

THE 151ST ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS

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Held at:

**The Brighton Centre,
Brighton**

on:

**Sunday, 8th September 2019
Monday, 9th September 2019
Tuesday, 10th September 2019
and
Wednesday, 11th September 2019**

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Congress President:

MARK SERWOTKA

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**PROCEEDINGS — DAY FOUR
(Wednesday, 11th September 2019)**

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FOURTH DAY: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

The President: Can I call Congress to order. You will miss that theme music. There will be CDs available on request after the Congress! Can I start by asking you to join me in thanking the Brighton Youth Orchestra String Ensemble who have been playing for us this morning. *(Applause)* I, again, thank the National Education Union for their sponsorship of Music for Youth and all the performers that we have been listening to this week, who have been very inspiring.

Congress, I mentioned in my opening address, and I just want to say again this morning, that we will all have been horrified to see on our screens pictures of the recent natural disaster in the Bahamas. Hurricane Dorian was mentioned yesterday in the climate crisis debate. Delegates will be aware of the absolute devastation that was caused and can I ask, Congress, in the usual way, to show our solidarity for all of those communities who have been affected and are now seeking to recover.
(Applause)

Congress, I have an update on the business. Yesterday, I was asked if I could take Motion 44, Homophobic and transphobic hate crime, as first business today in the name of the TUC LGBT+ Conference. I have consulted, as I said I would, with the General Purposes Committee and following that the General Council. It is my intention to stick to the agreed protocol and take lost business at the end of this morning's published business. However, Congress, I can tell you that the video presentation from Jacinda Ardern, which we were intending to take, will now not be taken until after Motions 63 and 44. After the video, I will then move to the three

emergency motions, EM1 on HS2, EM2 on the Royal Mail dispute, and EM3. Thank you.

Congress, we start this morning with Section 4 of the General Council Report, Good services, the section on Justice from page 49. I will say a bit more, but first can I ask Congress to welcome Keir Starmer, who is going to address us later on. (*Applause*) I am sure you are all looking forward to hearing from Keir and we are very appreciative of him coming down at this rather quiet time in British politics!

We are going to take a couple of motions first. We will start now with Good services, the section on justice from page 49. I call paragraph 4.7 and Motion 67, Manifesto for justice. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the FDA, seconded by NAPO, and PCS have indicated that they wish to speak. If NAPO and PCS could come down so we can move swiftly, I will call on the FDA to move Motion 67.

Manifesto for justice

Dave Penman (*FDA*) moved Motion 67. *He said:* Congress, austerity has blighted many communities across the UK where the cuts in public spending has resulted in benefits freezes, closures of Sure Start centres and a decade of wage stagnation in the public sector. No area of government has been immune and of course this has meant that many vital public services have been damaged, rationed or abandoned altogether. Arguably, though, the area of public service that has faced the largest cut in resources has been justice.

The Ministry of Justice, which is responsible for courts and prisons, has seen its budget cut by 40% in a decade, resulting in dwindling prisoner numbers and court closures. Former Director of Public Prosecutions, Lord Macdonald, said that although public services suffered from swingeing cuts, legal services were particularly targeted because it was felt that the public would not defend legal services.

Between 2010 and 2015, the number of prosecutors in the CPS fell by 30%. At the same time, workloads soared with an explosion in digital media, vital to both prosecution and defence. A single mobile phone can contain the equivalent of 20,000 pages of information, all of which may need to be examined. In a survey of our prosecutor members in the CPS, over 90% reported that they regularly worked excessive hours and nearly 80% had worked whilst on sick leave. At the same time, legal aid rates have been cut by over 40% and have pushed vulnerable people from the courts.

This has created what the Law Society calls "legal aid deserts", parts of England and Wales where no provision can be found. Rates for criminal legal aid work are now so low that young lawyers no longer see it as a viable career. There are now counties in England and Wales where there are no criminal duty solicitors under the age of 35 and a growing number with no lawyers younger than 50. Whilst pay has fallen by 20% in real terms for lawyers in the CPS, in the wider legal sector, wages are booming. If we are to maintain criminal law as an attractive proposition, we have to ensure that it offers competitive pay and fees for both prosecution and defence.

Our system of justice is at breaking point so as we welcome the recent announcement of £85 million in funding for the CPS, it is a sticking plaster on a patient that needs --

and forgive me, President, for the metaphor -- open-heart surgery. Twenty thousand new police officers might make a good headline, but justice does not end at the point of arrest. Criminals need to be prosecuted. They need to have a meaningful defence. Courts need to be able to sit and try the cases and prisons need to be able to accommodate prisoners.

Congress, I am sure you will recognise the need for a fully-funded justice system because these are not just issues that affect our members. They affect everyone living in England and Wales. They affect your family, your friends, your colleagues and they affect our nation's future.

Justice has many meanings. It can mean the administration of law. It can mean, in its simplest terms, fairness. Ensuring justice is delivered equally and fairly should be the objective of any government, but is it enough to convince this Government? If not, here is one final thought. Our call for a properly-funded justice system may soon be a matter of self-interest for our new Prime Minister. If, as he is promising to do, he refuses to obey the law, if he decides to die in a ditch and frustrate the will of Parliament, then very soon he may well experience the harsh realities of his resource-starved justice system. So, come on Boris, if you do not want to be banged up for months in the Scrubs waiting on a court listing, invest in the justice system as a whole and not just in a few bribes intended to win an election. Congress, I move.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Dave. I call on NAPO. Maybe the POA will want to speak and tell us what they will have in store for him when he gets inside! *(Laughter)*

Katie Lomas (NAP0) seconded Motion 67. *She said:* I am a first-time delegate and first-time speaker at Congress. *(Applause)* Our criminal justice system is in the grip of a crisis that deepens daily. The system is a complex one which starts with the police, but is made up of many parts. It cannot be fixed just by bribing the public with the promise of 20,000 extra police officers, as welcome as they might be.

NAP0 members work in criminal and family courts and witness daily the chaos caused by a lack of investment and budget cuts. We also suffer the folly of new ways of working being used to save money or plug gaps left by the failure to recruit and retain workers in the system. Budget cuts and the failed privatisation of probation led to a new way of working that replaced properly prepared and researched court reports with verbally delivered reports, based on little more than a hurried chat in a corridor. This, added to the serious reductions in legal aid and lower fees for those prosecuting and defending cases, causes scenes of chaos in court and ultimately leads to justice not being done for anyone.

New ways of working, such as digital justice, can be a problem. This is not always because the theory is wrong. Often genuine efforts are being made to improve things. It is just that choices made in implementing ideas are always, always based on lowest cost, not best quality.

Congress, you cannot get justice on the cheap. In probation, we fight daily to move to ways of working that are better for our clients and the communities we serve. Right now, we are in dispute with the Ministry of Justice, who are introducing a new way of working in prisons. Yet again, this is all about saving money. Ignoring years of research on best practice, the employer is introducing the Offender Management in

Custody model that we continue to fight, along with our brothers and sisters in the POA.

It cannot be right that workers in court are prevented from providing the professional service they are trained to deliver. It cannot be right that the Ministry of Justice continues to introduce new ways of working that fail to improve services and succeed in cutting costs in the short term. It cannot be right that proper justice has become a commodity purchased by the rich and out of reach for most in our society. Our justice system is complex and quirky. It is made up of many interlinking parts. We need investment in all of those parts to ensure that the system works properly for everyone in society. Congress, support this motion. Rescue our criminal justice service.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Katie. That was a fantastic first speech. Can I ask PCS to speak next and then we will move to the vote.

Steven Swainston (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 67. *He said:* Congress, new figures from the Office of National Statistics show that crime has risen between March 2015 and March 2019 by over 43%, with violent crime up 115%, sexual crime up 83% and knife crime up by 77%.

As crime rises and prosecutions become ever more complex, staffing numbers have continued to be reduced. Ten years ago, the CPS employed 8,300 full-time equivalent staff and that number is now 5,590, a reduction of over 32%. Alison Saunders, the previous Director of Public Prosecutions, warned just prior to her departure from the Department that they had been badly affected by staffing cuts and increases in

pressure on staff in the vital services which they deliver. The CPS continues to claim that the Department is over-resourced and admin-great, a claim that PCS completely disputes. Our view is exactly the opposite. The Department is understaffed in the admin grades and we need to continue to support the campaign for more resources to support the lawyers and prosecutors in cases. Continuing issues around recruitment and retention must be addressed and addressing the continuing pay restraint and annual awards that do not keep pace with the increased cost of living is a priority for PCS members.

Since 2012, £950 million has been cut each year from the legal aid budget. During that time, the number of people receiving legal aid fell by 80%. Huge cuts have been made to legal aid and have had a devastating impact on the most vulnerable in society. The number of disabled benefit claimants granted legal aid in welfare dispute cases has plummeted by 99% since 2011, at a time when it has been needed most due to the Government's policies on sanctions, work capability assessments and universal credit.

PCS firmly believes that cuts to legal aid, charging for tribunals and increases to fees should be reversed and that adequate funding must be put in place to ensure that all citizens can access the justice system, not just those who have access to funds. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Steve. There is no opposition so I am going to move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 67 please show? Thank you. Are there any against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 67 was CARRIED*

The President: I now call Composite Motion 15, Public inquiry into TR; stop government recidivism on rehabilitation. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by NAPO and seconded by UNISON.

Public inquiry into TR; stop government recidivism on rehabilitation

Ian Lawrence (*NAPO*) moved Composite Motion 15. *He said:* It is great to be able to mark a victory as we are near the end of Congress -- and, goodness knows, we do not get too many of those -- for May 16th was a pivotal date in the campaign by NAPO and our sister unions, UNISON and the GMB, to overturn the Government's plans to re-marketise probation and basically sell it all off again.

The Government u-turned that day because of that campaign and the pressure we applied and it represented a significant victory against Chris Grayling's flagship privatisation policy. The decision to transfer 80% of probation's work into the state-run National Probation Service from the failing 20 community rehabilitation companies was obviously welcome but, no, it is not the end of the campaign. The proposal to contract out the remaining 20% of work in the form of interventions and programmes is reckless and represents a clear and present danger to community safety.

So the message from this Congress must remain. We will not be satisfied until we see a return of all of probation's work under state ownership and control. (*Applause*) There has not been the luxury to celebrate the victory because the probation unions are now engaged in detailed negotiations on arrangements and terms of the staff

transfer for offender management work, firstly in Wales, scheduled for December, and the rest of that work by April 2021, by which time these useless privateers will be consigned to the rubbish bin of history.

There are serious questions that remain unanswered and it was great to hear from Laura Pidcock yesterday about the pledge to hold a public inquiry into exclusion lists on trade unionists, but we are demanding that the same should apply to the disastrous Transforming Rehabilitation programme, which has sent hundreds of millions of pounds into black holes, still unaccounted for.

We have our own long list of shame when it comes to this programme of people who need to be made accountable. There are no prizes for guessing who tops that list: Chris ("I've got no ferries, I've not got a clue") Grayling is right up there. There is former chief of the probation service, Michael Spurr, who wrote a quite laughable letter. We cannot release it as it is still under legal privilege, but I will do. It is actually sick, not laughable. He said, "TR will be all right on the night. It is no more unsafe than the current system." Five years on, we have seen a 43% spike in serious further offences across England and Wales, usually involving grievous crime against the person, often involving rape, and increasingly murder. Safe? You are having a laugh, Michael. You should come to Parliament and tell them what you said and you should be made accountable.

He was not the only liar. There are plenty more. There are ministers like Liz Truss to whom we, on record, said, "One of your contractors, Working Links, is unsafe. They have a supervision model that is costing lives." We were not listened to. Safe? Try telling that to brave campaigning families like the Marshalls in Wales, whose son

Connor was brutally murdered by a perpetrator who, because of the operational model that Working Links had implemented, could only be contacted maybe by phone (if he happened to have his mobile on) so that people could track his whereabouts. There is an inquest at large on that so obviously I cannot say too much, but they do not think it is safe. However, credit to that family, President, they do not want retribution against staff; they want Working Links called to account for their sins. The directors of Working Links, who scuttled away just before that miserable company went into administration, need to be brought to account. They need to answer questions and they need to explain to families like the Marshalls what went wrong.

So there is a long list and we need that public inquiry, as and when we have a Labour government, to establish it. We need to know where the money has gone. We need to know who profited from Transforming Rehabilitation and who should pay compensation to the families of victims such as I have described.

Congress, yes, we will mark this victory for now, but we want total victory. Total victory is within our grasp if we maintain that campaign. I want this Congress to send a loud message to the incoming Labour government: we will not rest until we achieve total reunification. I move. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Ian, and well done to everybody at NAPO for the campaign. Can I call on UNISON to second.

Debi Potter (*UNISON*) seconded the Composite Motion 15. *She said:* "We are proud to second this motion from our sister trade union in probation, NAPO, because together we fought the disastrous Grayling reforms to the probation service. The vital

work the probation service does often goes unnoticed because when it is done well, it can be invisible, but when probation work is weakened or broken up, it becomes everyone's problem.

We tried to warn Chris Grayling at the time that it would end in disaster, but of course he did not listen. We argued that a split between the NPS and the CRCs would damage the whole service. We said that introducing payment by results would damage it too. We warned that privatisation would lead to hidden costs and suck public money into private profit.

We feared that the real prize would be paid by probation staff, service users and local communities. Congress, it gives me no pleasure to say we were proved right. As a result of Grayling's reforms, victims of crime were forgotten, staff found themselves working to artificial targets where expertise came last and profit came first. An award-winning service was broken apart and left in a critical condition.

Searching criticisms were made by the National Audit Office, the Public Accounts Committee and Her Majesty's Inspectorate. MPs decided that they were "unconvinced that Transforming Rehabilitation could ever deliver an effective or viable probation service." Even this Tory Government were forced to listen and reverse course.

But, Congress, our campaign is not over. We need all parts of the probation service brought into public service, including unpaid work and intervention. We need to make probation a locally-run, locally-accountable service again. Congress, probation at its best was always a local service, working to local priorities with local partners.

This was pulled apart by Government centralisation. This has stifled local responsiveness and damaged partnership working. Congress, please support this motion so that dedicated probation staff and their unions can rebuild our probation service. I second. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Debi, and to all at UNISON and to all our probation workers. Can I now call for the vote on Composite Motion 15. Would all those in favour please show? Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Composite Motion 15 was CARRIED*

The President: Congress, it is now my great pleasure for me to introduce Keir Starmer QC, MP for Holborn and St. Pancras, and Shadow Secretary of State for exiting the European Union.

Over the past few years, Keir has played a leading role in stopping a damaging Tory Brexit that would devastate working people and communities. He has repeatedly and forensically held a Tory Government to account, both inside Parliament and out, revealing their total lack of Brexit planning and exposing the impact that it would have on all of our members. Over the past few weeks, he and his Labour Party colleagues have led efforts to try to stop the Government from crashing the UK out of Europe with no deal and I am sure we are going to hear a bit more about that from him in a minute.

Keir, you are very welcome and I would invite you to address Congress and for Congress to give him a welcome. *(Applause)*

**Address by Keir Starmer MP - Shadow Secretary of State for
exiting the European Union**

Keir Starmer MP: Thank you very much, Congress, for inviting me to be with you this morning. Mark, thank you for your introduction and, Frances, thank you for the invite to be with you here today. I am very glad I came in early so that I could hear those motions about criminal justice because I would like to record my thanks to the unions, the delegates and all their members for the work that they do in criminal justice against the odds, with savage cuts and privatisation, so thank you for everything that you are doing. *(Applause)*

I was obviously particularly interested in the comments about why Boris Johnson might be interested in criminal justice should he decide to break the law in weeks to come. Normally, I am a supporter of early release and rehabilitation, but I might have to think again about that if he finds himself in that position.

Congress, what a time for us to be meeting here: Parliament closed down, a general election on the horizon and at least 21 former Tory MPs with a new-found interest in employment law, looking through unfair dismissal provisions. I hope that they are in a trade union! Truth be told, we have had a hell of a week. I know that over the last three years, you have often heard the phrase, "It is a big week in politics" or, "It is a crunch week." I was chuckling with someone this morning over breakfast about it, that we laugh and say, "It is a big week coming up", but what a week we have just had in politics. There have been six big votes. It is the first votes that Boris Johnson has ever faced. He became Prime Minister back in July, we had the summer recess and

then he had to come back and face Parliament properly for the first time. There were six big votes and he got defeated six times. How good does it feel, Congress: Jeremy Corbyn 6; Boris Johnson 0. What a week! (*Applause*)

He thought he would corner us and ended up cornered. He is actually making Theresa May look like a winner. This is quite something. I want to thank the trades union Movement for the support that you have given to Jeremy, to me and to the Labour Party not just in the last week, important though that was, but over the three years that we have been fighting on these issues: on issues such as citizens' rights where we started that battle in July 2016, just a month after the referendum, the battle for citizens' rights; and the battle for employment rights and making sure that our rights do not lag behind those across Europe, a really important principle.

It was the fight to make sure that there was a deal that we could put forward that would protect jobs and the economy, the fight to expose Theresa May's deal for what it was and, of course, most recently, the fight against No Deal. Thank you for your support. Thank you for the way that we have been able to work together. It has made us so much stronger in each of those battles. We could have ducked them, but we did not and we stood up for working people together. The way we have done that, with the Labour Party hand in hand with the trades union Movement, with the TUC, is the way we should work. It is the way we should work in Opposition and it is the way we will work in power. (*Applause*)

Congress, look what we are up against: Johnson as Prime Minister. That used to be a joke, but now it is reality. He is a man of no conviction with no real regard for the truth, who has installed a right-wing Cabinet -- make no mistake about that -- and who

is now openly talking about breaking the law. This is a Tory Party which has given up on being a serious party of government and it is setting about tearing up the values that bind us together, both as a trades union Movement and a Labour Movement, but actually across the country. The values they are tearing up are of tolerance, with a Prime Minister who favours division over unity -- his whole strategy is based on division -- dignity, equality, our values, internationalism and solidarity. These mean nothing to Johnson. He is taking us down a right-wing Trumpian road and this is a serious moment for everybody in our Movement and across the country because everybody has to ask themselves at this moment: which side are you on in this battle?

That is why we worked so hard over the summer on a cross-party basis, with Jeremy Corbyn bringing together the Opposition leaders. This was not easy, but over the summer we brought everybody together on to one page, with one plan, with collective intent, purpose and discipline. The intent and the purpose was to stop a no-deal Brexit and to pass a law to do that and we succeeded in that last week.

So the position now is that if no-deal is passed -- and it looks unlikely -- and if Boris Johnson cannot get Parliament to vote for no deal -- and that does not seem likely -- he must seek an extension to Article 50. He does not have authority to crash us out of the EU on 31st October without a

deal. That is a huge collective coming together across Parliament to achieve that.

(Applause)

Do not underestimate the role that Jeremy Corbyn played in bringing those forces together and instilling that collective way to go forward at this political moment. Our legal advice is clear: the Prime Minister must comply with the law. That should not

really be an issue. The fact we are even talking about it speaks volumes. So what I say to the Prime Minister is this: accept that Parliament has spoken; accept you do not have a mandate for a no-deal Brexit and follow the law. It should not have taken an Act of Parliament to spell all that out. It should not have required us to take control of proceedings and pass a law. It should not have required a humble address which was buried years ago, without anybody paying much attention to it, or ancient procedures.

The fact that we have had to resort to those processes tells you everything you need to know about Boris Johnson. He thought that by announcing that he would shut down Parliament he would stop us and he would prevent us from doing what we have done. Actually, it had the opposite effect. I can tell you that over the summer, there were lots of discussions about precisely when we should take the necessary steps, with some people saying week 1 (which was me) and others saying, no, week 2, week 3, and we had a proper full discussion, as you would expect. The moment that Boris Johnson then said that he was shutting down Parliament, everybody agreed that we would do it last week in four days. It was incredible the way that he unified the opposition to himself and caused the very thing he did not want.

He now thinks -- and you saw the scenes earlier this week -- that by shutting down Parliament, he will silence us. Nothing could be further from the truth; nothing could be further from the truth. Just as we worked during the summer to achieve what we did last week and early this week, we will work each and every day of this shutdown to enforce the law, to defeat Johnson and to bring him down. Prime Minister, you can hide from Parliament all you like, but when you return, we will be ready for you.
(Applause)

Congress, do not mistake the seriousness of the situation that we are in. Your General Council Statement was explicit: "No deal would be a disaster for working people." It cuts right across the very rights and protections that mean so much to this Movement. UK workers and trade unions would be unable to enforce their rights, those rights that are enforced on a daily basis for you and your members and so many other people. Employment rights, environmental rights and consumer rights will begin to lag behind the standards across Europe and there will be no level playing field and we know where that leads. That leads to deregulation, division and exploitation. That is exactly where that leads.

Of course, there are wider consequences of a no-deal Brexit, well-known in this room -- the devastation to the manufacturing sector. The motor industry is only one example of that, but it is a good example of that. I have spent a lot of time with Unite colleagues and GMB colleagues going around the plants, looking at the processes and taking great pride in the work that your members are doing in manufacturing. I say great pride because my dad was toolmaker and we lived through the doldrums of manufacturing so for me to see the revival is really incredible. Then you have the threat of a no-deal Brexit which will take an axe to it. That is unforgivable for everybody who has done so much to revive manufacturing in this country. *(Applause)*

We are all familiar with the statements from Nissan, Honda, Ford and Vauxhall and worried they are -- not just for those working in those particular firms but, of course, all the other businesses that are supplying them that are there as part of the chain of activity for manufacturing.

Look at the damage it would do to the NHS and medicine supply. Are we really, in the 21st century, talking about an inability to get essential medicines into our country because of a no-deal Brexit? I went to Bristol just two weeks ago to talk to a company there and the staff that supply medical equipment from abroad into this country. I said, "What has the Government told you to do in the event of a no-deal Brexit?" because the equipment they are using is time-sensitive. They said, "They said they would try to book it on to a ferry." That was the response to getting medicines into our country.

Look at the squeeze that it will put on incomes and food prices -- Johnson wants to pretend that will not happen, but Gove has been forced into admitting it will -- and then look at our ports and borders. Again, I have been to those ports and borders many, many times, in particular Dover, where many of our union members are working really hard on a very efficient system there where lorries go through Dover in about two minutes. The Yellowhammer documents showed that on a worse case scenario, two minutes could become two days -- two days at Dover!

Now, the implications are there in the Yellowhammer documents. The Government knows all this. Andrea Leadsom, apparently this morning, has been saying, "We know it, but it may be best if the public don't know. They don't need to be troubled by knowing the details of what has happened." They know and they are spending millions of pounds telling the country to get ready for a no-deal Brexit, but they will not tell us what to get ready for because they will not disclose the documents. We will see about that; we will see about that.

I think the only conclusion that we can draw from the Government's behaviour is that

they think this is a price worth paying and they think that the damage to working people is collateral damage that they are perfectly happy to sustain.

Do not be fooled by Johnson saying, "We are making progress in the negotiations." They have had seven weeks to make progress in the negotiations and they have not even put any proposals forward. They have not even put any proposals on the table. The Irish Government tell us that. The EU countries tell us that. Even Amber Rudd has admitted that they are not doing any work on really getting a deal.

Boris Johnson was challenged to come up with a proposal within 30 days. He said it is blistering, but he would do it. Well, I remind him that it is now day 21 of the 30 days and he has not put a proposal on the table. The excuses tell their own story. There are some real corkers in the last week that we have had from the Government: "The reason we have not put in any proposals is because during the summer, we thought you might do something in Parliament in September so we thought it best not to put any proposals up." Come on! Then there was the one last week: "We have not put any proposals forward because we were scared they might leak." Seriously? They said, "We are not putting any proposals in in case they leak and therefore there will not be any proposals put forward." This is the "dog ate my homework" excuse.

The truth is I do not think Johnson has the first idea how to negotiate a deal that would actually protect jobs and rights. Worse than that, I do not think he has got any interest in negotiating a deal that would protect jobs and rights. For the Tories, that is not what Brexit is about. If you have not seen it, just take a look at the letter that Johnson wrote to President Tusk in August. He said in that letter: "UK laws and regulations will potentially diverge from the EU" and then the sentence: "That is the point of our exit." That tells us everything. What he wants is to cut off the level

playing field, particularly in workplace rights, to diverge, to separate, to have different standards here to Europe, to deregulate our economy. If there was ever any need for evidence of the plan to deregulate, it is in that letter. That, for Johnson, is the purpose of Brexit, to deregulate and to privatise public services. This is not, for him, a technical question of whether you are in or out of the EU: it is an ideological question of whether you deregulate and privatise your public services. (*Applause*)

Labour and the trades union Movement have never accepted that, Congress, and we never will so we have to put a stop to this. We have beaten them in Parliament. We are going to have to beat them at the ballot box. That battle is coming. It cannot, and it should not, be put off. We need a Labour Government. We need a radical Labour Government. We need a Government capable of pulling us back from the no-deal brink and transforming our society and public services. So, it will be a crucial election: on the one hand, no deal and all those consequences; on the other hand, to rebuild our country, our economy, our society and our communities.

Now, I know Brexit will be a central issue in that election and I know we need to draw a line under the wasted Tory years and clear up the Tory mess. People are yearning, yearning, to move on and we have got to find a way to do so. Congress, a referendum is the only way forward. (*Applause*) Jeremy was right to say at this Congress yesterday that an incoming Labour Government will commit to a referendum. We have to break the impasse; we have to find a way forward. A referendum is the only way. Of course, Remain should, and will be, on the ballot paper along with a credible option to leave. We need to ask people a basic question: after three years of failure by this Government, do you want to leave on the terms on offer or would you rather remain?

Then we need to move on to the wider issues, the wider issues that got us into politics, the wider issues that are actually behind the reason you are here today. We spend too little on those issues, the big issues that really concern people up and down the country, the injustices. I cannot list them all, but there are broken housing markets across the country. We have got to do something about that injustice. There are four million children in poverty, a collapsing health and care system, insecure work, the erosion of trade union rights, deepening inequality (whether that is income, wealth, health or opportunity), the fact that life expectancy is going down in this country in the 21st century in some areas is shocking, and, of course, the climate emergency. Those are the issues that have had almost no attention in the last three years as all the time and energy has been sucked up by Brexit.

We have got to settle the Brexit issue. We can only do that with a referendum, but we have got to move on to these wider issues that, in my view, were right there behind the very decision that was made in 2016: injustices left lingering for years, which an incoming Government has absolutely got to get to terms with.

I am really glad that they have been centre stage in this Congress. I think that what Jeremy said in his speech yesterday about a radical change to workplace rights was so needed. You could feel the energy from afar. I watched the speech. You could feel the response of Congress and the response across the country -- this yearning for a bigger change about the things that really matter beyond Brexit.

So we are going to rise to that challenge. The Tories are not going to rise to that challenge. They caused the problems in the first place. So when an election comes,

with the trades union Movement behind us, we can, and we must, defeat Johnson, defeat his politics and install a truly radical Labour government. Thank you very much, Congress. *(Applause and a standing ovation)*

The President: Thank you very much. We want you to stay there, Keir, because you are a lawyer and you can think on your feet! We just wanted you to know that as you were speaking there, the BBC News is reporting that Scotland's highest court has ruled the Parliamentary suspension unlawful. *(Cheers and applause)*

Keir Starmer: I had better get back to London!

The President: We know you have not got your wig and gown, but we thought we would give you the opportunity to speak in case you had any instant reaction.

Keir Starmer: Will you indulge me for just two or three minutes because it was obvious, I think, to everybody that not only was shutting down Parliament at this crucial time the obviously wrong thing to do as we should be sitting each and every day to solve this crisis, but the Prime Minister was not telling the truth about why he was doing it. *(Applause)*

This is really important. The idea of shutting down Parliament offended people across the country and then they felt that they were not being told the truth. That sums up the man. I am really pleased with this result. I am surprised because for a court to make a declaration like that on an issue like this is a huge thing for us. It vindicates everything we have done last week. I think what I can do, and what others need to do, is to get back to Parliament to see if we cannot open those doors. We

need to get back in and get Boris Johnson back in Parliament so we can hold him properly to account. Thank you, Congress. *(Cheers and applause)*

(Keir Starmer left the conference hall)

The President: I think he has left now. I was only joking -- there has been no such announcement! *(Laughter)* It is on the BBC, do not worry. Congress, I am sure you will all agree that it was very good to hear from Keir. I know he has gone off to see what that announcement means and I am sure he will take with him the excellent welcome that Congress gave him.

We are going to move on now back to the scheduled business as we still have a lot to do. We are turning to Section 5 of the General Council Report, Winning more for workers, the international section from page 67. I call paragraphs 3.7, 5.1, 5.5, 5.6, 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 and Motion 72, ILO campaigning. The General Council supports the motion. It is going to be moved by the NUJ, seconded by the GMB, and then I am going to call Unite and the NASUWT, if they could be ready. It gives me great pleasure to call on the NUJ to move Motion 72.

ILO campaigning

Chris Frost *(National Union of Journalists)* moved Motion 72. *He said:* Is it just another international quango of the sort we hear about all the time that has little effect on our working lives? No, Congress, it is not and it is something that I want to make you think a good deal more about and the important work that it can do.

I would like you to come back 100 years with me in your imaginations. Almost 100 years ago, the Great War finished. Soldiers and sailors are pouring back into the workplaces from an experience that has changed their lives for ever. They are being welcomed back by the women and men who have held the Home Front during that period of terror, horror and fear. They leave behind 17 million dead bodies, people who have sacrificed their lives (willingly or not) in the cause of elitism, nationalism, imperialism and militarism.

Brothers and sisters, it can come as no surprise that those returning from those horrors, from the war to end all wars, actually wanted to change that and find ways of ensuring everlasting global peace. One of the ways in which that was done, almost exactly 100 years ago, on 29th October 1919, was to launch the International Labour Organisation, an international organisation set up to work towards social justice and to promote decent work standards by setting international standards of work to which governments have to apply.

There is a bit more history because its needs were emphasised even more, a mere 20 years later, when the Second World War started and yet more soldiers, sailors and this time airmen flooded back into the country after the war, again with a strong desire for serious social justice. We see some of the effects of that in our country today in things that we applaud at this Congress.

But again, Congress, we now find ourselves at a time of rising right-wing activism and there is evidence of the same themes of nationalism, elitism and imperialism rising throughout people's popular thoughts, evidence of things that are again driving us away from those thoughts of social justice.

So, we are calling for more strength from organisations like the ILO.

International commercial corporations, for instance, have gained even more power than some governments so it is important that the ILO should not just use its power to help set standards for government, but to set standards for corporations. Gender equality and workplace discrimination are very important issues that the ILO should do more to support. Health and safety, perhaps not an issue in 1919 -- if you leave 17 million dead people in your last workplace, it may not be your first thought -- should be central to our workplaces in 2019. It is an outrage that there are still people who go to work and are seriously injured or killed just doing their jobs. It has got to end. Finally, we call on the General Council to campaign with the ILO for action on some of the issues raised in the Global Dialogue Forum 2014, which looked at the media and particularly picked up thoughts about work placements and free work.

Twenty-five years ago, I moved out of newspaper journalism and became a journalism lecturer. I joined UKIP -- it is all fine -- and I taught youngsters who were keen to become journalists, but I had to watch with growing disgust at the way they were treated in the workplace as gradually more and more of them were obliged to take up long periods of unpaid work or internships in order to actually get a job.

Few things in the world of work which, to me, so clearly illustrate the difference between the haves and have-nots is the struggle that my students have to get good decent paid work and the path of the likes of Boris Johnson, signed up as a graduate trainee to *The Times* through family contacts. Well, what a surprise! He was dismissed from the job for making up quotes, but he was instantly snapped up by the *Daily Telegraph* because of contacts through university. My students do not get that

kind of help. They have to get out there and they have to do low-paid work -- work without any pay at all in some instances -- in order to try and build a career in the media.

Congress, we know that you would rather have the ability to do the job in order to get some kind of social justice. It makes for a poorer media and it is damaging to democracy. We need to set standards for internships and the handling of unpaid work that benefit our enthusiastic young people at the start of their careers. Please support, Congress. *(Applause)*

Charles Adje (*GMB*) seconded Motion 72. *He said:* Congress, the challenges we face from exploitation, climate change and poverty are threats to us all and they are linked. Capitalism is global. The biggest threats to working people know no boundaries and have no limits. They do not care what language you speak, your age, your ethnicity or where you live in the world.

Think of the woman in Turkey working her fingers to the bone in sweatshop conditions to produce a T-shirt which is then sold online through retailers like Amazon. It is then picked and packed by a worker in the UK, who is pushed to the edge of their physical limits, walking miles in hot warehouses, going without lunch or toilet breaks to meet the boss's targets. It is then delivered by drivers who work so many hours that no amount of coffee could guarantee that they are safe to drive. This is all for the benefit of their bosses, whose profits are made on the backs of these workers.

The consequences of this rampant capitalism are stamped across the lives of our

global workforce. This cycle is repeated over and over again in different countries with the same result. All of our collective experiences could tell us that the response cannot be left simply in the hands of individual governments. We have seen that Amazon abuses its workforce whilst paying minimal taxes in every country in which it operates. In the US, for the second year in a row, Trump is allowing its CEO, Jeff Bezos, to pay a big fat zero in federal taxes.

This is an outrage. Congress, every single abuse is a product of the failure to redistribute wealth and power to workers, but we are fighting back. The GMB would like to put on record our gratitude for the solidarity shown from sister unions and the TUC to our members at Amazon and we thank Uni Global for their solidarity and support in helping build a global trade union response.

We believe that the only way to change the rules of the game is to stand shoulder to shoulder with our sisters and brothers throughout the world. While the ILO has its centenary this year, there is much to celebrate, but there is much more left to fight for. There has to be a minimum threshold of decency that we will accept as part of our international and human rights and we are going to have to fight all in power to hang on to them. Congress, let us recognise our power as well as our role in the continued fight for global justice and equality. Workers of the world unite! Please support.
(Applause)

Russ Walters (*NASUWT, The Teachers union*) spoke in support of Motion 72. *He said:* The ILO is the only tripartite UN agency with government, employer and worker representatives able to freely and openly debate and create labour standards and policies. Since its creation, the ILO has been an essential institution for

promoting the protection of workers through global social dialogue and standard-setting, but the ILO needs to continue to respond to the change in the world of work. At a time of complex supply chains, insecure jobs, increasing global deregulation of the labour market and millions of people stuck in forced labour, the organisation must extend and expand its scope to be able to effectively defend and extend worker rights, protect against exploitation and slavery, and ensure the freedom to form unions.

At the International Labour Conference this year, we secured, in the centenary declaration, recognition of occupational health and safety as fundamental to decent work and set out a pathway for this to be given formal recognition by the ILO in the framework of ILO fundamental rights, but we now have to push to make that a reality.

More broadly, Congress, the flawed rules of the global economy see working people take home an even smaller share of the wealth they create while corporations have been allowed to extract, exploit and undermine. The ITUC has called for a new social contract and an ILO fit for the 21st century with justice built into the climate and technology transition, with more control for people over their own working time, for fairer wages, including minimum wages on which people can live a decent life, and rights for all workers. In this country, that would include rights for supply teachers and for all those who work on a temporary basis, people highly qualified who were bought cheaply to fill vacancies and dismissed just as cheaply when the time came for the employer to get rid of them. They too need rights in the workplace and, as Jeremy said yesterday, rights for all workers from day one.

They are some of the things that we need to continue to campaign for and to work

towards. Wherever we reside, there is a need for trade unions and trade unions will be the ones who secure these rights. Congress, please support the motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you. Unite.

Taj Salam (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 72. *He said:* Congress, Unite campaigns with the global trades union Movement to secure landmark ILO standards on tackling violence and harassment in our workplaces. That means recognition in that convention of the risk of violence and harassment faced by public-facing workers, from transport workers like me, for hospitality and health workers, that means recognition of racial abuse against black workers, against migrant workers, that means recognition of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crimes, that means recognition of gender-based violence, violence and harassment against women and girls, and the impact of domestic abuse and violence at work. Over 50% of acts of sexual harassment have been reported as being committed by immediate colleagues.

Comrades, we live in turbulent and dangerous times. Across our planet far right and popular forces have as their aim the dismantling of an international rule-based system as borders return and division is there between us. We need to nurture and strengthen our internationalism. As we mark the centenary of ILO we need international standards established, sustained, and defended by international solidarity now more than ever. No child labour, no forced labour, no discrimination, the right to a union, to collective bargaining, and now no violence or harassment, too; these are the core labour standards that protect us all.

It is an outrage that the UK Government continues to undermine these basic labour standards, and we demand that this new violence and harassment convention is ratified as soon as possible. For that, Congress, I believe we need a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour government. Congress, support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Taj, and all our speakers. I put Motion 72 to the vote. All those in favour? Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

* *Motion 72 was CARRIED*

The President: I now move to Motion 73, Justice for Colombia. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the POA, seconded by ASLEF, and then I intend to call CSP, Unite, and NASUWT, if they all come down the front. There has been a lot of unions indicated. I will be able to bring everyone in if we all keep to time, so I am in your hands, Congress, and let's hope we can get everyone to speak. So, the POA to move Motion 73.

Justice for Colombia

Dave Todd (*POA, The professional trade union for prison, correctional and secure psychiatric workers*) moved Motion 73. *He said:* In May 2019 a Justice for Colombia peace delegation visited Cauca in the south west of Colombia. Cauca is often described as the epicentre of the conflict in Colombia. While a predominantly agricultural area, Cauca is also rich in minerals and natural resources. There are also high levels of coca farming, the base ingredient of cocaine. Many local communities are economically dependent on coca as traditional farming has been decimated due to

the lack of infrastructure, rising transport costs, and international trade agreements. Today Cauca is suffering the highest levels of violence in Colombia. According to the Colombian human rights organisations 125 social activists were murdered in Cauca in the three years from 2016 to 2018 making it the country's most dangerous region for social activists. Colombian national indigenous organisations say 36 of their activists have been murdered already in this year in north Cauca. All together 500 social activists have been killed in Colombia since the peace deal was signed in November 2016. In April of this year indigenous and rural communities shut down most of the south west of Colombia when they held weeks of protests over the lack of infrastructure and ongoing violence and state failures to implement the peace deal. A number of protesters were killed by the police and unidentified attackers. Various armed groups at present in Cauca have filled the void that the FARC left when they disarmed and became a legitimate political party.

Congress, support Justice for Colombia, affiliate, and help our brothers and sisters in Colombia to be safe to carry out the vital role that they do. Thank you, Congress.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you very much, Dave. ASLEF to second.

Mick Whelan (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) seconded Motion 73. *He said:* Thank you, President. Thank you, Congress. I am very proud to support this motion. I was there last year once more and for years the British trades union Movement through the TUC, through its support of many people in this room, has highlighted the plight of civil society in Colombia, it has highlighted the disappearances, the kidnappings, and the murders of many people and we all believed

in 2016 that when the FARC came out and laid down their arms that this was our time, this was the time for a true democracy, a society that could determine for itself what it needed to be, where a civil society and trade unions would come back to the fore, and offer a real opposition to the politics in Colombia.

Unfortunately, what we did not see was a change of president, President Ivan Duque, who at every stage finds a reason not to comply with that international agreement, not to comply with the accords that were agreed at the UN in Havana, and elsewhere. What we have is a group of people supported by many trade unionists round the world, from South Africa, and Ireland, who gave their experiences of reconciliation, their experiences of truth, to help make it a better process, a cleaner process, and the people who have honoured that side of the agreement have not been given the land, have not been given the crops substitution such as chocolate, so that they can self-determine, feed themselves, and move away from some of the other issues that people identify with Colombia totally.

More sadly, during this period of time when parts of the peace agreement have been dishonoured 30 trade unionists this year alone have been killed. We have seen 114 of the FARC who came out of the jungle and laid down their arms as part of the process in honour of the agreement being killed. We need to keep our focus on Colombia, we need to support our comrades, our colleagues out there, and I urge you to support this motion and support Justice for Colombia. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Mick. CSP.

James Allen (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapists*) spoke in support of Motion 73. *He said:* Congress, we are into the fourth day of this amazing event, fantastic speeches by Frances, Jeremy, and just recently Keir, and great motions and debates. We talked about Mark's pickled eggs, and we had some good days, looking around the room, and good nights as well, yet this morning we are talking about trade unionists being murdered, people like you and me. I was going to talk about the worst country in the world to be a trade unionist, the country that has the most murders of trade unionists, which as we know is Colombia. Hundreds of activists and human rights organisers have been murdered, the ILO, the OECD, and countries doing very little to stop this violence, but that has already been said.

So, I was trying to think about what a bad day is for me or for you as trade unionists. We have a phone call from a desperate member and we cannot resolve it. We try to spend some time with the family but still think about work. We try to get to sleep at night with those things going round in our head, but I am safe. I do not have days where there are threats to me or threats to my family. I am not thinking that my trade union colleagues have been threatened, beaten, or murdered, worrying that it could be me next, or having breakfast with my children and my wife hoping they will be safe today. That is what is happening in Colombia. I briefly spoke to the President of the CET Colombia at the fringe meeting yesterday and I wondered how he does it. It made me feel rightly inadequate, in awe of their commitment to the trades union Movement. It brought home to me the realities of what they do and made me think with those risks could I do it. Before the meeting I might have said, yes, definitely, but if I am honest I am not so sure any more and that is why we have to support this motion, to show solidarity, to raise the profile of what is happening, and to get this to stop. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, James. Unite.

Tommy Murphy (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 73. *He said:* Unite shares the frustrations and serious concerns of trade unions, civil society, and social movements in Colombia, and the severe crisis in human rights in the country and the extremely slow implementation of the peace agreement. Despite the commitment of the Colombian government to uphold the peace process, and a recognition by President Duque of the rights for peaceful protest, we are still seeing a very dangerous situation facing all of those who speak out for justice in Colombia.

Unite's Colombian sister union in Workers Uniting, FENSUAGRO, have been one of the worst hit. FENSUAGRO have had over 30 members murdered since the peace process began, suffered attacks, threats, and forcibly displaced by armed groups and their leader, Huber Ballesteros, spent four years in jail on trumped up charges.

Congress, I am proud of the work that Workers Uniting has done to support the members in FENSUAGRO in bringing human rights cases to light, and organising work with other unions also, and that important work with Justice for Colombia on the peace process. The CRIC and the UN have all said that the peace process is vital for the security of trade unions and social activists, and critical to improve the human rights situation in Colombia.

Colleagues, it is clear that the peace process is under enormous pressure and it is also clear that the international pressure on the Colombian government has been crucial in pushing them into the peace process and to stick to it. I urge you all, do not take your

eyes off the ball, the crisis facing trade unions and human rights activists in Colombia is far from over but is actually deteriorating so we need to redouble our efforts. Unite will continue to condemn the persecution of Colombian trade unionists, civil society, social movements, and political activists, and support the truth in their demand that the peace process is implemented fully. Unite will also continue to work with Justice for Colombia on its campaigning on trade union and human rights, which is inseparable from its ground-breaking and crucial peace monitoring work. I urge you to support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tom. NASUWT.

Patrick Roach (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Motion 73. *He said:* The NASUWT is proud to work with Justice of Colombia and with our sister union in Colombia, FECODE. FECODE, for those of you who do not know is Colombia's largest trade union. It has organised multiple nationwide strikes over chronic underfunding and poor conditions in schools, including a 37-day teachers' strike, but in return and despite the peace agreement FECODE has come under attack. FECODE has endured a wave of threats and intimidation, including from paramilitary organisations, the Black Eagles. Threatening pamphlets proclaiming death to all trade union and social leaders were sent to all members of FECODE's executive committee. These deplorable threats came just one week after FECODE staged their latest strikes.

Congress, we have also seen the escalation of violence against individual trade unionists in Colombia. In the last year the number of trade unionists killed has more than doubled and around half of those were teachers, and deplorably such killings

continue. One of the latest victims was Orlando Gomez, the principal of the Miguel Zapata Institute, abducted from school, assassinated on 12th August. I know that Congress will join in condemning Orlando's murder and send our condolences to Orlando's family and to all our comrades in FECODE. Congress, solidarity to FECODE. Solidarity to Colombia's trade unionists. Support the work of Justice for Colombia. Denounce the violence and demand the full implementation of the peace agreement. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Well said, Patrick. I now put to the vote Motion 73. All those in favour please show. Thank you. Any against? That is overwhelmingly carried. Thank you, Congress.

* *Motion 73 was CARRIED*

The President: I move now to Motion 74, Cuba and the US blockade. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the POA, seconded by Unite, and then I will be calling the GMB, and the National Education Union. Steve.

Cuba and the US blockade

Steve Gillan (*POA, The professional trade union for prison, correctional and secure psychiatric workers*) moved Motion 74. *He said:* It is 10 years since the last motion on Cuba at Congress. A lot has changed since then: the Miami Five are free, Cuba and the US have re-established diplomatic relations, President Obama was welcomed in Havana and Cuba's new president, Miguel Diaz-Canel met British government

ministers in London, all important and positive steps towards normalising relations and helping the Cuban people develop their economy and society.

However, the one thing that has not changed in those 10 years, and indeed the last six decades, is the US blockade. Let me remind you, Congress, of the impact of the blockade. It has cost the Cuban economy \$933bn. It is the longest sanctions imposed against any country in history. It is nothing short of economic warfare, which has caused massive suffering to the Cuban people and despite 27 consecutive United Nations votes in condemnation it still persists today.

The blockade impacts on all sectors of Cuban society, their ability to access essential medicines and equipment, agriculture and industrial machinery, food, education supplies and household items. It impacts on everything. Either they cannot get hold of what they need or if they can they have to go via third parties costing more money, up to a third more on transport costs alone, and it is extra territorial. This means it impacts on Cuba's ability to trade with other countries, including us here in Britain. British banks and companies have been fined millions of dollars for financial transactions with Cuba. The Open University barred applications from Cuban students because they were worried they might be penalised, a policy, I am glad to say, was overturned thanks to some of the brilliant campaigns by British trade unions and, in particular, the education unions and the Cuba Solidarity Campaign in 2017. These were policies that took place before Trump, under Obama, who was supposed to be improving things.

Things are now considerably worse. Trump has surrounded himself with the most pro-blockade and pro-intervention policy advisers on Cuba and uses language of

aggression not seen since the Cold War. He has tightened the blockade, banned cruise ships, and made travel to the island even more difficult for US citizens. He has also closed the US embassy in Havana and made it impossible for Cubans to apply for visas to visit the US. Cuban trade unionists are barred from attending trade union conferences with sister unions in the US, state-run hotels have been blacklisted, and Trump has reduced the money that Cuban Americans can send home to their families.

In May this year the White House implemented Title III of the 1996 Helms-Burton Act and in doing so it unleashed the most severe economic sanctions against Cuba since the blockade was first introduced in 1962. Title III enables Cuban Americans to launch lawsuits in US courts against foreign companies accused of trafficking in property nationalised after the revolution. This basically opens the door for Cubans who left after the revolution to sue any company that clings to nationalised properties. Four have already been filed, including one by the US multinational Exxon Mobile, which is taking Cuba to court for \$280m for oil refineries and petrol stations nationalised in 1960.

All of this is intended to scare foreign banks and companies from investing in or trading with Cuba in an effort to stifle the island's economy and develop and keep the people in poverty with a long-term goal of forcing regime change to install a government compliant to US interests. These are worrying times for Cuba and solidarity is vital. Despite the blockade Cuba has made world renowned achievements in education, health, social, welfare, women's representations and international humanitarianism, including 400,000 medical volunteers in 165 countries since 1960, trained 35,000 doctors from 138 countries since 1998, and the second

highest number of women MPs in the world at 53.2%. These are achievements worth defending.

I have not claimed that Cuba is perfect and the Cuban people do not either. They know there is a lot they can improve on but the country has achieved so much against the odds; imagine what they could have achieved without the blockade. This is why, Congress, I urge you to support Motion 74 on the 60th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and the 80th anniversary of the CTC by supporting unions for the Cuba conference as well on 2nd November this year. I so move. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Steve. I call on Unite to second.

Jayne Taylor (*Unite the Union*) seconded Motion 74. *She said:* Congress, it is an honour to be seconding this motion on the 80th anniversary of the CTC and the 60th of the Cuban Revolution. My union, Unite, has a proud history of solidarity with Cuba. For example, Unite moved the motion in support of the Miami Five in Congress in 2008. I am proud of the role that this trades union Movement played in the campaign for their freedom and the longstanding bonds of friendship that we have all maintained with Cuban workers. Unite and other unions will be hosting representatives from Cuban unions following exchanges with British workers unions at the Cuban conference in November. I would urge those of you not already involved to support the Cuba Solidarity Campaign who are organising this event.

The Cuban Revolution and the CTC not only prioritise the health and education of its own people but through its inspirational internationalism has transformed the lives of millions of people across the world. These achievements are inspirational in

themselves but when you know they have been carried out by a small island with few natural resources or wealth in the face of a 57-year old US blockade it is quite staggering. Despite suffering the longest economic sanctions ever imposed against any country in history Cuba resists. Its response to the US's aggressive and interventionist foreign policy is to forge one built on solidarity and internationalism and shows that another world is possible.

The rich elite who left Cuba after the revolution in 1959 thought they would be back in a matter of months to reclaim their plantations, estates and mansions. How wrong they were. They have never forgiven the people of Cuba for the revolution. Under President Donald Trump the blockade has tightened to unprecedented levels.

Congress, by supporting Motion 74 we will be sending a clear message to the Cuban people that they are not alone and cannot be isolated by the US policy of aggression. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Jayne. I call on the GMB and then the NEU.

Lorraine Parker Delaz Ajete (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 74. *She said:* My union is proud to stand in solidarity with the Cuban people who continue to fight the cruel economic blockade imposed upon them by the United States, a blockade that has now been tightened once again by Donald Trump. We also celebrate the achievements of the Cuban people in the face of such aggression, in particular their achievements in creating a more equal society.

Congress, today women in Cuba hold over 70% of education and healthcare jobs, 60% of them are lawyers, 68% university graduates, 53% MPs, the second highest in the world. I can speak from personal experience how these achievements make such a difference to the lives of the Cuban people. After attending a trade union delegation to Cuba in 2012 I met and married my husband. Thank you, GMB. (*Applause*) He now often says, “You are more Cubana than me.” Over time I have seen how my stepdaughters and my grandson have benefited from Cuba’s world-class schools. When my husband needed treatment in hospital he was seen by a doctor on the Monday, a consultant on the Tuesday, in hospital the next day, with a dedicated physio to look after him in recovery. It is amazing what a society that prioritises looking after your fellow human beings can achieve in such hard times.

The US blockade has cost \$933bn to the Cuban economy and still denies Cubans access to basic necessities and goods. Congress, international solidarity is not just about meeting and speeches, it is about something deeper than that. It is about working people, no matter what country they come from all speaking the same language of hope and determination. When the actions of Donald Trump can cause such suffering across national boundaries, working people need to come together in every country and stand up for the values we share, and oppose these policies.

The rights we have gained through our trades union Movement were not granted, we fought for them, and now they are under attack again from Boris Johnson. The rights that the Cuban people want to create a better society free from imperialism and inequality were not granted to them either. They fought for them and they are now under attack by Donald Trump. Trump wants to bully the world into shutting its

doors to the Cuban people. Cuba will not stand for it and neither should we. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Lorraine. NEU.

Philipa Harvey (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Motion 74. *She said:* Trade unions unite people to campaign to fight injustices. We must come together, unite together, to organise, to fight the impact and injustices of the blockade on the Cubans. We also come together to organise and to grow in strength in our workplaces and our communities. By working with the Cubans we can do this because we can learn so much from their successes. This is certainly the experiences that we have in the NEU (the National Education Union).

In our union we have a long and proud history of internationalism and solidarity with our friends in Cuba, our trade union friends in Cuba. This includes a vital link we have with the Cuban teachers union that we have hosted at our annual conference and we now have established through our annual delegation there through sending our members to Cuba. This provides us with invaluable experience in witnessing the impact of the blockade for ourselves but it also enables us to witness the passion, the commitment, the political will and determination to provide a rich and fulfilling education from cradle to grave.

It is notable how inspired our delegates are on their return, both as trade unionists and internationalists, but also as educators with a renewed passion for creative teaching. This inspirational education does not just happen by accident. It is because of that political will to make education a priority and the commitment of the highest

percentage of GDP on education of any country. We must remember the blockade continues to have a demonstrable impact and that impact is on obtaining the simplest of resources, such as stationery, computers, science equipment, and that impact is only set to get worse with Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. It could see pre-revolution owners of mansions, barracks, and private buildings sue the Cuban state for converting them into public schools after the revolution.

Members of the NEU have been able to offer practical solidarity so we have run campaigns to send Braille machines for special schools, and in April of this year we sent a shipment of 4,000 musical instruments at the end of our annual conference. We were also proud to be part of the campaign that Steve talked about, to end the Open University ban on Cuban students, working alongside other trade union colleagues. It is also political solidarity that we must bring to bear, putting pressure on the US government to end the blockade. We need to step up this campaign in the face of new threats through our continued support of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and supporting this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Philipa. There is no opposition so I move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 74? Thank you. Any against? That is carried.

* *Motion 74 was CARRIED*

The President: Ulises is still with us at the front and I am sure he will take back to Cuba and his comrades the overwhelming support of Congress.

I now move to Motion 75, Palestine – supporting rights to self-determination. The General Council will be supporting the motion with an explanation. What will happen in this debate, it will be moved in a minute by the Artists' Union England and seconded by PCS. Then I will call Tim Roache on behalf of the General Council to explain the General Council's position. I am then going to call Unite, Unison, and the National Education Union, and then we will move to the vote. Can I invite the AUE to move Motion 75. Good morning.

Palestine – supporting rights to self-determination

Martin Sundram (*Artists' Union England*) moved Motion 75. *He said:* As Kier Starmer earlier might have noted it is quite difficult keeping up with the news right now. Yesterday brought us news of the resignation or sacking, I am not sure which, of John Bolton, for which a small hurrah. We do not know what is coming next and who else Trump is going to choose to advise him. Chillingly and disturbingly yesterday also brought news in the form of a television interview by Benjamin Netanyahu of his intention, if successful in next week's Israeli elections, to annex a large chunk of the limited territory afforded to the Palestinian people today, a blatant appeal to the hard right settler voting to secure a majority but with all the markers of a Trump seal of approval. Trump does, of course, have the deal of the century up his sleeve that he is going to reveal to the world as his solution to the Middle East crisis in Palestine sometime around the time of the elections there. This motion has a contemporary feel to it today that it perhaps did not have when it was drafted.

Palestine in the scheme of things had appeared infrequently on our television screens and in our newspapers of late. You may have noticed, if you did catch the editorial

amid the Brexit noise, that the suffering and violence had, if anything, got worse and looked as though it is likely to do so in the future. However, there has been a step change recently with the threat of Trump's deal of the century being thrown into the arena and another bad deal in the world of such things, and yesterday's announcement of the annexation of Jordan Valley, part of the occupied West Bank under international law.

Congress, this motion does not depart from existing TUC policy but brings it sharply into the present in the light of these recent announcements. Trade unions have had a long and proud track record of support for the Palestinian people, with policies highlighting their plight and practical engagement developed since 1982. TUC policy is for a two-state solution. For such an outcome to succeed, of course, needs two viable states, both geographically now put at risk by Netanyahu's announcement and politically and economically when inhabitants are citizens rather than inmates, and where a symmetry of power in what has to be in the end a negotiated settlement is addressed.

At the moment we are looking at a people lack of control over even the basic infrastructure that enables a society to function, water, power, the freedom to travel, and the basic human right to safety. Congress, what we are defending in this motion is not just the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people but the very rule of law itself. Laws are what define civilisation and enable us to build societies that work. In a free society there are rules we voluntarily agree to as citizens and the quality of those laws reflect the quality of the civilisation we aspire to, something trade unions have of course been actively campaigning for where laws are needed in the fight against discrimination of all kinds, in the battle of equality, and for improved

conditions in the workplace. The laws that govern relationships between states are equally precious and hard fought for and where flouted must be called out.

Twenty-two years ago an incoming Labour foreign secretary, the late Robin Cook, committed the new government of the day to an ethical foreign policy. As it turned out the aspiration was short-lived. Interventions in Bosnia and Sierra Leone took the gloss off this well meaning and idealistic view. Robin Cook did, of course, resign as foreign secretary following Blair's decision to invade Iraq. It was an ethical foreign policy but an idea that seems to have disappeared since.

Congress, hopefully, a new government will be with us soon. Let's try again when we trade with the world, let's stop fuelling the misery of the wars that hit the poor, with our dubious alliances and weapons deals across the Middle East and elsewhere, and reintroduce some kind of ethical element to trade. Congress, right now please support this motion to reaffirm TUC policy, call for the upholding of international law, and support Palestinian efforts to self-determination in the face of the twin threats they face from Trump and Netanyahu today. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Martin. PCS to second.

Zita Holbourne (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) seconded Motion 75. *She said:* PCS has a proud history of standing with the Palestinian people and working with the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign and in April of this year I had the honour of representing PCS on a historical all-women trade union delegation to Palestine which came about from a motion we carried at the TUC Women's Conference last year.

Our focus was on women and children. We visited two refugee camps and within one was a women's cooperative and nursery run by inspirational young women providing education, hope, and respite, to small children who have experienced and continue to experience devastating violence, displacement as well as post traumatic stress, and we witnessed this trauma. We witnessed illegal settlement housing all around us. We visited the village of Nabi Saleh and the brave Tamimi family, who, in defending their home of generations have silent symbols exchanged between parents and children to say goodbye in case one of their lives are taken and they never see each other again. We met mothers whose children are thrown into prison with no regard for their human rights as children or access to appropriate legal rights. We witnessed soldiers who tried to bar teachers accompanying us on a visit to the school they teach in from walking down the road that led to that school. We witnessed an entire road of soldiers interrogating and fining young Palestinian people going about their daily business simply because they were in Jerusalem. Journeys which should have taken us minutes took us hours because of the system of segregation meaning vehicles with Palestinian number plates can only access certain roads, longer routes, and because we had to go through countless checkpoints.

We celebrated May Day with Palestinian trade unionists and met some amazing union activists, including women journalists. We met with the Women's Coalition for Peace, a group of Israeli and Palestinian women who just because they work together for peace experienced misogyny, harassment, and threats. What we experienced and witnessed was apartheid, which is racism and multiple abuses of human rights.

Despite the trauma Palestinian people are facing, we were greeted with warm welcomes and hospitality by all we met. When we asked what they would like us to

do to support them on our return to the UK, everybody said the same thing, they just wanted us to share with others what we had witnessed and raise awareness. As a student I was involved in the anti-apartheid movement and boycott campaign. I experienced apartheid in South Africa firsthand as a teenager and it was that experience I shared that had the most impact in convincing other students to take action and boycott the likes of cake, fruit, Barclays, etc. It was necessary to have an international response, including boycott and divestment to work towards an end to apartheid, and it was for the people of South Africa as it is for the people of Palestine to have self-determination in their struggle for peace, equality, and human rights but it is for us, Congress, us trade unionists to uphold equality, speak out against injustice wherever it occurs and to give solidarity. This is what this motion calls for, our solidarity, and to campaign for an ethical policy on trade in relation to arms that is used to breach human rights, to keep up pressure on companies which enable abuse of rights and hold them to account so the people of Palestine can have peace, equality, and freedom. We must reject Trump's politics of hate, discrimination, and division, and stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Zita. I call Tim Roache from the General Council to explain the General Council's support.

Tim Roach (GMB): Good morning, Congress. *He said:* I am setting out the explanation on behalf of the General Council. The General Council reiterates TUC policy, condemning the human rights abuses faced by Palestinian people and opposes Israel's illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories. We oppose the US policy of withdrawing much needed aid from the United Nations works and relief agency. This is particularly concerning given that in recent years the UN has predicted that Gaza

was on track to become unliveable by 2020. We condemn the blockade of Gaza and the annexation of further land in the West Bank and recognise calls by UN officials to halt further demolitions, and concerns expressed about the expansion of illegal settlements.

The blockade and occupation must be resolved in line with UN resolutions and international law. Existing policy has called for the suspension of the EU Israel Association Agreement until the rights of the Palestinians are established and we are committed to raising pressure on corporations composite in arms trading, the settlements, and the occupation.

The General Council is pleased that Palestine is one of the TUC's four priority international solidarity areas and that will be supported alongside many affiliates at the Palestine Solidarity Campaign's trade union conference in October. We reiterate our policy to work actively to encourage affiliates, employers, and pension funds, to disinvest from and boycott the goods of companies who profit from illegal settlements, the occupation and the construction of the wall, and to encourage affiliates to support the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and particularly work with the PSC trade union network.

In supporting the motion the General Council wants to emphasise the TUC's longstanding support for a two-state solution based on peace and security to both Israel and Palestine and justice for the Palestinian people as well as the need for the British government to recognise the Palestinian state. We have had a policy calling for a two-state solution since 1982 and has been consistent as Congress policy ever since. This is in line with UN resolutions adopted supporting a two-state solution and

self-determination for the Palestinian people. Last November, the UN Secretary General repeated the support for a two-state solution as the way to achieve lasting peace. The General Council supports efforts for peace and justice for all the people of Palestine and Israel and extends our solidarity to our sister and brother unions. Please support this resolution but with this crucial explanation. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Tim. Calling Unite.

Philippa Marsden (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 75. *She said:* Congress, earlier this year I too had the privilege to join the Women's TUC delegation to Palestine. We visited what has become the walled city of Bethlehem and the refugee camp of Jenin. Congress, nothing could have prepared us for the brutality which is being meted out by the Israeli state on a daily basis. We spoke to Palestinian families whose homes had been raided for no reason at 2 in the morning. We spoke to distraught mothers who could not speak to their own children because they were detained and processed by a military court. We saw the empty tear gas canisters that littered the roadsides and the gardens of people's homes. We heard about how skunk water was sprayed into homes covering their possessions inside. Congress, it is a systematic campaign of harassment, degradation, and humiliation. There were times when we felt we could do nothing more than cry and I am not ashamed to say that is exactly what we did.

Congress, we must not give in to despair. We must redouble our solidarity efforts. I am proud that Unite squarely stands behind PSC and the work that we have done to help establish the network with Palestine within the Labour Party. Besieged and blockaded from all sides, the Gaza Strip remains the world's largest prison. The

campaign of harassment, the land annexations, and the building of illegal settlements and walls, has created a string of mini-Gazas across the West Bank. Congress, this is what the end game of Netanyahu and Trump's vision looks like. It is nothing short of an openly apartheid state. Congress, the Palestinian people need our solidarity now more than ever. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Philippa. UNISON.

Angela Roberts (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Motion 75. *She said:* Congress, the last couple of years have perhaps been the most damaging we have ever seen for the prospects of a viable and democratic Palestinian state, living in peace alongside Israel, that the TUC has constantly called for. Buoyed on by the White House support, the Prime Minister has entrenched in Israeli's illegal occupation, expanding settlements and infrastructure deep into the West Bank while systematically destroying Palestinian homes and property. On the international stage President Trump has sought to delegitimize international law and decades of UN resolutions in an attempt to destroy the two-state solution, which remains the cornerstone of the international consensus, TUC policy and the efforts of peace in the Middle East.

Congress, while we welcome much of this motion which reaffirms many elements of Congress policy on Palestine, we do have a qualification that it must complement and not weaken existing TUC policy on Palestine. In 2009, Congress called for the suspension of the EU Israeli Association Agreement until Israel complies with its human rights clause, an agreement which the Israeli and UK governments have agreed to roll over should Brexit happen. Whilst an ethical trade policy should be our ultimate goal, we must continue to demand the Association Agreement and by

extension the proposed UK Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement is suspended until Israel complies with its human rights obligations. Likewise, this Congress also calls for the end of the trade of arms with Israel, a position we strongly urge the TUC to retain. Even during the Great March of Return when the UN had said that the Israeli military may have committed war crimes our Government have continued to approve arms deals arguing that there is no information that UK supplied arms have been used in a way that violates its arms export criteria. In these circumstances, it is important we continue to demand an end to the arms trade with Israel, not just arms used in the violation of Palestinian human rights but until the oppression of the Palestinian people ends.

Congress, the prospect of peace, justice, and the two-state solution are under serious threat by the actions of the Israeli and US governments and by the inaction of our own government. Congress, it is vital we redouble our efforts to demand an end to corporate and government complicity with the occupation and violation of Palestinian human rights. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Angela. I call on NEU.

Louise Regan (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Motion 75. *She said:* I am very pleased to be speaking in support of this motion. Following Netanyahu's announcement yesterday that if re-elected he will annex the Jordan Valley in the Northern Dead Sea this motion could not come at a more vital time. I am very proud to be a member of the union that has a long history of standing in solidarity with the people of Palestine. Our union takes two delegations a year to Palestine and I know many other unions here visit regularly. We see with our own eyes the injustice that

Palestinians face, the checkpoints which prevent people living freely, controlling access to medical care, to education, to visit family or to get to your land, the arrests of up to 700 children a year, the expansion of the illegal settlements taking more and more of the Palestinian people's land, house demolitions and families forcibly removed from their homes. The impact of all this, the denial of the Palestinian refugees' right to return, the denial of the Palestinian people's right to a home and shelter, the denial of Palestinian children's right to access education and to live free of fear.

In April 16 women trade unionists from 11 affiliated unions of the TUC visited and met with women's organisations and trade unionists. I know the powerful impact this has had on them and you have heard from some of them. Visiting Palestine is a life-changing experience. They on their visit made friends just like all of us who have visited have made friends, friends in a trade union movement, friends living under occupation who face injustice every day. This motion calls for us to speak out against this injustice, to put pressure on corporations complicit in arms trading, to support efforts to establish an ethical policy on UK trade, but actually the main thing this motion asks us to do is to ensure international law and UN resolutions are enacted.

Friends, the trades union Movement has solidarity running through its veins. Now is the time for action, not words. We need to speak out for freedom, justice, and equality for Palestine and the first thing all of you can do is send delegates from your union to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign trade union conference in London on Saturday, 12th October, and of course affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Congress, now is the time, it is the time for justice for Palestine. Please support.

(Applause)

The President: We will move to the vote on Motion 75. That is clearly carried.

* *Motion 75 was CARRIED.*

The President: Congress, just before we take the next motion, I wanted to bring to your attention that today workers and members of the UCU at Nottingham College have gone on strike and they will be on strike for the next 15 days to fight against cuts to pay and conditions. Can I ask Congress to show a bit show of solidarity to all our striking UCU workers. *(Applause)* Thank you, Congress. I hope that UCU take that back to the strikers on your behalf.

TUC Organisation

Role and remit of TUC Young Workers Forum

The President: We now turn to section 6 of the TUC General Council Report: TUC Organisation, from page 72. I call paragraphs 5.4, 6.11 and Motion 76: Role and remit of TUC Young Workers Forum. The General Council supports the motion. I call on Charlie Gray, on behalf of the TUC Young Workers Conference to move the motion, to be seconded by the National Education Union and I am going to take a contribution from the NASUWT. Charlie.

Charlie Gray *(GMB, TUC Young Workers Conference)* moved Motion 76. *He said:* Congress, last year seconded Motion 74: Make 2019 the year of young workers. I would like to use this opportunity to update you on what young workers in unions from across the movement have been doing as part of the Year of Young Workers.

The RMT has been running recruitment days aimed at young workers and have been organising apprentices. Unite has won a 21% pay rise for workers under the age of 21 at Greenwich Leisure Limited. UNISON young members in Scotland have been running *How's Your Head?*, a mental health campaign promoting wellbeing and the importance of looking after your mental health at work. NEU young members have been taking leading roles in the fight to protect teachers' and teaching assistants' pay, terms and conditions and health and safety at work. In their inspiring campaigns with the workers in McDonald's and Wetherspoons, the Bakers' Union has been taking the fight to bosses that primary target young worker's for exploitation.

My union, the GMB, has been organising apprentices and young workers and has been taking leading roles in the fight against Asda's Contract 6, of which you will hear more about in our emergency motion later on.

As well as affiliates, the TUC Young Workers Forum has also been busy this year. In the run-up to Christmas we commissioned a survey on young workers' experience of third-party harassment, which led to *Not Part of the Job* report, which compiled the responses of and gave voice to more than 400 young workers who had experienced third-party harassment and abusive work. If you have not already read the report, I would highly recommend that you do. The *Not Part of the Job* report also raises wider points than just clearly setting out young workers', and especially young women workers', experience of third-party harassment, as well as a number of recommendations to Government, employers as well as trade unions on the issue. The report clearly identifies wider themes on the issues that affect young workers in the workplace, and issues that present trade unions in organising young workers, such

as issues around poor employer practices being seen as just part of the job, young workers blaming themselves for the short-comings of the policies in the businesses that they work for, the concerns of young workers not being taken seriously by management and allowed to carry on with no support for the young worker, a sense of futility for young workers, who are short-changed by themselves, a lack of trust between colleagues and legislation designed to protect workers not being followed by bad bosses.

As was discussed yesterday at our Fringe — Nowhere to Turn — the TUC Young Workers Forum is currently working on a campaign that looks at the young workers' mental health at work. As mentioned in the General Council Report, this summer TUC Yorkshire and the Humber have been running the Summer Patrol Project, bringing together young trade unionists who have been reaching out to non-unionised workers in their workplaces. The project blends tried and tested means of face-to-face organising with the newest digital campaigning technologies. Activists had in-depth conversations with non-unionised young workers, introducing them to the concepts of rights and dignity at work and how unions can help them.

The Year of the Young Worker is not the be all and end of solving the issues facing our aging Movement, Congress, but the start of a process of recruiting young workers, empowering young reps and building a movement so that in 151 year's time it will still be here. The Young Workers has its place to play in supporting affiliate campaigns, and the motion looks at how this can be best done and how structures and remits can best be used to do this.

The motion mentions that young workers' issues will become more prevalent, but this is not just for young workers. We all know that the Amazons and the ATOS's of this world look to each other for inspiration on how they can do over workers and exploit their labour from wage theft to minimum wage-age banding, to zero-hour contracts, bad bosses are now, more than ever, looking at the ways in which they can exploit young workers and how that can be applied to all workers. Today's young worker exploitation is tomorrow's worker exploitation across the board.

I will finish by saying this. Let's build on the Year of the Young Workers and continue to invest in increasing the membership and organisation for young workers and to secure future of our movement. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you for that, Charlie. Let me say, on behalf of the General Council, Charlie has been a fabulous voice for young workers on the General Council all year, raising their issues at every single meeting. So well done, Charlie, for all you have done this year. *(Applause)* I call on the NEU to second the motion.

Tom Kirkwood *(National Education Union)* seconded Motion 76. *He said:* Good morning, President and Congress. I am the LGBT+ rep on the Young Workers Forum. I am aware that we have lots of unfinished business and lots of emergency motions, so I will abbreviate what I was going to say. Charlie has told you about some of the fantastic work that young workers have been doing during this year, the Year of the Young Worker. That has been happening across all of the unions. In our union, I know that we have many district secretaries and case workers who are young workers, young educators. We have something that our General Secretary is always saying to us, which is that young workers and young educators are not the future of

this movement, but we are the present of this movement. Because everybody is already doing an awful lot. *(Applause)*

But we do know that there is a problem of young worker involvement, getting young workers involved and keeping young workers active. The fact is that every union does a lot of things right but no union gets everything right, so this motion gives us the opportunity to learn from each other, to learn from young workers and to find out what we can do to bring people in.

I will say one more thing, based on what Charlie said about the summer patrol. I had the privilege to be part of that for one day. It was really effective and useful in talking to people who had no idea about trade unions. We were speaking to a young Bulgarian girl, with English being her second language, who had no idea about a trade union and she was suffering from wage theft as she was being paid below the minimum wage. After we had spoken to her and told her about her rights, she has been to her boss and she is getting paid properly. *(Applause)* I am sure that everyone else involved has similar stories that they could tell. With that, please support this motion. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you for that, Tom. Both of your contributions this week have been really valuable. I now call on the NASUWT and then we will move to the vote.

Ruth Duncan *(NASUWT, The Teachers' Union)* spoke in support of Motion 76. *She said:* Congress, the title of Motion 76 is: Role and remit of TUC Young Workers Forum. The NASUWT wholeheartedly supports the call for an intensive and focused campaign for young workers alongside the excellent work that the TUC Young

Workers Forum has undertaken. In the TUC's adopted Year of the Young Workers it is essential that the TUC Young Workers Forum is a strong and effective force for positive change in the workforce. Building a strong and resilient movement for the future requires urgent and strategic action on recruiting and organising young workers. Calls for the Forum to work with affiliate projects on recruiting and retaining young workers will be a useful step forward in this regard.

NASUWT believes that motion-based equalities conferences are critical to the position of the TUC in representing the voice of Britain's workers. It is also important that there is a process to ensure that the motions submitted from each of the equalities conferences for Congress are fully implemented. Motions adopted at the TUC Young Workers Forum are, therefore, critical in this process. NASUWT commends the work that is already undertaken to reform the constitution of the Forum, but it is essential that they are able to face the coming challenges as effectively as possible.

Young workers are experiencing challenges on an unprecedented scale; zero-hour contracts, unaffordability of accommodation, pay, promotion disparities and punitive working conditions are all commonplace issues amongst a new generation of workers. It is vital that all the unions are effectively working together to organise and help young workers forge a successful path through the obstacles put in their way by unscrupulous employers. The TUC Young Workers Forum should be at the forefront of this work.

Congress, the NASUWT applauds the work of the Forum but has high hopes that any reform will encapsulate the best practices and policies of affiliates and will put young

workers on an equal footing and at the heart of the work of the TUC. Please support.
Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Ruth. There has been no opposition so I am going to put Motion 76 to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That is overwhelmingly carried.

* *Motion 76 was CARRIED.*

The President: I now move on. I call paragraphs 5.7, 6.1 and 6.2. I think the NEU have indicated that they wish to speak on paragraph 6.2.

Affiliations and mergers

Hank Roberts (*National Education Union*) *said:* The report states that there has been no change either in the number or structure of TUC affiliates in the past year. This is the question. As to the competitive recruitment between unions, is anything going to be done to make our structure more rational and stronger to deal with the challenges we face.

Let me set some context. We live in completely amazing times, but nothing to me is more shocking than the fact that our life expectancy in this country has gone down. That is a complete and utter disgrace. It's a failure of our class to accept the responsibility. Only our class and its actions have improved things when they improved, and if they go down, you can blame *them* all you like, but you have to

blame us! To take this on, we have to organise ourselves in the best possible way in which an army can be organised.

In my view — this has been proven, I think — we have a problem and we are not facing up to it. In *this* document, the *TUC Directory 2019*, it looks at all the occupations and professions. It goes through the union that compete in some of those. So there are 26 where there are two unions competing. There are 12 where there are three. There are 11 where it is four and there is one where it is five. Is this logical? Is this sensible? Is it hard to deal with? Yes. But do we not have to do things that are hard now if we are going to change what is going on?

I want to point out another TUC document. *This* one was done 20 years ago: *British Trade Unionism — The Millennial Challenge*. It said: “Could the TUC and affiliates set ourselves the Millennial objective of having a more logical structure promoting much greater solidarity?” That’s a damned good question, isn’t it? There was a worry about declining membership 20 years ago. Twenty years on we have just started to improve it a bit but if we change our structure and we have the optimal for fighting these, then that is what we have to do. Some things are difficult but not doing them makes it even worse. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Hank. Can I draw the attention of Congress to my opening Presidential remarks, where I encouraged unions to work together and to avoid disputes and focus on recruiting non-members. The TUC has recently revised its dispute principles and procedures to encourage unions to work together in regard to organising campaigns and continues to support unions to build their organisational capacity through its Stronger Unions programme and Digital Labs Project. However,

ultimately, all of our unions are sovereign bodies and they and their members have to decide how they organise their structures. Thank you.

I now move on to call paragraphs 6.4, 6.10, 6.12 and 6.14.

Trades councils' participation in Congress

The President: I now move on to call Motion 77: Trades councils' participation in Congress. I want to explain how I will take the debate. The General Council is opposing the motion. I will call Matt Wrack during the debate to explain the General Council's opposition. So the order of speakers, if they can be ready, is that Dave Chappell will move the motion on behalf of the TUC Trades Councils' Conference, to be seconded by the RMT, and I will then call Matt Wrack to outline the General Council's opposition, and I am then going to take the CWU and UCU, offer the right of reply to the mover and then we will move to the vote. Hopefully, everyone is clear with that. With pleasure, I call Dave Chappell on behalf of the TUC Trades Councils Conference to move Motion 77.

Dave Chappell (*TUC Trades Councils Conference*) moved Motion 77. *He said:* Conference, I have been a Somerset delivery postman for 38 years, a proud member of the Communication Workers Union, a former divisional negotiator, a former branch secretary, the branch chair of one of the largest branches in the union — Bristol and District — and former delegate to the TUC and Labour Party Conferences. The reason why I have given you a little CV is because trades council activists are all trade unionists. But one big problem we have is that not all trade unionists are trades council activists, including the majority of people in this hall. I thank everybody in

this hall, on top of whatever they do on behalf of their union, who also finds time to go along to their trades council, because that's where we get a trade union Movement from in this country as opposed to yearly congresses, regional and national. Trades councils are the cement which brings us all together and makes solidarity possible.

I am the Secretary of Bridgewater Trades Union Council, which has 16,500 affiliated members from 32 different union branches and we have 25 to 30 people meeting every month. If there is a strike, a picket line, a Time for Better Pay campaign, if there is an oppose-rail-fare-rises campaign and when there is a campaign against universal credit with the Unite community, whatever union or TUC campaign is happening, we are there doing it. Day in and day out, week in and week out, we are there. If the New Deal for Workers' Charter, started by my union and now taken on by the TUC, is going to become a reality, not just to the 700 people in this room but the 5.5 million workers out *there*, it is going to be done largely at local level by volunteers in trade union councils, particular with a view to a mass action on 1st May.

Conference, we are asking for a little bit of respect and recognition after having been excluded from the TUC way back in 1895. I am the solitary delegate from 16,000 trades council members in Bridgewater. It is a guess — there are no figures — that there are about 300,000 trade unionists organised in the 154 trades councils in England and Wales. Of course, there are a lot more in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. I think I am representing a considerable body of people, all of whom are trade unionists. Yet I cannot even vote on this motion! It too Bob Crow and the RMT, supported by other unions in 2008, to get us the right to have a motion after 130 years. I can now move the motion.

I have sat on my arse the whole week having people staring at me because I can't vote. "Why's that vote abstaining all the time?" Yet 300,000 people representing the grassroots of this movement don't have a say. We are not asking for the earth. One member of the General Council said that we are 'overly ambitious'. That is a paraphrase of what was a much more aggressive term. We are not asking for the TUC rules to be implemented, which would give us a delegation of 50. We are not asking for 30 and we are not asking for 20. We are asking for the 300,000, if that's a correct guess, of the trades councils grassroots as part of this movement, to have a small delegation which can then feed in the local news about working class solidarity at this conference. We are asking for a member of the General Council to represent trades councils. Is that an unacceptable violent revolution on the General Council to have an activist from the trades councils feeding in local news? I think not.

This is the TUC Directory for 2019. It's an excellent book, but trades councils are not mentioned. So if any of you have learnt about trades councils for the first time from me this morning, you won't find it in *here*. Trade councils are mentioned in one paragraph in the General Council Report. It is not good enough. This is my appeal to everybody here who does not know a lot about trades councils, who maybe has been working and beavering in your own union, without having gone outside and talked to other trade unionists is, please, when you have reps' training of any kind, take part in that in terms of trades council training, history and everything else.

Look. We work our socks off for this movement. We are not aiming to destabilise or disrupt the movement. We want to strengthen it. If you strengthen trades councils, you strengthen the TUC. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Dave. I call on the RMT to second.

Michelle Rodgers (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*) seconded Motion 77. *She said:* Congress, I am the National President of the RMT. Dave has pinched half of my speech, by the way, but let's see what can be done.

Back in 2008 our General Secretary, a great comrade of everyone in this room, Bob Crow, used one of our motions from our union to get this item on the agenda at this Congress. We all sat in this room collectively and supported that motion. That was in 2008. What have we done? We've allowed one delegate from that local trades council to attend. In Scotland and Wales, they go to their TUCs. Why do we have such an issue at this congress? What is the fear that we all face? Because I bet 90% of us in this room have been on picket lines, on demonstrations, have encouraged and organised workforce literature and used our local trades councils. I can tell you that 90% of us in this room will have done that. The point is that when we have a campaign, and we are not in an industrial dispute, we don't always have the manpower. We rely on the people from our local trades council.

In Manchester, that's where it was formed. I said it the other day. "Manchester, Salford, London". That is what formed this Congress, our great Congress. It doesn't belong to little bits of us. It belongs to all of us. It is not my union's congress; it's not your union's congress; it's all of our congress. Part of that congress must be and should be our local trades councils. So I know what is going to happen today, but what I am asking every single delegate in this room to do is go back to your unions, who are going to vote against this today, sit down in your local branches and ask the question "Why?" "Why are you voting against it? What do you gain from voting

against it?” We are not asking for a mad takeover. We don’t want half the room filled up with local councils. What we want and what we need is a joined-up, altogether, fighting for each other organisation.

Comrades, I am going to ask you to support this motion even though your union is going to vote against it. Put your hands in the air and show people what you are really about, because without those local trade councils we are isolated. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Michelle. I call on Matt Wrack, on behalf of the General Council, to explain the General Council’s opposition.

Matt Wrack *(General Council)* opposed Motion 77. *He said:* I am speaking on behalf of the General Council to ask Congress to oppose Motion 77. In doing so, I want to make it clear that the General Council absolutely welcomes the vital role played by local trade councils. Dave set out very well supporting union campaigns, delivering the TUC’s priorities in local communities and providing a local platform and forum to bring together local union activists.

From my own perspective, let me pay tribute to those people involved in trades councils across the country, and particularly to Dave. We know, in my own union, the Fire Brigades Union, that when we run campaigns on opposing cuts in the Fire Service, we can rely on Dave and his trades council, and indeed the same position across the country.

In recent years, as has already been explained, Congress has already made changes to allow the Trades Council Conference to bring a motion to Congress and to elect a delegate to Congress to move that motion. However, Congress, this motion goes much further, by proposing three areas of rule change that would give the Trades Council Conference a similar status to that of an affiliated trade union.

The first proposal is that the trades councils would have a Congress delegation of nine. That would be greater than the entitlement of all but 12 unions here at Congress. The General Council feels it would be inappropriate for the Trades Councils Conference to have more delegates to Congress than 75% of TUC unions, each of whom pay an affiliation fee in order to be represented here at Congress.

The second proposal is for the trades councils to have a reserved seat on the General Council. There are reserved seats for unions on the General Council, elected by all unions here at Congress, including for under-represented groups, and for those with protected characteristics. Trades councils do not fit into either of these categories.

The General Council already has representation on the TUC JCC, and myself as the GC lead there, and other members of the General Council on that committee make sure that the views of the committee are fed back to the General Council on a regular basis.

Finally, the motion calls for an entitlement for trades council delegates at Congress to speak and vote on any Congress business. One of the key purposes of Congress is for us, collectively, the affiliated unions, to determine TUC policy casting votes in direct proportion to their membership as determined by their affiliation and their related

affiliation fee. Trades councils, like the TUC itself, do not have members. Instead every trades council activist is a trade union member, a member of an affiliated trade union, with the ability to influence Congress policy through their union. If passed, this motion would, effectively, double-count trades council activists as members.

In addition, it is hard to see how such a delegation could be properly held to democratic account or decide policy on such a wide range of issues. Congress, this motion would fundamentally change the purpose of trades councils from supporting trade union and TUC campaigns at local level to directly representing local members through the TUC. On that basis, Congress, the advice is to oppose the motion.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Matt. I now call the CWU.

Amarjite Singh (*Communication Workers Union*) spoke in support of Motion 77. *He said:* Congress, I have been involved in the trades councils for more than two decades. I think I met Frances at the Cardiff Trades Council Conference about 20 years ago when Frances was responsible for the trades councils. My experience of being involved with the trades councils is that when there is a dispute, the trades councils are all there. When the far right comes to town, the trades councils are at the forefront. When there is a school closure or hospital closure, the trades councils are at the forefront. Remember, they are your members from your trade unions.

I had the pleasure of being the President of the Wales TUC in 2012-2013 as a trade council representative. On the Wales TUC at the present moment I think there are 11 trades councils that get involved to the Wales TUC Congress. There are two seats on

the General Council, one male and one female. That is progression. The trades councils have an annual conference at which they discuss matters from the National Health Service, education, international issues to the environment. This year they had a motion on the Jalalabad massacre and a sentry. It was a real good debate, and I hope that the TUC is being directed in that motion to write to the Government for an apology as well as a change in the curriculum on the Empire.

I will go back to something that Charlie said from the Young Workers, that he contributes on to the General Council. We want somebody from the Trades Council contributing on the General Council. We want trade council representatives from each region here at this Conference. We want the trades council to have a vote. As Jeremy says, the Labour Party wants to embrace the trade union Movement. The TUC should be embracing the trades council movement. Support the motion. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

The President: Finally, I call UCU.

Brian Hamilton (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Motion 77. *He said:* Before I start, I would like to say that I represent educators, and our members would dearly look forward to offering Boris Johnson a different boarding school experience.

The previous speakers have started the case for supporting Motion 77. I want us to reflect on what was done this week and the sort of debates we have had this week. We started off with the debate at the start of the week about the shutting down of Parliament. Everybody in this room seemed quite horrified at the lack of democracy,

in shutting down democracy and stopping people from accessing democracy that went on at that stage.

Later in the week when Jeremy Corbyn spoke, he spoke about real politics and taking it down to the very basic level into the community. That is what the trades councils do with trade unionism. They take trade unionism into the very basic parts of our societies and talk about trade unionism, promote trade unionism and support trade unionism. I think, because of that, they should at least be entitled to come here with a voice to be heard and to take part in the debate, because they will be bringing the views of those people from the ground to this Congress. That is the important part for that.

Before I finish and before we go to the vote on this motion, I would like to thank you all for the support that you gave to Nottingham College strikers this morning on behalf of UCU, but on top of that, on a personal note, I would like to thank Nottingham Trades Council for standing on that picket line with our members. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Brian, and to all those people who spoke. That was a very good debate, so there has been opposition. Dave, do you wish to exercise your right of reply?

Dave Chappell: Yes.

The President: So Dave Chappell on behalf of the TUC Trades Councils Conference to exercise the right of reply.

Dave Chappell: After 76 unanimous motions, we've had a little bit of a debate. So, thanks, Matt, for that. Thanks to all of the General Council members of the TUC JCC who support us. Thanks also to Kevin Rowan, who I personally work well with, as our secretary, and particularly thanks to Roger McKenzie, who chaired our conference brilliantly. I also want to thank Steve Gillan and Simon Weller who have attended our meetings this year.

By the way, I thought I was on to a winner when I came to Brighton because Kevin Rowan and Frances put me up in the Grand Hotel. I have never been able to afford to stay in a place like the Grand Hotel. Then I found out that they had put me in Norman Tebbit's room. *(Laughter)*

The President: I got Margaret Thatcher's room, if it is any consolation. *(Laughter)*

Dave Chappell: The General Council thinks it is inappropriate to have a delegation of nine. That is based on the eight English regions and Wales. In Wales there is substantial representation already, as there is in Scotland. What is the difference? I am sorry that we may, if this is ever passed in future years, outnumber quite a few unions here, but it is not a competition. We are the people in every town and city, 154 of us in England and Wales, who support you, whether you are a tiny union or a big union. We don't care. We organise picket-line solidarity. We bring unions together. We will be working out the new deal for workers with you and all the other unions. We are the people who do it, as well as being active in our own unions. So I think the General Council's comment that a delegation of nine is inappropriate is itself inappropriate. Matt is on his weakest grounds. The General Council is on its weakest

grounds, when it says, “We can’t have a solitary member of the General Council representing 300,000 trades council activists because it wouldn’t in” — well, fit it in! — “or because it is not in the remit”. Then change the remit. That is a pretty weak philosophy there from the General Council, whoever thought that script up, Matt. I hope it wasn’t you.

In terms of double representation, that is the biggest fiction, because in the South West TUC every one of the 20 trades councils goes to every meeting and can vote and put motions to every meeting. We have five members of the executive on the South West TUC. We work absolutely brilliantly with our outstanding secretary, Nigel Costly. What is the difference? I am accountable every step of the way as a postman and a member of the Bristol CWU branch and as a delegate to Bridgewater Trades Council. If on any occasion Dave Warr, Tony Kearns or Rob Wallerspoon, my branch secretary, see me acting out of order, speaking against CWU policy, don’t you think they’d call me in? That applies if I go from Bridgewater to the National Trades Councils’ Conference and to here. There is no double representation. There is no double accountability. We are all trade unionists. You won’t overturn what has happened in your delegations, but can we have some better discussions in delegations when this comes back, hopefully from a trade union, in next year’s Conference?

If there is ever going to be a revival of working-class militancy in this country, it has got to come from everybody at the grassroots, hasn’t it? We need to get back working-class consciousness. Well, let’s get it back by having a totally united movement which is this Congress and trades councils, not a separation. Thank you.

(Applause and cheering)

The President: Thank you, Dave. I am now going to go to the vote. Can I see all those in favour of Motion 77? All those against? That is overwhelmingly defeated. Thanks to everybody as that was a very good debate.

* *Motion 77 FELL.*

The President: Congress, I indicated earlier that I now intend to move to the outstanding business. The business is Motion 63: Small and rural schools; Motion 44: Homophobic and transphobic hate crime; the video presentation from Jacinda Ardern, the prime Minister of New Zealand; Emergency Motions 1, 2 and 3, and I will take the outstanding business in that order.

Small and rural schools

The President: I now call Motion 63: Small and rural schools. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by the NAHT, seconded by the NEU and Unite will be called to speak. Thank you.

Judy Shaw (*National Association of Head Teachers*) moved Motion 63. *She said:* I am the NAHT's President and a serving primary school head teacher leading a small infant and nursery school high on a hill above a former mill town in West Yorkshire, also known as "Happy Valley" these days.

A sentence in our school's OFSTED report says: "You know the community the school serves exceptionally well and you are focused on making sure that the school remains at the heart of it". Yes, but as I stare at the spreadsheets in my office, like

many, many of my colleagues, I feel a threat. Many primary schools are small schools. They are small but they are not insignificant because we know that size is not everything. In fact, sometimes it's a virtue. We know all our children as the individuals that they are. We all whoop for joy when little Melody finally, finally, spells "was" without a "z". We give C-J a round of applause because he has climbed one rung higher up the wall bars this week than he did last week. He glows with pride and he goes higher next time. Reggie brings his reading book and he falteringly reads the first four pages and it's a triumph. "God Bless Kipper, Floppy, Biff and Chip". He leaves festooned with stickers, worn as proudly as any gold medal. The school leaders see a lot of teaching and learning, and great teaching is a beautiful craft. When you see that moment, just that right moment, the words, the explanation, the demonstration, and then the child speaks, reads, writes, counts, jumps, sings and paints with more confidence, more skill and more knowledge, then a life has been changed for ever. It is powerful. It never fails to move and inspire me. Such is the power of a school.

Every community deserves a local school within easy reach that welcomes, teaches and supports their children. That is what is under threat and that is why we are here today. I read a definition of "Community", which is: "A group of people sharing common interests, attitudes and responsibilities". The first connection between families in a neighbourhood are so often formed at the school gates; strong, lasting friendships, often lasting a lifetime, and the common ground there is children, family life, the place they live, the quality of life, the future and communities growing outwards from those schools.

But small and rural schools and small and rural communities have had their hearts torn out over the course of many decades. The other institutions that were commonplace where people met, worked, found advice and socialised have disappeared for ever. I am talking about libraries, pubs, local shops, banks, Post Offices, community centres, youth clubs, transport links and places of work for thousands of TUC affiliated trades people. They have gone. They are all gone! Unless we act, many small and rural schools will follow. Unless we act, I don't know what is going to become of those young people growing up in those communities because we know that strong, thriving communities care and provide for their own. There is trust, support, hope and less opportunity for those maligned forces that would bring crime into the heart of our more isolated and rural communities.

Congress, despite the recent Government announcements about funding for schools, there are still enormous pressures facing them, and the crisis is particular acute for small and rural schools. Local schools, a bit like mine, familiar and unthreatening, are now the first places that families turn to in communities where the provision of local services has been under constant attack due to austerity. In my school, in my office, we help families make sense of official letters, overdue bills and eviction notices. We are the first to hear of an older sibling falling into crime. There is substance abuse, there's debt and domestic abuse. We listen. Of course, we can't solve it but we can listen, we can find, we can signpost help and support and we can do that because we are there still in the heart of those communities.

To those who say that small schools are not viable, I say they are vital. The TUC is a community, one with an influential voice and reach. We need your help now. The Government must recognise the invaluable contribution that small and rural schools

make to their community. Furthermore, every small and rural school must be sufficiently funded and supported. For goodness sake, let's change our language when we talk about funding our schools! Instead of talking about cost, let's talk about investment in young people, in education, in communities and in the future. Please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Judy. I call the NEU to second.

Robin Head (*National Education Union*) seconded Motion 63. *He said:* Congress, the importance of small schools to their communities is vital. Without them, small rural communities wither. Without sufficient funding, schools struggle to provide the resources for a fully rounded and enriched curriculum, enabling young people to engage. When these schools are closed, families with young children move away and don't come back. Without resources, small schools, both primary and secondary, find it difficult to provide the kind of education which enriches children's lives or, crucially, for the schools to compete in the pernicious but very real world of pass or fail OFSTED judgments. When it is the latter, as it often is, poor reputations, a negative press and a lack of student applications makes the cycle of deprivation, if not inevitably, far too commonplace.

Eight years ago in Somerset where I represent members, I wrote to all secondary governing bodies to advise them against selecting academy status in order to protect themselves financially. They did not heed my warning and many of them now suffer the consequences. Some of them have done relatively well, but a lot more struggle, and the small ones really do struggle, punished by OFSTED in a downward spiral as smaller cohorts of students leave the schools at the mercy of percentage swings in

exam-grade success. A couple of students moving away or arriving could determine whether the results are deemed acceptable or not. Swingeing cuts to LA funding, too, play their part as there is a disastrous depletion of support resources to draw upon. Students with SEN go without.

As rural primary schools merge or close altogether, then rural life suffers as well, with villages and small market towns becoming like ghost towns. As families drift away, other amenities like Post Offices, as you have heard, banks, libraries and community shops die. In turn, other local residents suffered there, too. Local arts groups wither as less important subjects drop off the school timetables and curriculums. The development of interest wanes, therefore, and those groups close as well.

On Christmas Day last year, in Froome, an NEU member, a head teacher, Rupert Kelly, opened his doors on Christmas Day to feed 20 families because they could not afford Christmas dinner. That is what small schools do.

Congress, schools across the country require much better investment to provide quality education for all in general. However, to support rural schools in particular, a funding scheme, simply based on backsides on seats, is simply not fit for purpose. It cannot and will not provide the kind of resources and security that small rural schools require to provide for their children and communities. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Robin. I call Unite.

Ivan Monkton (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 63. *He said:* Congress, I am a rural trade unionist and supporting this motion. Anybody who looks into the

history of the countryside will know that village schools are incredibly important. They have been important in the past and remain so today. My own deeply rural parish had two village schools. It no longer has any. These schools were often funded and founded by the “great and the good”. The great and the good nowadays are on the county council, they are running the county councils and they are far more interested in the state of their bank balances than they are in rural children.

Rural schools are under threat everywhere. If we take my own parish council and county council, schools have been under threat and have been closed for 30 years. In the last 10 years school closures have accelerated. The school that my own children went to — Witton School in Radnorshire — despite huge amounts of volunteer labour, was closed a couple of years ago. This is bad for the community, the facilities and the cohesion that comes with having a school in the village, in the rural area, with facilities for concerts, the plays, the fetes, those things that bind the community together are gone. It is incredibly bad for the children. Just imagine a five-year old who has to get to the pick-up point and then travel for up to an hour a day to get to their primary school.

Unite, via the National Union of Agricultural Workers, the then T&G, has always campaigned on rural issues. In the past teachers have been there to support agricultural workers. Anybody who doesn't know about the Burston School Strike, I suggest you read it up and try and get along to the Burston School Rally to see how we can work together in the countryside.

Everybody in this room needs to work together for the rural working class. Please support this motion, support trade unionists in the countryside and fight for a Labour

government because that is the only way you are going to stop these closures.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Ivan, and to all our speakers. I will now move to the vote on Motion 63: Small and rural schools. All those in favour? Any against? That is unanimously carried.

* *Motion 63 was CARRIED*

Homophobic and transphobic hate crime

The President: I now call Motion 44: Homophobic and transphobic hate crime. The General Council supports the motion. It is going to be moved by Julia Neal on behalf of the TUC LGBT+ Conference. I then intend to call Prospect to second, and I then intend to call, in the following order, NAHT, PCS, ASLEF and Unite.

Julia Neal (*National Education Union*) moved Motion 44. *She said:* I am moving this motion on behalf of the TUC Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender+ Conference. Congress, recent statistics show that one-in-five LGBT people have experienced hate crime because of their orientation or gender identity. Two-in-five trans people have experienced hate crime and, sadly, four-in-five of all of these crimes go unreported. Young people are particularly affected, and BAME people are targeted in greater numbers than their white counterparts. Disabled LGBT+ people also fair disproportionately.

There is a climate of fear out *there*. Make no mistake. Rising hostility towards the LGBT+ community is made worse by mainstream politicians who spread the message of hate. Only this summer a one-woman show by Brexit MP. Ann Widdecombe, had to be cancelled in protest at her apparent endorsement of gay conversion therapy. According to Ann, “Science might one day produce an answer to being gay”. MP, Nick Bowles, commented: “If only science could produce an answer to the blight of poisonous bigotry that is Ann Widdecombe”. (*Applause*)

Congress, dangerous rhetoric can easily gain traction, and hate speech is rife at the moment, often, I am afraid to say, encouraged by the Brexit Party, which can be homophobic, racist and fascist in its tendencies. And other far-right parties are at it, too, contributing towards hostility and prejudice towards minority groups.

Our temporary Prime Minister is not averse to the odd homophobic jibe either. The recent assault on two LGBT women on a London bus brought further attention to the rising hostility, and only last month, *Guardian* journalist, Owen Jones, was subjected to a frightening assault outside a London pub. He has warned that divisive rhetoric is emboldening some on the far right to become violent. In January, after he spoke at an anti-austerity demonstration, he was subjected to homophobic abuse by an aggressive group of pro-Brexit supporters. A posting on social media said: “We are watching you. We are going to get you”. On his attack, Jones said: “I get the headlines. Many minorities don’t”.

A stark warning is needed about the impact of austerity measures and the socio-economic disparity which breeds division and the rise of hate crime. All this leads to a toxic mix which we must not be complacent about.

As a teacher, I can well remember the threats to the LGBT community under section 28, scaring educators and depriving many young people of an inclusive and supportive education. Now, only last time, the *No Outsiders Programme* caused schools and educators to be threatened in an intimidating protest that sought to drive the most disturbing agenda of misinformation and bullying tactics, and it continues.

Congress, this is going backwards to a hostile environment. Hate crimes are now increasing, often targeted at those at the intersection of marginalised communities. Homophobic and transphobic hate crimes often include stalking, harassment and violent assault, and they have more than doubled in England and Wales. Most go unreported, and the statistics hugely underestimate the scale of violence. We must take a visible stand against hate crime. We must call out on-line abuse. Let local businesses know if you witnessed an incident on their premises. Where there is abuse on accessing public services, such as housing or social services, report it. There is still a long way to go before LGBT+ people can feel safe.

Within the TUC, this motion calls for affiliates to work together, to be warned against complacency and to be visible allies. Remember, hate crime against LGBT people has increased by 78% since 2013. Look on the BBC website today. Prosecutions have fallen from 20% to 8% over that period.

We call on the TUC to organise an inclusive campaign, engaging people around universal human rights. There also needs to be increasing awareness of the intersections between LGBT rights and the black and disabled workers and the women's movement. Let's hear the voiced of LGBT people through this work.

Create campaigning resources and explore ways of highlighting the fact that LGBT+ workers still face violence and discrimination. Through training programmes, a leadership school and union activism, we can make a significant contribution to eradicating the blight of hate speech and hate crime from this country. Thank you.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Julia. I call Prospect to second.

Claire Mullaly (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 44. *She said:* Congress, what we do today is a test of us as trade unionists, as people in the future are going to ask “What did we at TUC 2019 do about the explosion in LGBT+ hate crime?” Did we take action? Did we fight for a review of existing legislation and how it is applied by the police and prosecution service? Did we commit to creating an army of activists and leaders to fight for the rights of the marginalised and most affected?

Congress, this is a quote from a hate-crime victim from the 2018 *Justice Inspectorate Report*. “When you’re a minority like I am, experiencing hate crime is part of your DNA. This is the United Kingdom. This is 2019 and this is our test of history”. From the same report, Jessica, a trans woman waited two weeks from submitting a report before the police contacted her. Then, when she was interviewed, she was asked questions that focused on her being trans at a level of detail that was not relevant to her case, which she found inappropriate and offensive. In a separate instance of Jessica reporting an incident, the police questioned her view that she had experienced a hate crime. Jessica said that she will not report a hate crime again.

Add to the mix of a hostile environment, we know of people from all over the globe who are fleeing persecution for being LGBT end up in the UK. We know that police forces are running immigration checks on persons of interest. When I looked further into this, both victims and suspects are persons of interest. It is no wonder that, according to Stonewall, only one-in-five hate incidents and hate crimes are being reported. There are so many failings, and this is systemic but not isolated. Even the Citizens Advice Bureau have published advice on how to counter police who may try to label your hate incident as simply anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour is me playing loud music. It is not the hate incidents that are happening to our most marginalised people based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

These systemic problems go right the way to 10 Downing Street. Just last week, *The Times* reported that the Government have been polling on divisive issues, including trans rights, to test whether they can be used to win votes in northern, working-class communities. This weaponising breeds hate and it must be fought.

Even coming into Congress today I was approached by a woman representing a group who told me that, as a woman, if I share my spaces with trans women I am in danger. If that isn't hate speech, what is? (*Applause*) Congress, our existing legislation is inadequate, our institutions are inadequate and the political will for fighting this is inadequate. The TUC must fight like it has never fought before. We must show leadership and create the future leaders of our Movement. We stand on the shoulders of giants but now it is time for new giants to strengthen the movement. Let's get the TUC leadership schools, like the TUC LGBT+ leadership school that I attended three years ago, up and running again. We must equip ourselves to win this fight.

Congress, please support this motion. Give us the tools so that we can turn the tide on hate. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Claire. I call the NAHT.

Sarah Hannafin (*National Association of Head Teachers*) spoke in support of Motion 44. *She said:* Congress, I am a first-time delegate and speaker. *(Applause)* NAHT members work in the majority of schools in this country. The teaching workforce numbers in excess of half-a-million professionals. The pupil population is around nine million strong. The education profession has the potential to make a positive impact on society that few could match.

The Government attempt to limit the curriculum through imposing multiple high-stakes accountability measures and through policies which aim to focus that curriculum only on knowledge, reciting times tables, identifying ‘fronted’ adverbials and narrowing the curriculum available to young people by imposing the E-Bac. But our schools take our children’s education much further than that. What is truly important is developing the ability of children and young children to enquire, question and challenge.

The rampant bigotry identified in the motion can only be checked if all young people are taught about difference, taught about tolerance and respect and taught about equality. Best practice in education means taking a whole-school approach to inclusivity, to equality and to rights and responsibilities. We have all seen the stories in the newspapers and on TV about schools which take this approach coming under attack from groups of people who, quite often, have nothing to do with the schools

themselves and want nothing more than to disrupt the school from fulfilling their commitment to equality and diversity and the teaching of LGBT+ inclusive relationships.

School leaders, teachers and staff have had to endure abuse and threats against their careers and their personal safety. In Britain, in the 21st century, you should not have to be brave to be an educator. You should not have to have courage to teach children about fundamental values, hard won and defended over generations. You should not have to take personal risk to discharge your duties as a committed public servant. Alas, courage and bravery are sometimes the very things our teaching professionals need. How can we expect them to continue to do the right thing, teach the values so important to our democracy, teach children to be discerning young adults or give young people the skills to question the popular refrain if school leaders, teachers and staff are so at risk? Please support this motion. In doing so, you will help foster the conditions under which schools can play their part and help renew a conversation about equality that will deliver a stronger future as well as protecting those immediately at risk. Thank you. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Sarah. I call PCS.

Jackie Green (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 44. *She said:* Congress, a hate crime is defined as “Any criminal offence perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice”. A *Radio 5 Live* investigation, which was reported today, so it’s in today’s news so this would not have been in my speech yesterday, sent a freedom of information request to 46 police forces. The information received from 38, so 38 sent full responses, showed a

decrease in prosecutions and a decrease in reporting crimes. You have got to report the crime but people have to see that once they have reported the crime there is a point to that and it was followed through by there being a prosecution. That needs fixing because the crimes that are reported are not going any further, and these are crimes that are homophobic, transphobic and biphobic hate crime. No one should suffer violence for being a minority group or a group that is seen as somehow different. Anyone seeing the photographs recently of the two women attacked for being gay on the bus would, surely, be horrified, but that is a tiny snapshot of what my LGBT+ family suffer regularly. Everyone has the right to be protected from discrimination and violence — everyone. The freedom of expression does not cover speech and expression that incites violence, hatred or discrimination, and we have to call this out for what it is, and not hide behind culture or religion.

Trump, Johnson and others incite violence every time their hate-filled comments are broadcast in whatever medium they are broadcast.

The 17th May is the day of expressions for gay people. I am not a particularly romantic person, and my partner held my hand the other day. I thought, “It’s not the 17th May. What’s she doing?” But that was her showing, despite the fact that we were walking by a church, that she was going to hold my hand and we had not somehow gone backwards in time. We all know of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, but “phobia” is fear. This is not about fear. It’s about ignorance. If it is not tackled what does our society become? Hate-filled abuse must never be normalised. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, human. Support this motion.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Jackie. I call ASLEF next.

Darran Brown (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) spoke in support of Motion 44. *He said:* Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. Here we are gathered today in Brighton, a safe bastion for LGBT+ people. There's Soho in London, Canal Street in Manchester and Queen's Court in Leeds, all big cities with vibrant and safe LGBT communities. Or so you would believe. However, we all, too often, see images on the news of LGBT+ people covered in blood, beaten, assaulted and devastated. What we see is just the tip of the iceberg. I am sorry to mention the "B" word, but since that vote, a door has been opened where people viewed as different can be freely abused. These hate-motivated attacks take place on buses, on trains, in the streets and in the workplace, with little regard for the consequences and the few prosecutions that follow.

Thatcher's section 28 worked to push LGBT+ people back into Narnia. That is where they think we come from. Oh, and Kansas. I'll tell you what, I'd rather be a friend of Dorothy's than a friend of Boris's. (*Laughter and applause*) Now we see schools, teachers and students facing daily protests for teaching about equality and showing respect for all. There are even Conservative MPs who believe that the teaching of LGBT equality should be done at the home. Well, if you don't want it in schools, who is going to teach it in the home? Education is the best way to break the cycle of hate. We will not be going back to the state of section 28.

For those who like figures, you won't like these figures. 40% of all reported hate crime was violent. Four-in-five, that is 81% of victims, don't report to the police, and I am sorry to say that I am part of that 81% but no more. No more! The worst

affected are trans. Two-in-five trans people report abuse. This has been trebling in number between 2017 and 2018. The BBC this morning put forward a report saying that 13,500 hate crimes so far this year have been reported, with only 8% prosecuted. That is down from 20% in 2014. These figures disappoint the LGBT+ community, but it is no surprise because we do seem to get sidelined.

We need to hold our politicians to account to ensure there are laws to protect, that schools, colleges and universities have provisions to teach equality and respect for all. Hate, prejudice and intolerance are taught. Let us not accept these. Let us, trade unionists, be at the forefront for the fight for equality and bring an end to those images of bloodied and battered LGBT victims. Please support this motion.
(Applause)

The President: Finally, I call Unite.

Lorraine Mannion (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 44. *She said:* The trade union Movement has a proud heritage of solidarity for the oppressed in society, from the battle of Cable Street to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign of today. Today's political landscape of hate and blame, which includes the growing threat of LGBT+ phobia and hate crime, is designed to deflect blame from the real cause of misery endured by the working class and those marginalised by society. This climate of hate emboldens those who would seek to reverse the progress made under the Equality Act 2010. Congress, we live under a Government that continues to refuse even to bring in section 40 of the Equality Act on third-party harassment, which means that we are not protected by law if a customer, client or contractor harasses us. Even if this section is reinstated, we still have to be harassed three times before our employer is liable.

We live under a Government whose policies increase discrimination and harassment and legitimise far-right ideology. Those far-right groups are trying to gain a foothold in our communities to play people off against one another. We have not forgotten what happened to LGBT+ people under fascism. We, as trade unionists, can and must tackle homophobic and transphobic hate crime with a message of class unity. That is why Unite feels it is more important than ever that the Conservative Government's vicious austerity policies are exposed. In this way, we continue the leadership of the union Movement in the fight for equality.

Congress, let's celebrate what we have in common and respect our differences. Let's reject hatred in favour of hope because we are the many and those who seek to divide us are the few. I support this motion. *(Applause)*

The President: Thank you, Lorraine. I am sure that we all agree that they were amazing speeches. I am going now to put Motion 44 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Thank you. Any against? Thank you. I hope the unanimous carriage of the motion sends a really powerful message from this movement that we will not tolerate any hate crimes or hate speech. Thank you, Conference. *(Applause)*

* *Motion 44 was CARRIED.*

The President: Conference, just to give you an update, we are anticipating that we should all be done now within half-an-hour. As I advised earlier, we are now going to hear from Jacinda Ardern, the Prime Minister of New Zealand and a good friend of the trade unions in New Zealand and here in the UK. We have a short video message.

(Video presentation from Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand)

The President: Delegates, I am sure you will agree that that was an inspiring message and rallying call for us to challenge racism and fascism in our communities, workplaces and around the globe. I hope delegates enjoyed that video as much as we did. Doesn't it just show how tough the TUC recruitment processes are? *(Laughter)* I am sure that you will now look at all the staff of the TUC in a new light. I hope Congress enjoyed that video, and it was great to have that message.

We are now moving on to the final three motions to Congress, which are the emergency motions. I am going to start with Emergency Motion 1: HS2 Access to Workers. The General Council supports the motion, which is to be moved by Unite, seconded by ASLEF and the GMB has requested to speak.

HS2: Access to workers

Gail Cartmael *(Unite the Union)* moved Emergency Motion 1. *She said:* Congress, the emergency motion is about trade union access. As we have just heard from New Zealand, it has a proven transitional trade union access arrangement. Yesterday, we heard from our own equally wonderful Labour MP, Laura Pidcock, who announced that Labour would provide the same rights in the UK as there are in New Zealand. What a fantastic announcement!

HS2 is good for jobs and for the future prosperity of the west Midlands and northern England, much needed investment in communities starved by a Tory decade of

neglect. HS2 should be a positive force, a legacy, a celebration of the skills of the workers who build it and will run it. Yet we know that Boris Johnson is playing political football having ordered a review with a hostile Secretary of State. HS2 needs us. Apart from the Tory game playing, the project is already blighted by more than just a whiff of union busting. Unite is battling to get access to construction workers on HS2 at Euston. The industry norm is union access to site canteens. The Euston demolition and clearance work is managed by a joint venture, comprising Costain and Skanska, two companies that are proven blacklisters, two companies who have claimed to have changed their ways and two companies whose actions show that that leopard does not change its spots. Frequently, construction workers chalk up 60 hours a week, constantly changing sites and employers. It is tough on them and it is tough on their families. So it is standard practice for union officials to speak, assist and recruit members when they take their breaks in the workplace canteen. It is a standard practice that Costain-skanska has refused to allow. Their reasoning for barring Unite is both disingenuous and sinister. They say that workers need to decompress after being involved in the removal of century-old skeletons on site. If workers are traumatised, this is when they most need their union, and the workers say that they want us on the inside. Construction has suicide rates three times the national average, and massive mental health issues caused by long hours and working away from home.

The successes we have had in tackling this epidemic is where we have Unite reps trained as mental health first-aiders and workers approaching them without fear of losing their jobs. These Unite reps are, literally, life savers. So shame on you, Costain, and shame on you, Skanska for using the dead to justify your union busting. Congress. HS2 is the client. They have the power as they control the purse strings.

They can demand that all their contractors follow the framework agreement signed by the TUC and HS2, a good agreement, that should underpin union access and workers' rights.

Conference, join us in our demand that HS2 tells their contractors to play by the rules. This may seem a trivial issue, especially as you want to go home, but unless we get the industrial relations right at the start of the mammoth HS2 development, history shows that problems will blight the project throughout its lifetime. That is exactly what happened on Crossrail, with low productivity mixed with bullying and intimidation of workers, coupled with blacklisting in all its forms.

We ask our movement to stand united and say that HS2 must be built and run with trade unions provided fair access to the workforce free from fear. Congress, we have not sat on our hands. We are visible and present, recruiting members and providing advice. That's how we found out about the underpayment of holidays among other problems on site. We resolved those issues and we will fight on. We expect nothing less than union jobs on union rates. Please support. (*Applause*)

The President: Thank you, Gail. ASLEF to second.

Mick Whelan (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) seconded Emergency Motion 1. *He said:* I am very proud to second this emergency motion. Strangely enough, I spend an awful lot of time talking about HS2, and I get an awful lot of communications about HS2. I used to have my own stalkers. There was this wonderful couple who don't quite share my view on HS2 who used to turn up

everywhere I spoke with this big white elephant. They are very people, but I am very glad that they are not here today. *(Applause)*

Of course, our view of HS2 was slightly different to the one that is currently being delivered. We wanted one that delivered for every community in the UK, that started in the south-east and started in Scotland at the same time and met in the middle, delivered our green targets, gave us a better future for freight and a better future for integrated transport. Unfortunately, you have to fight for what you have. We sometimes forget that this was a Labour Party project post the bankers' crisis that was going to create 100,000 real jobs. But it was also going to be a legacy project. I was there on the day that Frances signed the agreement with our sister trade unions and the GMB and Unite present as well. We were told it is to be a community project and they told us what they were going to do for every community that HS2 touched. They told us about the civil engineering legacy for future generations of apprenticeships. We thought, yes, for major projects this is a major way forward. They also assured us that unions would be recognition rights, we would have access and people would be protected. So I am going to go out and keep campaigning.

That is why I am against Mr Grayling. I spent a lot of time arguing against Mr Grayling because one of the first things he did was to take out the connection from HS2 into HS1. Surely, the people of Manchester, the north-east and the north-west should have the same right to step on a train and some day pop up in Frankfurt, France or Amsterdam as those people who come to London? *(Applause)*

Of course, behind all of this, we are trade unionists. Of course, my next battle will be with Mr Shapps, because he has now organised a review of HS2. We don't know the

basis of the review, but it's a project that we have already spent £7 billion on, a project that is vital if we are going to have a freight industry in the future, so I do wonder now if this is their magic money tree and the money they are now spending to get back into power they will reclaim from our projects.

What we need to do is not remember where we come from. Most of us had our social conscience or our class determination pricked by our families. My dad was a bricklayer-labourer, and all the things that are in this motion today were all the things that happened to him in the '70. When he ultimately fell off a scaffold and broke his back resulting in him never being able to work again, it was on a site with no union recognition. It was with no redress and no future. I am going to campaign for HS2 and I am going to fight for HS2 but I don't want an HS2 built on the back of no workers' rights, no future and no safety. Support the emergency motion. (*Applause*)

Justin Bowden (*GMB*) spoke in support of Emergency Motion 1. *He said:* Congress, this emergency motion is about HS2 and access to workers. GMB supports HS2 but this country has a dismal record of delivering major infrastructure projects and jobs are already on the line. We need to secure this investment and the highest possible employment standards. With HS2's many challenges, this is a perfect opportunity to establish the expectations for publicly-funded projects. The employment legacy of HS2 must be a lasting change to the culture of an industry beset by mistrust and practices that belong more to the 19th century than the 21st.

As a construction union, GMB will defend the right of access as laid out in our national agreements. Like Unite, GMB's experience of HS2 Limited and its contractors falls well short of the high standards we expect on a publicly-funded

project. We want HS2 to be known as a union project. We want to help deliver it on time, on budget and with no injuries, but we need the employers to take a positive approach, too.

Of course, we support the initial 2016 agreement between HS2 Limited and the TUC, but three years on it is time for standards which at least match the other agreements negotiated on other major projects. Colleagues, HS2 needs its friends. Just look at those trying to tear it down, the laughably named Taxpayers' Alliance and the so-called Brexit Party, pumping out Facebook adverts against it. There are even one or two Labour politicians who appear to have forgotten the huge importance that HS2 will have for jobs and the economy. We want to make a full-on defence of the benefits of HS2 but we will not stand by whilst some contractors try to weasel their way out of doing the decent thing. Denying access for unions to organise is a violation of workers' freedom of association and contrary to the core principles that HS2 signed up to under the 2016 agreement.

Congress, we demand that all contractors adopt the best and most ambitious working practices fit for the 21st century that deliver on legacy promises and leave behind once and for all the dark past of blacklisting and anti-trade union practices that brought shame on the industry and untold pain on our members. If contractors refuse to meet these standards, then the message is simple: Get out of the way, stop taking taxpayers' money, leave this project and let our members get on with delivering the world-class infrastructure that this country needs and deserves. Please support. Thank you.

(Applause)

The President: Thank you, Justin, and to all our speakers. I now put Emergency Motion 1 to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried.

* *Emergency Motion 1 was CARRIED.*

Royal Mail dispute

The President: I now call Emergency Motion 2: Royal Mail dispute, to be moved by the CWU and seconded by Unite.

Terry Pullinger (*Communication Workers Union*) moved Emergency Motion 2. *He said:* Congress, I am proudly, on behalf of our loyal and brave postal workers, moving this emergency motion. I am glad that all the delegates have stayed in their seats to listen to this extremely serious situation because this has the potential to be one of the biggest industrial actions taking place for years in this country. Solidarity to every single worker and every union at the moment that is taking industrial action in this country in pursuit of the policies that we have spent all week putting our hands up in support of. The point is that those people taking action now are about to be joined by 120,000 postal workers! (*Applause*)

Yesterday up and down this country we had what we called “Gate meeting day”; proper union meetings in the workplace. Our members in nearly 600 of our sites walked out of their place of work, stood on pavements, stood in car parks and had a proper union meeting with their reps and voted unanimously to support this trade union. (*Applause*) That’s how we generate a massive “Yes” vote.

We had an agreement made in April 2018. In 2017 we went into dispute. You see the result of that ballot up in this motion, because the employer then wanted to take us on. They fancied their chances because of the absurd laws in this country around trade unions. We absolutely smashed that legislation with our return and our “Yes” vote. Don’t forget that there are 120,000 people being balloted, and we will do it again. This dispute is about principle and honour, and we are not prepared to drop that with this employer, Royal Mail. We had an agreement in 2018, and despite that massive “Yes” vote, we never took one day’s industrial action. We got the agreement we wanted, we protected our members’ standard of living, employment security and pension security. We got an agreement with the employer that we would work together to protect this great public service that should never have been privatised. We want to work together for the next three, five, seven years, planning out this industry, having mutual-interest solutions to the challenges that we face. That is an agreement made in good faith which is now being broken. Why is it being broken? It’s being broken because within weeks of us getting that agreement the CEO of Rail Mail left and the Royal Mail board decided to appoint someone else. You would think that they would appoint someone who had read that agreement, had empathy with that agreement, was prepared to work with this trade union and was prepared to work to that agreement knowing the strength of this trade union. But who did they appoint, and people are going to try and make this personal? It ain’t personal to go back. It’s personal to the Royal Mail board. They are responsible for appointing him because he is what he is. It isn’t anything that this trades union Congress will like. They appointed him; they’re responsible. The Royal Mail board can stop this now if they want to and, trust me, they’ll be listening and we will highlight every single one of them. We will shine the light on them because they can stop this before it deteriorates into something extremely bitter.

What did they see in Rico Back that was so attractive that he was the right man to be given the honour and the privilege to be the CEO of the Great British postal service. Rico Back is a German national who lives in Switzerland. He lives in Switzerland because he is a multi-millionaire. He doesn't even live in Britain, yet he's been given the keys to the great British postal service, a magnificent public service which has served this country for over five hundred years. Amongst his own peers, he's allegedly known as "Mr Greedy". He has made his fortune by putting together a network of small parcel companies around this country, which is called GLS. Royal Mail bought it so they could have a European wing. It's a company that, at its best, employs about 17,000 people, but he's the right man, according to the Royal Mail board, for this great postal service that employs in excess of 160,000 people. He ran a business with 17,000 people. He has made his personal wealth off the back of working people.

GLS, as our union colleagues across Europe have told us, is a disgraceful employer. We have been told that in Germany they are anti-union, union-haters, union-breakers and they have employment models which are akin to modern-day slavery. That's the person who the Royal Mail board thought was fit to come into the Royal Mail postal service. He is out to break this trade union, to break up this great British postal service, make loads of money and break our members' backs, and this union will absolutely not have it! Do or die we will fight these people every single step of the way! *(Applause)*

The Royal Mail board decided — apparently, they've got no money — to give him a £6 million golden hello just to come and take the job, even though they owned the

company that he was heading up. Nearly £6 million! They've given him a reward package of £2.7 million a year, and guaranteed to him 17% more than they did to his female predecessor. They are paying him a hundred times more than a postal worker. This is the world that this Congress is saying we want to fight against. That is why we are going into dispute with these people. He is responsible for what I believe is a corporate raid. They have lowered the share price —

The President: Terry, you need to wind-up.

Terry Pullinger: — because they want to invest. He has hoovered up a million shares in this company and then he will use them to radically change this great British postal service. It will cost our members thousands of jobs and he will walk away, having more than trebled his money on those shares. It's an absolute national disgrace. The postal workers of this country will prove to every single one of you that principle, honour and pride does still matter. They will make you proud to be trade unionists. I say to every union in this hall, if you are committed and passionate about the things that we have carried this week, including the top table, you will be visible, vocal and physically supporting the postal workers when we save this great British institution. Thank you. (*A standing ovation*)

The President: Thank you, Terry. Tony.

Tony Burke (*Unite the Union*) seconded Emergency Motion 2. *He said:* Congress, I am the Assistant General Secretary of Unite and proud to support the CWU in this emergency motion, to show solidarity and to stand with our friends — Terry, Dave and the CWU — who have eloquently outlined what this dispute is all about.

Congress, Unite organises managers and senior staff in the Royal Mail so the CWU's dispute is one that Unite feels we have no choice but to support. On Sunday, in Mark's address, he said that it was important that all unions stand together to win disputes with employers, and here is an example of how we are going to do just that.

Our managers and members in the Royal Mail have seen threats to their jobs, job security threatened and an environment that has seen morale drop to an all-time low. As Terry said, in 2017 we made a similar pledge to the CWU and all of our members when Royal Mail attacked pay and conditions in this continuing race to the bottom.

Congress, the future of Royal Mail, as Terry has outlined, cannot be built on sand and the weak foundations of privatisation, on deregulation and ever more insecure contracting and employment models. We support the fight against derecognition, against privatisation and we will continue to support the campaign to defend our Royal Mail and the Post Office, returning it to where it belongs, in public ownership, under a Labour government led by Jeremy Corbyn. *(Applause)* We are not prepared to stand and see this attack on the CWU and we will stand with the CWU to fight back against this derecognition and the attacks being made on their members. As we said, we will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them in the fight for this vital public service, and the dedicated and skilled people who work for it. If you want any more information on the dispute, the CWU has lots of information. There is also excellent coverage in this morning's *Morning Star*.

Comrades, Unite is proud to stand with our colleagues in the CWU. We are prepared to fight back. I know that Congress is going to do the same, so I ask you to support the emergency motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The President: Thanks, Terry and Tony. I put Emergency Motion 2 to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried unanimously. I am sure we will all take up Terry's challenge and be as visible as possible as we can, as the CWU will undoubtedly win the ballot and, if needs be, take a dispute. So good luck to the CWU and to all our comrades in there for a victory in this important dispute. *(Applause)* .

* *Emergency Motion 2 was CARRIED.*

Respect Asda workers

The President: Finally, Congress, I am going to move to Emergency Motion 3: Respect Asda workers. This emergency motion is to be moved by the GMB, and seconded by the CWU.

Neil Derrick *(GMB)* moved Emergency Motion 3. *He said:* Colleagues, there is an Asda store in nearly every town and city in England, Wales and Scotland, and in everyone of those stores there are women and men wearing the Asda uniform, smiling as instructed and facing the sack on 2nd November. For dismissal awaits in eight weeks' time for anyone who will not or cannot sign a new contract. There are thousands of them. It is the infamous Contract 6, a contract that will force them to work bank holidays, reduce their hours, cut their pay and cut their breaks, all in the name of so-called business need and greater flexibilities. This is from a multi-million

pounds business, controlled from afar by Wal-Mart, which is pursuing ever-greater profits by squeezing more and more out of its long-suffering workforce.

The fact that this new contract is called Contract 6 tells you all you need to know about the flexibility that our members have already given Asda time and time again. Asda is trying to combat the Aldis and the Lidl's of this world by going to war with its own workers in a race to the bottom, instead of competing for customers on quality and value and setting higher standards in a sector which is desperate for responsible retailers.

I was outside an Asda store in Sheffield last Thursday demonstrating with our members. I talked to four women who, between them, had 111 years of service with Asda. Not one of them is going to sign the contract. Jean Foster, who is the chair of our National Shop Stewards Group, sitting in our delegation, has given 39 years of her life to Asda. They are all now under notice. They have been told that if they are sick, once they are under notice, they won't get paid sick pay. It's a disgrace, colleagues.

Congress, the Yorkshire founders of Asda, who built the business in Leeds in 1949 to be part of and for the community, will be spinning in their graves. There are loyalty cards a plenty for customers in the stores, so how about it at Asda? Why not show some loyalty to your own staff? (*Applause*) Today's Asda price, it seems, is losing your job. That's the price you pay for not signing up to the Asda way, never mind whether you have got a disability, caring responsibilities and never mind whether you just want a decent family life and a good quality work-life balance. Asda's answer is: Not on our watch! The GMB is now in a national dispute with Asda. GMB members will be demonstrating outside stores every week, in every town and in every

city until Asda relent. So come along and join us when you see those demonstrations. When you are shopping in Asda, tell the workers you are with them. Asda, if you're watching, and I know you are, come back to the negotiating table. Look after your customers in the best way possible by looking after your loyal and hardworking staff first and foremost. Asda, respect your workers. Please support the motion.
(Applause)

The President: Thank you very much, Neil. CWU to second.

Angela Teeling (*Communication Workers Union*) seconded Emergency Motion 3.
She said: Congress, this emergency motion is very important. It sums up the whole of the week of why we are here. It bookends what we started with, with a *New Deal for Working People* and we are ending with the same thing. This is very similar to the Royal Mail dispute that we are involved in in our union. When I was looking up, I found a quote of the CEO who looks after Asda, and he said: "I am immensely proud of our colleagues for their hard work in 2018 to keep the business moving in the right way". Well, I don't know what "proud" is to him, but I know that I was brought up by my mum and dad to think that "proud" is something completely different.

We've got to carry on. We've got to fight with our Asda workers. I've got a little badge *here* and it says: "Changing the world of work for good". That's what we have got to fight to do. Not only have we got to fight to change it for good but we've got to start by keeping what we have and then making that good. Our Asda workers have worked really hard, and they always do. When you go into the shop — everybody goes into them. There is one where everybody lives — everybody can join in with this campaign for GMB and their members. We can all give them support. We can

all show, we can all turn up at the next rally and we can all go and stand outside our shops. What I don't want is for people to clap at the end and put their hand up if you're not going to go, if you're not going to stand with the workers and you're not going to be visible and show your support because that's what we all need to do together. (*Applause*)

We are not getting a fair share of the profits. This highlights *this* and this is what we are all fighting for. As I said, we started the week talking about these campaigns. I am now throwing it out to everybody in the hall, or even if you are watching these proceedings on the telly somewhere, you've got a shop where you are. You go down and give those members your support. You speak to those people on the tills. You wave to those people in the warehouses. You show them that we are getting a new deal for working people and that we are fighting for it. So if you do raise your hand, make sure you are raising it to say that you are going to go and support these people. If you are not going to go, don't raise your hand. I second. (*Applause*)

The President: Thanks very much to Neil and Angela. We had two fabulous speeches to end. I am sure we do want everybody to raise their hands. Can we show: all those in favour of Emergency Motion 3? Any against? That is unanimous. Solidarity to all our comrades in Asda as well, and I am sure the GMB and the CWU will take that back. (*Applause*)

* *Emergency Motion 3 was CARRIED.*

Accounts

The President: Congress, I now draw your attention to Appendix 3 from page 90 of the General Council Report, which is the TUC Accounts. Unfortunately, the auditor is not able to attend Congress today due to a serious illness. We hope you can join us in wishing him well. Does Congress accept the Accounts as set out in Appendix 3.
(Agreed)

* *The Accounts, as set out in Appendix 3, were ACCEPTED.*

The President: Congress, please note that under rule 15(a) and following a full tender of the TUC's auditing services, the General Council has appointed Crowe as our auditors going forward from next year. Crowe has widespread experience in the third sector, including with a number of unions. Congress would wish to record their thanks to BDO and predecessor companies and their staff for the support in this and previous years.

Appendices 1, 2, 4 and 5

The President: Congress, I now call Appendices 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Congress, I would also like to draw your attention to an omission in Appendix 2: Committee Membership. Steve Gillan should be listed as a member under the Executive Committee section.

Closing of Congress

The President: Delegates, that completes the formal business of Congress. Can I now ask Congress to adopt the General Council Report?

* *The General Council Report was ADOPTED.*

Vote of thanks

The President: Congress, I would now like to move a few vote of thanks. First of all, can I ask you all to join with me to thank all those who have contributed to the smooth running of Congress. They will be brief because of the time but these comments are sincere and heartfelt.

Can I thank, first of all, Mary Bousted, for her role as Vice President. (*Applause*) She has, on behalf of the General Council, looked after the timing of the speakers this week. I can confirm that they were still overwhelmingly male and they were still overwhelmingly full-time officers, but most people did stick to the time and I want to thank you for that.

I also want to move a sincere vote of thanks to all the staff at the Brighton Conference Centre for all they have done to ensure that we have run smoothly. (*Applause*) Let's also not forget our fantastic stewards because I think the TUC stewards have been really brilliant this week.

Can I also give special thanks to Colin McAvoy, who is retiring today. He has worked at the Brighton Conference Centre for more than 23 years and done many conferences, including about 20 PCS ones. So I particularly thank you, Colin. A big round of applause for Colin. (*Applause*)

Can I also thank the verbatim reporters. They really are tremendous when you realise how fast some of us speak. I also want to thank the tellers, the scrutineers, the stage crew, QED, and the musicians who have worked so hard throughout the week. Can we all give all of those people a really big vote of thanks. (*Applause*)

I also want, particularly, to draw your attention to a TUC member of staff today for whom it is their last day of service after 40 years. I want Congress to join me in giving a special round of applause for the long hours that Jackie Williams puts in. She does all the scripts for all the TUC staff, and me in particular. At the end of the day, many people have thanked me. I can just tell you that I read the words that Jackie produces. She does a fabulous job and has worked here for 40 years. Can we all give Jackie a big round of applause. (*Applause*)

Congress, I now want you to join with me in saying farewell to colleagues leaving the General Council. Earlier in the year, Sally Hunt from UCU retired from the General Council. Sally has served on the General Council since 2002 and was a fabulous President. Can I ask Congress to give Sally a round of applause. (*Applause*)

I would also like you to join with me in wishing all the very best to Janice Godrich from PCS, who has not been with us this year. We would have loved her to have been with us for most of the year, but she has suffered ill-health, as people will know. She is making a come back to full health, and I would like you to join me in wishing all the very best to Janice. (*Applause*)

I would also like you to join me in thanking Vicky Knight from the UCU who left in June. Can we give Vicky a round of applause. (*Applause*) Also Nick Cusack from

the PFA who spoke really well here earlier in the week. Can we wish Nick all the very best and give Nick a round of applause. (*Applause*)

I am sure that Congress will want to join me in thanking all of those colleagues and everyone else who has really been committed on our behalf over the last 12 months.

Finally, Congress, I can announce that the democratic wheels of the TUC has been in motion this morning while you were all having your breakfast. The next President of the TUC who will take office immediately at the close of Congress is Ged Nichols from Accord. Can I wish him well. I hope he enjoys his year as President as much as I have done. Can I ask you to give a round of applause to congratulate Ged. (*Applause*)

Vote of Thanks to the President

The General Secretary: I call on Kevin Courtney to move the Vote of Thanks to the President.

Kevin Courtney (*General Council*): Congress, I am here on behalf of all of us to move a vote of thanks to Mark Serwotka, not just for the fantastic way that he has conducted Congress this week but also for the way he has carried out the role of President during the whole of this tumultuous year. I think no one can gainsay that Mark has carried out all of those duties simply brilliantly. Mark, your conduct at Congress has been generous, humane and humorous. You have encouraged new delegates, you have praised union successes, you have called out over-runners amongst our full-time officer gang, you have listened to concerns and you have

responded flexibly. You have been so supportive of the groups of strikers and occupiers who have visited our Congress. You have got us through the business and used humour and charm to do so.

Throughout this year your character as a union leader has shone through in the way that you have carried out the role of TUC President. In Mark's address to us here, in speeches to audiences large and small, he has spoken up for our Movement. He has sought to unite working people, whether they voted leave or remain in that referendum, so we don't just deal with the vital Brexit issue but also with the causes of Brexit division in our country. Mark has fought for unity by speaking out against racism and fascism, against poverty wages, against the way this Government has used austerity to attack working-class families and working-class women. In doing that, he has spoken up for a radical positive alternative and called on the labour Movement to unite behind that alternative.

Throughout this year, Mark, you have told your personal story so powerfully, to build support for the NHS, to defend the migration that it and our country needs and to call out for organ donation.

Your internationalism has shown through in your support of the Palestinian people. Throughout it all you have led your own union as well through significant disputes, like the indefinite strike at BAES, winning significant victories and, in the course of that, also leading the whole trade union Movement, in more support for workplace reps and digital transformation to help them.

Congress, at the start of last year some forecast trouble when Serwotka was going to be President of the TUC. That was because Mark had a bit of a reputation for speaking for quite a long time at the General Council and because Mark had some very well publicised concerns about the General Council Dinner menu. On the first, poacher became gamekeeper. Mark has kept all of us to time, including Len McCluskey, Tim Roache, Dave Prentis, Mark Bousted and myself. On the second, Mark scored a famous victory. Frances let a secret slip at the General Council Dinner on Monday. Each year she told us that the office consults with the President about what menu they would like and each year the office serves chicken. (*Laughter*) Not this year. Serwotka's determination, tenacity and negotiating skills meant that we had the best menu ever. Not a posh dinner but a proper south Wales' valley tea: fish and chips, pickled onions, pickled eggs and a hearty afters. All of it was accompanied by a Welsh male-voice choir.

This is where I want to say a personal thanks. Having Cym Rhondda and Bread of Heaven sung at that dinner gave me heart — it should have given heart to everyone there — for the battles to come, over the general election and the rugby World Cup.

Congress, you know that for many of us, for most of us, we would not have returned to high office following the health challenges that Mark has faced. I want to say to you that it is a mark of the man — a truly remarkably man — that he has come back with such vigour. As our incoming President, Ged, said today to the General Council, “Mark's conduct has been a tribute to himself, to his family, to his union and to the whole of the trades union Movement”. Congress, we do not pass votes of thanks by a show of hands. We pass them by applause and ovation. Congress, comrades, please show your support and your thanks to Mark Serwotka for his fantastic year as TUC

President. (*A standing ovation*) I present the Gold Badge of Conference and the Bell to our President. (*Presentation made amidst applause*)

The President: That was lovely. Thank you very much, Kevin, for those very kind words. Can I thank Congress for all your support this week. I think it has been an absolutely brilliant Congress. It has been a Congress where we have showcased resistance. We look like we have won a dispute as we've sat here this week. We've got the Scottish court to tell the Government that they have acted unlawfully. I think we have had a real sense of unity, whether it has been uniting against a no-deal Brexit or showing people in Asda and the CWU that we are with them in their victory, hopefully, to come, the strikers in the UCU, the health workers and the occupiers at Harland & Woolf. I think it has been a fabulous Congress. It's been a real privilege to be TUC President. I have advised the incoming President that he should scrap the five-minute speaking system at General Councils so we can go back to the long, waffley speeches that I love so much. It has been a real privilege to serve as your President. I said in my opening remarks that I really want to thank the TUC staff and my own union, my family and, particularly, my organ donor. I really appreciate those kind words, Kevin. I, like you, really enjoyed the Welsh choir. I remind people that English lost the Ashes and, as we meet next year, hopefully Wales will have won the Rugby World Cup.

Just before we close is to say, in the spirit of everything we've stood for, the unity we have shown on behalf of all of our members and our class, we want radical unions, we want a Labour government and we now want to show you a very short video which we think sums up everything that we have been doing this week. (*Video shown*)

Congress, we intend to be now and in the future a winning family. I declare the 151st Congress closed. Have a safe journey home. Let's get Corbyn into government and let's win for our members. Thanks very much.

(Congress concluded)