported by the LibDems is becoming reality by stealth. The local council leaders, and the Labour Party, are sticking their tongues out to Eric Pickles. That is their version of sticking up for local people. We do not want Labour council leaders to be in the post just to build their CV for a future parliamentary career. We want Labour to stick up for local people and take their fight to Eric Pickles and the rest of his government. That is the sort of leadership the local communities respect. Please support. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Secunder?

SIS. A. BRYAN (Northern): Congress, when the Coalition Government announced its public spending cuts last October they effectively put a stranglehold over the local decision-making. The frontloading of the spending cuts of 28% over four years will take us back decades. Sure Start centres, libraries, social care, and many more services will be hammered; added to that the freeze on the council tax and pay will put local government into a straitjacket. The Tory-led Coalition talks about localism, it talks about the big society, it talks about free schools. Congress, these are just a cover for the cuts. The reality is that all government is centralised power to Whitehall. All governments since Thatcher have never really trusted local government. What are needed are local people to determine more of their services through their locally elected representatives. We need local councils to be able to raise more revenue locally. They need to be able to borrow against their assets, and they need to be able to keep more of their capital receipts.

Congress, the Labour Party is conducting a policy review. It needs to give a firm commitment to decentralise the resources from Whitehall to the locally elected people. There is a democratic deficit in this country which shows no sign of easing. Unless there is a change, local government will continue to rely on Whitehall control. Please support the motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alyson. I now call on Mary Hutchinson, on behalf of the CEC, to give the qualification to Motions 201 and 202.

SIS. M. HUTCHINSON (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, the CEC asks that Motions 201 and 202 are supported with qualifications. Congress, local government and how it is operated has always been a key issue for GMB. The Conservative-led coalition government did not take long when it came into power to implement deep and savage cuts to local councils and contrary to what they said before the General Election they have forced local councils to attack the services that they provide, most notably Sure Start. Whilst the Government under its spokesman, Eric Pickles, proclaim that they are giving councils and the people more power, the stark reality is the opposite. On Motions 201 and 202 the CEC asks that Congress support both motions but with qualification. GMB supports Regional Development Agencies but the CEC believes that it should be down to the will of the people to decide on the structures of government and that other regions, not only in the Northern Region, may want to develop regional government; also that there should not be a top down approach but local communities should be consulted. Congress, please support Motions 201 and 202 with the qualification explained. Thanks. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. Does the Northern Region accept the qualification for Motions 201 and 202? *(Agreed)* Thank you. The CEC is supporting these two motions with the qualification. The region has accepted the qualification. All those in favour please show? Thank you. Any against? They are carried.

*Motion 201 was CARRIED.
Motion 202 was CARRIED.*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Before I go on to item 24 could I ask that all delegates who work for Asda, when we break for lunch if you will go to the back of Congress and have a meeting with Mick Rix and Martin Smith. Thank you.

I now move on to item 24, which is Political: European Union, Motion 210, Local Authority Offices in Brussels, Southern Region to move.

**POLITICAL: EUROPEAN UNION
LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICES IN BRUSSELS
MOTION 210**

210. LOCAL AUTHORITY OFFICES IN BRUSSELS

Congress condemns the short-sighted decision of the Conservative-led Government to abolish Regional Development Agencies and draws particular attention to the knock-on effects and closure of local authorities' offices in Brussels, where the GMB is the dominant trade union. At a time when the UK is suffering the full force of the government's ideologically-driven cuts, it is precisely now when the acquired knowledge and expertise of these Brussels offices in securing funding for projects in less affluent areas of the UK is needed. Therefore the EU's structural funds are more relevant than ever, as is the ability of local authorities to engage with the European legislative process as European legislation increasingly impacts on local authority work. Congress therefore calls on the CEC to raise the issue of funding for local authority offices in Brussels as a matter of urgency with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

B59 BRUSSELS BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. W. MODLOCK (Southern): This Congress condemns the short-sighted decision of the Conservative-led government to abolish Regional Development Agencies and draws particular attention to the knock-on effects and closure of local authority offices in Brussels where the GMB is a dominant trade union. At a time when the UK is suffering the full force of the Government's ideologically driven cuts, it is precisely now when the acquired knowledge and expertise of these Brussels offices is securing funding for projects in less affluent areas of the UK. Therefore, the EU structural funds are more relevant than ever as is the ability of local authorities to engage with the European legislative process as European legislation increasingly impacts on local authority work. Congress therefore calls on the CEC to raise the issue of funding for local authority offices in Brussels as a matter of urgency with the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government.

I am afraid I am not going to be able to give this motion the justice that the delegate who cannot be here today would have given it but, unfortunately, he has not arrived and I am standing in for him; that is Ben Fox from B59 Brussels Branch. I think the message and what has been said to the CEC is that the GMB is the most dominant and influential trade union in the heart of the European Community within Brussels. Clearly, that puts us in a position where we can actually influence what goes on in terms of local government. Just today the organisation SEEDA (South East Economic Development Agency) has been abolished. One of the directors on SEEDA was our own Southern Region Regional Secretary, Richard Ascough. Today, he is no longer part of that organisation because it does not exist. I think it is no coincidence that this Government is closing these organisations because of the fact that they have no interest in local government. They are looking to cut wherever they can and to privatise anything they can within local government. It is clearly a difficult time in opposition but I think it is a time for organisations like GMB, who clearly are at their best when campaigning. Therefore, this is a motion that we would hope the CEC will take very seriously and put at the top of their agenda because it will have a major influence on what happens in local government. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bill. Secunder to the motion? Formally. Thank you very much.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The CEC is supporting this motion. All those in favour please show? Any against? That is carried.

Motion 210 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. Congress, can we now move to item 25, European Report, (pages 29-34). Kathleen, do you want to move your report?

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

EUROPEAN REPORT

EUROPEAN OFFICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The GMB European office continues to drive GMB policies and campaigns at EU and International level to improve employment and social rights and protections for our members, their families and for trade union brothers and sisters worldwide. The European office also monitors and supports GMB intervention in the national level implementation of EU policies, for example public procurement and agency workers rules.

The continuing economic and financial crisis remains top of the agenda at European level, and the GMB staff have been monitoring and contributing to the wide debates at EU and International level, challenging the institutions to do more to support innocent workers who continue to be the victims of a crisis they did nothing to create, and advising and briefing officers and members on developments and possible GMB actions. GMB has campaigned to ensure that the issues of employment, workers rights and their financial security are given a central focus in relation to the crisis.

The new EU Commission was finally confirmed early in 2010, and the office has had contacts with many of the new Commissioners. We continue to develop strong relationships in solidarity with our trade union colleagues across Europe and the world in promoting labour rights, decent work, conditions and pay, and to strengthen trade union recognition and organisation.

CEC Political, European & International Committee – The Committee continues to steer and oversee GMB policy and campaigns on EU and international legislative proposals and developments as well as GMB involvement and practical support for solidarity campaigns for trade union colleagues across the world. Our continuing partnership with Costa Rican trade union SITRAP remains a central focus of the Committee.

2. PERSONNEL

GMB European Officer, Kathleen Walker Shaw, is joined by Sarah Clarkson as European Research and Policy Officer. Both officers continue to work from the GMB office in Brussels in the heart of the EU quarter. Sarah King will return to the GMB legal department following her secondment to the TUC Brussels office where she is covering a maternity leave.

3. GMB MEP GROUP

GMB continues to work closely with our GMB MEP group: Stephen Hughes (North East – Group convener), David Martin (Scotland) and Glenis Willmott (East Midlands) at European, national and regional level. The group generally meets bi-monthly in Brussels, and our MEPs provide ongoing practical and political support for our campaigns and policy positions. We also work closely with a wide range of MEPs in the European Parliament, and despite a reduction in the number of Socialist members and not having a Parliament majority; we have maintained our ability to jointly positively influence legislative proposals.

Glenis Willmott remains leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party (EPLP), where she continues to do an excellent job. GMB welcomed the inclusion of the Leader of the EPLP in the Labour Shadow Cabinet meetings following the leadership election in September 2010. We see this as long overdue progress in ensuring closer communication and co-operation between MPs and MEPs on key policy issues. In line with Congress 2010 motion 101, GMB supported Glenis and colleagues in the wider EPLP with joint events at Labour Party Conference 2010. We plan to further develop these positive links at a practical level with the EPLP at regional, national and European level. Acting on

motion 133 to GMB Congress 2010 on fighting fascism, we work closely with MEPs and Hope not Hate in exposing the true and terrifying face of the BNP MEPs.

4. SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

The GMB European officers continue to support and assist the work of National and Regional Secretaries and officers, in organising and recruitment, particularly relating to our involvement with multinational companies, and in areas of restructuring in these companies. This work regularly involves the European and International trade union sector federations, ETUC, direct contacts with European Works Council representatives and other European trade union colleagues, MEPs and with the EU institutions. The European office also supports the GMB Brussels Branch in its organising and recruitment work wherever possible.

Comparing terms and conditions – The European office continues to support national and regional officers in comparing rights, conditions and redundancy terms across multinational companies where we have members, to support our bargaining agenda. Support and solidarity from trade union counterparts in other countries in providing information on their social plans, and access to their works councils, can positively influence negotiations and strengthen our bargaining position.

Migrant workers – GMB has been involved with EU level project work on organising migrant workers. Ann Lafferty has led on this. Following motion 83 to Congress 2010 on migrant labour recognition, the European office continues to advise and provide briefings on proposals relating to migrant workers including the Agency Workers protections, Single Permit, Seasonal Workers and Intra company transfers (see below).

Information, research and briefings - The European office provides regular updates and briefings on a wide range of EU legislative and policy areas for members, officers and organisers to assist them in their roles, and support the bargaining agenda. A monthly EU bulletin is also produced, which can be accessed via the GMB website.

5. RECOGNITION

Comparing trade union recognition across key target multinational companies is another function of the European office, which has proved valuable in supporting GMB bids for recognition. European trade union colleagues continue to show solidarity in offering support to our members, and raising the issue with management in their national works councils or committees when requested.

6. GMB EU LEVEL CAMPAIGNS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

GMB is respected for its effectiveness in raising our members' concerns at national, European and International level, and influencing a large number of specific EU policy and legislative issues both within the EU institutions and at the highest level of UK Government. Below is a range of campaigning work undertaken in 2010 supporting Congress policy decisions:

Economic & Financial Crisis and Austerity programmes – GMB has actively campaigned at European level to ensure that the packages of measures on financial regulation and economic governance being developed at this level are strong and effective enough to ensure such a disaster is never repeated. We have also been active in urging decision makers to regulate the hedge fund and private equity sector and not just individual fund managers. The fact that the financial markets are still able to play cat and mouse with weak economies facing sovereign debt pressures shows there is still some way to go to bring the sector to account.

A delegation of GMB members and officers joined the major ETUC demonstration in Brussels in September 2010 "No to Austerity". In line with Congress 2010 motion 94 on public sector cuts, GMB has also raised major concerns about the direction of EU Economic Governance measures, which wrongly promote stringent austerity programmes, and resulting in major public sector cuts. The level of

intervention in the implementation of rescue packages in Greece and Ireland is unprecedented, and fundamentally undermines the role of trade unions and the collective bargaining process. EU Commission proposals in autumn 2010 seek to reduce wage levels, pension benefits, welfare benefits and employment protections on a wider scale – in effect tearing up the principles of a Social Europe. GMB has written formally to MEPs raising these concerns and asking for their support in challenging these measures.

Financial Transaction Tax – GMB supports a tax on financial transactions to curb the casino capitalism of the banks and raise valuable revenue. Throughout 2010 we have been actively involved with campaign groups such as Robin Hood tax campaign at UK and EU level, urging decision makers to support the tax. Paul Kenny addressed a fringe event on the issue at TUC Congress 2010. There is now wide support for the tax by Socialist and Green MEPs, but other groups are split on the issue. European Governments are also split on the issue, and work will continue in 2011 to make progress.

Working Time Directive Revision – GMB continues to campaign against attempts to undermine and weaken protections under the Working Time Directive. The Coalition Government announced a specific attack on working time protections in their joint government manifesto in summer 2010.

Following trade union success in seeing off attempts to water down protections in 2009, the EU Commission restarted social partner negotiations in March 2010, with the second phase being launched in December 2010. GMB has responded with our views to the TUC/ETUC and has played an active role in discussions at ETUC and European Federation levels on this issue. The EU Commission is clearly minded not end the opt-out, preferring to try to remove the need for its use. Undermining on-call rights remains a target. Meanwhile, the EU Commission continues to avoid taking long overdue legal action against Member States not complying with the Directive in this area. GMB will continue to work with trade union colleagues and MEPs to protect our members' rights in this important area.

GMB actively supported the work of the European Transport Union Federation in its successful campaign to prevent the road transport working time protections being undermined by an attempt to exclude self-employed drivers. In June 2010, the European Parliament voted against proposals to weaken the protections, and proved that, even without a trade union-sympathetic majority in the European Parliament, strong trade union campaigns can win out on the power of our arguments.

Temporary Agency Workers Directive – The Regulations implementing the Temporary Agency Workers' Directive were put on the statute books before the election in 2010. Following GMB policy decision Composite 4 at GMB Congress 2010 on the issue, GMB was highly critical that the Government had postponed the enactment of the rights until October 2011. We have been actively involved in challenging threats by the Coalition Government, fuelled by business, to undermine the agreed regulations implementing the EU Temporary Agency Workers Directive.

GMB is working with TUC in responding to Government guidance on the rights, and TUC will be producing bargaining materials to support trade union officers and members in this area.

Without the support and resources of trade unions, agency workers will struggle to enforce their rights, and it is hoped this will create a stimulus for recruitment and organisation in this area. Failing to ensure equal treatment for agency workers will risk undermining access to jobs, and pay and conditions for all.

Public Procurement – GMB has played a central role in co-ordinating joint EU trade union and social and environmental NGO positions in pushing for greater focus on the social dimension of public procurement. Having long called for strong EU Commission guidance on social considerations in public contracting, we felt that the guidance published in November 2010 was a missed opportunity to provide the positive encouragement we were looking for in this area. Together with the joint working group at EU level, GMB lead on a major response to the EU Commission evaluation of the public procurement Directives in November 2010, and submitted a GMB response to the UK Government consultation on this issue in December 2010. The EU Commission will be bringing forward a Green Paper on

modernising public procurement policy early in 2011, to which we will also respond. In preparation for this, GMB is co-operating with MEPs and colleagues from the procurement working group to organise a legal analysis session of the scope to use social criteria in procurement, which will be held in the European Parliament in March 2011.

Supporting GMB Congress 2010 Composite motion 9 on Remploy, the European Officer, together with National Secretary Phil Davies, the Remploy stewards and consortium officers continue to urge Government and public authorities at all levels to use the EU provisions on reserved contracts status for awarding contracts to supported employment workplaces for people with disabilities. OGC Buying solutions launched a major framework contract in four lots under the reserved contract status in January 2010. There has been no progress on other contracts since the election, and it is clear it will become harder to persuade local and government authorities to use this contracting process in the face of swingeing cuts.

The regular meetings of the procurement group with the Department of Work and Pensions involving supported employers and trade unions dried up after the election. GMB has raised questions regarding their continuation, but have heard nothing. Quarterly meetings continue between the TUC and the Office of Government Commerce (OGC - now part of the Cabinet Office) on a wider range of issues related to procurement, which the European Officer attends.

EU Trade agreements – decent work, trade union and workers rights and freedoms – GMB continues to have serious concerns about the mushrooming of bi-lateral and multi-lateral Free Trade and Association Agreements being negotiated at EU level, that fail to pay any real heed to fundamental and human rights, trade union rights and freedoms, labour standards and decent work principles. In 2010 we responded robustly to two EU Trade Policy consultations and a UK White Paper consultation on the issue. We have enjoyed more positive support for our position from MEPs in the European Parliament in a number of reports they have adopted over 2010 on fundamental rights and social responsibility in trade agreements. GMB wants to see formal involvement of trade unions in the countries in question from the earliest point of considering a mandate for negotiations, but to date there is little or no involvement in most negotiations at any stage of the process. Negotiators hope that a token gesture approach to social and sustainable development issues in one or two agreements will silence critics, but this is nowhere near enough to counter the potential damage to workers, their rights, wellbeing and the environment in both partner countries and EU Member States.

GMB, along with ITUC, has taken specific action in raising issues relating to the growth in the use of Mode IV provisions for intra company transfers of workers, which is being particularly aggressively pursued in the India Free Trade Agreement, and where we feel that equal treatment principles for workers will not be applied, and where the potential for undercutting and exploiting workers could be great. MEPs have raised questions on our behalf with the European Commission.

There are also major concerns about investor protections in the FTA agreements with India and Canada. GMB has joined with Canadian trade union colleagues in raising these issues at EU level, which give businesses the scope to sue Governments where they believe their freedom to trade has been restricted.

The highly controversial proposed FTA with Colombia continues to be a major concern to GMB. In line with Congress 2010 motion 219 on this issue, we are working with other trade union colleagues, Justice for Colombia and other sympathetic NGOs to try to block this agreement. British Labour MEPs have been very supportive, and have played an active role in a number of hearings and events in Parliament on this issue where we have taken part.

Working together with our SITRAP trade union colleagues in Costa Rica and Bananalink, the European Officer continues to press complaints made under the EU's Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) at EU and ILO level. GMB MEPs have consistently supported our work in 2010, and wrote to the new President of Costa Rica, Laura Chinchilla, calling on her to adopt the long awaited Labour

Procedure Reforms to end breaches of labour standards and freedom of association, and to tackle the issues of anti-trade union direct settlements and permanent committees. MEPs also raised these concerns with EU Trade Commissioner De Gucht and High Representative of the EU Catherine Ashton. It was evident from the response of the Costa Rican Government that they feel under pressure to make progress with these issues. As a result of earlier interventions by GMB, the EU Commission delegation in Costa Rica met with our trade union colleagues in the country early in 2010, and information exchanges are improving. TUC also supported GMB in raising concerns about Costa Rica again in the ILO arena.

GMB arranged for SITRAP General Secretary Gilbert Bermudez Umaña to speak at two major EU Conferences on Corporate Social Responsibility in November 2010, which sadly due to illness he was unable to attend. GMB's International officer spoke in his place at one of the conferences.

Posting of Workers Directive/Laval and other Judgments – GMB continues to campaign along with EU trade union colleagues for a revision of the Posting of Workers Directive, and the adoption of a Social Progress clause to deal with the effects of the judgments. Building on more helpful judgments from the European Court of Human Rights confirming that the right to strike is a human right and can only be limited in strictly defined circumstances, and the report of the ILO committee of experts in relation to the BALPA case that the European Court Judgments in Laval and Viking place practical limitations on the effective exercise of the right to strike, ETUC and GMB pointed believe this further proves the case law is in contradiction with fundamental rights and therefore needs to be addressed.

Single Permit for Migrant workers, Seasonal Workers and Intra Company Transfer rules – Together with EU level trade union colleagues, GMB campaigned to stop damaging proposals on the Single Permit in the European Parliament in December 2010, on procedures for work and residence permits for third country nationals. We oppose the proposals because they excluded a number of sectors of workers and fail to ensure equal treatment, thus threatening undercutting and exploitation. We are also raising our concerns about proposals for Seasonal Workers and Intra Company Transfer Directives (see also Mode IV issue under Trade agreements section) which also fail to guarantee equal treatment principles are respected.

Single Market Act/Monti Report - attempting to re-launch the single market, the EU Commission produced a communication “Towards a Single Market Act – for a highly competitive social market economy” in October 2010, following on from the Monti Report on the issue earlier in the year. It consists of 50 proposals, about half of which are legislative proposals. GMB will be responding to the consultation and calling for a proper balance in the social and economic dimensions of the internal market which are currently hopelessly out of kilter. GMB will raise our concerns that two important proposals in the text relating to fundamental rights and the Posting of workers were subject to last minute changes which watered down the initial proposals.

Fundamental Rights/Convention on Human Rights - With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union became legally binding, and strengthens action on respect for fundamental rights. The European institutions are now working on a strategy for implementing the Charter. GMB and EU trade union colleagues believe the base strengthens our arguments regarding many issues including working time, posting of workers and public procurement. The Lisbon Treaty also committed the EU to accession to the European Convention of Human Rights.

Pregnant Workers Directive – GMB supported the European Parliament vote in October 2010 to extend maternity and paternity leave rights across Europe, increasing maternity leave with full pay to 20 weeks and for two weeks paternity leave. At a meeting of EU employment ministers in December 2010 there was no consensus of support for these improvements, with many governments critical of the cost concerns. The UK Government is particularly opposed to the proposals. Discussions continue, though there is a risk the proposals will remain stalled for the foreseeable future.

EU Sovereignty Bill/Referendum Lock – the UK Coalition Government manifesto included the European Union Bill, which had its first reading in the Commons on 11th November 2010. Trade unions and MEPs have heavily criticised the Bill, which introduces the *referendum lock*, which it claims will strengthen UK procedures for agreeing and ratifying EU decisions and Treaty, but which we feel will be used to block any social clauses in the Treaty and restrict further workers' rights and protections.

Victims of Crime abroad – GMB is supporting campaigner Maggie Hughes to take her campaign “*please enjoy, don't destroy*” to European level. The campaign calls for urgently needed support, advice and information for families who face the dreadful trauma of having loved ones attacked or injured abroad. Maggie's son Robbie was violently attacked on holiday in Crete in 2008, and she found there was no real help to navigate the confusing maze of dealing with authorities in a foreign country and language. The EU Commission is planning measures on support for victims of crime in 2011, and GMB is organising meetings with EU Commission officials and MEPs so that Maggie's practical advice and experience can positively influence the content of the proposals.

Cross-border healthcare – The controversial proposals were unblocked at the end of 2010. GMB worked together with colleagues from EPSU to gain support in the European Parliament for amendments to the proposals, which would provide safeguards for the NHS to be able to control authorization of treatment. We were also successful in broadening the legal basis of the legislation to being a public health matter and not just internal market issue.

European Works' Councils – GMB responded to the UK Government consultation on draft Regulations to implement the recast European Works' Council Directive in February 2010, which have now been adopted and must be implemented in the UK by June 2011. We have concerns that the UK Regulations do not reflect trade union views effectively and have attempted to water down the positive progress made at EU level.

The European officer continues to support national and regional officers and GMB EWC members in establishing EWCs in multinational workplaces and in amending and revising existing agreements.

7. SUPPORT FOR TRAINING, EU FUNDED PROJECTS, DELEGATIONS

The European office continues to offer support and guidance to GMB regions and sections in developing EU funded projects.

GMB is a partner in an EU funded project in the nuclear sector, led by CGT French union colleagues and involving Finnish and Belgian trade unions. It aims to promote co-operation on health and safety, working conditions and contracting in the sector.

The European officer supported Manufacturing Section colleagues with a bid for EU interregional funding for a skills and employment project to rebuild the Medway Queen paddle steamer, which was successful in receiving major EU financial support in 2010.

Our links with a wide range of EU trade union colleagues continue, and visits by their delegations provide a valuable opportunity to exchange information on industrial relations and organising. The European office also hosts an annual delegation meeting with students from Ruskin College.

(Adopted)

SIS. K. WALKER-SHAW (National Officer): Formally.

THE PRESIDENT: Formally. Formally seconded?

The Report was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Page 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34. Agree to accept, Congress? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

The European Report (pages 29-34) was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Kathleen, would you like to say a few words to Congress, please?

SIS. K. WALKER-SHAW (European Officer): You are just about to see a short video that has been made on behalf of the GMB group of MEPs who, sadly, cannot join us at Congress this week as it coincides with the Strasbourg session of the European Parliament, so they will be down in France, but they have asked me to send their very best wishes to you all for a very successful week and to say that they look forward to our continuing positive relationship. We are blessed within the GMB that we have always had a very high calibre of MEPs and I think the video that you are about to see will speak for itself.

I think it is timely for me to remind Congress that we currently have a group of three GMB MEPs and during my time in Brussels there was a period at which our group of GMB MEPs, 16 MEPs at that time, was actually bigger than the current Labour group of European MEPs; their current number is only 13. You will see from the video the challenges that we have out there to protect and promote our members' interests in Brussels and they work tirelessly on our behalf, but we desperately need to have more MEPs in Brussels who are supporting the trade union agenda because the challenges are immense. That is why the European elections must never for GMB members be a vote that they sit out. I hope that what they have to say to you today will remind you just how important that is. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Video shown to Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: May I, on behalf of the Congress, say thank you to the MEPs and I would like to say very much a thank you to Kathleen Walker-Shaw, who is absolutely fantastic. She turns out all the gobbledegook into simple English for us, and she fights extremely hard. I would like to say something about our MEPs. We may not have that many now but we certainly do have quality. Glenis sits on the NEC with me and Andy and I have to say she defends to the end the GMB and the trade union position. We do not always see that. Someone else is coming this afternoon who does exactly the same. So, thank you to the team out there and we do wish them well. Thank you on behalf of Congress. (*Applause*)

Colleagues, we are a little bit early so what I would hope you will agree with is that we ask Andy Worth to move the CEC Political Statement and then if anyone wishes to come in on the debate, as it takes up a lot of the areas covered by some of the motions ruled out, you will be able to respond if you so wish. I am not pushing you but if you want to, Andy?

THE CEC POLITICAL STATEMENT GMB's POLITICAL ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURES

GMB CONGRESS 2011

CEC Statement – GMB's Political Organisation

A number of 'political activity' motions have been submitted to Congress 2011, these motions seek to redefine the regional and branch political structures within GMB. Unfortunately they were submitted as motions and not rule amendments, so would have fallen. This statement aims to pull together and endorse many of the good points made.

This CEC Political statement also addresses the union's wider political engagement and current best practice throughout the regions.

GMB political objectives are twofold; firstly to ensure that GMB's industrial and social agenda is delivered at all levels of the political process and secondly to secure the election of Labour representatives who share our aims and values.

GMB currently has both formal and informal structures within the union promoting political objectives. Nationally, the structure is clearly defined; however at regional and branch levels, a far more informal and fluid structure has developed region by region. These structures best fit the individual political character and historic position of the region. They use our local branch and regional knowledge in a way that eludes many other organisations.

Congress sets the political priorities and objectives of the union, these are then implemented through the CEC and the Political, European & International Committee. GMBs National Political Department then delivers on a day to day basis; engaging with government and politicians on the key industrial issues and assisting in selections and elections.

There is also a Regional Political Officer (RPO) in each of the nine GMB regions. The RPOs work closely in conjunction with the National Political Department to develop and deliver GMB's political aims at a local level.

GMB members

Members are actively encouraged to engage with their local Labour Party and ultimately not just vote Labour but also campaign for Labour. One current CEC project encourages GMB members to join Labour in target seats around Britain. Political meetings are organised with the local MP, region and branches. These have proved effective in encouraging political debate and engagement.

GMB has been actively encouraging members to join the Labour Party and there is a special form on the GMB website. There is also a reduced union rate of £1.70 a month. The more GMB members joining Labour, the more influence we can have on policy and campaigns.

GMB Branches & Branch Political Officers

The level of political activity at branch level varies widely across the union. Some branches invite their MPs and councillors to their meetings, whilst others do not engage politically.

One successful way of engaging members is for the RPO to attend branch and workplace meetings to talk to members and encourage them to get involved with their local Constituency Labour Party (CLP). Regions are further encouraged to support branches and branch officials to ensure political activity is fully developed.

GMB@WORK empowers members to develop a strategy that best organises their local workplace and their communities. Members should be encouraged to embrace political involvement in the same way and engage as appropriate. This should be developed in consultation with the RPO, Regional Secretary and Regional Committee.

Constituency Labour Parties

Sending delegates to represent GMB on Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) is one of the most important ways to build a local dialogue. GMB branches are entitled to send 1 delegate for every 100 members they have living in a constituency. The delegate must be both a GMB and Labour Party member. Branches will have members living in many constituencies, so can therefore send delegates to not just 1 but as many constituencies as they have members living in.

Once you have a delegate to the local Labour Party, you can then submit motions and raise issues that are relevant to your members. Having delegates at CLPs is also important as from time to time selections will take place for councillors or MPs. GMB members who are delegates to their local CLPs will have an opportunity to influence who is selected.

Political Education

Developing a regional political education programme is a key way that some regions have engaged with members. Political education modules have been written nationally; these have now been successfully run in a number of regions and can be tailored to suit all levels from introduction courses for new members, to political debates and discussion for the more experienced.

A number of regions currently run political education courses, whilst others incorporate political education sessions into shop steward and new reps training. This is all to be encouraged and built on where possible.

Winning Selections & Elections

Across the union we work closely with the Labour Party to ensure its success at all elections – local, regional, parliamentary and European. Labour politicians are a critical part of delivering GMBs objectives. It is therefore vital that a key part of GMBs political strategy is to ensure those selected as Labour candidates are solid trade union candidates who share our aims and values.

The GMB parliamentary Panel is now open for those wishing to be selected and stand as Labour candidates in the next General Election. It is important that this is opened far and wide to ensure that the best shop stewards, representatives and members are given the opportunity to apply for it.

MPs, MEPs and Labour's elected representatives

A number of regions currently organise political discussions and involve their regional GMB MPs, which can take a number of different formats. MPs are often invited to speak and take questions at regional councils, and regional or local forums. An important part of

GMB's work is ensuring elected politicians are held accountable for the decisions they make on our behalf.

Another key issue is ensuring councillors and MPs are made aware of issues affecting GMB members. In addition to this, the Political Department liaises with the European Office to further campaigns within Westminster and the European Parliament. Some of the current issues we are working on are: Remploi, pensions, the economy, Southern Cross and the energy industry.

The National Political Department and European Office have arranged meetings and visits to Westminster and Europe for branches and members. These have proved very popular; they give members the opportunity, often in an informal environment, to question and discuss the latest political issues with Labour representatives.

Regional Political Forums & Engagement

Each region has developed political campaigning methods that best serve its regional structure. For example, some regions choose a structure that interacts with both regional council and regional committee. Others have a more informal structure with groups meeting where necessary to discuss key issues or elections. Another has a political members' database which they use to organise hit squads of members to blitz areas at election time.

Regional political forums have become popular in a number of regions and have proved a successful way for members to interact with political campaigns and politicians. These forums, although often an excellent way to engage GMB members, are not the only option.

Regional Political Forums therefore can be set up, but size and geographical coverage remains at the discretion of the regional committees.

Conclusion - Delivering GMB Political Objectives

Allowing regions the freedom to develop and deliver their own political strategy, in conjunction with the National Political Department, is necessary to ensure a fast and effective response to changing political circumstances. Being over prescriptive in structure can be bureaucratic and cumbersome. Inviting politicians to attend and having political debate at branch meetings will always be the best way to enhance political engagement.

Overall, the success of GMB political engagement can be measured in a number of ways. One key method is by the contribution we make nationally and regionally during elections. At the last General Election, GMB in conjunction with other unions, helped win 45 seats which stopped an outright Tory majority. The targeting of GMB resources coupled with our engagement with members and activists helped stop Labour's electoral wipe-out; preparing the groundwork to deliver a swift return to power.

Menu of options for each region to consider

- Deliver a regional political education programme
- Encourage more members to join Labour
- Appoint a Branch Political Officer
- Invite MPs and councillors to your branch and hold them to account
- Encourage more members and reps to become CLP delegates
- Set up a regional, council or city political forum

- Organise a regional or local GMB member's election hit squad
- Identify GMB reps and members to stand as councillors and MPs
- Arrange educational visits to Westminster and Europe where appropriate

(Adopted)

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast Region): Thanks, President. I am moving this year's statement on the GMB's Political Organisation and Structures. A number of motions were submitted to this year's Congress seeking to redefine the regional and branch political structures within the nine regions. The GMB's current political organisation has, though, colleagues, delivered for the union but there is always room for improvement. Not only did the GMB contribute to the election of over 45 Labour MPs preventing the Tories from winning the overall majority that they craved so much so that they sold their granny to secure the power when they did not get the majority, we played a big part in getting 45 MPs. We need to do more, though.

The GMB frequently has its campaigns and its issues voiced in Westminster and in the European Parliament. We have a formal and informal structure to deliver our political objectives. At national level the structure is clearly defined within the National Political Department. In addition, each region has a political officer who works closely with the National Political Department. Their role is to ensure that the political objectives of the union and the regions are achieved and delivered, and over the years these have developed informally and into a fluid structure that fits with the culture, the history, and traditions of the various regions as there are differences between them.

All GMB members are encouraged to get involved with Labour, not just to vote for Labour but to campaign for Labour, encouraged to get active within the local parties, and encouraged to stand as councillors and as MPs. Boy, do we need some proper working class MPs in Parliament. There is no prescribed route for members to be politically involved. The GMB just wants members to be involved; a very simple aim, get people involved. Without involvement, we will not change anything.

In one region the political officer focuses on attending branches and workplaces and tries to convince members to join the Labour Party, not a particularly easy task at this moment in time because many people are switched off from politics. We need to re-engage with our members and get our members to re-engage with the Party. We have been successful in a number of regions in doing that and this same region actually has the highest contact rate with all the CLPs in the country. In other regions there are political forums that have been established and they have been successful in getting members to become more active. We just need to engage with Labour and talk to them about how we achieve the political objectives and how we turn Labour into a proper opposition rather than what is going on at the moment, and to do that we need to engage with people. Many regions have established political education programmes. Years ago we used to do that. The Movement became a bit slack, really, and forgot the education, I think, and we are now re-engaging and re-politicising people.

Political education. Many branches invite their MPs and councillors to their branch to make them accountable. Unfortunately, whilst a lot of branches are actively pursuing a political agenda, we do have many branches in the GMB who are not political in any way. We need to work to try and improve that situation. We will continue from the CEC to encourage members to join the Party, to become delegates to their local constituencies as it is crucial that we are represented within the Party. Once a GMB member is at the constituency Labour Party as a delegate they can raise their own issues, they can raise the GMB's policies, and they are within the heart of the local party and can start to take the Party back so that the Party reflects ordinary working people's views rather than business views, which it has tended to do in the past. We need to regroup and Mary and myself try to get a voice of reason across at the NEC; sometimes we are listened to, sometimes we are laughed at, I think, but the laughing will stop, colleagues, believe you me.

We continue to encourage you and would look at the regions just to exercise the menu of options that are there for you to undertake, to review that and consider a political education programme if you are not already doing that, invite the politicians to regional and branch meetings, set up political forums if regions have not already done that, pick up on the best practice of organising the political hit squads that have been developed in some regions, and arrange educational visits to Westminster and perhaps even the European Parliament.

Those are a few options, colleagues, but there are many others that we could consider as well, I am sure. Please just talk in your regions about that and develop it. There is no restriction on that. Regions have the freedom to develop and deliver their own political strategy in conjunction with national but we do not want to be over-prescriptive in the structure. We need to have the flexibility in the structure and the regional committees and the regions themselves are actually the best people to decide what fits in their location. We would ask you to get involved in that.

Clearly, we would ask you to encourage people to come forward for MPs. We do, as I said earlier, desperately need proper working class MPs there. There is a place for the academics and the lawyers but we need people who really understand what life is like in Britain today, I think. Let's start by getting our members interested in the Party. Hopefully, that will then encourage them to go on to greater things like we have seen Vaughan Gething come through, and many other good colleagues.

Congress, the statement is simply asking you to let the regions decide how best to meet their internal aims and let the regional committees encourage and drive the political activities within their regions. Quite simply, colleagues, I think the message from the CEC is, let's get active, let's reclaim the Party, let's get them to a position where they are actually putting forward an alternative which is not, "We'll cut but slower than the other buggers," because that is the only one that maybe is coming out at the moment. You have heard the alternative and it has been put forward by the trade union Movement as the only voice doing it for many, many years now. The only people who tried to defend the manufacturing sector in this country were the trade unions. Years ago we were saying that. New Labour did not listen to that. This Labour needs to start listening to that. There needs to be a mixed economy. We need to stop the nonsense that the Tories are getting away with at the moment. Some people call them the Cameroons, I like to call them Compo and Clegg; I think it fits

much better. They are getting away with this mantra that it is Labour's deficit. There is no answer going back, is there? It is clearly not Labour's deficit. Even their own experts this morning, and anybody who did not succumb to the amber nectar too much last night would have seen on the news that even the Tory City experts are now saying they are cutting too quick and they will damage the economy. The opposition Labour Party MPs need to be saying that stuff, saying we will put the Robin Hood tax in, saying we will introduce a living wage, saying we will put the free school meals in, and chasing down these patriotic buggers that take all the jobs abroad. Congress, I move the statement. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Andy, I may need you to reply, if you would sit there at the front. I saw Vaughan. Anyone else?

SIS. J. JEPSON (Northern) speaking in support of the CEC Political Statement, said: Congress, let's be clear, no party won the last General Election but it is no good Labour saying we lost it just by a little bit. We have to be honest with ourselves, Labour lost the election. A couple of more percent would have been the worst result for nearly 30 years. Congress, the recent local elections were good news for Labour across the Northern Region. We matched the target wards across the region. In virtually every case the help and support of the GMB gave weight to a successful result for Labour. In Newcastle the LibDems have been kicked out of their main base and good riddance to them. In the next two years we will organise so they get their comeuppance in Northumberland. Our work helped with putting back power in councils across the North. Now our task is to hold Labour councillors to account. Congress, nationally Labour must get policies that our people and our communities need, not those that benefit the rich and the powerful. Let's ensure that our efforts get our people's policies into our Party and into power. Please support the statement. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done.

BRO. V. WEST (London): London Region welcomes the CEC Political Statement and in doing so accepts the need to withdraw our motion because it did not encompass a rule amendment. The report makes clear the need for us to further develop and strengthen our political structures. In London we have developed a model, particularly over the last 12 to 18 months, that started to bear fruit in last month's local government elections around the East Anglia Region. It also demonstrates that we still have a long way to go. Those political structures need strengthening not just at Head Office or even at Regional Office level, but where the lifeblood of our union is, that is, at branch level. We need to ensure that branches have the tools to go forward to engage, to engage with our Party, the Labour Party. That Party does not just need us to provide people on the door, it does not just need us to provide the money, it needs us to engage with them so that our values are their values and that the people that we get elected into parliament and into local councils where the fight back is going to start are people that hold our values and that are accountable to us. The fight back has started but the election results last month provided a mixed bag. Kicking a Liberal Democrat is always good sport and always can provide a laugh but let's put business before pleasure, the real enemy is the Tory Party. If we are getting back into power in parliament it is the Tories we have to beat, not the Liberal

Democrats. Let's kick a Liberal Democrat on the way but let's make sure that the really big kicking is the Tories next time round. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Vaughan.

BRO. R. MORGAN (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, this statement is welcome. However, and there is always an "however" with me, it does not address the real situation. It reads more like Chamberlain's *Peace in our Times* rather than a call for action. Just presenting a menu for regions to select from is not enough. It still gives the regions the option to do little or nothing. The trade unions are still the main funders of the Labour Party. Sadly, our members see little or nothing for their money, or they appear to see that. For years our money has been taken for granted and it is time to call and hold them to account for its use.

Congress, it is time to return the Party to those who work for and support it. At a time when we are fighting to keep the decent terms and conditions, indeed the very jobs of our members, we need the Labour Party to work for the GMB and for the Movement as a whole. Remember the lessons of history; Cameron and Clegg are determined to destroy the Welfare State and return us to the dark age of Thatcherism. Together we will stand, apart we will fall. Congress, I support the statement with those qualifications. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

BRO. A. IRVING (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire) speaking in support of the CEC statement said: It was actually three of my motions that were ruled out of order but my intention was not to put rule amendments in place, it was more to learn from best practice about taking the Movement forward and getting involved in the Labour Party. I am pleased to say that the recommendations in the statement covered my main points but the one that is particularly relevant to me is the branch political officer. It is fine going down that road but we have to give those people the tools to educate and engage our members into being involved in the Labour Party and get them to see the value and to bring them back into the fold. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Anyone else? Andy, I think the best thing will be that we take note of the comments that were made and see if we can address them. Is that okay by the floor? (*Agreed*) Anyone against the statement? No. Can I now put it to the vote? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried. Thank you, colleagues.

The CEC Political Statement was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a couple of announcements to make. Could I please remind you that the Congress delegates' gift is a GMB@Work T-shirt which can be picked up from the Ethical Threads stall in the exhibition hall. These T-shirts come in various sizes and will be distributed on a first come, first served basis, so you will need to get in quick. Remember to take your credential badge with you. Okay, colleagues? I am not putting it on to give you a demonstration; it is a bit big!

This afternoon there are plenty of fringe events, in particular I have two here. The film of the Grunwick Strike will be held at 12.45 in Syndicate Room 4, and it is a tribute to Mrs. Desai who we spoke about this morning.

The other one is Hope not Hate against racism, and the fringe is being held in Syndicate Room 2, here in the centre.

Here is a special announcement: will GMB delegates who work for Asda at their lunch break go to the back of Congress to meet with Mick Rix and Martin Smith. Thank you very much.

Congress, that is it. We are on time with five minutes to spare and we have taken some work from this afternoon. Enjoy your lunch. Congress is adjourned till 2 o'clock, and thank you all.

Congress adjourned.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Congress re-assembled at 2 pm

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can Congress come to order. It is 2 o'clock. I want to draw your attention to a Congress Report entitled *Southern Cross: The Cross We Have to Bear – The Greedy and the Gullible*, which will be available to delegates this afternoon and will be press launched tomorrow morning. You can pick up an advanced copy from the Information Desk.

I now call upon Helen Johnson to move Standing Orders Committee Report No. 2.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, SOC): Chair and Congress, I move SOC Report No. 2. Withdrawn motions: The SOC has been advised that the following motion and rule amendment have been withdrawn. That is Motion 200 – Workings of Parliament – standing in the name of Northern Region, and Rule Amendment 306, standing in the name of London Region.

Emergency Motions. The SOC has accepted a second emergency motion. Emergency Motion 2: TATA AND ASSOCIATED JOB LOSSES, standing in the name of Midland & East Coast Region. Congress will be advised when this will be heard in due course.

Bucket collections. The SOC has given permission for the following bucket collections. First, a collection for the Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice by Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. The SOC recommends that this collection takes place at the close of the Monday morning session. Secondly, a collection for Luton branch, for Maureen Malone, by the London Region. The SOC recommends that this collection takes place at the close of the Tuesday morning session. President and Congress, I move SOC Report No. 2.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Are there any questions to Helen? (*No response*) Do you accept the Report?

SOC Report No. 2 was ADOPTED

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT
LONDON REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT**

LONDON REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	95,864
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	33,171
MANUFACTURING SECTION	10,344
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	52,349
Grade 1 members	60,465
Grade 2 members	26,081
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	9,318
Male Membership	43,876
Female Membership	51,988
Total number recruited 1.1.2010 – 31.12.2010	13,003
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2010 – 31.12.2010	766
Membership on Check-off	54,656
Membership on Direct Debit	33,762

We have continued to build our membership with a small but significant net gain over the last year. However like all other regions we anticipate a more challenging task in the years ahead and will be concentrating our efforts towards both retention and seeking out non members.

We are continuing our efforts in respect of GMB@Work, IST and consolidation, fully aware that with the variety of difficulties we face in coming years there is an absolute need to maximize the number of highly qualified Lay Officers across the region working in conjunction with all Full Time Organisers.

We are experiencing a déjà vu moment in respect of the political scene. Last year at this time we were preparing for the General Election. Now we are preparing for the Local Authority elections in the Eastern Region, there being no elections in the London area this time.

We are continuing the political forum approach that we developed with some success during the General Election, and will be targeting identifiable seats and Councils in the Eastern Counties.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	4
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	18
Organising Officers	9
No. of Branches	114
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	97
Branch Youth Officers	14

We continue to focus on Initial Support Training, GMB@Work and Consolidation courses in order to build upon and consolidate our recruitment and membership gains.

We are mindful of the pressures building in the workplace especially the Public Sector and the need for a high degree of co-ordination between the Lay and Full Time Officer.

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	Nil
Total Disablement	Nil
Working Accident	1,770.45
Occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Funeral	27,025.00

4. JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

We have integrated the press work with the work of the Organising Team to help “warm the water” in target areas, Councils, companies and to bring branches in to play in their local communities. Press coverage tells both members and potential new members that the GMB is a campaigning union. We have worked extensively in the East of England counties.

We highlighted the Tories schools policy on London and East of England schools by publishing the list of schools known to be moving onto Academy status with an alert as to how School Support Staff should react to Lord Hill’s advice that schools bypass TUPE.

In the course of media work, we were able to compile information on the levels of uncollected council tax, council reserves, and council job losses and youth unemployment in all of the region’s councils so that Officers and Activists can use the information in the fight against the cuts. In January we released official figures on recycling levels by Councils for London and the East of England and highlighted the likely increase in land fill tax if recycling tonnages are not increased.

CANDID

The three editions of CANDID published since Congress 2010 have highlighted GMB values and covered the region’s “Above and Beyond” survey results and explained how the “Big Society” already exists with many GMB members working up to 10 hours a week unpaid in their public services jobs. A postcard campaign was included in CANDID and members responded in great numbers. We reported on many successful GMB negotiations and the workplace of GMB members and post holders in organising their workplaces.

There are two more editions this year which will land at members’ homes in July and October. Any Branch who wishes to advertise their 2012 meeting dates needs to get the information to us by August 2011 in order to get it in the final 2011 magazine. The July editions will have a Congress report. The October edition will contain the GMB Central Executive Council Election ballot packs.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
604	604

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
385	121		257	7	£4,481,658.46
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2010			1,178		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	413
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
157	45	1	71 £532,053.46	40 £130,774.63	£662,828.09
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2010					

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages / Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010
3			3

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010

The delivery of the Legal Service continues to improve since the introduction of the in-house Solicitor, and clarification of the procedure to be followed from the initial reporting of a potential case to being put to a firm of Solicitors.

6. EQUALITY & INCLUSION

The London Region has had a busy year developing its local Equality Forum network within the region. This was commenced towards the beginning of the year as there was a need to get more people involved in the Equalities Agenda across the region. Initially analysis of branches showed that there were a few Branch Equality Officers within the Region and with a little bit of effort the number of Branch Equality Reps increased tenfold.

The Local Equality Forums were established to enable local branch activists to participate in Forums which were accessible and this has proved a resounding success. Some Forums have a regular attendance of 15 or more Branch Equality Reps. Local Equality Forums set up their own constitutions and the first task for the majority of them was obtaining their employers' Equality Policy documents and seeing whether they could be improved. Some local Equality Forums focused on specific issues such as disabilities by surveying various workplaces and putting together a plan of action to improve equality policies relating to these issues.

London Region undertook its very first Regional Equalities Conference which was held in October and was attended by over 50 delegates. Conference had speakers on different subjects including an Equality Act briefing, a talk on migrant workers, a speaker from Show Racism the Red Card, as well as the National Officer focusing on objectives for the Equality Agenda nationally. All delegates

participated fully and a hustings was also held for the regional representative for the National Equality Forum which will meet on a quarterly basis.

London Region is also looking to establish training courses for all Branch Equality Officers focusing on equalities within the Organising Agenda. London Region is also in the process of producing an Equality Officers Tool Kit which will assist Branch Equality Officers and co-ordinate campaigns through branches on equality issues.

The London Region continues to support and participate in Pride and also is working on establishing and extending participation of young members within the Region in respect of the equality agenda.

7. TRAINING

In figures (as at 31.12.2010)

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	11			51	153
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	6			35	175
GMB@WORK	16			196	392

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
	0				

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
H & Safety	3			36	180
H & S Inspection	6			31	62

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Put it in Writing	6			50	150
Negotiating Skills	2			16	48
Say Your Piece	4			28	108
Stress, Bullying & Harassment	5			40	120
Disciplinary & Grievance	6			59	177
Communication Skills	9			63	63
Other Courses	5			56	112

8. HEALTH & SAFETY

We continue to stress the need for vigilance in the workplace in respect of avoidable accidents, and the requirement to ensure all accidents are investigated and reported.

All Workplace Representatives are encouraged to attend Health and Safety Courses and we distribute all health and safety literature that comes to hand.

(Adopted)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call on the Regional Secretary of the London Region to move his report.

BRO. P. HAYES (Regional Secretary, London Region): Formally moved.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Are there any questions on pages 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112 and 113? *(No response)* Do you agree that Report?

The Report of the London Regional Secretary was ADOPTED

HANDSETS

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now pass you on to Paul Kenny, who will introduce the handsets.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Have all lay delegates been issued with a handset, because if you haven't, this is going to be a waste of time? Have they been given out yet? *(Calls from the floor "Yes" and "No")* In that case, can they be given out and I will come back in 15 minutes, because if you haven't got the handsets, I can't tell you how to use them. We will move on and then I will come back and tell you what they are about.

UPDATE ON GMB NATIONAL EQUALITY FORUM:

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. We will now move on to Item 3, which is an update on the GMB National Equality Forum, and I call on Kamaljeet Jandu to give the update.

BRO. K. JANDU (National Equality and Inclusion Officer): Thank you, Vice President, Sisters and Brothers. The reason why I was late in coming to the rostrum is that we were showing the film on the Grunwick dispute to Mr. Desai, and I think that the 60 people who were at the fringe were very moved. Thank you.

In the next five minutes I am going to update yourselves on the background to the National Equality Forum. You may recall that the first National Equality Forum was between the years 2008 and 2010. Last year you agreed a new selection method, which was endorsed by the National Equality Forum, the Senior Management Team, regional equality officers and regional equality forums. The selection method was such that members had two opportunities to be a member of the NEF and three opportunities if you are a retired member. The first selection method was that a regional representative was nominated by each region. The second method was an equality strand expert. The selection was through a national selection process. This process, Congress, was based on skill, experience and commitment. The selection process involved all candidates being sent the role description, the role specification, a report of the review of the selection criteria and the GMB's *Equality Through*

Inclusion Strategy document. The short listing, interviews and appointments were by myself, Harry Donaldson, the Regional Secretary for Scotland, and Sarah Veale, who is the Head of the Equality and Employment Rights Department at the TUC.

This method ensured that there were checks in the whole process, independence from National Office but also from the GMB. This process will be improved on the next round of selections by having a member of the CEC on the selection panel. So these are your National Equality Forum members. Many members are in the hall today. I don't know if you want to stand up and quickly give a wave to any NEF members who may be in the hall. I can see six people. Those who are not here, *that* is a picture of some of the National Equality Forum.

In terms of the selection process, we had 42 written applications for the six equality strands. It was a very, very competitive process, particularly as we had reduced the number of positions from 12 to six. The monitoring statistics for the new NEF shows that 59% are women, 24% are ethnic minority and 24% are LGBT. The unsuccessful candidates were sent a timely letter and given an opportunity to receive detailed feedback. So what's the added value? The added value is this. We have nine regions that have active regional equality forums and that is a great achievement. We now have structures in place that improve communication and the flow of information from national to regions much more easily. We are integrating the national and regional strategies. We are able to share best practice much better from one region to another. We have a cohesion and a focus.

President, the challenge for equality remains, that in order to achieve our strategic principal and aim of mainstreaming equality, and progress to equality can only be achieved through your inclusion. Thank you, Vice President.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kamaljeet. (*Applause*) Does Congress agree to accept that update? (*Agreed*)

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT EQUALITY AND INCLUSION REPORT

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION DEPARTMENT

The twin principles of organising and bargaining remained firmly at the core of the GMB strategy for the Equality through inclusion (E&I).

Since Congress 2010, there has been greater desire to integrate E&I into the GMB@Work strategy and considerable energy has gone into ensuring that the new governance structure for the National Equality Forum (NEF2) and the Regional Equality Councils (REC) were established and functioning.

Our journey for achieving equality through inclusion continued to make progress, particularly with the implementation of policy to enhance the number delegates from the different equality strands at Congress, as well as the successful launch of the Presidents Leadership Awards for Equality, (PLAE) and the organising of the highly successful third GMB National Equality conference.

This period can be described as 'challenging but steady' while establishing some fundamental changes that will improve equality in and for the GMB.

National Equality Forum (NEF2)

The National Equality Forum met on four occasions during the year to oversee the work on Equality through inclusion. The members of the Forum are:-

		Member
Region	Birmingham	Sharon Harding
	London	Brian Shaw
	East Midlands	Helen Holt
	Northern Irish	Margaret Gregg
	North West & Irish	Derek Sutcliffe
	Northern	Jan Jepson
	Scottish	Emma Ritch
	South Western	Ann Leader
	Southern	Dotun Alade-Odumosu
	Yorkshire	Nikki Sharp
Strand	Race	Mohammed Akbar
	Gender	Suzanne Motherwell
	Disability	James Stribley
	LGBT	Tony Hughes
	Migrant Worker	Diane Rogei
	Young Member	David Braniff-Herbert
RMA		Angela Murphy

The NEF2 also established a number of working parties to navigate the delivery of projects. This included:-

1. National Equality Conference Working Party
2. GMB Congress working party
3. Communication working party
4. Policy and organising party
5. Post National Equality Conference working party
6. TUC Equality Conference Working Parties
 - Black Workers Conference
 - LGTB Conference
 - Young Members
 - Womens Conference
 - Disability Conference

PROGRESS ON E&I STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 - INCREASE MEMBERSHIP

An initial meeting was held between the leader of 'Tamils in Britain', the Convener for Katsouris in West London and Political Officer to develop a plan to recruit workers of Tamil origin. This was followed up by a meeting with Chief Officer of Global Tamil Forum. A meeting between the London Regional Secretary and Tamils in Britain has been scheduled to progress this recruit drive of workers of Tamil origin.

Leadership in Migrant Communities Project

Following the success of securing funding from the Unions Modernisation Fund (UMF3) and the appointment of a project worker, who gave a presentation to the NEF and a meeting of the Regional Equality Officers.

Under the umbrella of Migrant Workers Project and in partnership with the National Organising Team (NOT), the 'Leadership in Migrant Communities Project' developed two training modules. These were:-

1. Training for GMB officers on engaging migrant communities
2. Leadership skills training for migrant communities.

This two year project is designed to break down barriers to employment rights knowledge in particular migrant communities. This was achieved by working with these particular communities and building up relationships with community leaders and identifying the training needs and providing training that builds skill, knowledge and leadership.

This project has a community engagement approach that reconnects GMB to a proud tradition of working with vulnerable communities. A meeting between the Project Worker and the Migrant Worker NEF Representative has been scheduled to exchange information and identify ways of closer working.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 - BARGAINING

Respect@Work

Respect@Work project was developed. This incorporated a generic Respect at Work policy, supported by a communication plan and a training package for members as well as a joint training for management and GMB reps. The policy was designed to define 'acceptable and unacceptable' behaviour at work and outlines a clear process for addressing any complaints.

This raises the profile of the GMB and will enhance the potential of recruiting new members. The GMB Respect@Work model agreement has been one of the most download documents from www.gmb.org.uk. Since its launch to GMB members and GMB post holders in the November 2009 magazine it has been accessed 1,910 times.

Industrial

Following negotiations between the Regional Officer, local branch reps and the National Officer, agreement was reached to adopt the GMB Respect@Work policy. Further discussion have been undertaken to identify a launch date and develop a training and communications plan. This will potentially benefit over two thousand employees of Katsouris and raising the potential for further consolidation of GMB membership.

Public Sector – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The Coalition Government announced cuts in public spending in its interim budget (June 2010) and Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR, October 2010) and localised cuts were being implemented before the General Election by some public authorities.

A GMB briefing was produced on Equality Impact Assessment or EIA.

This is a tool / method to assess if any proposed changes by a public authority to a policy, procedure or practices, have an adverse, disproportionate impact on particular groups of workers or users.

In the Equality Act 2010, (which consolidated equality legislation), placed a legal duty on public authorities to:

- eliminate discrimination and harassment and promote race, gender (including gender reassignment) and disability equality
- have 'Due regard' to the above and
- assess the equality impact of policies, procedures and practices as a legal requirements

An EIA should enable public authorities to show "due regard" to the equality duties in its decision making and identify methods for mitigating any adverse impact.

LuDun

This was a sheltered workplace which the Local Authority closed with the result of thirty three disabled workers being made redundant. The National Officer supported the Regional Organiser in making representations to the employer on the EIAs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 – CAMPAIGNING

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Acts came into force in 2010. This was a key area of campaigning on Equality and inclusion. Main purpose of the Act was to harmonise the existing discrimination laws, to create a single approach (consolidating 9 pieces of separate legislation) and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality.

The Act provided protection from “prohibited conduct” which includes, direct discrimination (including combination discrimination), indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The ‘protected characteristics’ covered by the Act are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Act ‘levels up’ by removing some unjustified anomalies in the existing law, for example by:

- extending protection from discrimination to people who:
 - associate with others who have a protected characteristic or
 - are perceived to have a protected characteristic
- permitting a discrimination claim to be pursued because of a combination of two protected characteristics
- extending protection from discrimination ‘arising from disability’
- extending indirect discrimination to disability and gender reassignment
- retaining specific provisions in some areas where different approach considered justified e.g. duty to make reasonable adjustments.

The Act

- Allows employers, service providers or organisations to take positive action as a means of overcoming or minimising disadvantage arising from a protected characteristic.
- As part of recruitment or promotion an employer may appoint someone because they have a protected characteristic if they are ‘as qualified as’ rival candidate
- However, employers may not operate a general policy of treating persons with particular protected characteristics more favorably.

The Act includes powers to require private sector employers, from 2013, to report on the gender pay gap whilst rendering pay ‘gagging’ clauses in employees’ contracts, unenforceable and restricts an employer’s ability to ask pre-employment disability and health questions of job applicants.

GMB policy to support mandatory equal pay audits and statutory support for Equality Representatives was not included in the final Act.

Labour Party BNP Task Force / Black Asian Minority Ethnic Labour

Labour Party BNP Task Force / Black Asian Minority Ethnic Labour were engaged to develop the General Election Strategy and many NEF members supported a number of constituencies across the country including Tooting in South London.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4 - ENHANCE PROFILE

During the year there was full participation of GMB delegations to the TUC Equality Conferences. These included:

- TUC Women's Conference
- TUC Young Members Conference
- TUC Black Workers Conference
- TUC Disability Conference
- TUC LGBT Conference

Presidents Leadership Awards for Equality (PLAE)

Presidents Leadership Awards for Equality were awarded for the first time at Congress 2010. These awards are designed to recognise and celebrate the contribution of GMB members and employees in progressing Equality in the work place and in the union.

GMB Regions, Sections and the National Organising Department were asked to make nominations and list below are the winners of the awards:

1. Edna Greenwood (NW&I Region) - Most inspirational individual on equality
2. Birmingham Region - Most inspirational Regional Equality Forum (REF)
3. Helen Davies (SW Region) - Most inspirational equality project for organising
4. Southern Region (Migrant Workers Project) - Most inspirational project for making a difference at work

Federation of Poles in Great Britain

A conference organised by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain and Consulate General of the Republic of Poland was held in Manchester.

The conference explored the expectations and challenges of the Polish community in Great Britain. Three officers represented the GMB at the Conference and raised our profile with the Polish community present. Access to education and developing language skills for the Polish community remains a key priority.

The National Officer was a keynote speaker at:-

- Black Britain decides Conference.
- TSSA Equality Meeting
- TU BaME Lab Meetings

A fringe meeting on Immigration at Labour Party Conference was a resounding success. The meeting focused on calling for new policy on immigration, addressing the combined impact of immigration on industry and communities.

The meeting was addressed by the General Secretary, Phil Woolas ex Minister for immigration, Simon Wooley the Chair of Operation Black Vote and Sam Tarry from Searchlight

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5 - ORGANISATIONAL EQUALITY

Review of National Equality Forum Structure

NEF2

Following the review at Congress 2010 of the process and the changes in the structure of National Equality Forum, the new NEF2 was appointed and met on four occasions. The list of the members of the NEF2 is at the beginning of this section.

At their first meeting, Brian Shaw (London Region) was elected as Chair and Emma Ritch (Scotland Region) was elected as Vice Chair.

The Retired Members Association nominated Angela Murphy as their representative on the NEF2 and another ten Regional representative were nominated by the Regions (including one for Northern Ireland).

GMB members had two opportunities to become a member of the NEF, as a Regional representative or as an equality strand expert.

The selection for the equality strands representatives followed the same process as in 2008, that selection was based on three criteria:-

1. Skills
2. Experience
3. Commitment

The role description and role specification were defined and used as the bases for selection.

Short listing, interviews and appointments were conducted by the National Officer, Harry Donaldson, Regional secretary – Scotland and Sarah Veal, the Head of Equality and Employment Rights Department of the TUC.

A total of 42 written applications for the six equality strand positions were received (Race, Women, Migrant workers, LGBT, Disability and Youth) the process was very competitive, (particularly as there was a reduction from twelve strand places to six). The applicants were highly motivated and of a high caliber which shows a very high level of member interest in equality and desire for involvement in equality from GMB members.

The monitoring statistics for the NEF2 show that :

- 59% are Women
- 24% are Ethnic Minority
- 24 % are LGBT

Since its appointment the NEF2 has participated in a working away day this included GMB @ work training for new NEF members and it agreed GMB nominations for TUC Equality Committees.

The new NEF2 strengthens the link between Regional and National equality structures which promise for greater exchange of information and co ordination of campaigns and work. One of the key principle of the Equality through inclusion strategy was 'mainstreaming equality, this has been reflected in the make of the new NEF2 as a number of strand representatives are now representing their regions.

Regional Equality Forums (REF's)

Most Regions now have Regional Equality Forums (REF's), see below and many have held Regional Equality Conferences to progress the GMB Equality through inclusion strategy.

Birmingham
East Midlands
North West
Southern
Yorkshire
Scotland
London
Northern
South West

GMB National Equality Conference 2010

Up to 100 delegates attended the second GMB National Equality Conference held in Manchester. Speakers included the General Secretary, the European Policy Officer and the Political Officer.

Workshops were conducted jointly with a) Child Poverty Action Group b) Refugee Council c) Searchlight Hope/Not Hate Campaign and a very engaging Question Time style panel included Paul McCarthy Regional Secretary NW&I, Chris Morley NUJ, Judith H. Gordon (Journalist) and Rene Wood (Unison).

GMB Equality Officers

The delivery of the E&I strategy was the subject of three meetings of Regional Equality Officers during 2010 /11.

Monitoring

A total of 347 Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms were distributed to delegates and CEC members at Congress 2010 and 300 completed forms were returned.

The analysis of the forms returned from Congress 2010 showed a return rate of 86% - an increase of 26% on 2009.

Other key findings showed of those attending:-

- 70% were men and 30% were women, which was an 8% decrease in women delegates/CEC between Congress 09 and 10.
- 34% were between the age of 55 and 65 (decrease of 5% on 2009)
- 38% were between the age of 45 and 55 (same as 2009)
- 12% were between the age of 35 and 44 (increase of 4% on 2009)
- 03% were between the age of 25 and 34
- 13% were over the age of 65
- There was no data for the age bracket 16 to 25
- 9% declared themselves disabled (decrease of 4% on 09)
- 20% delegates declared themselves to have no religion (21% in 2009)
- 75% delegates declared themselves to be Christian (Inc CoE or Catholic)
- 4% of delegates declared themselves to be LGBT
- 94% delegates self identified themselves as 'White British or White other' (Consistent with 2009) - 6% could be identified as 'ethnic minority'

A rule change to increase the number of members from the equality strands was advised on and implemented by the Senior Management Team.

Congress 2012

Since last Congress, though resources have been limited, considerable progress has been made in rolling out and implementing the GMB E&I strategy across the Regions and there was limited support for and work with the Industrial Sections.

A significant number of challenges remain for the coming year. These include:-

- Closer working with the National Organising Department and integration into GMB@Work
- Servicing of the new NEF2.
- Strengthening work with the Region Equality Forums
- Closure working with the industrial Sections.

(Adopted)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now ask Kameljeet Jandu the move his report on Equality and Inclusion?

BRO. K. JANDU (National Equality and Inclusion Officer): I formally move my report.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Are there any questions on pages, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29? *(No response)* Do you agree that report?

The Equality and Inclusion Report was ADOPTED

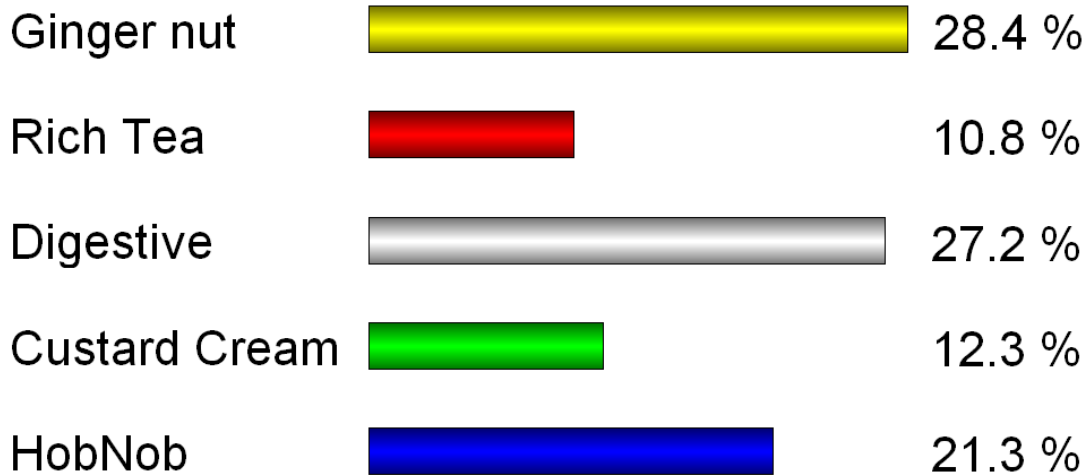
HANDSETS

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can we now go back to Paul Kenny.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Has everyone who is a lay voting delegate got one of *these*? (Indicating a handset) Great. We're in. Basically, it is time for doing something a bit different and maybe having a little bit of fun. Also, it is asking people for a whole range of information about some of the way we do things in the GMB and some of your knowledge about the way we do things in the GMB. Don't worry about it. *These* sets are not going to be used for voting on any of the resolutions, neither, I can assure, apart from Keith in the London Region, can we trace how anybody votes. The reality is that we just want to get an honest view and a picture to some of the questions that we think is quite important. So we are going to start in a minute with a couple of easy knockabout questions. The handsets are before you. You will see a list of options on answers, and you press the number appropriate to the answer you want to give. You might decide that the correct answer is no. 2, so you press button no. 2. If you then think, "Oh, sod it, I meant no. 3", there is no problem. You just press no. 3. The last one you press will be the one that registers. A bar will come across the screen. It will show you how long you have got left to vote and then, within a few seconds, we will show you how you voted. Okay? So it is a bit of fun, maybe, but actually there will be a lot of audience participation. At the end of it, particularly in relation to some of the services and some of the equality issues, we intend to use them particularly tomorrow for some of the questions and answer to some of the politicians. For example, you may be asked, "Did you think the answer that the politician gave was a load of a horse manure?", to which you can say "Yes" or "No". We will be interested to see what you think. We will start off with a couple of easy questions to show you what you think. Can we have the first question, please?

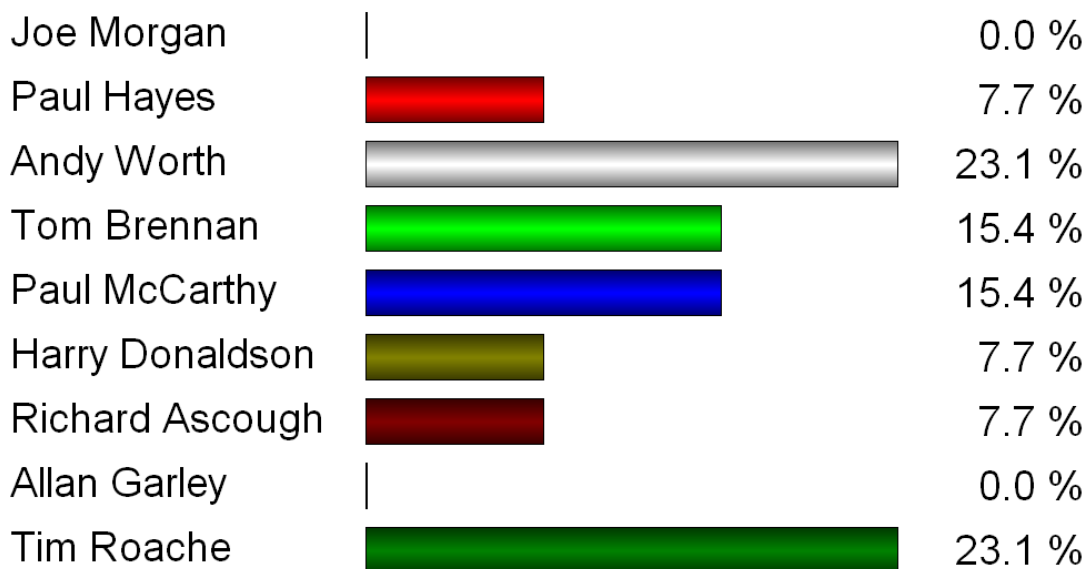
There you are. "What's your favourite biscuit to dunk in tea?" Are you a ginger-nut person, a Rich Tea person, a digestive, a custard cream or a Hobnob? Press 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. If you watch the screen, if you start to press now, it says, "Please vote now." As the red line goes, this is an easy one. Some of the others are a bit more complex. As the line goes across the screen, it will reach the end and then voting will stop. I had better vote, hadn't I. I have voted now. Look! There you go. Ginger spice wins it by a mile.

Which is your favourite biscuit to dunk in tea?



Now, you get the picture. It's a bit of fun for a few minutes but it is quite interesting. See what you make of this second fun question. This could be a close run thing. We did think about putting "None of the above", but we didn't think that was fair. I'm not voting on this one, by the way. I'll bet there's been some tenners handed out to delegations before this one came up. This is your last chance to get your expenses signed by the regional secretary. *(Laughter)* "Which regional secretary is the most pleasing to the eye?"

Which Regional Secretary is the most pleasing on the eye?



THE VICE PRESIDENT: We've got a draw.

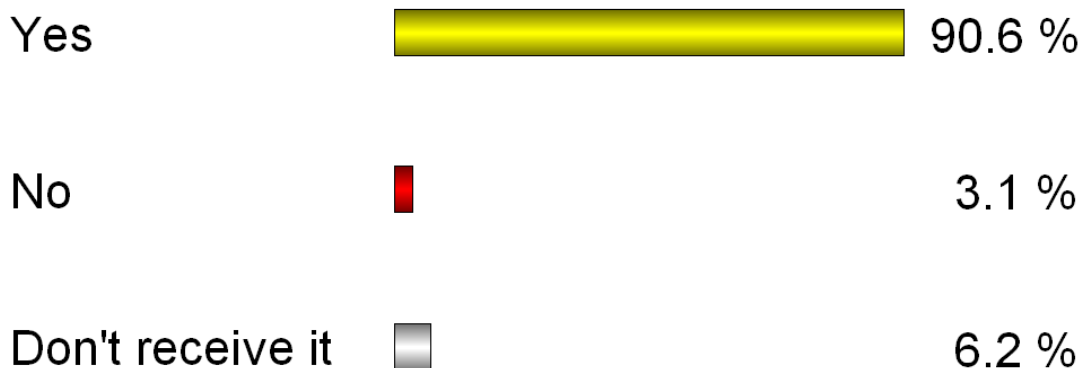
THE GENERAL SECRETARY: I don't want to say anything about Joe Morgan. Anyway, it looks like Tim Roache and Paul Hayes are the eye-candy of the week. Well done. Congratulations.

You will now get the questions. I will step back. You will see the questions and the bar. It is self-explanatory. Please vote and participate and we will get some interesting and honest information to judge services and actions on. Has everybody got it? Away we go.

(Voting continued to questions put on the screen)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: I understand we will have to wait for three minutes. Okay. *(Pause)* Let's try again. I am sorry about this. This worked perfectly in rehearsal. Let's try and vote again, please. "Do you read the GMB magazine?" "1. Yes. 2. No. 3. Don't receive it. Let's try one more time. If it doesn't work this time, we will move on. Not bad.

Do you read your GMB Regional Magazine?



Okay. We will move to the next question. "When did you last visit the GMB National website?" We want honest answers, please. Was it: Within the last week, within the last month, within the last six months, within the last 12 months or, frankly, never? So it is 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. *(Pause)* No, it's gone again. Time out. We will have to move on to the resolutions and come back to this if we get it fixed. Sorry.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Paul. Congress, can we now go to item 5. I intend to take all of the equality motions together. Then we will hear from June Minnery, the CEC speaker, before I call the vote. The first motion we will take in this group will be Motion 39. Then it will be Motions 40, 41, 42, 44, Composite 24, Motions 47, 48, 49 and 50.

UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY & INCLUSION

EQUALITIES MOTION 39

39. EQUALITIES

This Congress calls on the Government to reverse the disgraceful decision of Home Secretary, Theresa May, not to implement elements of the Equality Act (2010). Congress calls on the Labour Party to fully reaffirm its commitments to the Act and to confirm that the next Labour Government will implement the Equality Act (2010) in full.

NORTH CUMBRIA GENERAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

SIS. E. JEFFREY (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 39 on Equalities. The Equality Act advanced the cause of equality in the workplace. The Tory Party, backed by the Lib-Dems, were opposed to some of the contents in the Act. It has taken decades to combat inequality and unfairness. In her first comment last year, Teresa May, the Home Secretary, argued that inequality persists despite some of the most comprehensive equality laws in the world. This is just a spin and cover for the Tory ideology of less regulation. They just don't get the issue. The Tories prefer their big society to look at voluntary approaches to fairness rather than a regulated approach to equality.

Let's be honest, the Tories and their Lib-Dem allies see equality as a dirty word, associated with the worst forms of political correctness and social engineering. Plans to force businesses to disclose the pay gap between male and female employees have been abandoned by the coalition Government. Instead, businesses will be expected to reduce the pay gap, which is one of the biggest in Europe, by voluntary means. This is simply a way of watering down proposals on equal pay. The Lib-Dem Minister, Lynne Featherstone said that the nation's finances were more important than introducing mandatory pay audits. Yet just two years ago the same Lib-Dem MP backed mandatory measures saying: "A voluntary audit system for private industry is hardly worth the paper it is written on."

Also the Liberal-Democrat manifesto pledged to introduce fair pay audits for all but the smallest companies. This is yet another example of Lib-Dems abandoning a manifesto pledge. In the last 40 years since the introduction of the Equal Pay Act voluntary measures have failed and women are still paid 16% less than men on average. What we need is political will to bring in the Equality Act in full. This is to prevent a gravy train for some lawyers more interested in their wallets than social justice. Please support. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Elizabeth. Can I have a seconder for Motion 39?

BRO. C. HENWOOD (Northern): Congress, I second Motion 39 on Equalities. President and Congress, as the mover has already said, the Tory led coalition Government can't stomach the Equality Act. Section 78 of the Act gave the Government powers to make companies disclose pay differences. Instead, the

Government says they will work for the private sector to increase the amount of data that is reported.

Congress, it is 40 years since the Equal Pay Act, yet we are still some way from equality being a reality. In too many parts of the UK economy women lag behind men and that only seems to benefit no-win, no-fee lawyers. The Fawcett Society has said that the gap in pay between men and women is one of the starkest examples of inequality in the UK today. It also says that the Government's decision to ignore section 78 would ensure that the current generation of women will suffer low pay. Congress, reliance only on voluntary action sends a dangerous signal that discrimination against women is a choice, not a requirement.

The Labour Party should put in its manifesto a pledge to implement those parts of the Equality Act that this Government has failed to bring in. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Colin.

EQUALITY STRATEGY MOTION 40

40. EQUALITY STRATEGY

This Congress calls on the CEC to instruct all GMB Officers and Lay Officials to pursue the GMB Equality Strategy in any negotiations or consultations that take place in the workplace. This will assist in driving the Equality and Inclusion Agenda, highlighting it as a core strategy, not a side issue.

S02 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. R. DEAN (North West & Irish): Congress, this motion calls for the CEC to instruct all GMB Officers and Lay Officials to pursue the GMB Equality Strategy in any negotiations or consultations that take place in the workplace. This will assist in driving the Equality and Inclusion Agenda, highlight it as a core strategy, not a side issue. The agenda must be placed at the heart of all we do.

The financial pressures upon us now are real for everybody, but we must raise the issue of equality to make sure that the six strands of the Equality Act are covered. We must ensure that an equal impact is undertaken with regard to any changes or restructure to the workplace. We must also make sure that the minorities covered by the Act are not unfairly treated and affected by any section covered by this Act.

Are all workers being treated the same? Take the protection afforded to the teachers but not to the support staff. Tory Education Secretary, Michael Gove, has given extensive lists on prohibited items, and that pupils can be searched for new items if the staff have reasonable suspicion. This item could be used to commit an offence or cause injury or damage. If a teacher is accused of misconduct towards a pupil, the media cannot release his name. This provision does not apply to support staff. The GMB has called on Michael Gove to give equal protection to our support staff.

Are part-time workers being considered for redundancy before full-time workers? Are women being paid lower? The *GMB @ Work* covers organise and equalities. You may think that there are no problems in work until you look at the Equality Act. Do you know the number of men and women who you work for? Has an audit been done by your company? Do you have any LGBT workers or members who are being bullied or has the company got a good policy on equality? Do we also have a policy to protect our young workers?

I would like to take this opportunity to ask Congress and the GMB Union to support this motion as I believe that everybody deserves an equal chance in life and in the workplace. I thank you and I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Richard. Seconder?

SIS. J. KELLY (North West & Irish): Congress, I second the motion. I am a first-time speaker at Congress, by the way. (*Applause*) I am a member of the regional equalities forum in the North West & Irish Region. We, as a group, have concerns that the equalities issue is left on the workplace agenda. We, as a Union, should be using equality as a tool to recruit and retain our members. We feel as though some of our members don't really understand how equality affects them. Equality within the workplace affects everyone.

When it comes to workplace negotiations or consultations, equalities should be at the forefront every time. We should also be asking for an equalities impact assessment to make sure our members are not disadvantaged. I ask you to support this motion.

SOCIAL MOTION 41

41. SOCIAL

This Congress recognises that it is wholly unjust that young men are unfavourably discriminated against when insuring motor vehicles as against young women.

We instruct the CEC to campaign where appropriate to redress this inequality.

R35 ROCESTER JCB BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Withdrawn)

BRO. G. RICHARDSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move Motion 41. Legislation has, to some extent, stolen the crux of this motion. As is often the case, proposed new legislation doesn't come quick enough and doesn't go the way it seems fair. Insurance companies have, over the last 20-odd years, actively discriminated against young men by charging sometimes twice of much that a young women is charged for with new car insurance. The reason, they say, is that young men are more reckless, the drive faster, they drink and drive and they cause more fatal accidents. All of those reasons are lies and are an excuse for the exploitation of 50% of the young driving population.

The facts are, according to driving statistics, that young women, not young men, have more accidents. Young women tend just slightly slower, but only just, by a

percentage point or two. Young women are just as responsible as young men when it comes to staying sober when driving. So, on the grounds of equality, let us instruct the CEC to redress this inequality. Let us do this now, not next year and not the way the insurance companies are scheming to do, by bringing the fees upwards. It is totally unjust. The fees should be equal, fair and of proper value. Taking the fees upwards is disgusting and complete exploitation. It is making the legalities to cause even more hardship not only to the youth but, in lots of cases, their parents, who either pay some or all of it.

On the issue of equality, we need to redress this situation now and stop this disgraceful sham that the insurance companies are plotting. Thank you.

BRO. B. GORSKI (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am seconding Motion 41. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker? (*Applause*) Why should young men pay more for car insurance than young women of a similar age? Why, after the new legislation that is in progress, should they pay more than they should, because the insurance companies are raising driving costs? They are not lowering the costs. They are raising the costs for young men. I am a professional driver. My responsibility is to drive safely and to look after all users on the roads. So why should I pay more for the insurance than the young lady driver? This is discrimination against young men drivers. I would like to support this motion.

GMB POLICY MOTION 42

42. GMB POLICY

Congress supports the promotion of legislation that makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of wealth or income.

P20 PLYMOUTH BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): Congress, I move Motion 42. This is a motion calling for the end of discrimination based on wealth. Don't worry, comrades, that we have lost the plot in the Southern Region. We are not arguing against discrimination against the rich because they don't have any problems. The problem is discrimination against people for a lack of wealth. There are many instances where people, because they don't have enough money, can't open a bank account, for instance. If you have a bank account and you can pay for your electricity by direct debit it is cheaper than if you don't have a bank account and you have to by electric on the key with cash. There are any number of areas of discrimination against people because they are poor, where they have to pay more.

However, the situation is worse than that. There is also a popular culture of demonisation of working people. There are websites attacking people call "Chav Scum", attacking people because they do ordinary decent working jobs and because they are not in the professional middle classes or highly paid. We have politicians attacking people who, because they are in low paid jobs or in sub-standard accommodation, blame the people who are in that position, saying that they are not aspirational. No. Everybody aspires to have a good and decent life. The people are

in a difficult position because they jobs have gone. We have had governments which have closed down manufacturing, good, well paid skilled jobs and they have been replaced by poorly paid call centre jobs with bad terms and conditions. This is the problem. There is a discrimination in our society against ordinary working people.

A recent report showed that for every £1 spent on a hospital cleaner in wages, they produced £9 worth of value to the economy. But all we hear about is how stockbrokers are wealth creators. However poor people are, whatever job they do, they should have equality of regard. Everybody has a right to dignity. It should be illegal to charge people, because they haven't got a bank account, more money for their electric than someone who is well off and can pay by direct debit. So end discrimination against the poor, end discrimination in our culture against working people and let's have equality of regard for everyone. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I have a seconder?

The motion was formally seconded from the floor

EQUAL LOVE MOTION 44

44. EQUAL LOVE

This Congress welcomes the campaign launched by Equal Love which looks to campaign for an end to the current segregation of relationships based on a person's sexual orientation.

- Congress believes that people in relationships irrespective of sexual orientation should be able to enter a civil marriage or a civil partnership.
- The current laws in this area provide for lesser rights and responsibilities for those people entering civil partnerships. These include a different circulation for when pension contributions are taken into account for survivor benefits.
- Congress believes that the current system of heterosexual marriage and lesbian and gay civil partnership is a form of sexual apartheid and should be exposed as such.

This Congress therefore agrees to support Equal Love and similar campaigns that seek to create an equal basis for recognising a relationship in the eyes of the law and to use our contacts with the Labour Party to get commitments to rectify this situation.

GMB@PCS BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. H. PURCELL (London): Congress, I move Motion 44 on the Equal Love campaign. The Equal Love campaign aims to challenge the twin bans on gay marriages and heterosexual civil partnerships. It argues that to deny marriage to same sex couples and, likewise, civil partnerships to opposite sex couples, is denying them free choice, equal treatment and is contrary to the Human Rights Act.

To launch the legal challenge in late 2010 eight couples filed marriage applications at registry offices, but were refused, as was expected. Since February, they are undertaking a joint legal action in the courts to secure a change in UK Law. The

Equal Love legal team has also decided to take the case directly to the European Court of Human Rights before exhausting the UK courts.

As the current law stands, same sex couples in civil partnerships are not treated the same as heterosexual couples who are married. For instances, when it comes to issues like pensions there is discrimination for the civil partnership same-sex survivors. They do not get an automatic right to survivor benefits as with married heterosexual couples. How can this be just? If a married individual were to transition to their true gender, they would have to get divorced and then into a civil partnership rather than a marriage to their former spouse. How can this be right? We live in a democratic society with a belief that all people are equal. What would the reaction be if black or Jewish people were not allowed to get married? There would be outrage, and rightly so.

The bans on same sex civil marriages and opposite sex civil partnerships are a form of sexual and marital segregation – one law for gay couples and another for heterosexual partners. As the saying goes, two wrongs do not make a right. In a democratic society we should all be equal before the law.

What has this campaign got to do with our Union and why should you support this motion? The reason is because our Union is in the business of fighting discrimination wherever it occurs. Marital and sexual segregation reinforces prejudicial attitudes and divisions in our community and society. Our Union believes in solidarity, equality, human rights and freedom. By supporting the Equal Love campaign, it sends a signal that we support these bedrocks of our movement without hesitation. Our Union can show support for the legal challenge, in persuading the European Court of Human Rights that the UK system of segregating couples into two legal institutions violates the Convention. This will put pressure on the Government to voluntarily introduce a Bill in Parliament to repeal the current legislation. The point is that our Union's Labour Party connections can help to pressurise this Government into fulfilling its pledges and commitments in working for LGBT equality.

In summary, the Equal Love campaign is not asking for special treatment. It is asking for equal treatment. This campaign is not asking for religious or faith groups to be forced to conduct same sex marriages, but it is asking for the right of same sex couples to get married and, equally, opposite sex couples the right to a civil partnership.

Congress, support the campaign and let's bring Equal Love to the UK for all our sisters and brothers, irrespective of their sexuality. Thank you.

BRO. G. DOUSE (London): Conference, I second Motion 44 – Equal Love. Vice President and Congress, at the moment the situation is that heterosexual couples can only get married. Gay couples can only have civil partnerships. Put simply, they are denied the other. I know of some heterosexual couples who don't want the perceived "weight" of marriage. On the other hand, I also know some gay couples who do want the connotations of marriage as opposed to just a civil partnership. I believe that the choice should be down to the individuals concerned and that there need not be this legislative restriction.

The last Labour Government did a lot in bringing in civil partnerships, but there is a lot more to do. Yesterday, at the LGBT Labour councillors' network meeting, we actually discussed this issue. As local politicians we are clear that this discrimination that happens both ways is not acceptable. Let's put the strength and the might of the GMB behind this campaign as well. Please support this motion.

CHARTER FOR WOMEN

COMPOSITE MOTION 24

(Covering Motions 45 and 46)

45. Affiliation to Charter for Women (*Southern Region*)

46. Charter for Women (*London Region*)

CHARTER FOR WOMEN

This Congress notes:

- the continued discrimination against women, in work, in society at large, and even within the labour movement.
- that the current Government's Comprehensive Spending Review will impact far more on women and especially poorer women and women pensioners than it will anyone else.

At the recent Charter for Women Conference a call went out for the trade union movement to unite in opposition to the misogynist, unjust and unfair attacks on women.

The Charter for Women is a progressive Charter of demands for women in society, at work and in the Labour Movement arrived at by Trade Union and other Labour Movement Activists, now supported by 16 national trade unions. Affiliation would allow the GMB to join the other affiliates (including UNITE, UNISON, NUT, UCU, RMT, NUJ, PCS, FBU, NASUWT, SoR etc) in campaigning against the current Government's "slash and burn" manifesto.

This Congress agrees that GMB should affiliate to the Charter for Women and calls on the GMB to play an active part in the campaign and nominate a leading woman Activist to sit on the Steering Committee.

(Carried)

BRO. R. POLE (London): Congress, I move Composite Motion 24 on Charter for Women. Comrades, women constitute half the working population in Britain and, proudly, we have in GMB large numbers in our membership. We have a duty to represent them to the best of our ability. There is no doubt that this vicious Government's Spending Review will hit our sister members very hard indeed, increasing the discrimination already experienced by them in society, at work and within our own Movement. The Charter for Women was constituted in 2004 and is now supported by nearly all the major trade unions except GMB. It aims to work and campaign for full, social, economic, legal, political, cultural independence and equality for women, irrespective of age, disability, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, philosophical belief or sexual orientation. Those are aims which, I hope, all of us in this hall share.

At work the Charter aims to reduce the gender pay gap, end job segregation by improving training opportunities for women, to root out bullying and sexual harassment, to improve maternity rights and many other absolute worthwhile principles. It aims to tackle the under-representation of women in both the labour and trade union Movements.

This resolution, although being moved by myself, a mere man, was written in part by a leading woman activist in my branch, and it was felt by all the members of the branch that GMB needs to have its voice well and truly heard in this progressive movement. To do this we need to affiliate, and, yes, let's play our part to the full by getting a leading woman activist on the committee, which I've no doubt will be extremely welcome.

As the composite says, our Movement needs to be united in its opposition to "unjust and unfair attacks on women", which will increase.

Congress, support the composite. Let's play our part and let GMB's voice be heard loud and clear that we will take all steps possible to defend and, more importantly, improve the rights and working conditions of our sisters within GMB and our Movement. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

SIS. C. VALLELLY (Southern): Congress, I second Composite Motion 24. The aim of the Charter for Women is to unite around an organising campaign covering three broad areas: social policy, labour market and labour movement. It seems that today women are under attack from every direction. The devastating unnecessary cuts which this Government is imposing are having a disproportionate effect on women. From the public sector cuts, which have seen more women than ever joining the dole queue, to withdrawing funding for women's refuges which will result in even more women trapped in violent relationships, and cutting benefits for disabled people, the majority of whose parents are women.

We are also under attack from MPs who tell us that not all rapes are that serious, and perhaps if young girls were taught to say "no" there would be less abuse, bizarrely. Of course, from the famous, or should I say infamous, Canadian police officer, who told us that if we want to avoid being raped, we shouldn't dress like sluts. I can't believe in 2011 that we need to tell these people again. Wherever we are and whatever we wear, we have the right to be safe. We are more than 40 years on from the Equal Pay Act and women full-time workers still earn, on average, £140 less per week for full-time work than men do. I repeat that: £140 a week less! This is often because they are in jobs that have been traditionally under-valued, jobs that have always been regarded as "women's jobs". Among these are the carers and school support staff who do, at times, a very difficult job, but are not given either the respect or the wages that they deserve.

The GMB has been working hard for equal pay and has had some great successes which we should celebrate, but the battle is far from over. The TUC Women's Conference urged all unions to affiliate to this charter and many, as we have heard,

already have. I believe that GMB affiliation would take our campaign one step further, and I strongly urge you to support this motion. Thank you.

STOP DOMESTIC ABUSE MOTION 47

47. STOP DOMESTIC ABUSE

This Congress notes the 51,926 incidents of domestic abuse that were recorded by Scotland's police forces in 2009/10, and the fact that one in five women in Scotland experiences domestic abuse at some point during her life.

"Congress recognises that the effects of violence do not stop at the front door of the workplace, that women are stalked, harassed and assaulted by their partners at work, and domestic abuse is also a cause of absence from work.

"Congress also notes that women must rely on civil protective orders such as interdicts and non-harassment orders, to deliver them some measure of safety. Although legal aid is available to women to pay for these, a contribution to this is means-tested, and the pressures on the family budgets of low-paid working women experiencing abuse, are such that they are often unable to do so.

"Congress believes that trade unions, and workplace organisers, have a critical role in responding to domestic abuse, both in campaigning for adequately resourced prevention, protection and provision for women, and in negotiating workplace policies that ensure employers and reps respond appropriately to workers who have been abused.

"Congress calls on the General Council to:

- encourage the Scottish Government and Cosla to put in place a sustainable funding solution for frontline services;
- campaign against cuts to the Legal Aid budget that will limit low-paid women's access to civil protective orders; and
- engage with the Scottish Women's Aid 'STOP' Campaign, which will roll out prevention work to workplaces, places of education and community groups."

TOLLCROSS BISCUITS BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

SIS. M. BOYD (GMB Scotland): President, Brothers and Sisters, this Congress notes the 51,926 incidents of domestic abuse that were recorded by Scotland's police forces in 2009/10, and the fact that one in five women in Scotland experiences domestic abuse at some point during her life.

Congress recognises that the effects of violence do not stop at the front door of the workplace, that women are stalked, harassed and assaulted by their partners at work, and domestic abuse is also a cause of absence from work.

Congress also notes that women must rely on civil protection orders such as interdicts and non-harassment orders, to deliver them some measure of safety. Although legal aid is available to women to pay for these, a contribution to this is means-tested, and the pressures on the family budgets of low-paid working women experiencing abuse, are such that they are unable to do so.

Congress believes that trade unions and workplace organisers, have a critical role in responding to domestic abuse, both in campaigning for adequately resourced prevention, protection and provision for women, and in negotiating workplace policies that ensure employers and reps respond appropriately to workers who have been abused.

A *New Statesman* article, published on International Women's Day this year, stated: "The Home Secretary, Teresa May, launched the Government's strategy in tackling violence against women, yet documents leaked to the *Times* show that Britain is trying to water down an international agreement to protect women against violence.

The Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence has been two years in the making and was ready to be signed off by the 47 member states, but in an unprecedented step, Britain has intervened to object to the wording "Violence Against Women" as a violation of human rights. Instead it wants: "Violence Against Women Constitutes a Series Obstacle for Women's Enjoyment of Human Rights".

It also wants to alter the document so that it applies only in peacetime and not during armed conflict. That is a surprising request given the widespread international use of rape as weapon of war. Jose Mendez Botha, the President of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men at the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, said she was very concerned about UK objections. Reportedly, only Russia supports the idea of re-opening negotiations.

The Government claims to be strengthening women's rights at home sound distinctly hollow as it is covertly seeking to weaken them internationally.

Congress calls on the General Council to: encourage the Government to put in place a sustainable funding solution for frontline services, to campaign against cuts to the Legal Aid budget that will limit low-paid women's access to civil protective orders, and engage with the Women's Aid 'STOP' Campaign, which will roll out prevention work to workplaces, places of education and community groups. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

SIS. L. MILLAR (GMB Scotland): Congress, I am speaking in support of Motion 47. Congress, over the past few years I have spoken many times at conferences, both trade union and Labour Party. This is the first time I have had the chance to speak of my own experience of domestic abuse. People say, "Why did you not leave?" Believe me, that's not easy to do. It took me 14 years to leave an abusive relationship. You are abused mentally and physically. You are programmed into the belief that it is all your own fault. You are told you have nowhere to go and you will have no money. If you are lucky enough to have a job, it will affect your work. It affects the children. You make excuses but you are doing your best for the children by staying. Believe me, you are not. When you finally leave, you are terrified to take that step, but what you are leaving behind is worse. Some women have to go into hiding. You may have to go to another two to live, you may have to change your name, you have to arrange new schools for the children, the list goes on. Leaving is

only the start. Every time someone shouts, you jump and look around. Every time one of the kids say that they want to go back, your heart breaks. It can take years to get your family back to normality, if that is what you call it. It needs a lot of support. That support was not available for me.

We have made lots of progress in Scotland since then with Scottish Women's Aid. That support now exists, but this support has to keep improving.

I can tell you that the memories fade but they never go away. After 25 years I still jump at unexpected noises. We cannot go backwards. I stepped round the edges of what I wanted to say because it is very hard to deal with, even now. Congress, please support. *(A standing ovation)*

RETIREMENT AGE MOTION 48

48. RETIREMENT AGE

This Congress welcomes the abolition of the Default Retirement Age and recognises that choice is preferable to compulsion when it comes to an individual's time to finish working.

However, it is the case that some employers will still seek to impose a compulsory retirement age and Congress calls upon GMB negotiators at all levels, to achieve policy outcomes which allow members to remain economically active.

TORFAEN BRANCH
South Western Region

(Carried)

BRO. B. STACK (South Western): I move Motion 48 – Retirement Age – and I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

In July of last year the Government announced its decision to scrap the default retirement age, and with it the unrestricted abilities of employers to force people to finish at 65. That is a welcome development, colleagues, which takes away the stigma of second class employment rights for older workers and it allows them to plan for retirement at a time when they most need it. The old arrangement served only to force workers out of the labour market against their wishes and to deprive them of the opportunity to save or add to their pensions and to extend their working lives.

Research undertaken by Age Concern and other such organisations estimate that 100,000 workers were compelled to retire in 2009 alone. The harm that this can cause to individuals, both financially and to their self-esteem, is both significant and unjustified.

From October of this year, workers aged 65 or over shall have the same job security as younger people. Retirement should be a matter of choice and not compulsion. People in their 60s should have the right to work or the right to retire. This choice is supported by both older people themselves and the balance of public opinion. Getting rid of the default age should help changes views about the retirement process and help encourage employers and workers to be positive about the contribution that older

people can make in the workplace. There is no place in a modern society by which the value of an employee is to be considered because of their age.

Colleagues, when to retire should be about choice. If you are fit and competent to do your job, why should you retire? The argument that by staying on after retirement is blocking a young person's prospects is not supported by any evidence whatsoever. Youth unemployment, of course, is a massive problem, but it is not caused by people working longer. Generally, most older people in their 60s elect to change jobs, go part-time or just retire because they want to. What is important about the amendment of this law is that it gives people choice.

Conference, we must be on our guard to ensure equity of treatment for younger and older workers alike. This motion is not aimed at getting special treatment for one group only, and it recognises the right of the employer to decide what is best for their business. As long as it is not a result of discrimination or prejudice, in most areas of industry there will be no general case for a prescriptive retirement age.

As I stated earlier, freedom of choice, together with fair procedures, must be the GMB's campaigning basis. However, we must not forget as a Union that even as I speak this Con-Lib Government has implemented an unprecedented attack on pensions across all industries, but especially in local government, the Civil Service, the NHS and teaching professions, where the new government proposals will mean working longer, paying more and getting less from your pension.

I call on the GMB to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the other unions in this land and to help fight against this Government, which is hell bent on undermining pensions and terms and conditions in this country. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendon. Secunder?

The Motion was formally seconded

AGE DISCRIMINATION MOTION 49

49. AGE DISCRIMINATION

Congress, following the recent high profile case of Miriam O'Reilly wherein she, and John Craven were referred to as being "hardly spring chickens" by a member of senior management within the BBC, and where Ms O'Reilly was also told "to be careful about those wrinkles", this Congress calls for the age discrimination legislation to be strengthened and more vigorously enforced, given the contribution and experience that "older" workers bring to the UK's workplaces. That the GMB campaigns against "ageism" in the workplace, by raising awareness of the issue with politicians, employers, the media and opinion-formers, given that the population is living longer and will be expected to work for more years beyond the current "normal" retirement age of 65. We would remind employers that workers do not need to be youthful and attractive to fulfil their contractual obligations. Age brings with it a wealth of knowledge and experience which should be viewed as an asset not a liability.

GMB UNITE BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. D. PETERSON (London): Congress, I move Motion 49 – Age Discrimination. President and Congress, I am sure we are all familiar with the high profile case concerning the BBC with John Craven and Miriam O’Reilly. The BBC said that they were “hardly spring chickens” and that Ms. O’Reilly “should be careful about those wrinkles”. Obviously, the person who made these remarks has found the secret of eternal youth, and thus think they themselves will remain a spring chicken and never get wrinkles. Their bubble will soon be burst.

In this day and age of media focus on everything to do with appearance being a priority, if you don’t fit into the accepted mould you are dismissed as being past it and not wanted. But what of all the life experience and work experience that older people bring to their employment? With people living longer and now expected to work longer, it is essential that employers recognised the wealth of experience that the older workers has and draw on it. The GMB must campaign against ageism in the workplace.

People age at different rates. Those people who are fit and able to work should be valued for their experience, not dismissed because they are felt to be past their sell by date. Unfortunately, we all grow old. Take it from one who knows. The body ages much faster than the mind, so don’t just a book by the cover. I am far from the scrapheap yet, and the GMB is at the forefront of many campaigns. Let the GMB take the lead at stamping out ageism in the workplace. Please support this motion.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dott. Seconder?

BRO. S. NOBLE (London): Congress, I second Motion 49. I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker. (*Applause*) What do Helen Mirren, John Humphreys and Ken Clarke have in common? They are all working well beyond their official retirement age. I would like to say that I rest my case, but we all know that age discrimination is alive, well and rampant in the British workplace. Miriam O’Reilly, the ex-BBC *Countryfile* host, is a recent prominent victim, but for every headline grabbing case there are hundreds, nay, thousands of cases, of unreported age discrimination bubbling away under the surface on a daily basis. I could bombard you with statistics, but I don’t have the time.

What the motion has to do today is to look behind the bald statistics and delve into the human dimension that sees tens of thousands of older workers still with plenty of energy, drive, imagination and the elixior of experience thrown on to the rubbish heap not for a week, not for a month, not for a year but for ever. This is not only a moral crime against working people but a waste of talent, so necessary to help revitalise the British economy, which in turn would provide an upturn in the jobs market, but not apparently for the discarded older worker.

This situation should not be seen as a generational battle between the younger workers and the older worker fighting over the same job, but to be seen in the context of a balanced workforce. Blending the experience and life skills of the over-50s with all the dynamism and enthusiasm of youth is what we should be striving for. I commend this motion to Congress with the plea that it does not remain on the backburner of good intentions but is propelled to the forefront of the GMB’s

campaigning agenda. It is an issue that won't disappear quietly into the night pushing a zimmer frame. Thank you.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT MOTION 50

50. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This Congress will be aware of the media attention, in January 2011, relating to the football lines woman and the comments made about her ability to carry out her role.

What this has highlighted is the way in which sexual harassment is perceived by both men and women and Congress agrees to endorse the seriousness of issues in this area.

BRISTOL PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
South Western Region

(Carried)

SIS. C. GREEN (South Western): Congress, I am moving Motion 50 on Sexual Harassment. I am a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I have researched sexual harassment and there are numerous definitions of the phrase. Some are very complex, but I like the simplicity of the *GMB @ Work* policy, which states: "Harassment is determined by the impact of the behaviour on the recipient and not by the intention of the perpetrators." But does this go far enough? Wikipedia's explanation is more hard hitting, and I quote: "Sexual harassment is intimidation or bullying, or coercion of a sexual nature or the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of reward in exchange for sexual favours." There is ample material in the Sexual Discrimination Act, so why is it difficult to challenge this unacceptable behaviour. Anyone who has had their dignity violated, have felt degraded or found themselves in an offensive environment needs protection, not humiliation.

In the case of the well publicised Sky Sports incident, Sian Massey was on the receiving end of some derogatory comments from Richard Keys and Andy Gray. Both men were heard challenging her ability as a match official. They both tried to say that they had not realised that their microphones were on. Does that make it any less of an attack against Sian Massey?

Many of you have probably seen the film *Made in Dagenham*. Shame on you if you have not. It shows a very good example of sexual harassment with a young lad. In the scene of the sweatshop the women are working in their underwear because of the heat. The lad has to face the gauntlet of crossing the factory floor to the jeers and groping of some of the women. Yes, sexual harassment is a problem for women and men. Employers are reluctant to take action for a number of reasons. There may be no witnesses. The perpetrator will get another person to come forward and say, "They are like this to everyone. I don't take offence so why should anyone else?" The person who puts in the complaint is accused of being either overly sensitive or stirring up bad feelings by dividing the workforce.

Despite organisations, large and small, having extensive policies and procedures to tackle bullying and harassment, this type of behaviour is still prevalent. Why is it happening? Is it because they are unsure of the treatment they are experiencing or

have observed, perhaps, various happenings of colleagues who have reported incidents in the past and have been badly treated? The perpetrator is rarely moved from the workplace during the investigation, whilst the complainant is either moved or ends up taking sick leave through stress or depression. This, in turn, shows up on their time-keeping record and it may be detrimental to their career.

We would, therefore, ask Congress to endorse the seriousness of sexual harassment and to ensure that a clear message is given to all GMB workplace organisers on how to access the GMB Respect at Work policy as a tool in tackling this unacceptable and unlawful conduct. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

The motion was formally seconded

I now call June Minnery, on behalf of the CEC, to reply to Motions 41, 42, 49 and 50.

SIS. J. MINNERY (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking to Motions 41, 42, 49 and 50. We are seeking withdrawal of Motion 41 because it has been overtaken by events. The European Court of Justice ruled in March of this year that insurers cannot charge different premiums to men and women because of their gender. This will take effect in December 2012.

The CEC is supporting Motion 42 with a qualification. The coalition Government removed the social economic duty that is discrimination based on income from the Equality Act. The qualification is that we support differentiated tax levels for the wealthy.

Motion 49 calls for the strengthening of age discrimination legislation, and asks GMB to raise awareness and lobby politicians and opinion formers. The qualification is that, although the motion highlights a high profile case of discrimination against older workers, it should be noted that age discrimination applies to both ends of the age scale.

As to Motion 50, the CEC is supporting this motion. Harassment in the workplace blights the lives of too many workers, particularly women. As the previous speaker said, highlighted is the case of the Sky Sports presenters who questioned in a very undermining, derogatory and sexist manner, the competency of a professional football referee simply because she was a woman. They were, rightly, dismissed from presenting the sports programme.

The GMB's Respect at Work policy is designed to challenge harassment in the workplace, whether against women or otherwise, and advocates that all workers should be treated with basic dignity and respect.

To summarise, the CEC asks Congress to seek withdrawal of Motion 41; to support Motions 42 and 49 with the qualifications, and support Motion 50 with the statement I have given. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we will now go to the vote. Motions 39 and 40 are both being supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 39 was CARRIED.

Motion 40 was CARRIED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 41 is asking for withdrawal. Do Birmingham withdraw? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much, Birmingham.

Motion 41 was WITHDRAWN.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 42 is being supported with a qualification. Does Southern accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Do you all accept that motion with the qualification?

Motion 42 was CARRIED

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, Motion 44, Composite 24 and Motions 47, 48, 49 and 50 are all being supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Any against?

Motion 44 was CARRIED.

Composite Motion 24 was CARRIED.

Motion 47 was CARRIED.

Motion 48 was CARRIED.

Motion 49 was CARRIED.

Motion 50 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon, Congress. Well done, Malcolm. The next shift is on. I ask the mover and seconder of Composite 4, State Pension Age, to come to the rostrum. The CEC is supporting and there is no CEC supporter.

STATE PENSION AGE

COMPOSITE 4

(Covering Motions 75 and 76)

75. PENSIONS INEQUALITY (*North West & Irish Region*)

76. STATE PENSIONS (*South Western Region*)

STATE PENSION AGE

This Congress deplores the changes to State Pensions announced by the Conservative led Government, in particular the approximate 30,000 women who will be forced to work for two years longer than they had previously planned because of the increases to the State Pensions age entitlement

This Congress recognises that the removal of retirement age and the extension of qualifying age to draw the state pension adversely affects female workers who face losing anything up to an average of £38,000 if they ever actually get to draw it.

Women born between 5th March and 5th April 1954 would have been due to start drawing their State Pension when they reached 64, but the Government has moved the goal posts and this group of women will have to wait until they are 66. A total of 5.1 million people will be affected by the plans to increase the State Pension age to 66 between 2018 and 2020, but this particular group will face the longest wait of two years.

The Government Pensions Minister has defended this change stating that this only represents one per cent of the 2.6 million women who will be affected by these changes. Once again women are being penalised. Many in this particular group may not have another pension to retire on and having planned their retirement age will now have to rethink their plans with only seven years to prepare.

Congress therefore calls upon the CEC to lobby against these changes, and on the GMB to mount a vigorous campaign to defend the pensions of our whole membership; in particular our women members who will be affected adversely.

(Carried)

SIS. J. SMITH (South Western): Congress, I move Composite 4. President, once again, women face the prospect of unfair treatment in relation to qualifying for their State Pension. Women who were born between March 5th and April 5th 1954 would have been able to draw their pension at 64. They will now have to wait until they are 66 due to the changes to the State Pension qualification. The Government's Pensions Minister has tried to defend this change by stressing that this only affects 1% of women. This is cold comfort to women who fall into this bracket. Many of these women will not have the luxury of a private pension to retire on, particularly when there was little or no access to a private pension scheme. Many women could not afford to pay into such a scheme. Those women are already being penalised for staying at home and bringing up their children because they were unable to contribute longer to a pension scheme.

The Government tells us that we have to save for our retirement. Once more we are being preached to by a Cabinet dominated by millionaires who have no concept of what it is like to live in the real world. I know this motion is covering women whose families have grown up, but within families now grandparents are very often helping to support their children and grandchildren. Things can only get worse with the cuts in benefits and much of the burden is going to be felt by those at the bottom of the social pile.

Projected figures show that the population of the UK is going to live longer and pensioner poverty is going to be an extreme problem. Women, on average, live longer than their male counterparts, and will probably experience pension poverty because of reduced qualifying years for the State Pension, with no second pension to help in their retirement. It is appalling to think that in the 21st Century women are still being penalised and discriminated against with regard to pensions.

Congress therefore calls upon the CEC to lobby against these changes, and not let our sisters have to work longer in order to receive a pension which they had expected and planned for. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Seconder?

SIS. B. HOMER (North West & Irish): Congress, I second Composite 4. We are all aware, or should be, that the previous Labour Government intended to raise the State retirement age for both men and women to 66 years by 2024. However, “Call me, Dave” and his good mate, “Don’t call me Gideon, call me George” have brought that down to 2020. Women are already missing out on being able to draw their State Pension at 60, so even before the new measures hit, women are adversely affected. How much of this big society are women expected to deliver whilst having more and more taken away? Yes, we campaign for all pensioners; yes, we want fair treatment and dignity in old age, but we also want equality in pensions.

Not for nothing is this generation of women in their 50s known as the “Sandwich generation”. That is because, more often than not, they have children still at home because they cannot get on the property ladder, grandchildren who they help to look after so that their mums and dads can work, and elderly parents who they either have living with them or help to care for because of inadequate care provision.

The big society is nothing new. Women have done this for years, and that was recognised in some small way by having your State pension at 60. Quite frankly, after that lot, you are too knackered to work until 65, but no more should you do all of that with no financial help, all at no cost to the state but in fact saving millions in child care facilities or residential care. Now they have to carry on for another six years so, hopefully, you won’t be a burden and have the nerve to draw a State pension, but you will, obligingly, pop your clogs in your 65th year. Thanks “Call me Dave”, but no thanks. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)* No. The CEC is supporting. I will put it to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against.

Composite 4 was CARRIED.

ADDRESS BY SIS. FERN McCaffrey, GMB YOUNG MEMBER

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Congress. Fern McCaffrey, GMB Young Member. Welcome, Fern. *(Applause)* Fern is a student studying social science at the local University of Brighton. She is an active member of the Southern Region and has done a work placement with the GMB. She has attended her first National Equality Conference and TUC Youth Conference and made a real impact. She is a committed trade unionist and feisty with it. That is how we like it, Fern, believe you me, in the GMB. Please address Congress.

SIS. F. McCaffrey (GMB Young Member): Hello Congress and welcome to Brighton. Obviously, as Mary has just said, I am currently studying at the University of Brighton. My membership of a union was encouraged from the day I was born. If you know my father, he is an active GMB member. Looking back now, I am grateful for that early lesson in empathy to others less fortunate than us, which I was made to understand is a very valuable human trait. As an active member of the Brighton GMB branch, I have represented the GMB at various events, such as the Young Labour

Conference in Glasgow, the Young Members Conference in London and by far my most favourite activity was the May Day Brigade in Cuba last month, and I am very grateful for having been given that opportunity as it really contributed to my personal and academic development.

First and foremost, the May Day Brigade provided me with the opportunity to get to know and interact with an extraordinary group of young trade unionists from across the UK, something which made the experience truly amazing. I went to Cuba full of ideas of what it would be like and how I thought the people would be. For me, this trip changed my view of Cuba and allowed me to realise how phenomenal Cuba really is. I began to truly understand the outstanding level of solidarity that the Cuban people have for one another.

I would recommend this Brigade to anyone. The warmth and gratitude that our delegation was shown was absolutely astounding. This trip has given me irreplaceable memories. The things that myself and my comrades have learnt I hope will enable us to continue to make a difference in our own society and help in our own fight for greater equality. I hope that I have brought back even a fraction of the undeniable and unprecedented Cuban spirit.

The GMB has also given me the opportunity to do work experience at the National Office, and I would invite you all to use such access to introduce young members into the trade union Movement. The level of friendliness shown towards me was amazing, because the staff allowed me to interact with them very well and supported me immensely in my work.

Congress, work with young people will be a priority project for your National Equality Forum in the coming year, so what is the case for young workers? You can find us in low paid, non-unionised, private sector jobs. We are less likely to know our rights or be aware of workplace grievances, or even know how to challenge unfairness and, Congress, how we are less likely to be union members. Where are young people today?

Young people aged between 16 and 29 make up 18% of the UK population. The GMB Rule Book classifies 27 or less as young members. We have over 35,000 young members in the GMB today, which is 6% of the total membership. The highest number of young members are in the London Region and the North West & Irish Region. Regional density for young members is highest in the Midland & East Coast Region. Nearly 14.2% of young members join GMB on line, and the highest number of young people joining on line are in London Region and in my region, Southern.

Congress, there are many myths about young people. One of the biggest myths is that lowering contribution rates increases young workers' recruitment figures. This is not quite correct. Let me put it to Congress simply. Young workers join a trade union around collective issues and we are verbally and directly asked to join. This principle will be at the core of any strategy for young members this year and, as such, the NEF will work closely with organising departments. We should all work together to increase our young membership because we really want to help you guys who are changing the Movement and stuff like that. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that Fern's mum is in the balcony. You must be very proud of her because we are. (*Presentation made amidst applause*)

Colleagues, before I move on to the next agenda item, we are running very efficiently this afternoon. We will find out in a few minutes if we are more efficient with the handsets. I may be able to move forward the debate on general economic motions, which are timetabled to be heard on Monday afternoon.

Could the movers and seconders and Bernie Taylor of the CEC please be ready to speak on the following motions in case we do get to them today: Composite 15, VAT and Labour Party Policy, Northern Region to move, South Western Region to second; Motion 180, Property Development Tax – Housing Policy, Southern Region to move; Composite 16, Loan Sharking and Interest Rates, Birmingham & West Midlands to move, South Western Region to second. Is that okay with Congress? Does Congress agree? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR EQUALITY

THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP AWARDS FOR EQUALITY 2011

MOST INSPIRATIONAL INDIVIDUAL ON EQUALITY

Award Winner: Sharon Harding, Birmingham & West Midlands Region

Sharon has been a GMB member since 1994. She is a member of the Regional Equality Forum and the National Equality Forum and she represents GMB on the TUC Race Relations Committee. Sharon is always encouraging, supportive and has driven the change from the old equality structures to the NEF.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL REGIONAL EQUALITY FORUM (REF)

Award Winner: Midland & East Coast Regional Equality Forum

Midland & East Coast Regional Equality Forum has progressed greatly and was instrumental in establishing the new NEF structures.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL EQUALITY PROJECT FOR ORGANISING

Award Winner: Gwylan Brinkworth, South Western Region

Gwylan works for South Wales Police. Since becoming Branch Secretary she has turned a dysfunctional branch into a prosperous one, resulting in growth in new members.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL PROJECT FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT WORK

Award Winner: Nicholas & Harris Learning Project

The Nicholas & Harris Learning Project has delivered innovative work related learning opportunities for migrant workers including ICT and ESOL. It is used by the TUC and National Apprenticeship Service as an exemplar.

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to the next part of the business. We launched the President's Leadership Awards for Equality at GMB Congress in 2009. There are four awards and these will be given to members who have inspired and championed various aspects of the equality agenda. You will find a list of winners on a separate document, and we would like to thank Pellacraft for supplying the awards. It gives me great pleasure to announce the winner of each award and invite them to come to the platform to collect their framed certificate.

Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in the GMB or at Work

THE PRESIDENT: It gives me great pleasure to ask Sharon Harding, from Birmingham & West Midlands to accept the Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in the GMB or at Work. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

Most Inspirational Regional Equality Forum (REF)

THE PRESIDENT: We now come to the Most Inspirational Regional Equality Forum. It gives me great pleasure to ask the winners to come forward from the Midland & East Coast Region, who is David Lascelles, David Jobson and Shona Ortiga. *(Presentations made amidst applause)* David, it is good to see you back with us both healthy and fit.

Most Inspirational Equality Project for Organising

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to the Most Inspirational Equality Project for Organising. It gives me great pleasure to ask the winner of the Most Inspiration Equality Project for Organising to come forward and collect your award. Gwylan Brinkworth. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

Most Inspirational Project for Making a Difference at Work

THE PRESIDENT: The last award is the Most Inspirational Project for Making a Difference at Work. It gives me great pleasure to ask the Nicholas Harris Learning Project from the Southern Region. This will be picked up by Joanna Luciene and Asha Morass. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

Congress, as well as the award winners, I am pleased to announce that there are also highly commended GMB members for two of the categories. These members will be collecting their framed certificates from the regional secretaries and not from the platform. I will read out their names so that Congress can acknowledge them.

The highly commended on Equality in the GMB or at Work are Vaughan Gething, South Western Region; Tania Race, Northern Region, and George Wolvine from North West & Irish Region. Well done to you all. *(Applause)*

The highly commended Regional Equality Forums are the forums of Southern Region and London Region. Well done to the members of those forums. Well done. *(Applause)*

EQUALITY MONITORING QUESTIONNAIRE (using Handsets)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: We are going to try again. I am told that this is about a 50-50 shot. The technology is not quite up to the strain of bearing out which is the most exciting looking regional secretary, obviously.

THE PRESIDENT: Paul, before you do the most exciting regional secretary ----

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: No. We've done that.

THE PRESIDENT: ---- can I warn Congress that I will then be taking Composite 10, Motion 130 and Motion 10. I will be asking Phil Davies to respond in that debate on behalf of the CEC.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: If *these* don't work, you will be very quickly into that, Mary. We are going to try again. These are going to be some equality opportunity monitoring questions. The first question is quite simple: Do you consider yourself to be male or female? Press 1 for male, 2 for female. Does it work? You are on the edge of your seat worrying about it, aren't you? The moment of truth. Wow, we are getting there.

Are you



Male  63.6 %

Female  36.4 %

It tells you there is a fair way to go or a lot of people are outside.

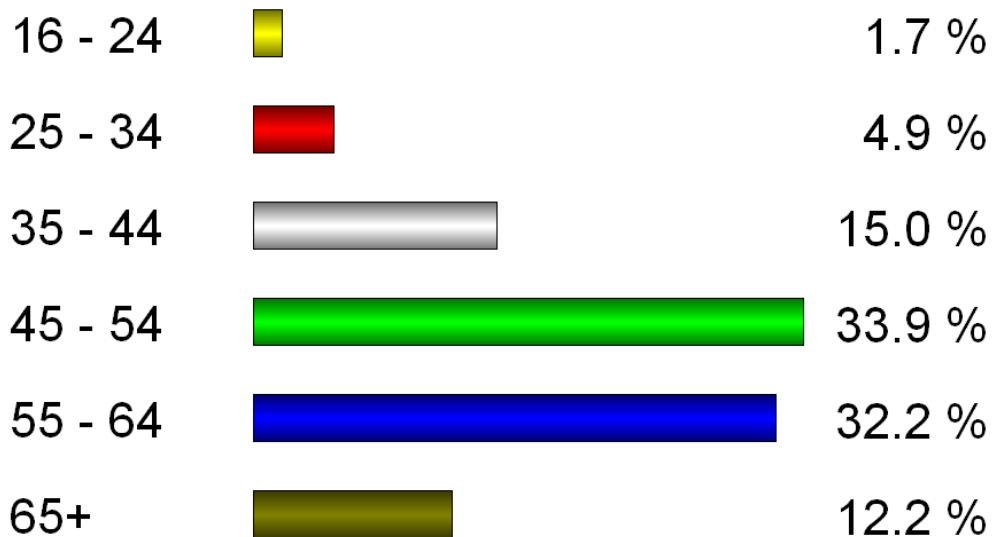
The next question: Do you identify yourself as transgender? 1 for yes, 2 for no. It's working.

Do you / Have you ever identified as transgender?



Now we are getting to the really serious stuff. What's your age range? If everybody says they are 16, there is going to be a stewards' inquiry, I'm telling you that now. So, what is your age range? Is it 16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 plus or Tommy Brennan? *(Laughter)*

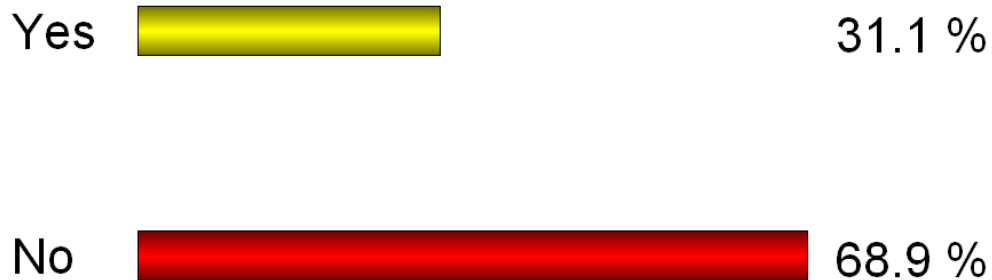
What is your Age range?



That tells you the challenges that we have.

We have an easy question coming up: Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

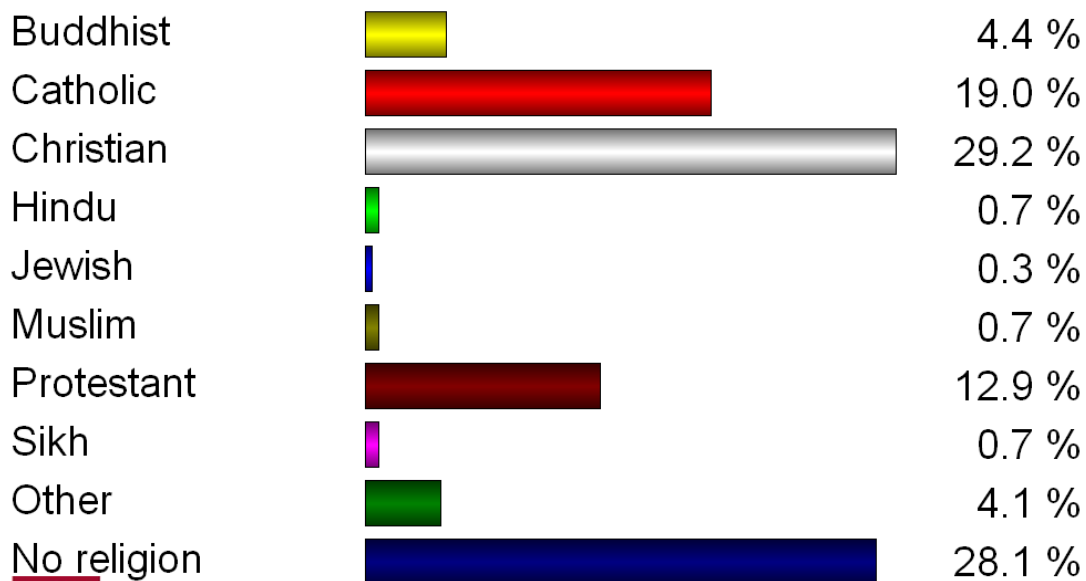
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



The purpose of these questions is that we issue questionnaires and we ask people to fill them in and help us, but the rate of return we get is, unfortunately, very low. If it works right in the first bit, this is a funny way of finding out quite a lot of information that you are giving us. People are generally cooperating. *That* is quite a high proportion, don't you think?

Next: What is your religion? Are you Buddhist, Catholic, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Sikh, Other or No religion at all? There are ten questions. You have to push the 1 and then the zero if you have no religion at all.

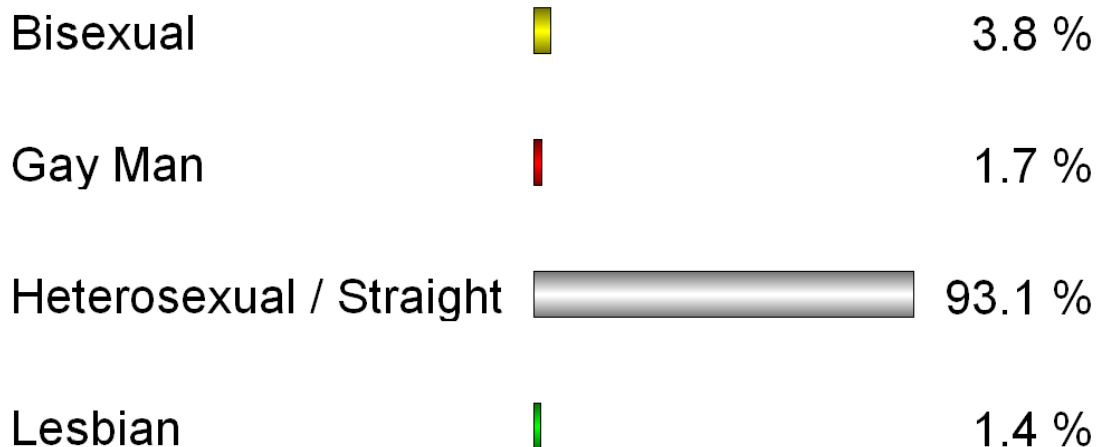
What is your religion?



We will make what we will of that result.

Next: What do you consider your sexual orientation to be? No, we haven't got "Lucky" on the list. Just sit down. *(Laughter)* Are you bisexual, gay man, heterosexual, straight or lesbian? We are almost there.

What is your sexual orientation?



That result is very interesting.

We come to the last one in this session, and fingers crossed it works: What cultural background would you describe yourself as? Remember, it is what you consider yourself to be: Asian, Asian British, Black, Black British, Chinese, Mixed Race, Other ethnic group or White. *(Pause)* I knew it was too good to be true. No, we are not going backwards.

In simplistic terms, we have got about three or four of these during the week. They are meant to be a bit of fun but they are incredibly important because what we have just done in that very short set of slides is gathered more accurate information about the make-up of our delegates to Congress than we have ever had before. That is the reality. I know it may seem a little strange, but I think somebody said this morning that it is really important that we know as much about our members as possible, and that is absolutely true. The online joining material that we have done has been great at doing that, because when people join online they tell us loads of stuff and we can talk to them very quickly because they join via an email address. Again, as somebody said this morning, the importance of knowing who the members are, what their interests, cultures and backgrounds are is absolutely critical to the future of the Union. One of the things that I am really proud about – I don't know how you feel about it – is the number of new delegates who have come to this Congress and the number of people who have come to this rostrum. I am sitting on the stage with Mary incredibly proud about that. That has come about because of the changes we made in the structure of the Union. That is why we need to monitor what we are doing because we can judge if the things we want to do, the goals that we want to achieve, we are achieving. Thanks very much for your participation. I am really sorry that it didn't

work the first time. If we get a chance, we will go back to the first lot of questions. They are quite interesting as well. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Paul.

INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: MANUFACTURING

REMPLOY CAMPAIGN

COMPOSITE 10

(Covering Motions 127, 128 and 129)

127. REMPLOY REDUNDANCIES *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

128. SUPPORT FOR REMPLOY *(North West & Irish Region)*

129. REMPLOY BONUSES *(Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)*

REMPLOY CAMPAIGN

We call upon this Congress and the CEC to support the Remploy factories network that oppose any closures or any redundancies. Our mission needs to continue with no factory closures and continue with our no surrender policy so we can carry on for another 50 years. We would like support for this motion to keep Remploy Factories open.

The Electorate were conned in May, by the then Liberals by saying a vote for Conservatives was a vote for cut backs. The Electorate then voted for the Liberals to find they were voting with the Conservatives.

We call for the management structure to be radically reviewed and streamlined and procurement policies to be invoked to bring work into sites and secure our members' jobs.

High bonuses are paid to the bosses, but we are told it costs far too much per employee.

We call upon this Congress and the CEC to campaign against the bonus paid in Remploy to managers and directors. In the last financial year the managers and directors were paid approximately £1.5million which is an undeserved and unjustified disgrace. How can a failed management have a bonus at the same time they are sacking our disabled members, yet at the same time the workforce can't even get a pay rise. We believe this management are incompetent and are a bunch of scroungers and we need to show them for what they are.

We need a management that needs to be positive about disabled people and their future and that is just not the case at present. Management must be stopped from ignoring the Remploy accord which is a legally binding document.

Congress resolves to campaign for the DWP to have a bigger say in the running and future of Remploy and a parliamentary sub group be established instead of this board of incompetent directors.

(Carried)

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I am from the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region and a proud Remploy worker, moving Composite 10.

President and Congress, we call upon the CEC to support the Remploy factories network, that we strongly oppose any redundancies, any TUPE transfers or factory closures and the maintenance of the manufacturing units. We need to continue our policy of no factory closures and have a no surrender policy like we have had for the last 50 years.

We call for the management structure to be severely watered down and to stop the old boy's network, mates of mates. We need a positive management for disabled people and not an anti-disabled management, and run by disabled people for disabled people. We have a board that hides behind the DWP. That is fine, so sack the board. Let the DWP run Remploy or let it be run by a Parliamentary sub-group on a daily basis. Sack the board. Butcher and Hill must go for the good of Remploy. This board can't be trusted with public money. Where you have public money, you have scroungers like the senior management and the board of Remploy, yet only this week, Sue Butcher has threatened the Remploy Consortium and officials. They have no business idea and they have no intention of running Remploy successful, only running it into the ground. Their intention is more factory closures, which we will strongly oppose. We will also oppose any senior management being paid bonuses. You ask yourself "For what?" Remploy is not performing as a manufacturing business with Government support. It is failing disabled people. In the past year, senior management, who are failing disabled people, have been given £1.5 million in bonuses. What do our members get? They get £250 if you end under £21,000, yet our members' bonuses have been still for the last ten years.

We believe that the senior management in Remploy is incompetent and are a bunch of scroungers. We need to show them up for what they are. The chief executive, Tim Matthews, drinks Champagne for a living, and Ian Russell, the Chairman of Remploy, failed Scottish Power. We now have him. At the same time the DWP allow management bonuses but won't allow pay rises for our members. The last pay rise of £250 took eleven months to resolve.

The company is not even bidding for contracts under article 19 of the public procurement rules. This work would have meant the survival of Remploy. We are not asking for charity. We are asking for a good day's work. Only last week 700 people left Remploy on voluntary redundancy, 500 of whom are disabled. What are the chances of them working again? Whereas some of our members might think it is right to take redundancy, they will probably find out the hard way with the economic climate today. We have funding for Remploy until 2013. We are now in the fight of our lives and we need to take the membership with us as we are in the biggest cost struggle ever seen. I move.

BRO. B. DAVIES (North Western & Irish): Congress, I am proud to have been a Remploy worker for 32 years. We have just another 700 employees. Three years before that we lost 29 factories. I will tell you a little about the human cost and what that means to people. I will throw a few things out to you. Out of 40 people who left our factory three years ago, three-thirds of them are still unemployed. They are not earning a penny. Three of them have tried to commit suicide, one is in jail and 35 of those people who took voluntary redundancy three years ago are now in financial trouble. They have got no money, they have lost their houses and cars. Also three or four have been divorced. This is what happens to people when they lose their jobs. I

am not talking just about disabled people but normal people. However, normal people have got a bit more of a chance than disabled people. When disabled people leave Remploy, that's it. It's done. It's gone. It's over with.

Three-quarters of people who left my factory three years ago will never, ever get another job. If we carry on the way we are going, there will be no Remploy left. That will be a cold day in hell because I will not let that happen. We have to stop it from happening. People every day come up to me and ask me the same question: "When are they going to close the factory down?", because they are scared to death. Can we stop it for peace of mind to people with disabilities? Let them say, one way or the other, are they shutting it or leaving it open? We want to leave it open. Let's fight for that. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brian.

YORK DISABLED CO-OPERATIVE MOTION 130

130. YORK DISABLED CO-OPERATIVE

This Congress we call upon and the CEC to use the success of the York Disabled Co-operative as the framework on what can be achieved by disabled people for disabled people, and that the GMB continues to support the opening of more co-operatives for disabled people.

BRIGHTSIDE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. SHIELD (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress and President, I move Motion 130 – York Disabled Co-operative. I live and work in York and I want to speak to you today about the success of the York Disabled Workers' Co-operative. In March 2008 the Remploy factory in York closed its doors forever. Some of the disabled workers took redundancy and some retired. A few of them got part-time jobs in charity shops. Most of them are still unemployed. They have been left with nothing to do and the dignity and pride of full-time skilled work has gone. It seems that if a person is working class and disabled then opportunities for them to gain decent employment are very few and far between. Most UK employers still view disabled people as a liability and choose not to employ them.

Since 2008 we have faced a worsening economic crisis, which has led to massive job losses in both public and private sectors. This has made it even more difficult for disabled people to find and keep decent employment. All this changed when, on 13th May 2010, documents were signed and the York Disabled Workers' Co-operative was born. Things have now moved on. They have employed and joiner and some of the machinery is up and running. I recently visited the site in York and spoke to the GMB National Secretary, Phil Davies. He was working there for a couple of days to help them out. He told me how determined the staff and the disabled workers are to make this an Co-operative an ongoing and lasting success, but for this success to carry on it is vital that they get some big orders from, maybe, the local council and, possibly, schools to ensure their survival. The Co-operative makes high quality wooden garden accessories, ranging from bird boxes and ornamental planters to solid picnic benches. If, like me, you need to replace that wonky bench you have in your

garden, please go and have a look and maybe buy something from the stand that is here at Congress. Also have a go at the raffle to win some good prizes. Tickets are £2 each or three for £5. This really is a brilliant framework on which to get more co-operatives up and running, but donations alone are not enough to keep these places going, especially in the first year with wages and high running costs to cover.

We, as trade unions, can help, but the Government have a responsibility to those disabled people who they threw out of work in 2008. They must provide substantial funds to start and maintain co-operatives run by disabled workers. Let's show the workers and the staff of the York Disabled Workers' Co-operative that we will continue to support their cause and we will also ask the CEC to use York's success as a framework to start more co-operatives. So here's to an exciting and happy future for disabled workers all over the country. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder.

SIS. S. WALKER (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, the main points I wish to cover are the achievements so far, the need for continued funding, and the framework usage for future cooperatives. Firstly, the cooperative at York officially opened on 28th October 2010 after months of planning, cleaning, painting, and the installation of equipment and machinery. The open day was a huge success and saw over 100 people give their support and over £12,000 worth of orders were placed on the first day. Secondly, to maintain their success they need orders to keep coming in and any support from branches and regions would, I am sure, be greatly appreciated. Thirdly, we call on the CEC to use the success at York as a framework for any future cooperatives to show that disabled people can succeed even though Remploy discarded them.

To conclude, the achievements at York have been phenomenal but we cannot rest on that success. They still need funding and orders to build on that and their success should be used as a framework for any future cooperatives. I call upon you all, please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL
BRANCH FUNDING FOR GMB YORK WORKERS COOPERATIVE
MOTION 10**

10. BRANCH FUNDING FOR GMB YORK WORKERS CO-OPERATIVE

This Congress will recall the travesty when our Remploy members who were faced with mass factory closures by bad management and with no defence from the Labour Party. Many of our members were removed from long-standing employment into areas of the unknown. Many of these disabled workers were subject to losing their jobs through redundancies at a time when employment was flourishing.

This is against the backdrop where the management of the employer continue to reap the benefits off the back of these workers.

It is a disgrace the way that these individuals were treated, and it's thanks to support from the GMB and its Officers that alternatives for some people in York was to move to a Workers Co-Operative.

However I'm sure you will agree that this kind of Co-Operative needs to be run on strict financial rules, and should never be allowed to enter into debt for the sake of lack of funds. It's stability is down to everyone to do all it can to ensure security for the disabled workers. We have recently seen many letters requiring financial support for the York Workers Co-Operative, and we need to ensure that there is a mechanism at the National Administration Unit that should branches wish to contribute on an ongoing basis, through direct debit at source then they should be allowed, and encouraged to do so.

This motion is therefore a plea to Congress to allow this to happen, and an additional plea to branches across the Union, to set up direct debits where money can be automatically transferred to the York Workers Co-Operative to give sound financial stability for the future and benefit of these disabled workers, and have the fear of lack of funds to continue, removed.

ISLINGTON 1 & HARINGEY BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Can I now call the mover of Motion 10, London Region?

SIS. P. ROBINSON (London): President, Congress, 13th March 2010 was a very significant date in British employment history. It was a triumph for the GMB, its officers, and a dedicated bank of shop stewards. It showed the previous Labour Government that abandoning a disadvantaged group of workers was not the only way. It gave us this mission statement. Our mission is to provide ethically manufactured products made from recycled materials and employing disabled people on terms that exceed ILO standards of employment. It was the day the York Disabled Workers Cooperative was formed. Colleagues, it was a great day. The years of abandonment, factory closures, redundancies, disabled people forced to give up their hard-won skills and work in charity shops or not work at all, are not forgotten, nor are the huge bonuses paid to the worst management in living memory, the only group more involved than City bankers, nor the lies and broken promises of Peter Haines and Gordon Brown, nor indeed is the heartbreaking story of Tracey so eloquently put together in that DVD which shamed everybody involved in closing the Remploy factory in York.

Colleagues, although nothing is forgotten the 13th March 2010 was a day of hope, a day to look forward and a day our disabled colleagues could reclaim their dignity. The GMB and its members, stewards and officers, especially Phil Davies, can be rightly proud to have brought the cooperative about. Over a year later this enterprise is still fulfilling its mission statement; it is making high quality products and providing skilled employment for our disabled brothers and sisters. But, colleagues, an enterprise such as this is very hard to finance in the early stages. It was set up with trade union donations and is still in need of support. The support required is twofold. Firstly, it needs more orders and those of you who have purchased from the cooperative can certainly testify to the quality of the product. Secondly, it still requires funding and I make no apology that the purpose of this motion is a direct appeal to branches to make regular donations to the cooperative. The admin unit has advised that donations can be deducted at source, or periodic direct debits can be set up. It is a laudable project where everyone connected with both its inception and its running can be extremely proud. It certainly shames the Remploy fat-cat board and the previous Labour Government. They may have abandoned our disabled brothers

and sisters but the GMB never will. President, colleagues, please donate and please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Penny. Secunder.

BRO. M. FOSTER (London): President, Congress, I do not want to go over the comments made by the previous speaker as I think the motion says it all. However, what I want to do instead is give you some idea of what happens to disabled workers once the factories are closed. Recently, Central Bedfordshire Council, a ConDem coalition council, chose to cut £300,000 funding to a disabled workers factory called Luton Works in Dunstable, Beds. Despite a London Region campaign, sadly the doors closed on 31st May this year. Luton Works had 24 workers, 23 being disabled and one being able-bodied, and only one of them has been given alternative employment. I am certainly not going to give any prizes out for guessing which one that was.

Colleagues, 23 disabled workers are now unemployed having been robbed of all the respect and dignity those jobs gave them. So, please give all the support you can to the York disabled workers, and others like them, and help them regain the respect and dignity stripped from them by this Government and the councils up and down this country. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Before I call Phil Davies to reply, does anyone wish to come in on the debate? Les.

BRO. L. WOODWARD (South Western): I am a Remploy National Convenor and proud Remploy worker, and more to the point I am a founder member of the York Workers Cooperative. Congress, I bring you fraternal greetings from the people's democratic republic of Swansea in Remploy and I can give Congress absolute assurances that we have no hedge fund managers, no venture capitalists, and definitely no multimillionaire stockbrokers working in Remploy factories or any other supported employment factory for that matter. Comrades, we are in the fight of our lives and I do not mean to go over what James and Brian said. We are in the fight of our lives. Whether we are in the public sector or the private sector, we are facing the biggest, nastiest, and most vitriolic attack on the working class this country has seen since the Industrial Revolution. Disabled people are bearing the brunt of those attacks. We have just heard speakers talk about the closure of a factory and who knows, comrades, in two years' time there may even be plans for closing the Remploy factories.

Comrades, let me pay tribute to you all for supporting Remploy and for supporting the York Disabled Workers Cooperative. Without your help we could not manage. I would like to thank the London Region for proposing the motion on direct debit funding. It is such a brilliant idea I wish I had thought of it myself.

Comrades, finally, I would like you to take a look at these two items, the difference being this is made in York by disabled workers who own the company and have a say in their terms and conditions. This is made in China by workers who have yet to achieve what we have achieved in York. Just bear that in mind, comrades, and thank you very much.

BRO. R. BUCKLE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I am a first-time speaker at Congress and first-time attendee, and I am a Remplo worker. I work alongside fellow disabled people in the real world of manufacturing which does in the main work for Schools for the Future programme. The Government gives Remplo £100m a year to run Remplo as a business with a failed management who is greedy for money. Remplo started in 1946 after the Second World War for ex-servicemen and women and not for senior management to take the cream for themselves. As an ex-service person I understand what Remplo is all about, not weaving baskets like a lot of people may think but proper factories with proper industry, engineering equipment such as CNC welding and robot welding machinery, and a lot more. Because of poor management it has been run into the ground aided by the board and supported by the DWP. It is the last remaining government-run body/industry. The miners have gone, steel, fisheries, oil, and Remplo is the last one. With only 5% of public procurement Remplo could stand on its feet and within five years at least find the opportunity to employ more disabled people. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Phil Davies.

BRO. P. DAVIES (National Secretary, Manufacturing Section): President, Congress, nearly a third of the people in this Congress today deem themselves as being disabled. One minute you can be fit doing all the sport in the world, and the next minute you can be struck down and disabled. That is a fact of life. That is why this composite is so important. March 2008 was a date written in the history books of disabled people. It was a dark day for disabled people. 2,500 disabled people lost their jobs in Remplo, most of them have never worked, many have suffered their health deteriorating, some have lost their houses, and marriages have been broken up. A much worse date was recorded in the history on 5th May 2010, the election of a Conservative government supported by the rag-tag Liberals. Within seven months of the office of a Tory government it launched an attack on Remplo again, more job losses, more heartache. Only one week ago 780 people, nearly 500 of whom were disabled, were thrown on the scrapheap, as were hundreds more in Luton, Wigan and Aberdeen by the closure of local authority workshops. May I pay tribute to the officers in the London Region for their attempt to keep the Luton workshop open. Supported employment in the UK, colleagues, is under threat of extinction. Remplo bosses fiddled while Remplo was being destroyed, sacking hundreds of disabled workers without a care in the world. We now again have more bosses and less disabled workers, and 288 senior Remplo managers awarded themselves massive bonuses between £4,000 and £10,000 while at the same time they were dismissing our members. These directors were appointed, unfortunately, by a Labour government to break the trade unions and to destroy the Remplo factory network. I have to say Labour needs to hang its head in shame for their part in this. The GMB will continue to campaign to stop these bonus payments and the job losses. We now have a hard core of Remplo workers and there are dozens of Les Woodwards, Brian Davieses and James Stribleys, there waiting to take up the fight. At the same time as we meet here today the Government ploughs on ahead attacking the most vulnerable people in our society. Each week we see British soldiers killed in Afghanistan. Have you ever asked yourself what has happened to those brave soldiers that are injured? Where are they, the people who have lost limbs, and their minds scarred for ever? They are certainly not coming into supported employment. They are being hidden away from

society. There is no shortage of disabled people in the UK but there is a shortage of jobs.

The last 22 years that I have been fighting for our members in Remploy in supported employment has been difficult but we need to continue that fight, we need to make sure that disabled people have a choice of where they want to work. The latest attack only last week by the company was to threaten legal action against all our shop stewards in Remploy for recommending that our members do not turn over the medical records to a tin-pot outfit that is a so-called health surveillance company. Brothers and sisters, we have a fight on. We have a hard core of members in Remploy. The next two years are going to be critical.

I just want to get a plug in for York Workers Cooperative. If you have not bought a raffle ticket already, I will have you by the end of the week because you will have done.

Comrades, I want to tell you a little story about a guy called Darren who worked 20 years for Remploy in York. When he lost his job in 2008 he went from charity shop to charity shop. Darren suffers with severe learning difficulties and mental health problems. They could not find him a job. His health went downhill. Five months ago they brought him into the York Disabled Workers Cooperative. For the first time in his life he is now communicating. He is now happy. He is now smiling and he is now doing a job that is appreciated. His father said to me, "Darren is 45. I have never known him to change so quickly," and that is because disabled people working together can work out all the issues and all the problems that disabled people have. So, the York Disabled Workers Cooperative is yours. I have to thank the Branch Secretaries, Regional Secretaries, the Officers, and the members for the tremendous support that they have had. Paul Kenny's garden must be like a garden centre he has purchased that many goods. There has been some tremendous support given. It is now starting to work.

Paul must get fed up with me going into the office and asking for advice, what can we do, but Paul's advice has been good. Of course we want the donations but the orders are more important. Only a couple of weeks ago he was having a day off at home and I knocked on his door and said, "We've got a few problems in York. Can you solve them? Can you help?" He immediately made a phone call to Asda and things have started happening. Paul, I want to thank you on behalf of all those disabled people who are watching this. They are all watching the GMB. It is your cooperative, be proud of it and come to the stand, order goods, buy the raffle tickets, and I am pretty sure that by this time next year the apprentice will be up and running and I have to thank the Liverpool & Irish Region for that; from the bottom of my heart I have to thank them for that.

Colleagues, we have a fight in Remploy, we are going to take that fight to them, we are not going to bow down, we are not going to give up, we are going to keep organising and we are going to keep fighting against a ruthless management and a terrible government. Thanks, colleagues. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Phil. Congress, I would like you to put your hands together for our members in Remploy, some you have heard here today who have

stood shoulder to shoulder to save their workplaces. Can I add that every councillor, every MP, every employer, that shut these factories should be totally ashamed of themselves. I hope it never strikes in their backyard because only then will it come home how important those jobs are to these individuals, and everybody else. I am proud to say I know most of them and I thank them from my heart for the work they have done, and of course none of them could ever get away from Phil Davies whose heart and soul is in that. We will keep going and we will keep fighting. Please, help out by donating and buying some stock and help to fight when they are going round the country. Thank you. *(Applause)*

Can I now move to the vote? Does Yorkshire Region accept the statement? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Motion 130, Disabled Cooperative, Yorkshire Region, the CEC has agreed to support Motion 10, so can I put all three to the vote together, please. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Composite 10 was CARRIED.

Motion 130 was CARRIED.

Motion 10 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now move to the Regional Secretary's Report from Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region, pages 157-174.

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	13,991
MANUFACTURING SECTION	13,322
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	32,481
Grade 1 members	33,557
Grade 2 members	17,169
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	9,068
Male Membership	29,317
Female Membership	30,477
Total number recruited 1.1.2010 – 31.12.2010	7,437
Increase 1.1.2010 – 31.12.2010	1,554
Membership on Check-off	36,531
Membership on Direct Debit	15,493

THE REGION

This section of our regional report is going to be remarkably similar to last years and I make no excuse or apology for that.

I reported to Congress last year that, with its policy of GMB@Work as the central theme of our agenda, we will manage through clarity, consistency and compassion to grow our region. So I set out below our proud progress throughout 2010, but have gone further and set out our business plan for this year so

that delegates can see not only what we have done, but what we have planned around GMB@Work to ensure our continued success.

Despite foreseeing 2010 being a difficult year economically, and in order to build on the region's fantastic success in 2009, we once again set ourselves very ambitious targets for 2010 including growing our membership, growing our activist base and the functioning of our branches to play their full part in the democratic process of the region.

On membership we **GREW** by a very pleasing 1554 (2%) and finished the year just short of 60,000 members, the highest membership in the region for very many years. For the third year running we not only appointed, but actually trained more reps than the previous year and this tells us that, as our army of activists grows so will the strength and stability of the region as they deliver the GMB@Work agenda.

And despite all of our efforts to recruit new membership, we never take our eye off the ball of retaining and looking after our existing membership base and our performance of one of the regions with the lowest drop out rate is very satisfying.

I report monthly on progress on all of these GMB@Work key areas to the Regional Committee and 6 monthly to Regional Council and the accountability is welcomed all round.

Our website remains our key communication tool with our membership and remains up to date, relevant, attractive and user friendly. But this is no substitute for face to face contact and we held a series of branch roadshows across the region and our November branch activist weekend was once again a resounding success with over 100 activists, many of them brand new, giving up their weekend to share their views, on how, together we can grown the union further.

Our learning and organising project continues to bring major benefit to our members and is a key tool to our recruitment strategy, not least in respect of our migrant working and those who earn their living through sport.

So I hope that this gives delegates a snapshot of our activity throughout 2010 and I set out below the region's

AGREED Business Plan for 2011:

1. Through GMB@Work and using both regionally and nationally agreed targets, we will grow the region in 2011
2. 2011 will be a difficult year, so we will support our activists better than ever before to deliver on behalf of our members
3. We will focus almost exclusively on 3 areas:
 - a) Recruitment maximising the value of recruitment weeks
 - b) Consolidation
 - c) Retention
4. Continue to direct resources to frontline organising
5. Explore developing technology to speed up communications and at the same time reduce costs
6. Develop further the region's fledgling work in communities and with like-minded groups
7. Cement the link between the region, branch, workplace and our members through vehicles such as branch roadshows, branch awards and the annual weekend branch event.
8. Through membership and activity we will forge closer links (and therefore be more influential) with the Labour Party at constituency and district level.

ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

Sectional membership in the region as at end December 2010 was 13,994.

Consumers became increasingly pessimistic about the state of the economy and their own finances up to December 2010 according to local newspaper reports with six out of ten people worried they won't have enough money to live comfortably during 2011. According to the Samaritans, 37% are worried about losing their job. About 56% are worried they will suffer directly as a result of austerity measures with a quarter worried about losing their homes.

Figures from research firm Equifax in December showed there was a 3.2% increase in business failures in Yorkshire and the Humber against the same period in 2009 when 517 businesses fell by the wayside, Yorkshire being only one of two areas to see an increase in insolvencies. For those that did survive the trading year it may be this was achieved at the cost of growth given the unemployment figures rising much to the chagrin of the ConDems who insist their way is the only way. There has yet to be any evidence of an increase in the private sector job market taking over from the public sector.

Pay freezes are predicted for one out of ten pay groups with a median of a 2% increase forecast in the private sector despite doggedly high inflation rates, irrespective of which is used, i.e. CPI or RPI. Increases to VAT in January 2011 and the general cost of living as measured by the various indices means that most employees' pay will continue to chase inflation. XperthHR say that any tentative signs of a pick up are set against and hinges largely on whether the fragile economic recovery gains pace. Interestingly, figures from IDS showed that the total earnings of FTSE 100 directors increased by 55% in 2010 – 'we're all in it together', yeah right, that obviously only applies further up the ladder.

In retail, the first quarter of 2011 will be make or break. The sector is set to suffer a wave of administrations, closures and job losses. Many retailers introduced pre Christmas promotions and discounts earlier than normal to drive sales. At the time of writing, sales figures were hit and miss partly due to the bad weather which some may have hidden behind. The figures are also obscured by a number of issues such as what happens when interest rates start to rise, when HMRC tighten up on 'time to pay' agreements and where insolvencies traditionally rise as an economy comes out of recession.

Against that backdrop, whilst the regional economic and employment situation remained grim throughout 2010, membership grew both in the section and the region, i.e. by 2.7% over the period, positive news indeed.

Energy & Utilities

Organisation - employee group (nos. covered)	Effective date	Period (months)	Terms of latest award
Biwater - all (950)	1.4.10	12	Initial three-month pay pause followed by average salary increase of 2% from 1 July, worth 1.5% on an annualised basis.
CE Electric - DJC administrative staff (191)	1.4.10	12	12-month pay freeze.
CE Electric - industrial staff (1,100)	1.4.10	36	Third year of three-year deal: 0.33% pay increase.
EDF Energy, Existing Nuclear (formerly British Energy) - all (5,000)	1.7.10	12	2% increase on base pay and allowances from 1 July 2010, with an additional 1% increase from 1 January 2011, worth a total of 2.5% on an annualised basis.
National Grid - industrial grades (3,000)	1.7.10	36	Second year of three-year deal: base rates and allowances rise by 1.25%.

National Grid - junior and middle management (800)	1.7.10	12	All-merit rises distributed from a 2.3% pay pot.
National Grid - junior and middle managers (800)	1.7.09	12	All-merit rises distributed from a 1.5% pay pot.
National Grid - senior managers (100)	1.7.10	12	All-merit rises distributed from a 2.3% pay pot.
National Grid - senior managers (100)	1.6.09	12	All-merit rises distributed from a 1.5% pay pot.
Scottish Power Energy Wholesale - engineering, administrative and clerical grades (460)	1.4.10	24	First year of two-year deal: 2.5% basic pay rise.
Severn Trent Water -production grades (200); staff (4,600)	1.7.10	12	2% basic pay rise.
Yorkshire Water - employees covered by collective bargaining (2,000)	1.4.10	60	First year of five-year deal: November 2009 headline RPI (0.3%) plus 1%. Additional 1% paid as a non-consolidated lump sum.

Northern Gas Network (formerly United Utilities) As well as a transfer of employment at the end of the year, 2010 has seen protracted negotiations around shifts and working hours. Agreement was reached following consultation with union members on a new shift pattern that enhanced basic pay, only for the employer to revert to the previous way of working without any consultation within a month of its implementation. Legal advice is currently being sought over what is believed to be a breach of contract and senior workplace organisers have sought an emergency meeting with the employer to resolve the matter. A longstanding issue over pensionable pay has recently been resolved in members favour and the employer has agreed to pay compensation, the finer detail is still being discussed. Workplace organisers will meet in early 2011 to discuss the next pay claim.

Yorkshire Water Pay talks concluded in early January 2010, with the offer of an increase linked to inflation with an element of non consolidated performance related pay over 5 years being accepted by union members. 2010 saw significant change in the mid level management ranks following on from the companies five year operations review, many left the business whilst others were redeployed.

Severn Trent Water After lengthy pay negotiations a 2% pay increase was eventually imposed on our members, despite this offer being rejected by 80% of members who voted in the ballot. The result of the ballot was not surprising as inflation stood at 5% and the company had just announced an 18% increase in company profits for 2009/2010.

UK Coal This energy resource still plays a vital role in the South Yorkshire economy and beyond with about 28% of Britain's electricity generated from coal with three of the remaining five UK Coal mines located in Yorkshire. During the cold spell at the end of 2010, electricity supply to the national grid peaked at 47% demonstrating that large parts of the country would be without heat and light if the nation's sixteen coal fired stations were switched off. (Over the same period wind farms and other renewables supplied only 0.4%!) (Source: Yorkshire Post)

Total UK Coal production for 2010 increased to 7.2m tonnes successfully negotiating its way through low coal prices and a collapsing property market. They are "cautiously optimistic" that deep and surface mines are back on track to make a small operating profit.

Production at Kellingley was halted for a number of weeks towards the end of 2010 due to an underground fire. The fire is now out and the mine is now back in production but nitrogen is still being pumped into the area to reduce the risk of reigniting. Members continued to receive normal pay whilst the mine was closed. This may have a knock on effect for the new financial year.

Monckton Coke & Chemicals Royston Barnsley 1st June 2010, 2% pay award plus 25p per hour increase on night shift allowance, improvements in attendance bonus and sick pay scheme.

Connaught Compliance Gas Services Ltd Have TUPE transferred to British Gas Services Commercial Ltd in October 2010. GMB has a recognition agreement and has also managed to negotiate a 2.2% pay increase for staff which is the first rise for these staff for many years.

C.E. Electric The company is now in the 3rd year of its pay deal which means that new negotiations will commence in 2011. The major industrial relations issue is and remains the consolidation of Northern Electric and Yorkshire Electricity on to one set of terms and conditions. This issue has progressed over the duration of the current deal and we hope to conclude the matter in the next deal.

Food, Drink & Leisure

Asda Stores continued as a national target. The organising team had planned activity on a number of occasions through the year with support from officers responsible for Asda stores. Although some reps have stood down due to retirement etc during 2010, we have gained new reps who are keen to organise and grow the union within their workplaces. Specific health and safety training was done especially for the workplace organisers in Asda Stores to encourage them to communicate with the wider workplace through this process, and had a good attendance with almost all reps taking part, with great feedback for the content.

We intend to carry out more specific training in relation to Asda's grievance and disciplinary procedures, to support the GMB training already received by reps. A different tact was taken by officers in relation to leafleting, with a more softly, softly approach, resulting in a steady growth in membership, although it is believed with more communication on a regular basis with the workforce by workplace organisers, that the increase month on month could be far greater. We have created a monthly Asda Stores newsletter for all staff which also has a membership form on the back and intend to continue producing this throughout 2011. November and December's newsletter also had a prize draw entry included on it with prizes being funded between the two Asda Stores branches, and final figures for recruitment from this look promising. Some stores have given us direct access to see staff in rest areas which is outside the usual Asda agreement and we hope to continue this along with looking forward to being able to recruit directly with the agreement of Asda in target stores within our region.

In March 2010 a HR 1 form from ASDA in relation to them redeploying staff from their site to the Home Shopping warehouse in Morley. No compulsory redundancies were sought as redeployment applied. There has been less recruitment going on in Asda stores as reps have reported much less activity around possible inductions.

Asda Stores are constantly being targeted for recruitment and organising activity by Reps, the ROT team and Officers. New reps are coming on board but low membership levels in some stores is creating a difficulty for reps being recognised, in particular at the Doncaster store where we have a new very keen Rep who is not being recognised by the store. A grievance regarding the treatment he is receiving is to be heard shortly by another store manager. Hopefully this will resolve the local issue. The interest the situation is causing is generating new members at this store. Reps have all received two day H&S training.

Wilkinsons Membership in the region has remained static at around 1700 for the last 12 months. After many months of national negotiations a pay increase of 2% was accepted by our members. Regular quarterly reps meetings are taking place at DC1 and reps training is being organised for store reps.

Barnsley Premier Leisure Outsourced provider of leisure facilities, no pay increase agreed for 2010, Organisational re-structure through this year involving some voluntary redundancies. Expect to see cuts next year due to local authority budget cuts passed on to the Organisation via funding.

Tradeteam Ltd Sheffield 2 year pay deal from 1st March 2010, first year increase of 2% and again in 2011.

Arla Foods, Settle They have announced that they will be ceasing butter production at their Settle site by the end of 2011. Production will be moved to Westbury Dairies, which may result in 18 jobs being lost at Settle. Consultations with the company are looking to reduce the number of potential job losses. Also the Learning & Organising Together team will be providing support to any staff affected.

Arla Foods, Leeds Membership continues to grow with approx 85% density in the dairy section and 95% in the transport section. Transport section received 4% pay rise for 2010/11 having taken a pay freeze the year before. The company are currently reviewing rotas after the loss of a major contract with Tesco which should not result in any job losses. However the rota changes could be detrimental to some of our members. The intention is to build stronger links regionally and as the GMB only has membership within the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region, and Arla have announced they are building a super-dairy in the south, I intend to seek joint recognition along with the other unions.

Club Stewards Membership remains constant with branch secretary Lesley Day doing excellent work in providing members in this section with top class representation which has increased somewhat due to the fact that the CORCA agreement has now been scrapped by the employer nationally.

Organisation - employee group (nos. covered)	Effective date	Period (months)	Terms of latest award
Arla Foods - negotiated distribution staff (1,000)	1.4.10	12	3% basic increase, plus an additional 1% in compensation for changes to terms and conditions.
Arla Foods - negotiated production staff (1,000)	1.1.10	15	3% increase to hourly rates, plus a one-off non-consolidated payment of 7pound;100.
Arla Foods - non-negotiated employees (1,000)	1.1.10	12	12-month pay freeze.
Asda Stores – Hourly paid retail (142,420)	1.10.10	12	2% basic increase for sales assistants

Security

Membership in the region currently stands at around 1000.

The majority of the membership work for G4S, Securitas, Loomis and Security Plus Ltd and are covered by GMB national agreements. The industry has seen a number of changes in 2010, significantly Securitas losing the Telerel / Trillium contract to G4S resulting in the transfer of approximately 100 staff in our Region. G4S on the other hand lost the Morrisons retail contract in our region resulting in around 60 staff transferring to Cardinal Security. G4S Care & Justice are currently in the latter stages of a competitive bidding process for the contract and should be informed whether or not they have been successful in January 2011.

G4S Membership growth within G4S continues slowly this is a result of cut backs within G4S and contract losses however there are plenty of opportunities to recruit on the back of TUPE. The announcement of Court closures in our region may result in Job losses in the future.

Securitas Inductions sessions in Wakefield continue to be covered by the region, although new starters attending sessions has reduced however there are plenty of opportunities to recruit on the back of TUPE.

Security Industry Authority An announcement was made during the year, following the ConDem government's drive to reduce quangoes as they see it, that "there should be a phased transition to a new regulatory regime" for the security industry which is awaited with interest.

Airports

Robin Hood Airport, Doncaster/Sheffield (RHADS) - (Peel Airports, Penauille Servisair, Securicor) Peel Airports sold a majority share to Vancouver Airports, a Canadian company with a global portfolio in the aviation industry. Membership has increased slightly and reps have completed their basic training. There has been a consolidation of membership at Servisair and negotiations on pay and terms & conditions are now conducted under a new national agreement.

In October, Securicor won the contract from G4S for providing security at RHADS. Membership is on the increase and there is a new rep in place. RHADS will lose all Easyjet flights from January 2011 which resulted in proposals to reduce contracted hours. Consultations are currently ongoing.

Action Housing and Support - Membership levels continue to steadily grow and GMB density is now at 63%. Monthly reps' meetings have continued and have been extremely helpful for reps when representing our members, particularly at joint quarterly meetings with the company (JNCG). As Action Housing contracts are tendered from local authorities there has been a reduction to some contracts and others lost to predominantly non unionised companies. This led to a pay freeze for 2010 and in line with local authority cuts there are expected difficulties for our members in 2011.

Road Transport Distribution

PPL YODEL (formerly DHL) 2010 proved to be a challenging year for employees in the YODEL business. At the beginning of the year DHL announced that it was selling loss making parts of the business to Parcelpoint, a company owned by venture capitalist brothers the Barclays. Following consultation the transfer went ahead in February. Parcelpoint's management team said that there would not be any major changes throughout the course of 2010 and that they would spend the year assessing the business with a view to making necessary change the following year. In September the company announced the centralisation of their mail sort operation to Wednesbury in the West Midlands meaning closures of depots around the country, Yorkshire stands to lose Morley Hub and Keighley depot. Consultation talks continue with the company with a view to minimising the impact on employees at these sites. It is expected that any redundancies will not take effect until summer 2011.

In partnership with our regional Learning and Organising Together team we have agreed with the employer to open a learning centre at the Morley depot, with the provision of several PC's a printer and internet access making learning at work directly accessible to members on site.

3663 Swithenbank Membership continues to grow steadily due to a number of issues facing drivers throughout the year, and as a direct result of the great work carried out by our workplace organiser at the Bradford site in dealing directly with management. We intend to draw up a recruitment plan in 2011, which will include carrying out regular meetings at the workplace and holding recruitment sessions on site, with more emphasis on the warehouse and office areas. We are looking to having a newsletter and other materials translated into Polish as there has been an increase in this particular group into the workforce.

TK Maxx Shared Services - distribution: hourly paid employees (1,961)	1.4.09	12	2% pay rise.
TK Maxx, Shared Services - distribution management (260); head office (291)	1.6.09	12	2.5% basic increase.
TK Maxx - UK employees (1,752)	1.6.10	12	3% merit pot for individual performance-related awards.

Safestyle/Windowstyle Barnsley From 1st January 2011 1.85% increase on basic rates, 1 days extra bereavement leave, ½ days additional leave entitlement and increase in employers pension contributions.

Chemicals

Pay settlements showed a mix of outcomes during 2010 with the median award being 2%. A marked reduction in pay freezes coupled with more overtime being worked shows the sector is beginning to emerge from the recession.

BASF - head office staff (220)	1.4.10	12	2% increase on salary bands plus an additional 1% of paybill allocated to fund individual merit and associated awards. Employees also received non-consolidated bonuses based on individual and company performance, ranging from nil to 30% of salary, and averaging 12%.
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Robert McBride, Bradford - operatives, semi-skilled and junior management (400)	1.7.09	12	1.5% basic pay rise.
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MANUFACTURING SECTION

Manufacturing in the region appears to be in a state of uncertainty as the figures give a mixed view. The EEF (Engineering Employers Federation) is predicting growth of 3.5% in manufacturing in comparison with 2.1% across all sectors. However, the EEF conducted a poll of more than 500 firms which concluded 20% were still worried about the future.

Manufacturing output increased by 5.8% from the year start to October 2010 but the latest figures for the economy showed a reduction of 0.5% growth overall.

The Government cuts and tax increases have not been factored in and no current figures are available at present but the forecasts for the next 12 months are mixed.

The truth is no-one can actually predict the growth of manufacturing or the economy in general, but the shock figures of a 0.5% reduction is worrying.

Rhodia Leeds & Halifax

Rhodia Leeds a recognised workplace is due to merge with Rhodia Halifax around June 2011. I have been visiting staff at the Halifax site along with the Leeds shop steward, Andy Johnson to distribute recruitment material and engage directly with staff. This has seen an increase in membership at the Halifax site and we are looking to gain recognition for this site in the not too distant future. We have been involved in advising members about new contracts as a result of the merger and have an assurance from the company that harmonisation of pay and conditions will be completed by 2012. Those being made redundant from the Leeds site are being spoken to about continuing their membership and retention packs have been prepared. A pay offer has been rejected by the members at the Leeds site and talks are ongoing. When a settlement is made it is likely that Halifax site operatives will be given a higher increase to work towards harmonisation to work colleague's wages in Leeds.

Rocol

Any issues are usually very competently dealt with by the shop stewards on site. However, this year's pay offer seems to be a sticking point in that there is a 50/50 split on acceptance/rejection. Rocol have continued to have reasonable pay rises over a number of years except when they accepted a pay freeze around 2008. This year's pay offer is 3% and some members feel that as they supported the company when they were having difficulties, that this should be returned in a higher pay offer this year as the company continues to thrive, even in the present economic gloom.

IMI Yorkshire Fittings (Leeds)

The company has had a number of redundancies although these were on a whole voluntary, but there are likely to be more in the future. Pay talks were a struggle last year with the company wanting a pay freeze. Members voted to take action which resulted in the company offering a pay rise which was

accepted. The long standing shop steward, Ray Brown who has done excellent work on behalf of the GMB over the years retired recently, but continues to work as branch secretary, and has handed the reins as senior shop steward to Martin Moorhouse. It is thought that the Leeds site may eventually close with all operations being transferred to the Doncaster manufacturing site.

Burberry's

Following the closure of the Rotherham factory, the Castleford site is now working at full capacity and they have introduced a night shift.

We have now a new shop steward and we hope that this will lead to an increase in membership.

Spectrum for Arcadia

We have had a very acrimonious dispute with the company over Christmas and New Year working arrangements.

This was finally resolved in the 11th hour following the intervention of ACAS. The company's stance on this matter has resulted in an increase in membership.

Remploy

The difficulties continue with this company at a national level.

BCIA

An increase of 2% on all rates of pay backdated to 1st October 2010 was agreed on the 15th October 2010.

Ellis Furniture

Whilst 2010 has not seen any further redundancies, workers reverted back to a four day week from October through to the end of the year, having spent most of 2010 working five days a week. Management are hopeful that the order book for 2011 allows for an increase back to five day working.

In partnership with our regional Learning and Organising Team we have agreed with the employer to open a learning centre at Ellis Furniture, with the provision of several PC's a printer and internet access making learning at work directly accessible to members on site.

Carillion

Employees transferred back into Yorkshire Water on 1 April 2010, after being outsourced over 10 years ago and having gone through several transfers. Despite the company wide Carillion pay freeze members did not lose out as through negotiations with Yorkshire Water following the transfer, members agreed to accept the 5 year pay deal backdated.

Hanson Brick

Hanson's Howley Park site has managed to continue production throughout 2010 without further job losses, following the closure of many of its other brickworks plants towards the end of 2008.

Whitby & Chandler Ltd, Penistone (near Sheffield)

Anniversary 1st June, award 2% across the board from 1st June 2010.

Premdor Barnsley

Anniversary 1st January, 2011 pay freeze.

Safestyle Wombwell Barnsley (previously Windowstyle)

Anniversary 1st January, award 1.85% on basic rate, 1 extra days bereavement leave, ½ days extra holiday and an increase in the pension cap for shop floor employees, implemented from 1st January 2011.

Sanofi Aventis Thorncliffe Sheffield

Anniversary date 1st January. Following negotiations, anniversary date moved to 1st April, award from 1st April 2011 3.25% across the board.

Chapmans Agricultural Sheffield

Anniversary 1st February, award 2.5% from 1st February.

Corus Engineering steels (now TATA)

Anniversary 1st April, award 3.25% from 1st April.

Firth Rixson Metals Group, Sheffield Rotherham & Glossop

Anniversary 1st October, award all hourly paid employees received an increase of £9.30 from 1st October.

Multiserv, South Yorkshire Agreement

Anniversary 1st January, award 3.25% paid from 1st December 2010 plus £250 one off payment.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

Membership of the public services section within the region stands at 32,481. This is an increase of 1,724 on last year.

The last 12 months have continued to be some of the toughest yet for our membership who have faced pay cuts and pay freezes, job losses, threats of redundancy and the unpicking of national and local terms and conditions, all against a backdrop of economic recession, rising prices and government sponsored hostility towards any public service and those providing it.

We have worked hard in the region to support and co-ordinate our response to these challenges by ensuring we support and co-ordinate our public service activists, branches and officers in the field.

Local Government

We have continued to convene the local government 'core' group which brings together all senior local government representatives within the region and their officers. This forum has allowed us to share problems and solutions, develop strategy and co-ordinate recruitment and organisation in our councils.

The core group has been particularly active in determining and co-ordinating GMB response to the government cuts programme which began to manifest itself in the later summer of 2010 with HR1 notices and notices of intent to dismiss and re-engage.

We have worked closely with our Labour Party comrades within local councils to both mitigate the impact of local council cuts and ensure that 'blame' is firmly laid at the government's door.

GMB local councillors and local authority representatives and officers have continued to meet regularly to review and agree strategy. Councils have responded in a variety of ways to the government cuts programme. Our negotiations have put protecting jobs and terms and conditions at the top of our agenda. Members are being kept well informed on developments, consulted on any proposed agreements and where appropriate, given leadership to fight back where councils have sought to go too far in either sacking staff or slashing terms.

It is not a coincidence that the first industrial dispute in the region over a council's over zealous response to the cuts looks set to be in Sheffield City Council which is Liberal/Tory led.

During 2010 we carried out an audit of GMB organisation within local councils to establish:

- Our real level of organisation and preparedness for the battle ahead

- Our membership density
- Target areas for consolidation.

Having identified active reps as opposed to those 'on the system' we set about building on what we had with reps to grow GMB in local government. The resulting increase in recruitment and organisation is a testimony to the effort and commitment of our reps and officers and helped to sustain the whole region's overall growth during 2010. For the record local government recruitment in 2010 was:

Leeds MDC	785
Bradford MDC	420
Sheffield CC	372
Rotherham MBC	247
Barnsley MBC	216
Kirklees MDC	189
Calderdale MDC	101
Doncaster MBC	96
Derbyshire CC	67
Wakefield DC	41
City of York	22
Craven DC	15

Overall local authority recruitment was significantly up on 2009.

Equal Pay Campaign

We continue to campaign for pay equality and to organise and recruit on this key issue. We have taken a robust approach on equal pay claims with councils in the region reaching satisfactory negotiated settlements for mainly women members in York, Barnsley, Wakefield, Bradford, Kirklees and Calderdale on the back of a vigorous litigation/organising strategy.

In Leeds City Council the newly elected Labour council, replacing a discredited Liberal/Tory coalition took immediate steps to reverse the coalition's no negotiation stance in the face of and on the eve of a six week employment tribunal involving 4,500 GMB claimants. A satisfactory negotiated settlement is being finalised.

Further equality based litigation and organising campaigns are being put in place within the region in response to some council's misguided reaction to the government cuts programme. Councils are implementing measures such as incremental progression freezes which even their own equality impact assessments show to be discriminatory in that they adversely and disproportionately impact on women and ethnic minorities.

Local Government Contractors

We have continued to map and better organise contractors within the region. We have created a contractors branch, grown our reps in contractor companies, identified lead officers and reps who report to the core group and campaigned on issues across Chartwells, Kier, Mitie, Sodhexo, ISS and others.

Schools Support Staff

Over the last academic year we recruited 1402 school based members. Our schools membership density has reach 35%. We have just short of 9,000 school based members.

Our school support staff forum has gone from strength to strength meeting bi-monthly and regularly attracting 30 plus school based reps. Minutes and campaign documents are produced as a result and this has led to high profile regional campaigns on assaults on staff, administering medicines in schools and anti-academies. Although the number of schools opting to become academies in the region is relatively low we have engaged with all schools in the region with the 'health warning' and with all staff in each of these schools which have opted to go down the academy route.

Southern Cross

We have recruited 331 members during 2010. Our Southern Cross membership density is currently 47%. This compares to a density of 8% in May 2006. We have mapped every home in the region, grown our reps within the company, established a regional Southern Cross reps committee which meets regularly and drives our campaigning strategy in the region. We have an active Southern Cross branch with a membership of 956.

During the recent pay campaign we conducted, met and balloted every home in the region. We secured a 50% turnout and a massive mandate for strike action.

We continue to campaign for decent terms and conditions for this beleaguered group of members.

NHS

We have 2,221 members in the NHS within the region. During 2010 we recruited 420 new members. Since our last congress there have been many changes to the NHS as the intentions of the Conservative government begin to emerge. It is clear that they are in the process of asset stripping the best and most profitable sections of the NHS in preparation for privatisation.

Kirklees District Community Health which covers Kirklees, Calderdale, Huddersfield and Dewsbury, has recently submitted a bid to the Strategic Health Authority to become a Social Enterprise. The bid will be formally accepted early in February. This will mean that community nursing and care services will by the end of March begin the transfer of services to the private sector. This will be done via two G.P. consortiums. The first of which will be the North Kirklees Health Alliance which will include 31 G.P. practices. The second will include 42 G.P. practices with 1005 sign up by G.P.'s across the area with one commissioning board in place to oversee the enterprise. All 'provider services' will go and staff will transfer under TUPE arrangements. There is no guarantee that following the transfer staff will retain their current terms and conditions of employment.

We are advised that in the future, the G.P. consortium will probably look for the cheapest way to provide services and there is no guarantee that nursing care will not be transferred again to a private health care provider. Contracts to care going to the lowest bidder without consideration to patients or the staff who will provide that care. It is also apparent that hospitals are reviewing the length of time patients stay in hospital and how quickly they can be discharged with care provided in the community. They will give no guarantees for job security. We are clearly on our way back to the Thatcher method of 'don't care in the community.' On a brighter note, we have gained recognition and a written agreement will be signed soon.

North Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and York PCT are in the process of dispersal. They currently provide community nursing and mental health services from South Tees to North Yorkshire, York and Airedale. The nursing services will be divided amongst South Tees hospital, Harrogate hospital, Airedale hospital, York Hospital and Bradford Care Trust. The mental health service currently provided by York and Selby Mental Health Trust are to be merged with Leeds Partnership (mental health) Trust. There will be many redundancies as a result of the merger of community health services and it is not yet clear how many people will lose their jobs. Voluntary redundancies have been accepted and the first group of staff will go at the end of March.

We have gained recognition which will transfer to all hospitals from the 1 April 2011.

Wakefield and Dewsbury Community Health Services are considering Social Enterprise and are in discussion with commissioners. We await further news. Castleford hospital has merged services with Mid Yorkshire hospitals and recognition under TUPE has been requested.

Throughout the NHS and despite the lie from David Cameron to 'protect the NHS', each hospital across the region has been forced to make 'efficiency savings' of between £11 million to £15 million this year

with more to be saved next year. Job losses, down banding, ward closures, reducing or cancelling cataract, hip and knee operations and none emergency operations are the first to go. We are already seeing people laying on trolleys waiting for beds. In Barnsley hospital a patient waited 19 hours on a trolley for a bed over a weekend.

At Leeds the staff are exhausted and distressed. They are at the point where they cannot physically do any more. They are in the disgraceful position, due to staff shortages, of having to provide only the very basics to patients. They have a deficit of £59 million which will get worse in the coming year.

Rotherham hospital asked full-time officers to attend an emergency meeting where we were asked to accept reductions in pay and terms and conditions of employment in an effort to make further savings. GMB and other trade unions refused to accept their offer and we await the next offer.

Sheffield remains problematic as staff have been told that they have been paid too much for working nights and weekends. It would appear that Unison have agreed to this on behalf of all staff. We have asked to be recognised and need branches to attend Sheffield Trades Council to gather support. We have submitted a TUPE request for recognition to Sheffield Teaching hospitals and await a response.

At Barnsley hospital they have closed wards, reduced beds and down banded highly skilled theatre staff in their efforts to make efficiency savings. GMB are in the process of considering legal challenges and will consult with members on what further action can be taken in the very near future.

Recruitment continues to increase and I place on record my thanks to all NHS reps for their hard work and support.

West Yorkshire Police

West Yorkshire Police as with many public services have already been faced with redundancies and a number of our members are also under further threat of both redundancy and re-structuring of their workplaces. However, in spite of this the convenor, Sandra Berwick and shop stewards continue to work hard to support and retain members and recruit new members and shop stewards.

The branch holds monthly meetings and has a regular attendance of shop stewards. However, we are looking at ways of attracting the wider membership to be involved in these. We are working together to plan visits wherever there are police support staff stationed and will continue this plan throughout 2011.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	16
Organising Officers	4
No. of Branches	102
New Branches	4
Branch Equality Officers	41
Branch Youth Officers	21

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	£2,012.80
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	
Funeral	£33,712.50

4. JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The magazine, as always, proves to be invaluable in terms of highlighting GMB campaigns and success stories to our members. The additional copies supplied are used extensively across the region as a recruitment and organising tool. Each issue sees an influx of new applications to join as a result of the form on the inside back cover.

The 'Getting Organised At Work' members' handbook, which is supplied to all new members and provides information such as building GMB in the workplace, facing workplace issues and GMB's benefits and services, has been re-designed and now looks fresh and vibrant.

The regional website is continually being improved and updated. Press releases, both regionally and nationally, are uploaded on a daily basis as are any other useful literature and materials. Branches are now populating their own page on the site which is used to publicise branch meeting dates and any other events or campaigns which they are holding.

Eye-catching campaign materials and flyers continue to be produced in-house and can be tailor-made to any given campaign with a quick turnaround to ensure momentum, for e.g. the professional drivers' campaign.

Press and media coverage has been extensive over the last 12 months, most notably because of the government cuts – officers and reps have been at the fore when dealing with requests for press interviews and statements.

The region has sponsored several charities and organisations during 2010, which include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope Not Hate • St Gemma's Hospice • Houghton Main Cricket Club • COLSAC • SADACCA • Circus Starr • Heart Research UK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Disabled Workers' Co-operative • The Dr Jackson Cancer Fund • Castleford Tigers • Featherstone Rovers • Wrenthorpe Rangers Junior Football Club • Wisewood Juniors • Comrades of Children Overseas
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5. LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including criminal injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
785	785

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
811	331	2	476 £2,773,358.60	2 £45,194.92	£2,818,553.53
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010			1250		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	165
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Cases in which outcome became known

Total	Rejected	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
191	32	33	3	90 £187,559.71	33 £178,630.00	£697,819.18
Cases outstanding at 31.12..2010			110			

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages / Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010
-	-	-	-

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2010
26	10	44

The legal department is responsible for overseeing the region's comprehensive legal services. Much of the region's legal services are provided by Thompsons Solicitors. The biggest requirement for legal assistance continues to be in the area of personal injury and disease. The Legal Assistance Scheme also includes free legal assistance on work related criminal matters; a road traffic accident scheme; a free will preparation service; discounted rates for family law, probate and conveyancing. Members can access a free 30 minute legal advice session on any other legal question.

Most of the region's employment law work is conducted by the regional GMB legal department, with 'overspill' and, for example, public sector equal pay cases, referred to Thompsons as required. The regional legal department operates a professional and efficient Employment Tribunal casework management system and provides a first class successful service to members. Unfair dismissal claims made up the largest proportion of cases taken in 2009 with other cases taken under a variety of causes including equal pay, race discrimination and age discrimination. Over £200,000 was recovered in compensation for GMB members from Employment Tribunal claims during the course of 2009.

'In house' knowledge and practical experience of handling Employment Tribunal cases is utilised to provide regular employment law training courses as an integral part of the region's training agenda for lay representatives and activists. Empowering workplace representatives is aided by the department providing or arranging a wide range of employment law training. There is a monthly introduction to GMB legal services and a basic employment rights course as part of the induction of new representatives. Training is also provided in a range of employment law topics such as discrimination law, redundancy; and dispute resolution procedures (including the affect of the Employment Act 2009 on handling grievance and disciplinary issues). The region's full-time officers are also kept abreast of new developments in employment law through the use of bulletins and briefings.

6. EQUALITY & INCLUSION

Regional Equality & Inclusion Forum continues to meet regularly and membership is gradually growing. Unfortunately, the meeting planned to take place in December had to be cancelled due to the bad weather. This has been rescheduled to take place on Friday 4th February at the Thompsons offices in Sheffield.

Branch Equality Officers

I am pleased to note that also have a gradual increase in branch equality officers. Steve Wellings has been instrumental in ensuring that the majority of branch reps have attended equality & inclusion training. Steve's branch is in the process of arranging equality reps stage 3 training which will be facilitated by GFTU, and I place on record my thanks to Steve and all branch members for their

continued dedication and hard work in ensuring that the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire regional plan and policy to have an equality & inclusion ambassador in every workplace is beginning to evolve.

Training

We continue to provide training. However, attendance at both stage 1 and stage 2 is sporadic. It is disappointing to report that we have had to cancel training due to lack of candidates. It is important to note that we have over 100 Branches in the region, all of whom are required under rule to ensure that they have branch equality, branch race and women's officers. If branches complied with rule book requirements, then the courses would be over subscribed. The first course this year has been cancelled for the reasons referred to above and it is hoped that this report will remind branches of the necessity for branch equality officers, training and rule book requirements.

Community Participation Project

Work continues to reach under represented areas of our community. We have been instrumental in the work done in Sheffield. GMB is the only trade union that is actively speaking to and organising meetings within communities. We have attended events in Sheffield which have been extremely well received and also raise the profile of GMB and the work we are undertaking.

In Huddersfield, we were invited to attend a Refugees United event which was a great success. A member of the Kurdish community spoke passionately of the lives they had left and the need of help for those who remain. I have worked in Huddersfield with Pedro Fuentes, and Emma Bew. We have put in place a learning centre where all members of the community come to use the laptops, learn and meet. They are all becoming aware of the GMB and how can help at work. I offer thanks to Emma and the LOT team for their hard work in getting the GMB learning centre in place

Union Modernisation Fund

Working with Ann Lafferty, we have managed to secure Union Modernisation Funding for Community Leadership training. The pilot scheme commenced in Leeds on Saturday 29th January and will meet for a further two Saturdays. As this is a very new project, it is not without its hick ups, but judging from the comments already received, I am confident that with some minor adjustments, this will be a great success. The majority of participants were of Asian origin and we identified a number of issues that were the cause of concern for their community in Leeds. We hope to equip them with the skills and knowledge to campaign and resolve the matters of concern.

I intend to ensure that this training is also carried out in the Polish community, the Sheffield community where we have been working for some time, the Chilean community and also to identify Women leaders within communities.

I thank Ann Lafferty for her hard work and guidance and also to Colin Kirkham.

LGBT

Delegates have been nominated to attend the TCU LGBT Conference. We have also participated in the Pride events across the region, which were held in July and August. More recently, I have been asked if GMB would become involved with a campaign to stop homophobia in rugby. This initiative came following a local rugby match where homophobic abuse was rained upon players and members of the public by supporters. GMB will happily support this initiative.

TUC

I have led the Women's Committee for the year and my term of office will end in March. We have worked hard to re-establish the Women's Committee and have recently put in place an action plan for 2011/2012.

TUC Women's conference I am delighted to advise that Diane Wragg will attend as a delegate and Sheila Carter will attend as a visitor. The conference will take place on 8th & 9th March in Eastbourne.

GMB National Equality & Inclusion Forum I am delighted to inform you that Nikki Sharpe and James Stribley were nominated and duly elected onto the National Forum.

I believe that my hard work and commitment are beginning to show good results, but this is just the beginning of a long process. In the words of Nelson Mandella, “the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step”. I hope this report demonstrates that we, in the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region have begun our journey.

Young Members

During the first half of 2010 our anti fascist and anti racist activity continued to be consistent – we got involved in extensive leafleting exercises in the run up to the election and participated in and sponsored Love Music Hate Racism events as well as raising further campaign funds by sending a team of volunteers to the Glastonbury Festival in June – our eighth year running. All other activity however, dwindled dramatically.

A number of attempts were made to convene organising meetings but apologies from across the region led to cancellations and subsequently the committee did not meet at all in 2010 – a special shout out to John Hawksby of York Rowntrees branch for his continued support in trying to get meetings off the ground.

Having had considerable success and having made tremendous progress over the previous three years, we seemed to have ground to halt – essentially this was because key activists moved on to pastures new, left the region, secured new jobs or passed the young members’ age limit and we had not developed a new layer of young members’ to step into their shoes.

The second half of 2010 began very much in the same vein as the first six months of the year with very little to report outside of anti fascist activity. The most notable event during this period was a GMB young member presence at the Leeds Festival, where, in addition to elevating the profile of our organisation, we managed to raise just short of £1500 for future young member supported campaigns.

Our difficulties in motivating young people to get involved and to take a lead in union life continued to frustrate until November when the wave of student demos began. We sent messages of support to a Leeds school students’ collective, visited the Leeds University occupation and demonstrated against Cameron on his visit to Leeds in December – the latter two initiatives orchestrated by young people - and consequently we have forged important new contacts among leading student activists, a number of which have joined GMB.

It is crucial that we link the student campaigns to the rest of this government’s austerity agenda and in doing so create a strong foundation of GMB young activists across colleges, universities and workplaces throughout the region. Showing solidarity with young people and uniting our respective campaigns is the key to growing our organisation and taking on this government. This will be our focus in 2011. The first young members’ organising meeting in a long time is scheduled for 3rd February. Our young members are ready for action.

7. EDUCATION TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses - Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB@Work	9	92	44	136	272
Introduction to GMB (2 days) inc. on-site 2 day	9	81	50	131	262
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	7	73	30	103	515
Branch Officers	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

(b) On Site Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Advanced Health & Safety	1	5		5	5
Consolidation Training	1	7		7	7
Constructive Dismissal Law	1	7	1	8	8
DDA - Disability	1	7	2	9	9
Disciplinary Procedures Best Practise	5	47	16	63	63
Disciplinary & Grievance ACAS ET	3	17	11	28	28
Discrimination Law	1	6		6	6
Environment in the Workplace	1	6	1	7	21
Equality Reps Stge 1	1	6	1	7	21
Equality Reps Stge 2	2	11		11	22
Grievance Procedures Best Practise	5	37	19	56	56
Health & Safety for Officers	2	12	11	33	33
Job Evaluation	1	7	2	9	9
Management Regs & Risk Assessment	4	12	17	29	29
Redundancy	2	11	8	19	19
Safety Reps Regs & Right to Inspect	5	22	22	44	44
Steps to a Greener Workplace	1	5	2	7	7
TUPE	16	11	5	16	16
ULR	3	20	9	29	87
Unfair Dismissal Remedies & Law	1	5	2	7	7
Variation of Contract & Compromise Agreement	1	5	3	8	8
Welfare Benefits	1	16	3	19	19

(c) Health & Safety Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
H&S 3 day	7	76	26	102	306

(d) Other Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GFTU					
Total Courses	45	60	27	87	n/a
Northern College (5 days)					
Practical Employment Law	1	1	1	2	10
Employment Law Update	1	2		2	10
Understanding Pensions	1	1		1	3
Stewards Refresher	1	8	1	9	45
Understanding the DDA	1	5	1	6	18
Branch Secretaries	1	1		1	5

Day to Day Negotiations	1	5		5	25
Greening the Workplace	1	1		1	5

(e) TUC Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Diploma in Employment Law	3	3		3	108
Union Reps Stage 1	2	2		2	24
Health & Safety Stage 1	4	12	3	15	180
Next Steps for Safety Reps	2	2	1	3	36
Stepping Up Advanced Course	3	4	3	7	84
Pensions Champions at work	1	1		1	3
Diploma in Occupational H & S	1	1		1	36
Handling Disciplinarys & Grievances	1	4		2	12
Equality Reps Training	1	1		1	3
COSHH	1	1		1	

The following report covers the period between congress 2010 to Congress 2011 it covers both education and health & safety. Educationally the commencement of the newly elected activists training pathway is to have delivered to them via their organiser initial support training. The region currently has a 99 percent hit rate of delivery of IST. This is a massive achievement and is part of the GMB@Work ethos as outlined at a previous Congress some years ago. The IST platform sets the tone for the follow on education programme that is available to all workplace organisers. The 2 Day GMB@Work course was delivered 9 times in 2010 as it was in 2009, 2008 etc. Attendance levels have remained consistently high, not only at IST, GMB@Work but also the regional follow on modules and advanced courses.

It is felt that this has assisted with the regions organising agenda and its continuous growth throughout 2010. To enable the workplace to become more organised then it is reliant upon well trained and educated postholders to deliver on behalf of members back in the workplace so both initiatives are embedded as one.

8. HEALTH & SAFETY

The Region's Health & Safety Forums continue to be popular with H & S reps attending. Evidence suggests from contact with safety reps that accidents in the workplace continue to be decreasing in numbers due to the hard work and dedication of the trained and educated safety reps. The region re-introduced the regional asbestos register in the month of October and this initiative will be replicated on an annual basis via the regional magazine at a similar period in 2011.

9. POLITICAL

The Con-Dem Government has been in power for almost a year and the worst fears we all had are now being realised. The economy is looking in a bad way and the majority of the public spending cuts are still to be implemented.

The economy contracted by 0.50% for the fourth financial quarter of 2010. The Government have blamed the slump on the bad weather in December but this is not the whole picture. If the weather had not been taken in to consideration the economy would have still ground to a halt.

The regional position is very difficult with the prospect of many Public Service workers losing their jobs.

The GMB are fighting the cuts locally and nationally with many marches and demonstrations. The union is working hard with partners in the TUC and wider Labour movement to convince the public that the cuts are wrong. Many Labour MP's and Councillors are behind the GMB in opposing this economic madness.

The appointment of Ed Balls, the MP for Morley and Rothwell as Shadow Councillor is a move in the right direction. Ed believes that if the deficit is resolved too quickly then there is a serious risk of a double dip recession.

Regionally we are working with the Regional Labour Party and TULO (Trade Union Labour Liaison Organisation) to formulate a regional strategy. The result of this strategy is to target 3 key areas in the forthcoming local elections:

Sheffield

Sheffield is at present a Lib-Dem held Council and the seat of one Mr Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats and also the Deputy Prime Minister.

The aim is to damage the Lib Dems in Sheffield and send the strongest possible message to the Lib Dems that their position of collaboration with the Tories is wrong and disastrous for the region and country.

Leeds

Leeds is a key area for the GMB, we have over 7000 members working in Public Service related jobs in Leeds. We and our colleagues from Unison fought a hard dispute with the former regime of Lib Dems and Tories through the refuse dispute - we must fight hard to give Labour an overall majority in Leeds as the Council is hung with Labour needing the support of two Green Councillors to keep the Tories and Lib Dems out.

York

York is in all out election this time and Labour has only a small majority. York is a small dot of red in a sea of Tory blue in North Yorkshire. It is essential that in a city where the GMB has a large membership that we hold the line.

We now have a strong political team in the region with Pete Davies overseeing the political issues in Sheffield.

Bill Chard is looking after our interests in Leeds and I will continue to co-ordinate the GMB's political interests along with the senior organisers and regional secretary.

If you are not a member of the Labour Party and wish to join at the trade union rate please contact me on 01484 720 088.

(Adopted)

The Report was formally moved and seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Page 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174. All agree to accept? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much.

The Regional Secretary's Report: Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region (pages 157-174) was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I have Standing Orders in the wings waiting to speak to you. Helen and Barry.

STANDING ORDERS REPORT NO. 3.

(Adopted)

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President, Congress, Emergency Motions, the SOC has accepted a further Emergency Motion. This Emergency Motion will be No.3 and is entitled: The Scandal of Care and the Cross we have to Bear – Southern Cross Healthcare and the Disgrace of the Care Industry, standing in the name of the Central Executive Council. The SOC is recommending that this be heard on Monday morning. President, Congress, I move SOC Report No. 3.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. Does Congress agree to accept the report? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much. Thank you, Barry.

Standing Orders Committee Report No. 3 was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: I just have an announcement to make. Some delegates have been asking how much we are charging to use the internet café. I am happy to say it is absolutely free. If you want to go online any time this week, go to the GMB internet café in the Exhibition Area. Okay? Thank you. Don't all speak to me together out there.

Can I now ask the movers of Composite 15, Northern Region to move, South Western to second, Motion 180, Southern Region to move, CEC are asking for reference, Composite 16, Loan Sharking, Birmingham and West Midlands to move, South Western to second.

VAT AND LABOUR PARTY POLICY

COMPOSITE 15

(Covering Motions 178 and 179)

178. LABOUR PARTY MANIFESTO *(South Western Region)*

179. VAT *(Northern Region)*

VAT AND LABOUR PARTY POLICY

Congress notes that the increase of VAT to 20% in 2011 hit businesses and those on low incomes alike, was an economic decision taken by Tory and Liberal Democrat free market thinkers, and needs to be reversed if the UK economy is to be helped on to a sustainable footing, free of market dogma. VAT is a regressive tax that affects the less affluent in society to a far greater extent than it affects the more affluent

This Congress calls on the CEC to use its influence within the Labour Party policy making framework to ensure that the next Labour Party manifesto contains a commitment to rebalance the UK's tax code by drastically reducing VAT. .

This Congress calls on the next Labour Government to give an unequivocal commitment to ensuring that VAT is not used as an economic tool to fill fiscal gaps.

(Carried)

BRO. D. NELSON (Northern): I am a first-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* The increase in VAT to 20% will cost 250,000 jobs. This is according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development; yes, Congress, the HR managers think tank. The ConDems and business attacked the Labour Government's increase in employer National Insurance yet the Personnel Managers Institute calculated the increase cost 75,000 jobs. So, VAT increases hurt the poor and cost jobs. What could be a more regressive tax than VAT. VAT is being used by this coalition to help cut the deficit. The VAT rise has helped push up the price of the most basic essentials and it has led to many businesses shutting down. It will reduce tax revenue, it will stop people from spending, and businesses will sell less. The Labour Party must recognise the progressive Income Tax is the only way a civilised society should operate. The free market dogma of the last 30 years caused the problems that we now have. We should rebalance our economy to ensure that our children's future is a sustainable one. Let the Labour Party pledge to reverse the VAT rise to set this for redistribution through progressive taxes. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. I. BOUNDS (South Western): As my colleague just said, VAT is a regressive tax. The Institute of Fiscal Studies confirmed this in their report published just after George Osborne's emergency Budget. George Osborne did not agree. He tried to tell us that the VAT increase was progressive and more progressive than increasing Income Tax or National Insurance contributions. I suggest that Mr. Osborne uses his billion-dollar fortune to buy a dictionary and look up the definition of "progressive". The Labour Party criticised the increase in VAT. When we were in government we chose not to bring it and we increased Income Tax to 50% rate. If we are still as the Labour Party opposing any VAT increase, then we need to make that part of our manifesto for the next election. In fact, if I had been making this speech tomorrow when I was due to be making it, I would have left the question there for Ed Balls to answer when he speaks to us. Is he going to make it part of our manifesto? Perhaps the President can make sure that that question does get asked of him. We can also try and make that part of the manifesto. The Labour Party is currently going through a review of their policy-making procedures. Please, please, take part, take part so that they listen to us. Our voices are important. Please support this motion. I second. Thank you. *(Applause)*

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT TAX – HOUSING POLICY MOTION 180

180. PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT TAX - HOUSING POLICY

Congress recognises the severe budgetary position currently existing with the UK and the hardship being caused by government policy. Congress strongly opposes the increase in student educational fees and the possible implementation of an alternative, student graduate tax. Congress instructs the GMB leadership to campaign for a property development tax to help relieve the pressure on the government purse. Congress recognises, that in the boom years before the financial banking crisis, a key feature was an unsustainable housing price inflation, which besides very damaging social consequences, led to massive revenues and profits for some ! Congress further recognises the current disparity between the cost of building homes and the market value of such homes, which are still at historically high values. In the pre-crash boom, even many small, one man companies, made 'serious', 'excessive' returns, disproportionate to their skill base, due to the UK housing market. Congress wishes a GMB

lobby of government to impose a Property Development Tax, to recognise the situation within the UK housing market, that allows the generation of 'super' profit. Congress further wishes to see UK housing policy to develop, which breaks the obsession of a house as an investment and not as a home, which should be the priority. Congress wishes any lobby to consider the possible imposition of a retrospective tax, to support the government funds, in view of the vast sums made in the boom years and so alleviating any burden on the less prosperous in our society.

X23 DOVER FERRIES BRANCH
Southern Region

(Referred)

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Good afternoon, brothers and sisters. Congress, we are constantly barraged with news of the budget deficit with the resulting need to cut public expenditure. As we know, there are numerous fairer and more effective ways to create the conditions for economic growth. Amongst these are expanding tax revenues by tackling issues of tax avoidance and imposing a fairer burden on those most able to pay. A large contributor to the global economic crisis of recent years was the availability of cheap credit and the accompanying house price bubble. This benefited property developers and speculators, and to a lesser extent those already on the property ladder. However, the house price bubble and its results were calamitous to the economy, the country and working people. With the need to boost government revenues and ensure the bubble and banking crisis of the recent years is not recreated this motion urges the GMB to lobby for an additional tax on profits derived from property speculation and development. I do not believe the introduction of this tax will hinder future home building. Home building levels are currently at historical lows due to a number of factors; amongst these are low wages, high unemployment, job insecurity, the unavailability of mortgages, and the unwillingness of developers to build unless prices are rising steeply. A paradigm shift is required in our nation's collective mentality to property. Houses are not commodities in which to speculate for profit, they are a basic human need. Congress, please support this motion. I move.

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

The motion was formally seconded.

LOAN SHARKING AND INTEREST RATES

COMPOSITE 16

(Covering Motions 181 and 182)

181. LOAN SHARKING *(South Western Region)*

182. INTEREST RATES PRIVATE FINANCE *(Birmingham & West Midlands Region)*

LOAN SHARKING AND INTEREST RATES

This Congress:

- is concerned over the uncontrolled interest rates charged by some finance companies
- calls on the GMB to support the campaign to end legal loan sharking.

These companies are targeting the low paid and disadvantaged members of our society a large majority who are unable to take advantage of more reasonable loans.

Congress therefore instructs the CEC to vigorously campaign with its entire political links and to:

- link with other like minded organisations to bring into being a law to outlaw all unreasonable rates of interest by all financial institutions.
- place serious consequences both financial and legal on Directors of such companies who abuse their lending rights.

(Carried)

BRO. J. MOORE (Birmingham & West Midlands): I am a first-time speaker and first-time delegate to Congress. *(Applause)* Thanks very much. The loan shark is one of the most grotesque features of modern capitalism and he certainly knows his prey. He preys on normal working class people like you and me. He preys on the low paid, the unemployed, pensioners and students, people who need a few quid to buy a new fridge or a new tele, or something like that, and as if by magic a debt that starts off of just a few pounds can within weeks turn into a debt of hundreds of pounds, or even thousands. It is tantamount to legalised theft. The previous Labour Government and the current ConDem Coalition have failed to end legal loan sharking so, therefore, we are calling on Congress to campaign with other like minded organisations to end this barbaric practice of legal loan sharking. Thanks very much. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. I. BOUNDS (South Western): A few minutes ago when the President told us that these motions were being moved from tomorrow to today, I went on the internet on my phone to have a look for a pay day loan, and a company called wonga.com. You may have heard of them. You have probably seen their adverts on the TV. To try and borrow £150 for a week they will charge you £35 on top, about 4,200% APR. This is legal. This is also a scandal. We should be campaigning to ensure that these loans are no longer available. Interest rates at that level will just cause no end of trouble for our members. We are having public spending cuts squeezing disposable income so people need to have short-term loans available. Those rates, unfortunately, do nothing to benefit them. Please support this motion. I second. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? No? *(Call from floor)* I cannot see you. *(“That’s because I’m so short!”)* Cath, that’s no excuse. You should have been down here. Regional Secretary, 20 quid. *(Cheers/applause)*. First one to date.

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): I just thought if nobody paid them they would go out of business. How about that for a thought?

THE PRESIDENT: I just caught the thoughts of your Regional Secretary: 20 quid. Get down there! Should have thought of that before you came up. Okay, Cath, thank you. Thank you, Bernie.

BRO. B. TAYLOR (CEC, Manufacturing): First of all, we want to support Composite 15 with a statement. Then we are asking Congress to refer Motion 180. Composite 15 covers Motions 178 and 179 which highlight the Government’s

increase in VAT to 20%. This has had a massive impact on low paid workers as well as businesses. The increase affects the least affluent in our society and is ideologically driven by the Tory-led coalition government. The CEC fully supports this composite and will work together with other trade unions and a future Labour government to discuss a substantial reduction in VAT. However, the CEC wish to highlight that having a high rate of VAT on luxury items, which are normally purchased by fat cats who drain our economy, is a progressive policy and should be supported. We think it should be supported by the Labour Party and a wider labour movement. The CEC is supporting Composite 15 with this statement.

The CEC is asking you to refer Motion 180. The motion calls for a property development tax as the motion suggests this tax may ease the pressure on the public purse but it may also constrain the house-building industry which could lead to economic recovery. More research is required on this important subject and the CEC is asking you to refer Motion 180 for this to be carried.

Therefore, the CEC is asking you to support Composite 15 with this statement and to refer Motion 180. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Bernie. Does Northern Region accept the statement? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Is Southern Region prepared to refer?

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Just on Motion 180, we are happy to refer it. It may require some scrutiny. I would just like to make the point, and we have made the point in previous Congresses, I do not believe something that is a fundamental human right and need, living in a decent house, a decent property, should be left to the private sector who are just doing it to profit. I think the state needs to take a lead in this and build decent houses, at decent prices, that are available to all. That is it, really. Thanks. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you colleague. I do not think you will be disappointed with the CEC Report. Congress accept reference? (*Agreed*) Can I now move with the acceptance of the statement from the Northern Region, Composite 15 and Composite 16 to the vote? All those in favour please show? Thank you. Anyone against? Those are carried.

Composite 15 was CARRIED.

Composite 16 was CARRIED.

Motion 180 was REFERRED.

POLITICAL: LABOUR PARTY REFORM

COMPOSITE 17

(Covering Motions 183 and 184)

183. REFORM OF THE LABOUR PARTY (*Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region*)

184. LABOUR PARTY STRUCTURES (*Northern Region*)

LABOUR PARTY REFORM

This Congress calls on the Labour Party to make a complete break with failed Party structures that have become so discredited over the last decade.

If the Labour Party is to reconnect to its members, the trade union movement and communities, it must stop its command and control mania. Congress believes that way of doing politics has long since had its day and that it is about time that those at the top of the Labour Party wake up, smell the coffee and trust local people, rather than Whitehall and the City.

MP's need to integrate with working people and deal with issues that affect us and not, as happened in recent years, give more time and attention to business and the city stock brokers than our own rank and file members.

This Congress agrees to campaign for the Labour Party to go back to basics and to reform the party at grass roots.

(Carried)

SIS. J. JEPSON (Northern): Congress, I stood at this rostrum four years ago here in Brighton seconding a motion on the Labour Party drift to the right warning that if it did not change it would lose members and be beaten by the Tories. However, it is worse, we have been hammered by the ConDems. I am sad to say that what I predicted came true, Labour failed to renew itself in government. Not since the 1830s has a party come to power with the majority that Labour had in 1997. When Labour came in we were feeling relief. We bit our tongues and just were pleased to get rid of the Tories. The Labour Party took the tactics of opposition into government. They became paranoid. They believed in command and control; dissent was brutally dealt with. Labour thought they were invincible. They took us for granted. Labour's policy forum failed to be in touch with party members and betrayed the union members. Consultation papers were put out when the final report had already been written.

Congress, Labour faces the task of renewal. It can only do that if it is serious about open debate. It is one thing to be in a 24-hour media culture but we do not need to be a slave to it. No more of the labour Movement regarded as the scars on the back of the Labour Prime Minister. There are those in the Party who want to break the link with the trade unions. Well, Congress, we formed the Party, not the other way round. Let those of New Labour who want to break the link go and join another party, and that is the polite version. Congress, things can change. Those in power can deliver a new approach, a policy progress that reaches out to us, and a party rule book that is no longer a relic of the 1980s. All these things need to happen if Labour is to regain the trust of its members, its affiliates, and our communities. Remember, keep the red flag flying. Please support. I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. S. WELLINGS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire) in seconding Composite 17 said: Congress, political involvement and engagement are now more than ever crucial to the GMB. Labour was in power for 13 years but trade union involvement has declined. Not all trade union members are interested in politics but many of those who were involved in the past were disillusioned with New Labour. Now we have a Tory government, coalition by name, Tory by nature.

The local elections produced good results for the Labour Party especially in the regionally agreed target areas of Leeds, Sheffield, and York. In Leeds the LibDems were left in shock after losing five seats with Labour taking firm control of the council with a seven seat gain in total. In Sheffield things were even worse for the

LibDems, they lost control of the council, losing nine seats to the Labour Party. This was particularly devastating for the LibDems as Nick Clegg, their leader, is a Sheffield MP. He did not, however, appear on any of their campaign literature. I wonder why. In York the LibDems lost 11 seats, including many senior members of the former leadership, and the council leader, Andrew Walker. The Labour Group leader at only 29 is set to become one of the youngest council leaders in the region. Do not forget, many Labour Party meetings are poorly attended and the attendance of a handful of union members can really influence issues. We believe the time is right for a fresh start. We need to continue and expand with our regional education programme and encourage Labour Party membership. We need branch political officers to coordinate politicians to speak at meetings. We need more trade unionists to become politically active; this includes becoming councillors and MPs.

In my branch, Sheffield S38 Branch, we recently encouraged all 91 branch members to canvass on behalf of our candidates. We had three candidates standing from our branch. We were successful in electing all three new Labour branch councillors. We now have 11 Labour councillors and two MPs in our branch. We subsequently now have a standing item on our branch agenda, which is Councillors Question Time. We have two branch members attending Prime Ministers Questions in October so what we have been doing can only come from the grassroots. We need branches to get involved in the political regional structure and we need to take back our Labour Party; it is not New Labour, it is ours. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Composite 18.

**THE LABOUR PARTY AND TRADE UNION LINKS
COMPOSITE 18
(Covering Motions 185, 186, and 187)**

- 185. TRADE UNION LINK (*Northern Region*)
- 186. COLLABORATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS (*London Region*)
- 187. THE LABOUR PARTY AND TRADE UNIONS (*GMB Scotland*)

THE LABOUR PARTY AND TRADE UNION LINKS

This Congress acknowledges the role played by affiliated trade unions as an integral part of the Labour Party.

Congress notes emphatically that it is the Labour Party's links with the trade union movement which distinguish the Labour Party from other political parties in Britain. Historically, the trade union movement was the leading force in the creation of the Labour Party formed by working people in trade unions. The Labour Party was established as the political wing of the trade union movement.

Throughout the twentieth century affiliated unions provided the bulk of the Labour Party's financial support, as well as campaigning at election time for the election of a Labour government. This Congress notes the efforts and hard work of Full Time and Lay Officials to work with other Trade Unions and the Labour Party for the benefit of our members and the general public.

Careerists and carpetbaggers in the Labour Party are trying to use discussions about how the Labour Party moves forward, to change the dynamic within the Labour movement. This Congress calls on such people to be unmasked, not just for who they are but for what they are,

and calls on the Labour Party to forge a much closer working relationship with the Trade Union movement.

Therefore this Congress condemns those within the Labour movement who wish the link between the Labour Party and the trade union movement to be broken *and* opposes proposals that the role played by trade unions in the Labour Party should be reduced or even scrapped completely. Congress resolves to further strengthen these links with other Trade Unions and the Labour Party.

Congress also singles out for particular condemnation the attacks on the link between the trade unions and the Labour Party which are voiced by newspapers which called for a vote for the Tories or the Lib Dems in the 2010 general election. The mass media, especially those which openly back the Tories or the Lib Dems, should have no say in how the labour movement conducts its internal affairs.

Congress therefore commits the GMB to campaigning for:

- Defence of the organisational links between affiliated unions and the Labour Party.
- A greater say for affiliated unions in the decision-making process regarding the adoption of Labour Party policies.
- The restoration of the right of all CLPs and affiliated unions to submit motions to Labour Party national conference.

(Carried)

SIS. S. MOTHERWELL (GMB Scotland): First-time delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* President, Congress, the role played by affiliated trade unions is an integral part of the Labour Party. Historically, the trade union Movement was the leading force in the creation of the Labour Party and throughout the 20th century affiliated trade unions have provided the bulk of the Labour Party's financial support, as well as campaigning at election time for the election of a Labour government. It is this crucial link with the trade union Movement which distinguishes the Labour Party from other political parties in Britain. Therefore, we must oppose proposals that the role played by trade unions in the Labour Party should be reduced or scrapped. The Labour Party was formed by working people in the trade union Movement and proposals to scrap this role will weaken the voice and strength of the labour Movement in political spheres.

As a wave of Thatcher's children sweep and destroy all that we fought for, the links between the trade unions and the Labour Party need to be defended and strengthened. In particular, we saw the attacks during 2010 General Election by the right-wing media who were attacking the links between the labour Movement and the Labour Party. The GMB needs to be campaigning for the defence of the organisational links between affiliated unions and the Labour Party and a greater say for the affiliated unions in the decision-making process, and GMB needs to be campaigning for the restoration of the right of all CLPs and affiliated unions to submit motions to Labour Party National Conference. Please support. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done. Secunder? Hello, worthy president. *(Applause)*

BRO. B. HUGHES (Northern): See, I was right on the mark. I did not want my Regional Secretary to get fined because he owes us 20 quid from last week, so if he was fined today little hopes of getting it back.

THE PRESIDENT: He owes 20 quid from last year.

BRO. B. HUGHES (Northern): Yes, you are right. I remember. Anyhow, let's get on with the business.

THE PRESIDENT: All right, Billy, worthy president.

BRO. B. HUGHES (Northern): Worthy President, MBE.

THE PRESIDENT: And to you. (*Applause*)

BRO. B. HUGHES (Northern) Worthy President, the Labour Party and the trade union links. In Southport 2010 we dealt with MPs' expenses. Today we deal with those people who have used the trade union Movement to further their own political ambitions. Then they have the nerve to advocate breaking the links with the trade union Movement. Now, I have been a trade unionist for the last 60-odd years; mind, I joined when I was very young! I am proud of that and I am proud of the Northern Region where I come from. I am proud of the links that we have with our MPS, our councillors, and the Labour Party in the whole of the Northern Region. I am proud of that.

Then these so-called MPs want to break that link, they want to break the support, and they want to break the comradeship. They say, "Don't do as I do, do as I say." Well, Billy says, on your bike. That is how we got into the mess with the expenses. We do not want careerists or carpetbaggers running our party. It is our party, for the people, by the people, and long may it continue. We want Labour MPs to represent our people, our philosophies, our values, our way of life. Congress, if they want a third way, a big society, or be a slave to the market, do not come to us with a flag of convenience. I get sick of people telling me about living in the past. Look where it has got us, cosying up to business people, Murdoch, and Cool Britannia. Where has it got us? They cannot wait to stick the knife in when the going gets tough.

So, Congress, who do we trust? Who do we trust? We cannot trust Cameron because he has more broken plates than a Greek wedding. We cannot trust about-turn Clegg; he has turned about more times than the guard outside Buckingham Palace. Now they tell me he is flexing his muscles. It is a good job because, come the day, it'll take him some time to get a seat on the 27 bus, never mind in Parliament. (*Applause*) I am afraid we have to take the matter in our own hands and fight those who do not want to have any more to do with us. Ferret them out, name them and shame them, as we did in the past. We did it. We did it in the past and we have to continue doing it. We will decide who represents our people. That is what we do, it is in our blood, it is in our hearts, and it is our birthright. Let's strengthen the links, not weaken them. Let's make sure the Labour Party remains our party. Thank you very much, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Billy. London, priority in debate.

BRO. G. DOUCE (London) President, Congress, I am pleased that the earlier political statement was accepted. I am an example of this in action. I started as my GMB Branch Youth Officer and they nominated me to become the local party youth officer, and from there with the support of my London Region colleagues I am now the youngest councillor on Waveney District Council. (*Applause*) There are another three GMB councillors there too. Enough about that, though.

Sadly, I also was not surprised to hear about Motion 18 earlier with our colleagues from Yorkshire and North Derbyshire, and their experiences with other trade unions. In my branch we have several workplaces where at least two different unions have seemingly gone out of their way to undermine the work of the GMB. I think it is time we should strengthen our links with the Labour Party and, hopefully, other unions will do the same. We may then end up singing from the same hymn sheet because sometimes, quite frankly, I wonder if we are even singing from the same book. Let's do what we do well, GMB taking the lead. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congratulations.

SIS. N. REDHEAD (Midland & East Coast Region): President, Congress, I was surprised when I read this motion because I thought, surely we are doing this already. If you heard Andy speaking earlier when he gave the CEC's political statement you will know that the GMB is very politically active nationally, regionally, and locally. Then I looked again at the motion and I noticed that it says, "This congress calls upon the GMB and the Trade Union Movement to seek urgent dialogue with the NEC of the Labour Party with the objective of continuing and enhancing the historical relationship between these organisations."

Here is the history part. The Labour Party was formed at the beginning of the 20th century, created out of great economic and social depression by socialists and trade unionists, a tailor-made political party for the working people. The trade union Movement was an important part of the Party's success; in fact, one of the key players in its creation was our very own Will Thorne (who, as you may all know, founded the GMB). Over the years the relationship between the Labour Party and the trade union Movement has had its ups and downs. The ups were when trade unionists like Ernest Bevin entered into a Labour government that created the NHS and the welfare state. The downs were in the late 1970s and the winter of discontent allowing the Tories to win the 1979 General Election and for the party to remain in power for 18 years, giving the Thatcher government the power to restrict trade unions' fundamental rights through legislation.

The trade union Movement has received bad press over the last 35 years. Even when Labour ceased power in 1997 under Tony Blair the relationship between the two organisations was never the same as in the party's earlier hay-day. One thing is certain, when the Tories are in power then it is time for the trade union Movement and the Labour Party to unite. Today we have a coalition government led by the Tories. They intend to stay in power for the full term; that is another four years of social and economic misery. We have already seen what they can do, slashing schools, libraries, public services in health, education, emergency services, the Armed Forces, slashing jobs, and attacking the elderly and the vulnerable, and demolishing the welfare state and our beloved NHS.

It is paramount that we now join forces with the Labour Party to stop the rot and get the Tories out. The country's future depends on it. I suppose there was a need for this motion but it is not just about us being more politically active, because in times like these there will always be something more that we can do. This motion calls for the Labour Party to stand together again with us and the whole of the trade union and labour Movement in the fight to stop the ConDem Tory Government and stop them from demolishing everything that we hold so dear. The time is now, Congress. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

SIS. H. EWAN (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, and delegates, the downfall of the trade unions was as a result of the Tory Party with Margaret Thatcher in office privatising and giving the right to buy - what happened to those who could not afford to buy - ignoring social state and taking away trade union rights, and when Tony Blair came into office that did not really bridge the gap. Now the Tories are back in again it is important that trade unions continue to work together with the Labour Party to get the Tory Government out. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

**POLITICAL: DEMOCRACY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES
MOTION 199**

199. FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES

This Congress calls on the Government to restrict the donations that businesses and rich individuals give to political parties.

SELLAFIELD INDUSTRIAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. B. ASHWORTH (Northern): First-time delegate. *(Applause)* Congress, it is apparent that British politics has now become open for sale to business and the rich. Firstly, we have had MPs regulating themselves, asking no questions over their expenses and, surprisingly, not raising concerns about the claims. From this it is only a small step to the culture where it allows rich individuals and businesses to buy influence. Since 2001 the Tories have spent millions mainly in marginal seats. Lord Ashcroft and others have sought to buy the electorate. Thankfully, this has not occurred and despite this the British electorate is not for sale. Yet politics in the UK has become the personal plaything of non tax-paying non-doms and tax-avoiding big companies.

Congress, we expect this from the Tories, it is in their genes, but we do not expect the same from the Labour Party. We do not expect the Labour Party to accept the same patronage. Yet the Labour Party has accepted funds from these sources. Congress, in the debate about funding of politics the trades unions have been pilloried by the Tories, the Liberal Democrats, and their friends in the press, and shockingly even some in the Labour Party, but the trade union Movement is proud of its Labour links. The trade union Movement started the Labour Party, the union Movement is transparent, the union Movement complies with the laws, and the union Movement pays its taxes. We do not have dealings with rich individuals so we call upon the Government to restrict the amount of money that can be paid by individuals and big

business so that our political system can become fair and our system will not be tainted by dodgy money. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder.

SIS. L. AVERILL (Northern): Congress, at the last election the Tories spent massively. In the more marginal seats in the Northern Region the Tories spend hundreds of thousands of pounds. They did not get this money from fundraising dinners and raffles, they got this kind of money from non-doms, rich individuals, and business. You have to wonder why they gave their money: was it to avoid tax, was it because they wanted to meet David Cameron, or was it because they wanted something? Well, Congress, whatever the reason, as the saying goes, there is no such thing as a free lunch. When Lord Ashcroft of Belize was giving money to the Tories William Hague took him on foreign trips. Unelected non-doms were effectively influencing Tory foreign policy. Congress, this sort of influence is a disgrace. It is bad for politics, and it certainly turns people away from voting. Congress, such influence should be restricted. If non-doms want to give money, give it to charity. We do not want your money in our political system. Please support. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

SELF-GOVERNING/ADMINISTERING PARISH COUNCILS MOTION 203

203. SELF-GOVERNING/ADMINISTERING PARISH COUNCILS

This Congress condemns the implementation of abolishing some Town Councils, in order to set up smaller Parish Councils who may be unable to be effective due to insufficient resources.

This is having a detrimental impact upon our members who work for the Town Councils and then find themselves being 'divided' up between two or three or more Parish Councils, who will be unable to deliver any level of service within the tiny budgets they are allocated.

BRISTOL PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
South Western Region

(Carried)

SIS. G. WINTER (South Western): First-time Congress delegate, first-time speaker. *(Applause)* President, Congress, we would like to highlight the plight of some town councils who have fallen foul of the new communities and governance legislation which has been enacted by many Tory and LibDem unitary councils in order to dismantle Labour town councils.

One example occurred in the South Western Region whereby around 7% of the population voted in a local town council ballot to determine whether or not to stay with the town council structure covering three parishes under the community governance review. The ballot paper was confusing in that there was a series of questions requiring completion that many voters were misled into thinking they only had to answer the first question: "Do you want to retain the town council or do you support individual parish council set-up?" The result from the electorate was resounding support to retain the town council. The result was then taken to the full

council meeting of the Tory-run local unitary council and despite numerous opposing statements in support of the town council the vote was carried by the Tories and LibDems to create three parish councils.

The three parish councils came into being on 6th May 2011 and there has been absolute mayhem with staff left not knowing how they are going to deliver services, the unitary council becoming interim employers, and staff being split physically by having to move from the town hall to other work locations. The ground staff are now working from one parish council that is billing the other two for work on the same basis as when they were working for the town council. This will last for a further one year at which time the staff may lose their jobs due to lack of funding. The same size or slightly smaller budget has now to be divided between three parish councils in most instances paying three times for the same service provision, enquiries, complaints, and equipment. How is this value for money?

Add to the pot just a few days after the local elections a local resident, a doctor, was photographed by one of our members carrying out some ground maintenance work as she does not consider the workers should be paid when people like her are available to do the same work as volunteers. She actually told our member she thought he was overpaid on £7.50 an hour. One of the parishes in Tory control has already stated they do not need any staff as they have a volunteer workforce. To finish it off the unitary authority have been quoted as stating they will loan grounds equipment to volunteer workers. We would hope this is an isolated case but are fearful this is just the start of Cameron and Clegg's people power, which is a thin disguise to get rid of public services as quickly as possible at the expense of our members.

Congress, I would ask you to condemn this totally inefficient way of providing public services to local people. Welcome to Cameron and Clegg's big society. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Glenda. Secunder. Formally. Thank you.

The Motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debates?

BRO. B. GUNN (North West & Irish): President, I support all of the motions but in particular I want to speak in support of Composite 17. President, you more than most are aware of the very long campaign, and eventually successful campaign, to achieve Labour Party membership in Northern Ireland. You will also be aware that we now have a very active and successful CLP in which GMB members are very much at the fore and play a very active role. The last piece of the jigsaw for us is the right for the CLP to be able to put up candidates, and can I ask of our NEC reps to lend their support when this issue comes before you in the near future. Following the rule amendment which gave us the right for individual membership, as I say we have built up the CLP. We are now in a position to take that final step to put up candidates in forthcoming elections. We are electorally building from the grassroots and have built from the grassroots. We want to continue to do that and to play our part, hopefully, in the return in the near future of a Labour government. Thank you, President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Bob, what is the membership now?

BRO. B. GUNN (North West & Irish): Four hundred, plus.

THE PRESIDENT: You have made great strides. Thank you, Bob, and yes, we will. My goodness, Ian, I thought you were asleep!

BRO. I. LOWES (North West & Irish): No, no, I am still alive. President, Congress, I welcome both Composite 17 and Composite 18 but I think we need to understand how the Labour Party got to where it is. When the likes of Blair and Mandelson were creating New Labour and abandoning socialist principles, ditching Clause 4, and riding roughshod over the constitution, who allowed them to do it? It was the trade unions, us included. When those of us in the Party, or not in the Party but in the trade unions were arguing against the creation of New Labour and its policies, we were branded as dinosaurs. I am afraid we have been proved right and they have been proved wrong. It is working class people who are now paying the price for the failed policies of New Labour. If New Labour is dead, then we need to ensure that it is never resurrected. We need to re-establish our principles, we need to reopen the debate on bringing back Clause 4 and abolishing anti-trade union laws, and we need to shift the balance in favour of working class people and not the rich and privileged. I support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Ian, you are going to like that report, too, when it comes. You will be up there like a rabbit. Anyone else? No? Can I call Gerry Ferguson to reply on behalf of the CEC? The Special Report is being printed right now. Thank you, Gerry.

BRO. G. FERGUSON (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, the CEC is supporting Composite 18 and Motion 203, but with a qualification for both. Composite 18 covers Motions 185, 186, and 187, and calls for stronger links between the trade union Movement and the Labour Party, something I believe all of us support and wish to defend vigorously. The composite also calls for trade unions to have a greater say in the development of Labour Party policy and the restoration of the right for both trade unions and Labour Party members from constituencies to submit motions to the Labour Party Annual Conference. The qualification for these composites is that a motion can already be submitted to the Labour Party and become Labour Party policy. This was changed at Conference 2010.

Motion 203 condemns the abolishing of town councils to set up smaller parish councils. Parish councils may be left at the reorganisation with limited resources in some cases. GMB supports the principle of local decisions being taken at local level but if the size of the representing body is too small services may suffer and this must be avoided at all cost. The CEC is asking for you to support 203 with the following qualification: that the amalgamation or splitting of parish, town, district, county, or regional councils be dealt with on a case by case basis followed by local discussion.

Therefore, Congress, please support Composite 18, Motion 203, with the said qualifications I have outlined. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gerry. Can I now ask GMB Scotland, do they accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Agreed. Thank you, Harry. Can I ask the South Western Region if they accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you, Sheila. Therefore, Congress, I will put Composite 17, Composite 18, Motion 188, Motion 199, and

Motion 203, to the vote. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried. Thank you.

Composite 17 was CARRIED.

Composite 18 was CARRIED.

Motion 188 was CARRIED.

Motion 199 was CARRIED.

Motion 203 was CARRIED.

SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL MOTION 232

232. A FAIR, OBJECTIVE PRESS

This Congress notes that, with a few notable exceptions, the press has never showed support to the Labour and Trade Union Movement. Over the past 30 years or so, this has changed from simple opposition to vitriolic and personal attacks. At the same time, the press support for the Tory Party, especially its right wing elements, has become more pronounced and sycophantic.

A free independent press, with objective reporting and presenting a plurality of views, is an essential part of a democratic society. However, the British press is not objective, nor does it cover a wide range of views. Unlike the trade unions it vilifies, the press is self regulated. To redress this imbalance, Congress calls for:

1. Replacement of the press complaints commission with a genuinely independent body, with powers to enforce proper redress for misreporting
2. An automatic right of reply for individuals and organisations
3. Access to the press for all political parties, except fascists, to allow for a wide range of views to be aired and debated.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, back at the 1982 Labour Party Young Socialists Conference I called for the nationalisation under workers control and management of the press and media. Nearly 30 years later I am older and probably no wiser, and although this motion suggests a little mellower the sentiments are exactly the same because the situation is exactly the same. Pick up any newspaper, wade through all the pap and non-news, and what is left: all too often anti-progressive diatribe with no attempt to engage in balanced debate. With few notable exceptions, how many journalists dare to challenge the status quo? How many dare to challenge the dominance of wealth and privilege? If they were to do so, how many of those reports would actually be printed, and I do not mean the report into what does or does not go on in certain bedrooms.

As ownership of the press has become more and more restricted, the press has in general become more right-wing and reactionary but don't ever think there was a golden age of objective reporting. Lord Beaverbrook said it all: what is the point in owning a newspaper if you are not going to use it for propaganda. From the Zinoviev

letter in the 1920s to modern day personal attacks, the majority of the press has always denigrated and lied about Labour and trade union Movements. Comrades, you are probably all waiting for me to launch into an attack on Rupert Murdoch. All I will say is that this is the owner of the racist, sexist, and homophobic scum. This is the man who has employed such paragons of virtue and objectivity as Andy Gray, Richard Keys, Andy Coulson and Kelvin Mackenzie. Need I say more? With such a record what does it say about Murdoch and his values, and with the way he always tried to act as kingmaker for presidents and prime ministers, it is no wonder that back in the 1930s somebody as right-wing as Stanley Baldwin could say of the press barons that they were like harlots, enjoying power without responsibility.

What happens when the press does get caught out? We always have recourse to the Press Complaints Commission. What does the PCC do: six months down the line, if it decides in your favour, in a font that requires a magnifying glass to see there may be an apology saying, no offence was intended, yet that damage has already been done. What is the PCC? It is the press sitting in judgement of the press, a voluntary body with no legal powers. That is why we need to reform the system, not to restrict press freedom but to increase access and to have healthy, wide-ranging debate.

There may be some of you sitting there who feel a bit uneasy about the call to prevent fascist access to the press. You may argue that everyone should have the right to air their views no matter how objectionable. I am not clever enough to engage in philosophical debate so I will just say this: why should we give press access to those holding the beliefs that led to the gas chambers, to the Blitz, to the line of war graves stretching from North Africa to Norway, from the Atlantic to the Volga, why should those degenerates have the right to peddle their obscene philosophy of barbarism and death?

Comrades, freedom of the press does not mean the freedom to lie and distort. The press should reflect a pluralistic Britain, not the narrow views of the rich and powerful. Support this motion, weaken the power of the press barons, widen access to the press, and strengthen democracy. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

BRO. J. JACKSON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire) seconding the motion said: First-time speaker, first-time delegate. (*Applause*) Congress, the labour Movement has always been up against it where the press is concerned. Historically, press barons like Lord Beaverbrook of Daily Mail infamy have hated trade unions and their allies but since Margaret Thatcher declared a class war against the trade unions the Tory press have been brutal to any working class organisation. The Murdoch press have led this attack. Any workers involved in industrial action have been condemned without exception. In the Yorkshire region during the victorious Ben strike the press were particularly nasty. On many occasions the press personalise issues concentrating on individuals, not issues. Once the individual is identified, the soc-called free press go for the individual in an out of control feeding frenzy. When they get it wrong or on many occasions deliberately get it wrong, there is no meaningful redress or apology. The Press Complaints Commission is a paper tiger with no teeth.

Congress, this injustice has gone on for too long. In a democracy how can this continue? The press must be accountable. The Press Commission must be replaced by a genuinely independent body with powers to sanction deliberate misreporting. Individuals must have a right to have their side of the story reported with equal

coverage to redress the balance. When Labour return to power they must grasp this nettle. Failure to do so will leave the labour Movement open to the continuation of these vicious attacks continuing in perpetuity. We all want a free press but it has to be fair to all. Please support. *(Applause)*

NEWS INTERNATIONAL MOTION 233

233. NEWS INTERNATIONAL

This Congress notes the role of Murdoch's newspapers in the phone tapping scandal, and rejects the whole use of this type of journalism.

It expresses grave concerns of the influence that Murdoch has in the media of this country. This is a man who denounced his Australian Citizenship, and became an American so that he could buy the New York Times.

It further notes that whoever is in number ten Murdoch is one of the first through the door. This raises the question just who really runs Britain.

We therefore ask the CEC to look at ways to expose Murdoch's sinister role in our Political life, and fight to ensure that workers interests come before those of power mad billionaires.

EDMONTON/ENFIELD BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. SMITH (London): Good afternoon, President, Congress. This motion calls for the CEC to look at ways to expose Rupert Murdoch's questionable, some would say sinister, role in our political life and fight to ensure the protection of employees' rights against those of billionaires driven by the pursuit of power and control. In 2006, the first person in this country was charged with illegally tapping into mobile phone messages. Since then the floodgates have opened up. We now see dozens of people bringing claims against News International after reportedly having their privacy invaded. There are claims that more than £1m has been paid out in out-of-court settlements so far. We know that this practice by certain newspapers has been historic and its purpose, of course, has been to discredit or simply to sell newspapers and boost circulation for the wealthy.

What is more concerning, however, is the influence that Mr. Murdoch appears to have on this country's political life. We get a sense of what is going on when our political leaders fly out of the United Kingdom to meet with Mr. Murdoch at election time or to see him come here immediately after an election accessing Number Ten through the back door. This is a bit confusing. The question is this. Are our elections free and fair or are they being manipulated? If Mr. Murdoch acquires 100 percent of BSKyB then this will certainly be trouble for all of us. It is important to have a mix of views in a free press. It is important to have a balanced perspective on developments in the country. We will not get that from a one-dimensional press or media set-up. I would ask, therefore, this Congress to support this motion in addressing some of the concerns I have raised here. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Are you a first-time delegate?

BRO. A. SMITH (London): I was last year.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. I just wondered. Well done.

BRO. V. WEST (London): We have known for decades that News International and its owner, Rupert Murdoch, is no friend of the trade union Movement or the left in general since his days of smashing the print unions at Wapping through his virulent anti-Labour editorials and comments from the '70s right the way through the Thatcher and Major years to the present-day fawning that the Sun and the News of the World give to Cameron and the Tory Government. We know that Murdoch and his media outlets are pushing a free market right-wing agenda. Any organisation that employs Sarah Palin as a political commentator, as Fox News does in the States, is not an organisation that we ought to be seeking to court favour with. However, recent revelations just show how sinister his media operation is. It is not just the illegal phone tapping of celebrities and politicians, it is the cover-up as well that shows how his operation works. First we are told it was a single rogue individual. Now we have had a number of arrests of senior editorial staff and why did Andy Coulson, Cameron's spin doctor, the man who apparently knew nothing, resign? Even more worrying is the fact that the Metropolitan Police appear to have only started to do serious investigations of the issues when forced to do so, and you have to ask why. The mistake of ingratiating yourself before Murdoch eventually comes back to bite you. No more brown-nosing from the left, the Labour Party, or the police. It is time to expose the way that the Murdoch press operate and to realise that it is a multinational media conglomerate that sees itself in many ways above the laws of the land. I second. *(Applause)*

SUPPORTING THE BBC, NOT SKY'S VISUAL MUGGING MOTION 234

234. SUPPORTING THE BBC, NOT SKY'S (VISUAL MUGGING)

This Congress supports the continued financing of the BBC, largely by the licence fee, as an exponent of quality broadcasting in comparison to the repetitive short change drivel served up by the likes of SKY TV which extorts further payments for anything of quality and interest and is largely financed by excessive advertising time, in effect, amounting to visual mugging.

ALFRETON NO.1 BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. D. MILLS (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, "Congress supports the continued financing of the BBC, largely by the licence fee, as an exponent of quality broadcasting in comparison to the repetitive short change drivel served up by the likes of Sky TV which extorts further payments for anything of quality and interest and is largely financed by excessive advertising time, in effect, amounting to visual mugging." The programme repeats are excessive, something they do not tell you about when you sign up to Sky. Mr. Murdoch has a monopoly in the media and at this time of pay cuts and redundancies we ask the GMB to take up with the Government this unjust rip-off of our members and pensioners. Thank you. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

BRO. M. STOKELY (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, and visitors, this is my first Congress. (*Applause*) I am very proud to be stood here today. The BBC, which we pay for through our tax levy, gives us quality broadcasting with unbiased news coverage and without the irritating constant force-fed advertising, and the dull uninteresting programmes that Sky insist on charging us for. Remember, the BBC is accountable to us, the licence payers in contrast to Sky with their extortionate cost of £750 per annum compared to the BBC's £150. In a time of national austerity, with pay cuts and pay freezes, job losses, and low salaries, this is a modern-day corporate mugging. Sky squeezes us for our money and delivers a quality so poor it is an outrage. I ask Congress today to support this motion. I second this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? Come on, Terry, before Paul Hayes is fined another 20 quid!

BRO. T. FLANAGAN (London), Professional Drivers Branch, former chairman of the Chapel of the Sunday Times Night Machine Chapel: Murdoch, I have swapped pleasantries with the little bastard. He is a lovely little character, I have to tell you. Let's look at what this guy does. I could tell you a tale about what he did with the bingo operation. I am not sure whether I should go ahead with it. I am looking to get a nod. Right, Murdoch's paper was the first paper to have a million-pound prize for bingo and when the prize was drawn he said, "Let's have a photograph of the guy or the woman who won it." It was a black person. He said, "I'm not having that on my front page. Let's draw it again." So they drew it again: another black person. "This ain't my lucky night, is it? I'm not having that on my front page." So they drew it for a third time: up came a white person. "That'll do," he said. So he paid the white person out a million quid; the other two people got the million quid but did not get any publicity and had to sign a secrecy arrangement. That is Murdoch. That is the people you are buying newspapers from.

As I walk around this Congress, and previously I have travelled all over the country, I go into the GMB offices and it is not unusual to see copies of The Sun and The Times lying about. Understand who you are buying newspapers from. The guy is a parasite. He has far too much influence. Blair and Brown were brown-nosing him. They used him. It is appalling. We have to do something about this bloody mob. The latest developments: they are actually buying information off the police in London. The implications are quite clear as to what the police and quite clearly what News International are up to. It is about time we got stuck into this mob. The guy is saying nationalise the press; very difficult. I think it is about time the trade union Movement considered having their own publication. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: There is the Morning Star. Thank you, Terry. Anyone else? No? Can I call Roy Dunnett to reply? Roy.

BRO. R. DUNNETT (CEC, Commercial Services): Thanks, Mary. The preamble for Motion 232 reflects the position in regard to the bias against the labour Movement in the national and regional print media. The GMB fully supports the concept of a total freedom for the press, which is one of the hallmarks of a democratic society. Unfortunately, in Britain a biased media is the price we have to pay for this freedom. As the motion rightly points out, this has led to a situation where much of the media has moved from providing news to sensationalism, distortion and downright lies.

When the press maligns individuals and misreports the news, there should be a powerful and independent body that insists on corrections and a right to reply on the same page as the original article. Innocent people's lives have been destroyed, misrepresented and unfairly exposed by sensational press reports. Trade unions are vilified in the interests of media barons who have no interest in fairness or truth. We can all testify to the fact that right-wing press continually misrepresents trade unions and working people. We agree with the proposals in the motion for the replacement of the Press Complaints Commission. The PCC is a toothless self-regulating body which operates in the interests of right-wing press barons, not the public, and its replacement should be a major act for the next Labour government.

Dealing with the print media, I would say from this platform that no trade unionist worth their salt should buy an anti-trade union anti-Labour comic called The Sun. Trade unionists do still buy the damned thing. A daily recommended read for all trade unionists should be the Morning Star. While we may not all agree with what it says, it is the only paper that supports trade unions through thick and thin.

Turning to Motion 234, the GMB strongly supports the principle of a public-funded fair and objective BBC with a remit for quality public service broadcasting supported by a mandatory licence fee. We strongly object to the undermining of this principle by those with vested interests in introducing the disgusting biased Fox News type of broadcasting into the UK. Fox News is yet another product of the Murdoch media empire. Our qualification is that, whilst agreeing with the sentiment of the motion on BSkyB's output, the GMB does not take a position on which media products GMB members or others should subscribe to. We cannot dictate to our members on what they watch.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motion 232 with the statement I have set out and support 234 with the qualification I have just set out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roy. Does Yorkshire Region accept the statement? (*Agreed*) You do. Thank you. Does Midland Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you, Dorothy. Can I now move to 232, 233, and 234, all being supported by the CEC, with those qualifications? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried. Thank you.

Motion 232 was CARRIED.

Motion 233 was CARRIED.

Motion 234 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Can we now move, colleagues, to the next business and as you have been aware I have to welcome someone who has been at the top table with us for some time listening to the debate, and that is Tom Watson, MP. It gives me great pleasure to welcome Tom to Congress. Welcome, Tom. Tom started work as the Youth Student Officer for the Labour Party. That was a long time ago, Tom, wasn't it, dear? Tom also worked for the AEU, now Unite. We won't hold that against him either! There are a few people in the hall who have shared a flat with Tom over the years and they will testify that he never washes – oh, the dishes! (*Laughter*) Tom was elected MP for West Bromwich East in 2001 as a member of the Select Committee for the Media. Tom has led the campaign to uncover the truth about phone-hacking and other dirty tricks used by parts of the newspaper industry. Last

year Tom launched an outspoken attack on the barons of the media. Tom is here to talk about his personal struggle against News International.

Congress, Tom works very closely with the GMB on the NEC and I have had the pleasure of working with Tom on a number of occasions, selection processes and so on. He got into a bit of trouble a few times, let me assure you. I have to say he is extremely supportive of this union and all the unions round that table. Tom, I would like you to address Congress. Thank you. *(Applause)*

ADDRESS TO CONGRESS BY TOM WATSON, MP

TOM WATSON MP: First-time speaker, first-time delegate. *(Applause)* Before I start, is there anyone here from Liverpool? *(Cheers)* Good, I want to talk to you gentlemen later. First, I want to talk to you all about the story of a scandal. It is a scandal that is so bad that even journalists on the Daily Mail are suing Rupert Murdoch for invasion of their privacy. Whilst his papers trot out Tory spin about public sector workers taking sickies, Rupert Murdoch has more reporters on gardening leave than last month's Chelsea Flower Show. His reporters could do a whole set of window boxes in David Cameron's new taxpayer-funded Downing Street kitchen with all the spare time they have helping police with their enquiries.

People say to me, we should also see the good side of News International. Yes, they are a company that is commercially ruthless, politically insolent, corporately thuggish, but say what you want about Rupert Murdoch's empire of tappers and phone-hackers, at least you know they are listening. *(Applause)* How has it got this bad? Why is Murdoch always the first to visit a new Prime Minister in Number Ten? I am sorry to say he did it with Tony Blair. He did it with Gordon Brown. As John Anderson from London Region said, he is always sneaking in the back door when no one is looking. When it comes to secret liaisons in Downing Street, after only a year, David Cameron's back passage is already well worn by Mr. Murdoch. *(Applause)*

Scandal it is, though. It is a scandal that Rupert Murdoch does not want you to hear about. It is a story of a giant criminal enterprise; the story of powerful forces involved in a cover-up. It is the story of how people in one of the largest media conglomerates in the world systematically conspired to illegally, secretly, covertly, invade the private lives of thousands of British citizens. Police knew about it and did not act. Politicians knew about it and did not speak out. Journalists knew about it and did not report it. Think about that for a moment. If governments supporting newspapers in Syria were discovered to be illegally systematically listening to the phone calls of thousands of Syrian citizens and worse, and the Syrian police knew all about it because they were best buddies with the criminals in question, and all the media knew but reported nothing because they also were up to their elbows, and the politicians knew but were too scared to speak out, if that were Syria William Hague would be calling for sanctions, but because it was the henchmen of Rupert Murdoch that did it to our people in our country, there is a deafening silence from this Government. David Cameron does not have a word to say about the activities of News International.

For better or worse my part in this story began when I resigned as a minister in 2006 after calling on Tony Blair to stand down as Labour leader. I was told then that Rebekah Brooks, then the editor of The Sun, now the Chief Executive of News

International, would never forgive me for what I did to her Tony. They said she would pursue me for the rest of my life. They did. They have. I can tell you from personal experience it is not very nice. When you are faced with that daily fear, you really only have two choices: give in and get out or give as good as you get. So my part in this story is a simple one, when the neighbours complained that this time their bins had also been gone through, my family was at breaking point. And when our 3-year old hid behind the sofa because there was another nasty man at the door, I snapped. I stood down as a minister. I joined the Media Select Committee. I stood up in parliament and for the first time told the truth, the dare not speak his name, that we were scared, that the whole of British politics had been terrified into silence, become complicit in a cover-up of the illegal methods of a corporate beast that was out of control.

The committee began an inquiry into press standards that started to crack open the criminal activities of News International. Glen Mulcare, a convicted criminal investigator for News of the World, hacked phones. He went to jail along with royal correspondent Clive Goodman. News International kept repeating and repeating it was just the work of a single rogue reporter. That was a big fat corporate lie. Our inquiry found company executives guilty of collective amnesia. When others were arrested they dropped that defence, trotting out a new line. They said that they took a zero tolerance approach to wrongdoing yet a judge had accused their chief reporter of blackmail, not moral blackmail, not intellectual blackmail, criminal blackmail. In a judgment, a very senior judge explicitly accused News International's most senior reporter of a serious criminal offence. They did nothing. The police did nothing. We did nothing.

In evidence years ago to a Select Committee, Rebekah Brooks admitted that her papers routinely paid police officers for information, another criminal offence, openly, brazenly, arrogantly admitted to a parliamentary inquiry. She literally believed she could do and say what she liked with no consequences; that she was above the law. At the time, and for many years, they were. On that occasion the police did nothing. Politicians did nothing. It was hardly reported in the rest of the media. Good people stood by and did nothing, and evil prospered.

So, Rupert and James Murdoch want you to believe that this hacking scandal is just about celebrity tittle-tattle. They want you to think it is about Hugh Grant's latest girlfriend. It is not. It is about power. In the end, these stories always are. They hack the phones of their rival papers. They listened in on ministers responsible for media law. They were listening in on the police. They systematically and ruthlessly prosecuted a campaign against their enemies in the trade union Movement and wider labour Movement. Congress, that is why the fight against News International is your fight too.

Sickest of all, when the nation was grieving they tried to hack the phones of the parents of the children who were murdered in Soham. Think about that again for a minute. You probably did not know they targeted the Soham parents. That is because it has hardly been written about in a British newspaper or ever mentioned by a British broadcaster. Imagine what the Tories and the rest of the media would say if it had been the BBC that hacked the Soham families' phones. Imagine the hue and cry, heads would roll, an inquiry would be launched, it would make the front pages of every paper in the country, the individuals concerned would be personally targeted,

their lives laid bare and their careers ended. That is how it works. But instead because it is Murdoch tabloids trashing the grief of these murdered children's parents, we get silence, silence from Cameron, silence from the police, and silence from the rest of the press.

These things are not reported in many other newspapers because even they live in fear of Rupert Murdoch's News International. That is why these things are important to you. News International papers constantly attack public services. All these stories about waste in the public sector, all these attacks on terms and conditions, pensions, bonuses, working hours, they do this because they want to help George Osborne dismantle the public sector as a whole.

The Tories scratch their backs and ignore their criminal activities. Murdoch scratches Osborne's back by supporting his jihad against the public services. This relentless drip, drip, drip, about scroungers and wasters is designed to undermine the work you do to protect our communities. I am sick of being lectured by highly paid right-wing commentators about lazy public sector workers. I have listened to what Rupert Murdoch had to say if he lived in the UK, if he paid his taxes like the rest of us. How dare they attack public sector workers working day in, day out, looking after children in schools, keeping our hospitals clean, mending our streets, emptying our bins. It is the oldest trick in the book, trying to divide workers in different trades and different occupations. But let us tell them what hard work is: it is getting up in all weathers to keep the streets moving, working minimum wage in a school canteen, and walking mile after mile to collect the rubbish. That is why this story is about you.

To my friends in Liverpool, do you buy The Sun? (*No.*) No, I did not think you did. Terry Flanagan was right. But you cannot read The Sun on a bus or in a canteen in Liverpool without someone telling you about the lies they peddled about stealing from the dead at Hillsborough.

It is our job this week to spread the word to other cities and towns. Imagine if every workplace in the country were a Sun-free zone, would Rupert Murdoch wield the power he does if every worker in Britain boycotted The Sun and the News of the World? If they ask you, "Why shouldn't I buy The Sun," tell them this: tell them what their private investigator did to the Soham parents, tell them what they did to Milly Dowler's family, tell them about the lies and the bullying, tell them that in the everyday struggle against injustice and for progress at work if you do not stand for something you will fall for anything.

Congress, the final chapter of this story has not yet been written. Powerful forces are still trying to get the lid back on in this scandal. They are trying to do it before more revelations are made. Help us make sure that the story Rupert Murdoch does not want told is known by every worker and citizen in the land. Thank you. (*Standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Tom, on behalf of our members in the GMB who make these glasses and this, Congress, please accept this with our highest regard. This is the first time a politician has told the real truth when he has come in here. Well done.

Presentation of gift amid applause.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, dear, if I catch you with The Sun in *here* tomorrow morning you are going to be excommunicated out *there*. Colleagues, we come to the next part — we are nearly there, nearly finished — agenda item 17. I will hand over to the Vice President.

PRESENTATION OF THE REGIONAL OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2011.

REGIONAL OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region

Award Winner: Stacie Elson

Stacie was mentioned by the National Organising Team at the Public Service's conference held in Birmingham.

In the report received at Regional Council from Tamworth in the first 6 months of the academic year she recruited over 250 new members.

When representatives in Walsall enrolled on an Employment Law course, Stacie also enrolled but because of 2 Tupe Transfers and a massive restructure within SERCO (company that looks after education in Walsall) withdrew from attending college to focus on ensuring the GMB members were supported through the processes and completed the course in her own time and successfully passed it.

Stacie is always available to members no matter the time of day they need support.

She successfully facilitated equal pay and venues taking on over 70 claims.

She facilitated drop in sessions for members in her own time (weekend) across the borough of Walsall.

London Region

Award Winner: Evelyn Martin

Evelyn Martin, London Region CEC member has been awarded the Exceptional Person of Islington and winner of Employee of the Year for Housing and Adult Staff Awards for 2009/2010. Evelyn was also runner up in the Epic Awards 2010 Rewarding the Exceptional People of Islington Council, Employee of the Year Awards. These awards are in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Islington. The London Regional Committee were aware of Evelyn's continuous concerns and efforts towards the homeless and less fortunate in our Society.

Evelyn's caring nature, commitment and determination in fighting injustice, along with the voluntary time she gives to helping the vulnerable is second to none. Evelyn Martin is a woman of integrity and with her achievements have made the region so very proud.

Midland & East Coast Region

**Award Winner: East Midlands Ambulance Service (GMB EMAS Branch)
(award accepted by Annie Berry on behalf of the Branch)**

The EMAS success story, like many success stories, has come out of adversity.

Old EMAS (Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire) was reconfigured to take in Northants, Lincolnshire and Rutland; making a huge geographical area in 2007. GMB Representatives were a bit thin on the ground, with two stalwarts of GMB, Trev Abrey and Dick Clark taking the lead roles.

Unfortunately, Trev's health caught up with him and he eventually retired from the service. Tragically and quite suddenly, Dick Clark became ill and sadly passed away in early 2008. GMB members were transferred to Mansfield Central Branch (M15) as in interim arrangement and Learoy Fox took on the role as lead GMB Representative on a temporary basis to help out. GMB at EMAS was at an all time low with membership below 200. We had lost two highly experienced and dedicated representatives and the small number of Representatives were left unorganised and isolated.

Regional office reorganised in June 2008 putting Colin Todd as the Officer responsible for the whole of EMAS. The first task was to hold a meeting inviting all the Representatives and to come to an agreement to build a structure of Representatives and a strategy to improve communications. GMB met with HR Management and gained full release for two Representatives, Alan Chetwynd and Dan Ackroyd. This was the key to developing the membership.

Following this we targeted the ambulance stations and systematically visited every station in EMAS; then did it again. Contributions from the Regional Recruitment Team, Branch activists and the EMAS representatives themselves produced immediate results; growth in membership but equally important, growth in representatives. Added to this was the merger of ASU into our ranks, which not only swelled our numbers but gave us some activists in Northants, where we previously had none.

We started to hold Bi-monthly Representatives meetings so issues could be resolved and shared, and promoted our driving ethos as a member-led organisation.

In 2009, Dan Ackroyd was replaced by Annie Berry. After the initial settling in period Annie took on the arduous task of creating a group email for GMB members in each of the five divisions in EMAS. This has been valuable in ensuring our communication with members is regular, relevant and up-to-date.

In April 2010, we signed off a new Partnership Agreement which cemented the facilities we had previously negotiated into it.

In February 2011, the membership moved out of Mansfield Central Branch into the newly formed GMB EMAS Branch, with Branch Officials elected from among the EMAS membership. GMB membership currently stands at 777 members (April 2011) and we now have over 40 GMB representatives.

Northern Region

Award Winner: Carl Lewthwaite

Carl has been a member of the GMB at Sellafield for 10 years he is the "Disability Champion" for the whole of the Sellafield site, he has helped numerous GMB members with many problems to return to work, by either having a phased return to work or obtain a temporary move to more suitable work, he also advises management on making reasonable adjustments to the workload our members are expected to carry out.

North West & Irish Region

Award Winner: **the late Colin Priest, Regional Organiser**

Colin Priest was a totally dedicated Trade Union Officer and committed activist who worked tirelessly for his members and union and the labour movement.

Colin was taken ill and passed away suddenly whilst campaigning for a cause that he felt passionately about and amongst the friends and colleagues who will miss him dearly.

After demonstrating great potential as a steward in the Buxton Branch, Colin began his career as the youngest ever GMB officer in the old Lancashire Region. In addition to his commitment to the Trade Union movement he also gave a lot of his spare time to his local community and with the support of his wife Catherine he became very political active.

Colin had a passionate believe in social equality and justice and believed strongly that through effective campaigning we all could make a difference, but knowing full well to do so, would require sacrifices.

"All of us who knew Colin will have our own memories, of some act of kindness and consideration with which we remember Colin undertaking on our behalf, Colin will be greatly missed by us all and remembered always with love and affection, the GMB Union and its membership have lost a true friend, a supporter, advocate and employee, our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Catherine, his sons Mathew and Daniel"

GMB Scotland

Award Winner: **Jackie Faulds**

Jackie's commitment and dedication to his Union and in particular his members within the National Health Services is legendary.

Jackie has also been outstanding in his support for Scottish Labour during the recent Scottish Parliament election as he has done on every occasion.

This Award is a fitting tribute to a valued member of GMB Scotland's team of activists. To Jackie the GMB has been and continues to be his lifetimes work.

Southern Region

Award Winner: **Roger (Podge) Eldridge**

Podge joined GMB (GMWU) in January 1958 and immediately became actively involved. He worked for Southampton Borough Council and was the Convenor, Shop Steward.

He sat on the Mid Southern Provincial Council for a number of years, first taking up this position back in the 70's.

He was appointed to the Industrial Tribunal Panel in Southampton in 1989 and has been reappointed every 2 years since, and he encourages our members to seek appointment as it is very interesting and rewarding sitting on the bench.

In 1989, Podge was seconded to Hampshire County Council for the Competitive Tendering Exercise and he successfully secured all the in house tenders in Southampton.

Podge served a period of time on Regional Council in the 1970's, and was again re-elected to Council in 1995, remaining on Council up until his resignation/retirement earlier this year.

He became Branch Secretary of the S37 Southampton Branch in 2004, only recently stepping down from this position.

Podge sat on the Southern Regional Committee from 2005 until 2009, when he decided to wind down ready for retirement.

Podge has always been politically active, and was on the Executive of the Southampton Trades Council and has been the GMB delegate to the Southampton West CLP for many years. He had always assisted in the arrangements for providing food and refreshments for GMB members attending the Tolpuddle Festival each year, but when Podge became Branch Secretary of the S37 Southampton Branch in 2004, he took over the role of being the main organiser for the Southern Region.

Finally, he is also a School/College governor for the last 17 years a position from where he can help our members in schools and Local Authorities.

South Western Region

Award Winner: Phil Hughes

Bro. Phil Hughes commenced employment with Ifor Williams Trailers in April 1994 as a welder and first became involved with the GMB in 2000 when the Union recruited the employees into membership; Phil became the first GMB Shop Steward.

Phil went on to become Branch Secretary in 2005 and has dealt with most issues and problems that can arise from TUPE, redundancies, pensions, applications for derecognition and countless attempts to undermine the Union.

The last attempt at deregulation was in 2009 when a small number of employees made an application to the CAC for deregulation. As soon as this was brought to Phil's attention he organised a petition around the workforce in support of the Union and over 50% signed in less than an hour, stopping the derecognition application at the first step.

Phil and his fellow Trade Unionists are a credit to the GMB and he fully deserves the Regional Outstanding Achievement Award on behalf of the South Western Region.

Well done Phil!

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

**Award Winners: Eric Batty, Lee Simpson and Amanda Horsman
Rotherham MBC Convenor Team, R62 Rotherham General**

Campaigning

Although the branch is primarily a local authority branch, wherever possible the private sector membership are encouraged to have a claim on the table with their employer in every workplace. Details of the regular campaigns are put on the branch website and sent out to members by text. Whenever an issue is identified it is rigorously and enthusiastically followed up at every opportunity. At least four times a year, depending on the time of year, the branch have a theme supported by posters, e.g. a Christmas Scrooge campaign which is aligned to whatever is happening in the authority and elsewhere.

Communications

The branch convenors and workplace organisers have purchased and wear corporate clothing with GMB logos at every opportunity so no-one is in any doubt who they are when visiting members and workplaces which consists of suits, polo shirts and outerwear. The branch were also one of the first in the region to set up and run their own website at <http://www.gmb-rotherham.org/index.php> which lists all current campaigns. Together with a mass text

messaging facility there is no doubt that GMB members are kept well informed, usually well ahead of other organisations much to their despair.

Contact

On every visit to a workplace, employees are approached and engaged in conversation about the union's work with a view to recruiting non members, encouraging new workplace organisers who then map the workplace and identify workplace issues. Convenors regularly receive a list of starters and leavers from the authority which is actively followed up by appropriate and innovative recruitment and retention initiatives. There is a branch office with voicemail when they are out and about and emails have a unique out of office response.

Credibility

As much servicing of members as possible is done at local level with training given to new workplace organisers. Members know who to contact where they work by way of regular newsletters, up to date notice boards and the branch website and text messaging service.

Commitment

Every visit to a workplace is followed up with mapping leading to a local action plan worked on by the convenor team. The names of Eric, Lee and Amanda, along with all GMB reps is well known within the authority. Regular road shows are put on around the patch utilising a GMB branded gazebo equipped with a full range of GMB promo material supported by Eric's infamous GMB liveried camper van. Potential members know exactly what they can expect from the branch, where GMB stand on the issues and regularly ask what they can do to assist.

Summary

Online joining can be achieved through the branch website which can be monitored at a touch to see when and where people are joining from. This enables convenors to identify hotspots and so be proactive. The website also has a members' area only page full of information.

As a result of all the above, the convenor team supported by the branch are steadily increasing membership despite the austerity measures. 388 new members were recruited during 2010 together with 10 new workplace organisers. The convenor team have visited other branches and regional council to outline what works for them and have generously offered to help and assist colleagues where they can.

Without doubt, the convenor team lead the way in promoting GMB@Work in the region and are fully deserving of this nomination.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now go on to the presentation of the Regional Outstanding Achievement Awards. Just note that all regional winners will be lined up in the following regional order on the ramp and as their names are read out they will collect their pen set from Mary, then move across the stage. The Outstanding Achievement Award Vase is on display at the front. There will be a photo session where every individual winner will have their photograph taken, plus a group shot, after the end of the session.

We start off with Birmingham & West Midlands Region, Stacie Elson. (*Applause*) London Region, Evelyn Martin. (*Applause*) Midland & East Coast Region, East Midlands Ambulance Service (GMB EMAS Branch) and the award will be collected by Annie Berry on behalf of the Branch. (*Applause*) North West & Irish Region, the late Colin Priest, Regional Organiser, and Colin's wife, Catherine, is here to collect the award. (*Applause*) Northern Region, Carl Lewthwaite. (*Applause*) GMB Scotland, Jackie Faulds. (*Applause*) Southern Region, Roger Eldridge. (*Applause*) South Western Region, Phil Hughes. (*Applause*) Yorkshire & North Derbyshire

Region, The Kerry May Award for Outstanding Contribution to GMB@WORK, Eric Batty, Lee Simpson, and Amanda Horsman from Rotherham MBC Convenor Team. (*Applause*)

Colleagues, could we just thank the members of Dartington Glass, Southern Region, for supplying the crystal vases for the second year. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I would respectfully ask you to just hang on for a few minutes. We will close Congress but I do think it is very important that the General Secretary makes a statement.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Colleagues, you have seen and rightly applauded worthy winners, worthy winners. It would be impossible to let this moment pass without mentioning the nomination from the Liverpool, North Wales, and Irish Region, now known as the North West Region, I beg your pardon. They nominated Colin Priest, one of theirs and one of ours. His wife and his son just came up on the stage to accept the award. Colin died tragically on the day of the great demonstration in London doing what he believed in, fighting and standing up and campaigning for people. It is a great honour to have his family here and the Executive decided unanimously on Saturday night that we are going to nominate Colin for the Gold Badge of the TUC as a mark of respect that right to the end he was fighting for workers. Thank you very much. Could everybody give a round of applause? A well respected and very, very well liked and much missed man. (*Standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Paul. Can I say to all winners, well done to everyone, and of course I do not have to say anything else about Colin. Could I now please remind delegates that tomorrow morning we begin at 9.30 again? See you in the morning, have a good evening, and I will see some of you later. Bye.

Congress adjourned.