

**THE 151<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS**

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Held at:

**The Brighton Centre,  
Brighton**

on:

**Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2019  
Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019  
Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019  
and  
Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

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**Congress President:**

**MARK SERWOTKA**

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**PROCEEDINGS — DAY TWO  
(Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019)**

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## SECOND DAY: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

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

**The President:** Can I call Congress to order. I do love loud music first thing in the morning. I hope you enjoyed that. Good morning, Congress. The programme of music this week has been put together by Music for Youth and many thanks to the Penrose Trio who have been playing for us this morning. Can you show your appreciation. *(Applause)*

Congress, as Linda reported yesterday, the GPC approved a bucket collection today for the PCS striking members at Aramark and ISS. That collection will take place at the end of this afternoon's session and I will say a little bit more about that this afternoon. I remind delegates that to ensure that we get through all the business, it is important to respect speaking times. It is five minutes for moving a motion and three minutes for seconding a motion and for all other speakers. We have had a lot of notifications from unions who want to speak in debates this morning and this afternoon. We are very tight for time and there are some important debates, but if we all respect time, we hopefully will get as many speakers in as possible.

Congress, I now call upon Linda McCullough, Chair of the General Purposes Committee, to report to us on the progress of business and other Congress arrangements. Good morning, Linda.

**Chair, General Purposes Committee:** Good morning, Congress. The General Purposes Committee has approved two emergency motions. Emergency Motion 1 on

HS2, Access to workers, will be moved by Unite and seconded by ASLEF. Emergency Motion 2 on the Royal Mail dispute will be moved by the CWU and seconded by Unite. The President will advise when it is hoped to take these emergency motions. I will report further on the progress of business and other GPC decisions when necessary throughout the conference. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Linda. Congress, I now invite you to formally receive the GPC's report. Is that agreed? (*Agreed*) As Linda reported, the GPC has approved two emergency motions: Emergency Motion 1, HS2, Access to workers, to be moved by Unite and seconded by ASLEF, and Emergency Motion 2, Royal Mail dispute, to be moved by CWU and seconded by Unite. I will advise Congress when I can take these emergency motions later today or in the week.

**The President:** Congress, we now turn to Section 3 of the General Council Report, Respect and a voice at work, the section on collective bargaining from page 12. I call paragraph 1.2 and Composite Motion 5, Sectoral collective bargaining. The General Council supports the composite motion. It will be moved by the National Education Union, seconded by UNISON, and supported by USDAW and PCS, if those people would take their seats at the front. I have been advised that the following unions wish to speak -- and I will try and call you all -- CWU, UCU, EIS, NASUWT and the FBU. Can I now call the National Education Union to move Composite Motion 5.

### **Sectoral collective bargaining**

**Kevin Courtney** (*National Education Union*) moved Composite Motion 5. *He said:*

Over the 40 years of neo-liberalism since 1979 in this country, we have seen huge attacks on the right of working people to negotiate with their bosses. There have been huge reductions in collective bargaining and those attacks just have to stop. However, there is a very real chance that they will get worse.

The consequences of those attacks are clear and we see them in all of our unions and in all of our families. Things were nothing like perfect in 1979, but in those days, there was dignity at work and working-class people expected that things would get better for their children and their grandchildren. My dad was a skilled blue-collar worker, a lorry mechanic, a member of the AEU. He had left school at 14 with no qualifications, but he had a good job, a good pension, strong union representation, clear hours of work and defined arrangements around overtime.

Fast-forward 40 years in the south Wales valleys where he lived, or any other working-class area of this country, and what do you find -- not good jobs with good pensions, but zero hour contracts and minimum wage jobs, even for people who leave school with good qualifications and who are taking on significant responsibilities. There is little unionisation at many workplaces with pay policies determined solely by the boss.

We know that those 40 years are not an accident. During the whole of those 40 years when neo-liberalism has been dominant, even during the interlude of a Labour government, the economy has been progressively rigged against working people. It is no accident. Every attack on the rights of workers, on the 99%, every reduction in trades union density, and every reduction in collective bargaining reduces the rights for our people and increases the profits for the bosses and the 1%. (*Applause*) It is no

accident that these things have happened.

Congress, you know how the economy has been rigged against our people. It is by privatisation, by outsourcing, by attacks on union rights, by atomising working people and reducing their voice compared with that of the bosses. My mum was a school cleaner and a dinner lady. She was in one of the first waves of privatisation following Thatcher's election and you know the consequences: working-class women made to work longer for less as privatised companies compete not through some notion of efficiency, but through simple bullying of their workers.

Across that period, collective bargaining collapsed from 80% to 20%. Any working-class person who thinks that Boris Johnson is any part of putting this right will find themselves sorely disappointed. If there is one politician in this country who is the direct descendant of Margaret Thatcher's ideology, it is him. If he is elected, we can expect further atomisation, further marginalisation and, in my industry, the completion of the academisation project. There will be even greater flexibility expected of workers with an even greater voice for the bosses.

But there is an alternative and we encompass that alternative on our agenda this week. Our economy does not have to be organised like this. We can see the alternative on our agenda with the new deal for workers, the return to workers' rights. It is on our agenda and we have to talk it up. We should organise our economy to eliminate cowboy operators, to require employers to negotiate with their employees, to bargain and to recognise unions. We should organise our economy to increase the voice of working people and we can see this alternative in some political programmes. You can see it in Laura Pidcock's plan for a Ministry of Labour and the introduction of

sectoral bargaining which would increase the say of working people. You can see it in Angela Rayner's plans to bring back, in my industry, the school support staff negotiating body and a return to national collective bargaining of pay for teachers, reducing the voice of academy trust chief executives and other bosses.

We are facing the fight of our lives. We have to talk up our alternative to point to the reduction in working people's rights as the real cause of the problems they face. Vote for this motion. Get ready for that fight. There is a better future and it is not the one planned by Gove, Johnson and Cummings. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Kevin. That is a great start to the morning. I call UNISON to second.

**Christina McAnea** (*UNISON*) seconded Composite Motion 5.

*She said:* Congress, back in 2010 and after several years of campaigning, I and UNISON, along with colleagues from the GMB and Unite, were on the verge of seeing the skilled support staff negotiating body being established in England. We had fought for this because we knew that it was through this that we could ensure that the pay of the support staff could be linked to their roles and responsibilities. We could avoid pay being set on a skill-by-skill basis or even, as was happening, on a worker-by-worker basis within individual schools.

One of the first things the Lib Dem/Tory Coalition did was to abolish this. Congress, this was nothing less than an act of spite. It was done because they wanted to show that, as far as they were concerned, skilled support staff did not matter. But as we know in this hall, they do matter. They are not an add-on. They are not an optional

extra in schools. They are an essential part of the team around the child. (*Applause*)

Whether it is about keeping schools safe and healthy, or working as a specialist supporting children with special needs, or working as early years professionals, or keeping schools efficient and effective as school bursars and administrators, these things matter. My mother, for most of her working life, was either a school meals worker or a school cleaner and she was passionate about the job that she did. She felt passionate about the children who were in those schools. She did not see herself as an add-on in that school.

We have seen the fragmentation of education in England lead to schools seeing themselves as autonomous units, appointing not head teachers but chief executives, paying themselves huge sums of money but, at the same time, trying to cut our members' jobs and pay and conditions. Of course, this motion is not just about what happens in education. It is about supporting collective bargaining, national bargaining and sectoral bargaining across the country. We know how important that is because you only have to look at the sectors where it is weak or does not exist to see the consequences of the impact. You only have to look at sectors like the care sector and the chaos that ensues there or employers like the Amazons of this world to see the impact that that has on the workforce.

So we are supporting the Labour Party's position in terms of setting up sectoral bargaining because we know, as trade unionists, that it is through collective strength and trade union strength that we can protect the lowest paid and the most exploited in our workplaces. But, Congress, this has to be with the TUC and with trade unions. It is important that we get this right because there are different arrangements in different

sectors. It is really important -- and I am glad the TUC are backing this -- that we work with the Labour Party to make this happen. Thank you and please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**Dave McCrossen** *(Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers)* supported Composite Motion 5 on sectoral collective bargaining.

*He said:* Congress, over the last 40 years or so, we have seen a massive drop in the number of people covered by collective bargaining and, as a direct result, we have seen an increase in the evil that is poverty pay. We need to see the reach of collective bargaining extended so that it covers every worker. We need collective bargaining broadened so that it covers every workplace in a particular sector but, most importantly, we also need to make it easier for unions to gain access to a workforce because it is only in this way that workers can make a real and informed choice about the sense in joining a trade union.

Congress, trade unions should have a legal right to access workplaces to speak to staff and working people should have a right to hear what we have to say. This is not a question of forcing people to join, but giving them the opportunity to have an open and honest conversation so we also need to make it easier for unions to become the recognised trade union in a workplace.

The current rules requiring unions to have 10% membership before lodging a claim for statutory recognition makes it far too difficult for working people to get a truly independent voice. We need those thresholds to be reviewed and substantially reduced. We want workers to have a real choice in being represented by a trade union



in their workplace. So USDAW believes that these thresholds to trigger a ballot should be reduced to 2% of the workforce or a minimum of 500 members in a bigger workplace. Those lower thresholds would give more workers a real choice for a ballot on whether a union has to be recognised in their workplace.

Employers have no reason to be fearful of having recognition with a trade union. Good employers know that where we are recognised and where we negotiate, pay is better, health and safety regulations are more substantive and the employees feel part of something. It is only bad employers who want to pay minimum wages, who want to have a disregard for health and safety in the workplace and who make sure that their staff feel exploitable: "If you do not like it, there is the door and you can leave." That is why so many companies are trying to keep trade unions from their door.

This composite motion rightly calls for sector-wide collective bargaining. At the same time, if this is to work, workers need to be in a union and well-organised. Trade unions need access to that workplace so workers can decide for themselves about their recognition and about their right to a voice. There is a need for statutory recognition thresholds to be reduced so that more workers can have a choice through a ballot on whether they want to have a trade union recognised in their workplace. Please support the composite. (*Applause*)

**Martin Cavanagh** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support Composite Motion 5, which included the PCS amendment to the original motion.

*He said:* Time and again, our annual conference has called on our union to demand the restoration of national pay bargaining across the civil service and related areas. Since the advent of delegated pay bargaining, workers right throughout the civil

service have seen pay rates depressed with the divide and conquer tactics of delegation. The system is full of wildly different rates of pay for workers doing broadly the same jobs and the inequalities that are inherent within the system are huge.

Congress, this situation is not one that has flatlined; it is one that is getting progressively worse. The Treasury (who basically hold the purse strings in relation to our pay) have set a framework for pay, making a nonsense of collective bargaining at even delegated level. The judicial review that our union (alongside comrades in Prospect and FDA) took in 2018 made one thing very clear -- there is no such thing as delegated bargaining in the civil service. The pretence that was played out by the politicians and director generals across civil service departments was there for all to see, evidence that they had set the rate of pay in the Treasury and in the guidance months ahead of the guidance being declared and without consultation with any of the trade unions. That is the reality our members face on a day-to-day basis.

Congress, when we look at delegated pay, when we see 14,000 HMRC staff who implement the minimum wage on the minimum wage, when we see 2,500 DWP workers (who are there to provide benefits for the poorest in society) claiming the minimum wage, where they also have to top up their salaries, and when we see 60% of those who work on universal credit having to claim universal credit, that shows you what delegated pay bargaining does.

Congress, we have an opportunity to work with the Labour Party leadership. We have an opportunity to organise ourselves and make sure that we have a restoration of sectoral and national collective bargaining. The demands that we have are very

simple, are they not? We want real-term pay rises for our members, we want unrestricted national pay bargaining and collective bargaining, we want common national pay terms, and we want to protect the lowest paid in our society. What an indictment on the Government (and successive governments for that matter) that our members have to go to food banks and claim benefits to top up their salaries.

That is not a situation in which we should be in 2019. It was not a situation that we would have accepted in 1919. Congress, please support this composite. Let us make sure we get a return to sectoral and national bargaining and let us make sure we defend our members' rights and our members' pay. Please support. (*Applause*)

**Maria Exall** (*Communication Workers Union*) supported Composite Motion 5.

*She said:* President, Congress, Labour's proposals to introduce comprehensive sectoral collective bargaining is the single most significant gain for our Movement since 1979. 40 years of Thatcherite market fundamentalism and the accompanying anti-union laws have collapsed collective bargaining coverage and reduced trade union membership, particularly in the private sector.

The Labour Party's proposals are a massive opportunity to turn the tide and revitalise our Movement. It is important now when the threat of a no-deal Brexit would impose Thatcherism on steroids on a working-class weakened by ten years of vicious Tory austerity. In our sectors (post and telecom) we particularly welcome Labour's proposal and we see it as hope for working people. In our sector, we are unionised but under siege. We have recognition in two big firms (Royal Mail and BT) and individual membership in many other firms. We are making progress in recruitment and organisation throughout the sectors.

However, the current moves to break up Royal Mail (subject to our ballot) and sell off and outsource from BT Group are a direct result of market pressures from competitors in the sector who pay lower wages, minimal pensions, have longer hours, less leave and bad sick pay arrangements. I could go on, but I think you know the story. The extension of collective bargaining rights on a sectoral basis can stop this race to the bottom. Also, current employment laws do not stop anti-union employers using union-busting consultants to go in and stop union recruitment.

Richard Branson ran an aggressive de-recognition campaign in Virgin Media before he sold it off to Liberty Global. Rupert Murdoch ran a consistent anti-union campaign in Sky where we have a significant and growing membership. Sectoral bargaining rights will allow us proper rights to organise our members and the opportunity to have access to potential members. We need these rights to meet the challenges of the workplaces of 2019 so we can fight for decent pay, for safe workplaces, against sexual harassment and all other discriminations, and get the skills and training that we need.

These are the reasons that we, as trade unionists, will campaign for Labour at the coming general election, one of the most important general elections for a generation. We want Labour in power to abolish all the anti-union laws, to bring in collective bargaining, to civilise our workplaces and to deliver a society equal for all. Congress, I urge you to support the composite. (*Applause*)

**Margot Hill** (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 5. *She said:* I am a worker in the FE sector. We have seen that the breakup of

sectoral bargaining since incorporation has meant that wages have dropped drastically for teachers in the area, for support workers, for cleaners, and for everybody across the board. It is a model for what happens when you run colleges and education without a plan and as businesses for profit rather than for what young or old people need. In fact, everybody needs education. It shows you exactly how bad it can get.

I work in a college where the difference between myself and the principal -- and I am a senior teacher there -- means that she earns five times more than I do. Her wages have not been suppressed but mine have. When you look across the board, sectoral bargaining has broken down.

I think one of the things that I would like to bring to Congress is that they have not absolutely had it all their own way. One of the things that we have decided to do in our union is to try and light some fires under the backsides of our managers and to take up the challenge to see if we can build a fight on the ground whilst maintaining a demand for collective bargaining as well. So far, we have had 44 branches balloted, with 20 more this year, and only three did not meet the ballot threshold. I would like to say to the CWU that your conga-like videos were quite an inspiration to us!

We have been demanding that pay is raised and that casualisation is tackled. The disgusting nature of some of the contracts that exist for part-time workers in our colleges is something over which we should hold our heads in shame. We have seen some gains of between 3-5% in capital city college groups.

Brothers and sisters, that is not enough. We need to have national pay bargaining. We need to have respect at work and a plan that allows us to deliver the services,

particularly in the public sector and elsewhere, that is respectful of workers across the board. This is why, for us, this motion is very important. There are two sides to this. One is that we have to build the fight on the ground, which is what we are trying to do, and the other is that we have to try and make national demands that pay bargaining is on the agenda. I want to see Jeremy Corbyn elected and I want to see national pay bargaining and collective bargaining back on the table, but the best way to help Jeremy Corbyn is to build the fights on the ground. *(Applause)*

**Larry Flanagan** (*Education Institute of Scotland*) supported Composite Motion 5. *He said:* Congress, I want to support this motion by focusing on two success stories which we have had in Scotland. EIS only organises in Scotland. We have around 80% of Scottish teachers and around 95% of FE lecturers.

Unlike colleagues in our sister union, the NEU, Scottish teachers do have national collective bargaining. They have a tripartite arrangement with the Scottish Government and local authorities with the trade unions sitting in. That national bargaining was a pivotal focus over the last two years in terms of building what was ultimately a successful pay campaign on the part of our members because it allowed the collective strength of the union to be focused upon persuading both the Government and COSLA, the local government, to change their minds, so much so that last October, we managed to mobilise over 30,000 teachers on the streets of Glasgow in a demonstration. That was over half of our membership taking part in a demonstration of collective strength, which was then built into the campaign, which allowed us to reject offer after offer and demonstrate our willingness to take strike action. It was not just to take strike action, but also to smash the Tory thresholds, so much so that on the eve of the statutory ballot, we had a last-minute offer from the

Scottish Government and we achieved a 10% pay rise for all teachers on all grades from April of this year. *(Applause)*

That would never have been achieved through a pay review body because pay review bodies are designed to reduce the role of trade unions. Collective bargaining facilitates collective action, which is the way that you win pay campaigns. We had a similar success in FE, but from a different starting point. Four years ago, colleges in Scotland were incorporated. We had planned bargaining. We had a range of salaries across the country, with as much as £16,000 difference between people doing the same job, and a range of different conditions of service.

Our FE members campaigned for a return to national collective bargaining, aided by a commitment from the Scottish Government, the SNP, to support that, but resisted by college management. Through a series of strikes, totalling 13 days, we won equal pay for equal work. We returned to national collective bargaining and achieved, for unpromoted staff, a minimum of £41,000 at the top of their scale and we won national terms and conditions, with maximum contact time and a right to personal discretion. So we are in a stronger place because we have managed to get national bargaining back into the FE sector.

Sectoral collective bargaining focuses the power of the unions and delivers for our members. It also maximises the profile of the union. We put on 4,000 members over the course of those two campaigns so the success that we have had in Scotland augers well for the campaigns for sectoral bargaining in other parts of the country and in other industries. Sectoral collective bargaining works, Congress. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you very much, Larry. Can I, on behalf of everyone, and particularly as I went to the Scottish TUC, congratulate the EIS for the stories you have just told and for the demonstration, which was really inspirational. You can take that back to all of your colleagues on behalf of us all. (*Applause*)

**John McGill** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' Union*) supported Composite Motion 5. He said: The NASUWT is in complete agreement with the TUC's response to the Labour Party's commitment to new sectoral bargaining machinery. The NASUWT has fought hard against privatisation, outsourcing and academisation from PFI school contracts and the onslaught on state education since 2010 via the Government's ideologically-driven academies and free schools programme.

This has created the £500,000 per year academy CEO whilst schools are starved of cash and damaging cuts are imposed on the workforce and school students alike. The NASUWT also fought for unsecured key terms and conditions improvements for teachers. This includes the right for planning preparation and assessment time and other improved pay and conditions between 1997 and 2010. This has happened in social partnership with the Labour government and with the support of the STRB. These are rights which the NASUWT has fought hard to protect through industrial action since the election of Conservative-led governments since 2010.

Congress, the School Teachers' Review Body was welcomed by the teaching profession when it was first established. It ensured the removal of years of chaos over teachers' pay. The STRB played a key role during Michael Gove's period of office (the Secretary of State for Education) in rejecting his request for the removal of



teachers' non-pay conditions of service and retaining these in place.

It is the Government and not the STRB, with its policies of privatisation, deregulation and allowing excessive freedoms and flexibilities which is the issue. For example, in 2018, the STRB awarded a 3.5% increase to all teachers, a recommendation which the Secretary of State for Education refused to accept. Congress, we should direct our anger against the Conservative Government and not the teachers' pay review body. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**Andy Noble** *(Fire Brigades Union)* supported Composite Motion 5. *He said:* I am happy to speak in support of this motion. We are also happy that this Congress is standing up for collective bargaining. It is a sad fact that many of the collective bargaining arrangements and structures that were in place, covering many millions of workers, have been smashed or watered down over the last few decades.

However, there are still some structures left. In the fire and rescue service, for instance, we have still got our own National Joint Council and that covers the whole of the UK. It was set up in England in 1947 and extended to Scotland, Wales and finally Northern Ireland after many years of campaigning.

The FBU wants the NJC to continue and for UK-wide collective bargaining on pay and conditions to be maintained in the fire and rescue service. We know that some politicians and some employers would like to get rid of our own NJC. The previous Prime Minister told a conference of fire chiefs in May 2016 that if they did not like the NJC, they should have the courage of their own convictions and simply walk away from it. Fortunately, most of the employers are not so foolhardy.

We have done some useful work in recent years at the NJC including issues of broadening the role of the firefighter and on firefighter fitness amongst other issues. Firefighters often work across the borders with other firefighters from other fire and rescue services and it makes absolutely no sense at all for pay and conditions to vary between those individuals. We think the same should apply in other sectors so we will defend the NJC to the last and we will also campaign for sectoral collective bargaining for other industries.

We will support other unions and hope that our example can be used to open up opportunities for others. Of course, we are not demanding that others tear up their existing arrangements where those arrangements actually work for their members, but we think it is right for the TUC to champion the best collective bargaining arrangements that are left in the campaign to level up in every sector to the best structures possible.

This is crucial to improving our pay and conditions and union density, both now and hopefully in the near future under a Labour government, which is why we and others are happy to work with the Labour Party and shadow ministers such as Laura Pidcock on this particular issue. I say that because there is one note of caution. It is not just being able to say that we have sectoral collective bargaining; it is more important that all parties to those arrangements actually understand what they mean, and that includes some Labour-controlled local authority employers. So, yes, let us move to such bargaining arrangements, but let us not do it in name only. Let us do it with real purpose and with full understanding from all of those involved. Please support the composite. *(Applause)*

**The President:** There has been no opposition so I intend to move straight to the vote. Can I ask all those in favour of Composite Motion 5 to show? All those against? Thank you. That is overwhelmingly carried.

\* *Composite Motion 5 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Before we move on, there have been quite a few mentions of unions balloting. Can I also wish well all those unions in HE education who are also moving to a ballot on pay. We wish you all the best in reaching the threshold. (*Applause*) To brighten up your morning, Benjamin Netanyahu has apparently got confused and referred to Boris Johnson as Boris Yeltsin. (*Laughter*) We could not have put it better ourselves!

We are now going to move on to Motion 17, A new framework for collective bargaining. The General Council supports the motion, which will be moved by Aegis and seconded by Prospect.

### **A new framework for collective bargaining**

**Brian Linn** (*Aegis*) moved Motion 17. *He said:* President, Congress, as part of the new framework for collective bargaining proposals, Aegis calls on the TUC to secure a commitment from Labour to ensure that any company that receives Government funding -- that is our taxpayers' money -- to help them set up in the UK or to help them through a troubled period or even to develop products should have a union recognition agreement that supports collective bargaining and a union that is affiliated

to the TUC.

When I started research into this, I found some quite amazing statistics and some fantastic opportunities for unions to grow that we have missed. For example, I found a Government spreadsheet called "Innovate UK-funded projects 2004-2019". In the 15-year period, there were 4,000 applications for funding accepted and over £9 billion worth of funds handed out. These companies are spread across all sectors and all industries and this is only one type of funding. There are loads of other types of funding from governments.

This creates a massive opportunity for unions. Can I ask you to imagine this. What if it was a condition of the funding application that you must first have a recognition and collective bargaining agreement with an independent trade union when it is affiliated to the TUC? It is taxpayers' money, so it is our money. Surely it is not unreasonable to take steps to ensure that the employees of companies applying for Government grants or funding are properly represented for collective bargaining purposes?

Actually, when you think about it, taxpayers should insist upon it. The Labour Party should insist upon it. The Labour Party has always been about people. The Labour Party was formed by working-class people, trade unionists and socialists to give ordinary people a voice and has sought power in order to improve their position. So this should be policy for a future Labour Party. Labour should be supporting this motion and supporting trade unions to grow, especially in these companies which do not have union recognition agreements. If there was ever a time for the TUC to go along to Labour with a wish list it is now.

So Aegis calls on the TUC to secure a commitment from Labour to ensure that any of these companies which are applying for Government grants have to have a union recognition agreement for collective bargaining purposes and one that is affiliated to the TUC. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

**Mike Clancy** (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 17. *He said:* I have a couple of points to make with some statistics before I do. In the private sector, collective bargaining coverage dropped from 20% to under 15% between 1996 and 2018 and even in the public sector, it has dropped from 74% to 57%. Those are the figures that which we should really be focusing upon, but my contribution this morning is particularly about the private sector.

Prospect members are in the public sector, but predominantly in the private sector. We are also in the growing parts of the economy where we have different forms of employment and where we have actually brought collective bargaining norms to freelance work, particularly in the creative industries.

I have two points to make in supporting the motion and the amendments that we are putting in. Congress, do you feel comfortable that we have won the argument for collective bargaining among people beyond this room? We all know the transformative and distributional impacts of collective bargaining, but the decades of rollback in collective bargaining reflected in those statistics means that we have to win the argument again so that we can actually reach a generation of people who really need collective bargaining.

I was with our members at the Science Museum group on strike where they are

fighting for the living wage and improvements in terms and conditions of employment, a workforce that can hardly afford to be on strike and yet they are using their hard-won union rights to try and drive that agenda. So we have to win that argument again and we have to win it amongst people who really need it.

My second point, which is probably the most challenging point that I want to make to you this morning, relates to how we are going to deliver this. We are told that certain Tory strategies that we have mentioned on this platform are like military tactics. One quote I like from von Moltke is that no plan survives first contact with the enemy.

Now, we must obviously welcome any political party's proposals to re-energise collective bargaining. Central bargaining has its role, but in the private sector, the decline in collective bargaining, the level of comprehension of what collective bargaining is about, and the skill set amongst employers to be collective bargaining partners has eroded to such a level that we need to think very carefully about the ferocious opposition that plans for rejuvenating collective bargaining are likely to draw and we need to make sure that we have multifaceted plans to address that.

That is why we, in the TUC, have argued strongly not just in relation to sectoral bargaining, but actually placing upon employers a duty to bargain where they have 250 or more employees. We can talk about recognition, but recognition is, to some extent, a feudal concept. We have got to go along and ask an employer, why do we have to do that in 2019? Why not place a positive duty upon all employers to have to bargain? Give them some scope to fashion those bargaining arrangements with us. Give them some scope to understand the positive properties of collective bargaining and trade unions and give them an opportunity to realise that change is coming, but

they can actually influence that agenda.

We strongly believe that there should be a duty to bargain in addition to the rights of sectoral bargaining that are being considered. So, Congress, I second this motion and urge you to support it. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Mike. There has been no opposition and no other requests to speak so I am going to move to the vote. Can I ask all those in favour of Motion 17 to show? All those against? Thank you. That is overwhelmingly carried.

\* *Motion 17 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call Motion 18, Christmas and New Year working. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by USDAW and seconded by the GMB.

### **Christmas and New Year working**

**Paddy Lillis** *(Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers)* moved Motion 18.

*He said:* Everyone should be entitled to quality time off over the festive period, but all too often retail, distribution and many other workers find themselves unable to take part in the Christmas and New Year festivities. Each year, by the time it gets to the holiday, many retail and distribution workers are worn out from the weeks of build-up with extended opening hours and huge increases in workload in the run-up to Christmas, weeks of dealing with frantic customers who are all too ready to take their frustrations out on staff who are already under significant pressure. By the time

Christmas arrives, many workers are too exhausted to even enjoy the holiday.

While many people will be enjoying an extended break of a week or more off work, retail and distribution workers will often get one day off, squeezed between a late finish on Christmas Eve and an early start on Boxing Day. This situation, Congress, is unfair and urgent action is needed. This motion is calling for stores to close early on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve and remain closed for Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

At the beginning of this year, USDAW surveyed over 18,000 members to find out about their experiences of working over the last year's festive period. Two-thirds of respondents told us that they are under pressure to work on Boxing Day and New Year's Day by their management. 80% reported that they find it difficult to get an early finish on Christmas Eve and three-quarters said that working on these days meant spending too little time with family and friends. The comments we received from members made for heartbreaking reading: the guilt of not being there at your child's first Christmas, friction and breakdown of family relationships, and the impact all this is having on mental, physical and emotional health.

We know this is not just an issue for workers in retail and distribution. We have the utmost respect for the vital public service workers who keep the lights on, the hospitals open and the country safe over the festive period, but beyond the incredible work of the vital emergency services, is Christmas working really necessary? Since 2004, thanks to one of our campaigns, large stores are already closed on Christmas Day. Boxing Day and New Year sales no longer have the same significance due to the rise of all year round in-store and online promotions and spring, summer, autumn



and pre-Christmas sales. In our survey, the majority of retail workers reported that stores are either fairly or very quiet on these days.

As a society, we need to ask ourselves do we really need to have the shops open on Boxing Day and New Year's Day? We believe the shopping public would understand and support the trades union case for shops not to be open on Boxing Day and New Year's Day and to allow workers a proper break. Congress, an online petition a couple of years ago calling for shops to remain closed on Boxing Day got the support of over 235,000 people. In Scotland, an existing piece of legislation means that large shops could legally be prevented from opening on New Year's Day, but this legislation has not been enacted. This is something that USDAW is currently raising through the Scottish Parliament.

Congress, workers deserve a decent break at Christmas and the New Year and we believe that the shopping public will support us if we make a clear case for workers as they deserve a proper break over the festive period. Congress, please support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Kate Gorton** (*GMB*) seconded Motion 18. *She said:* I am a first-time delegate and first-speaker. (*Applause*) The GMB supports this motion not just on behalf of our members working in shops and supermarkets, but all those working in distribution too. I worked in hospitality and in retail in ASDA for eight years doing pretty much every job there is. We all know that Christmas and New Year are busy times, but the pressure on workers in retail and in so many other sectors can be relentless.

Too many retailers expect you to work twice as hard for no extra money. This is part

of a wider problem of casualisation which goes beyond retail. While other workers rightly look forward to getting a break over Christmas with their loved ones, certainly if you work in retail, you can finish pretty much exhausted.

It is important to recognise that away from the shop fronts or glossy home pages on websites, many warehouse workers have hard productivity targets right through the run-up to Christmas. The world of online retail has meant 24-hour shopping with different companies competing to get last-minute gifts to people's homes. There is no time off in the run-up to Christmas and the pressure is on all workers to pack and get deliveries out. Drivers have to get their deliveries through Christmas shopping traffic and again this causes more pressure.

It is at the busiest times that companies like Amazon and ASOS cut even more corners with workers' welfare than they do usually. We need to take a new approach to fairness for workers at Christmas and New Year. One day off for Christmas is simply not good enough. You should not have to use your holiday or go unpaid on Boxing Day, as many do. This motion is right to demand early closure on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve as well as closure on Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, but we also need to ensure that the people behind the scenes such as the warehouse workers and drivers are afforded the same rights, too.

Christmas and New Year should be a time that everybody looks forward to and they should not approach it with nervousness or fear. The gift we want this Christmas is decent rights, proper time off and for workers not to feel ill because of their workload. We have a market based on continuous growth which is benefiting those at the top, but not the rest of us. The whole economy has to change and work for working

people and not just for the fat cats. Congress, please support this campaign and this motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Congress, there has been no opposition so I am going to move straight to the vote on Motion 18. Can I ask all those in favour to show? Thank you. All those against? Thank you. That is unanimously carried. Can I say, Kate and Paddy, they were fantastic speeches highlighting the brilliant work that retail workers and related trades do so well done on a really good motion. *(Applause)*

\* *Motion 18 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call paragraph 1.3, 5.3 and Motion 19, Demands for the future world of work. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the CWU, seconded by USDAW and then I intend to call PCS and Unite, if everyone could be ready. I call Dave Ward, on behalf of the CWU, to move Motion 19.

### **Demands for the future world of work**

**Dave Ward** *(Communication Workers Union)* moved Motion 19. *He said:* This motion is really a call to the whole of this Congress to say that it is actually time for us to stop tinkering at the edges. It is time for us to set out a stronger and more ambitious set of demands that are going to put right the wrongs of the last 40 years as we fight for a new deal for working people.

I believe that in or out of the EU, the defining issue of our time is undoubtedly growing inequality between rich and poor, between the constituency that Boris

Johnson was born to serve and the constituency that we are born to defend. *(Applause)* That inequality is happening everywhere. It is happening in the UK, it is happening in Europe and it is happening across the world, as we heard yesterday from Ulises Nacimiento from Cuba, the trade union leader, who spoke about what is happening across the whole of the Americas. We know it is happening in every part of the world.

The most compelling stat that tells the story of what has happened to workers, far more than any you will see in what may happen to the economy in respect of a no-deal Brexit -- and we have to do everything possible to stop that -- is the fact that over the last 40 years, the share and proportion of workers' wages which makes up the overall economy of the UK has fallen from 65% to 49%. Workers have had money stolen out of their pockets. It is time that we face up to the reality that we are on the cusp of a fourth industrial revolution. AI and new technology are only going to make things worse unless we fight to make things better so we have to do something about it.

So let us make sure of a four-day week. I thought it was a great positioning of the four-day week last year by the TUC, Frances, but there is one thing that was wrong with it. We talked about it being this century. We will all be dead, our children will be dead and our grandchildren will be dead. We need it by 2025 in a serious fight to make sure that Thursday becomes the new Friday. We can play around with that with all our different attendance patterns and what-not, but when we do that, we will deliver an irreversible shift in power back towards workers in this country.

We need to make sure that alongside new forms of public ownership and the

renationalisation of all the industries to which Labour are committed, we break down the grip that privatisation and liberalisation has on companies in the UK, which is more than anywhere else in the world. We have to do that in such a way that we can make sure they know what we are talking about. There was an article in the FT last week saying that Labour are going to take £300 million away from private ownership purely by introducing worker ownership funds. That is one of our demands here. We should be doing that because, as Tony Benn said, that will really send a signal that we are looking for an irreversible shift in power and wealth back to working-class people.

Regarding digital technology and AI, we are going to be talking about a dispute -- there are loads of them going on at the moment -- in Royal Mail. Our postal workers used to be able to go around and engage with customers. They were empowered to take decisions when they were out on their rounds. Now, because of the forms of new technology that exist in the world today, they are walking around as if they are tagged like a criminal for every second and every minute. The intensification of work has to be slowed down. We have to have that as one of our central demands for workers.

We have heard a little bit about pay ratios today. In the top 100 companies, the CEOs earn 375 times more than somebody on the living wage. That is absolutely obscene. The beauty of a pay ratio is that we can move it to a 20:1 pay ratio and send that out there as our demand. You see, I am not against them getting more money. If they want more money, for workers getting £30,000, they can earn £600,000. That is not a bad wage, is it! If they want to have £800,000 then we will have £40,000 for our workers. That is what a pay ratio should be saying. It is saying that when it comes to what is fair, we should track these people so we get something out of it for our members.

So, there are a number of demands here. You will hear me talking in a minute about what we need to do to take forward a new deal for working people, but these should be the demands so that we strengthen the charter that the TUC has already put together. It really is time to end tinkering at the edges. It is time to get back what we are owed and it is time to make sure that we get a fair share for workers of what is coming in the future world of work. I move. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you very much, Dave. Can I say how great it is to see you back looking so fit and well. Thank you very much. I call on USDAW to second.

**Amy Murphy** (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) seconded Motion 19. *She said:* President, Congress, the future world of work brings with it significant challenges for the trades union Movement. Automation and new technology bring forward and threaten new forms of exploitation, but they can also, if properly managed and implemented in ways that benefit the workforce, offer new solutions to old problems.

One thing remains clear: the best way to tackle issues in work reorganisation is through a strong trades union Movement. In recent years, weak employment legislation has led to the growth of insecure work, whether it is zero or short-hour contracts, bogus self-employment or the so-called gig economy. Working people have paid the price for the lack of robust employment legislation to protect workers, the absence of legislation to regulate an increasingly unregulated labour market. Any response to the challenges of the future world of work must be built on secure employment contracts that cannot be exploited by bad employers. USDAW, my

union, is campaigning for all workers to have a right to a minimum contract of 16 hours per week, a contract that reflects and guarantees normal hours of work and an end to zero-hour contracts.

The composite motion rightly calls for action to tackle the long-hours culture. It points out that advances in technology means that a four-day working week for full-time staff could become a reality if the politicians and employers show the will and the vision. At the same time, tackling the long-hours culture needs to go hand in hand with measures to deal with the other fundamental problems in the employment market -- the problems of under-employment, short-hour contracts and workers on insecure contracts struggling to make ends meet and feed their families.

At the same time as campaigning to cut the full-time working week without loss of pay, we must ensure that all workers are guaranteed secure contracts on the minimum number of hours they are looking for. Changing long hours and working and tackling underemployment are the two sides of the one strategy which is needed to deliver a future world of work that will benefit all workers. On behalf of USDAW, I second the composite motion. Please support. *(Applause)*

**Mohammed Shafiq** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported the motion. *He said:* We entirely support this motion stressing the importance of planning for the future. It paves the way for a more fundamental and more progressive economy. Importantly, it is the groundwork for a society which, through transfer of ownership, social and environmental priorities are as important as personal profit for a few. In 1930, John Maynard Keynes suggested that with technological advances, it would soon be possible to have a 15-hour working week with no less productivity, but with

more time for leisure, family, community and creative pursuits for workers. This is so much truer now than it was then.

The first big trial of the four-day week in this country was conducted this year by Perpetual Guardian and it found, surprisingly, that it resulted in a 20% increase in productivity and massive reduction in work stress ailments.

The Shadow Chancellor, John McDonnell, has asked the eminent economist, Lord Skidelsky, to further investigate proposals for a four-day week. The TUC should, and must, be part of this process and be an advocate for a four-day week. Leading the nation's conversation is where the TUC should be.

Typically, the Tory ministers have lied and hidden the truth about life expectancy. Their claims around life expectancy going up to 89 for men and 90 for women have been exposed by the Office for National Statistics. Congress, you cannot trust the Tories to defend working people. You cannot trust them when they say you have to increase the retirement age or make people work longer. The trade unions should be fighting to give workers more time off to enjoy their retirement and have a good quality of life.

The demand for a 20:1 ratio between so-called executive pay and ordinary workers is not an extreme one. It is the current situation that is extreme and unacceptable. Dave Ward talked about the massive increase between executive pay and pay for ordinary workers. The High Pay Commission found that executive pay had increased by an astonishing 4000% -- yes, you heard that right; 4000%. The UK economy, under progressive socialist direction, should be heading in this direction. Congress, please



support this motion and support John McDonnell and the Labour Shadow Cabinet to help change our country for the better. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Stuart Davis** (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 19. *He said:* Congress, the world and the world of work is changing rapidly. Digitalisation and globalisation are having a profound impact on our lives and societies. The OECD's latest employment outlook estimates that 40% of existing jobs could disappear as a result of automation in the next 15-20 years. Another 32% are likely to change radically as individual tasks are automated. So the threat to jobs from automation and digitalisation is real although it varies greatly across countries. The risks include growing inequality and a digital divide in access to technologies and the benefits that arise from them.

However, as with any revolution, this one also presents opportunities. In the UK, the issue of working time is a topic of great debate again. During the three decades following World War II, a combination of increased pay and productivity, strong collective bargaining and increased labour market regulation from the Government saw the average full-time week in the UK fall from 46 hours in 1946 to 40 hours by 1979. However, from 1980 onwards, this trend faltered following labour market deregulation, reduced collective bargaining and slower earnings growth for low-income workers. Had average hours continued to fall after 1980 in line with the initial post-war trend, the UK would have been on target to reach a 30-hour week, equivalent to a four-day week, by 2040.

Congress, the trades union Movement has a long and proud history of fighting for shorter hours. That includes the ground-breaking CSEU campaign for a shorter

working week. Our Movement must be front and centre of a new campaign and a programme of work to flesh out a framework for how a reduction in working time can be achieved in the modern economy.

At my own site, Bentley Motors in Crewe, our members have won a 35-hour week with no loss of pay, a landmark for the automotive sector. We do not want to be alone in this. We want every sector and every member to benefit from the better work/life balance a shorter working week brings.

Congress, this is not just about a shorter working week. Reduced working time can be taken in a number of different ways, but it must always be without a loss of pay. Significantly, the OECD report I mentioned earlier identified the strong role that collective bargaining and social dialogue can play in addressing the challenges posed by a change in the world of work. Trade unions need to be at the heart of this transition, negotiating and collectively agreeing reductions to working hours. It has already been achieved for the few; let us now achieve it for the many. Support the motion and let us ensure a future that works for all. *(Applause)*

**The President:** There has been no opposition. All those in favour of Motion 19, please show? Any against? That is carried unanimously.

- *Motion 19 was CARRIED*

### **Collective voice and new technology**

**The President:** I call Composite Motion 6: Collective voice and new technology. The General Council is supporting the composite motion, which will be moved by Prospect, seconded by Accord and supported by Community and FDA. I will also be calling CWU in this debate.

**Eleanor Wade** (*Prospect*) moved Composite Motion 6. *She said:* Conference, as we have heard in the previous motion, work has been shaped by technological change since it began. All of our careers and workplaces have been affected through mechanisation, electrification, automation, computerisation and digitisation. In fact, I could go on with the ‘ations’. The human drive to innovate, create and problem solve has always created challenges for workers. Work that once occupied thousands is now overseen by a handful. But it has also created opportunities. We have seen our workplaces get safer and, for many, work getting more rewarding, especially when a collective voice has been involved in that change.

The challenge for our time is the handling and use of data, advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning. AI is the core to the operations and R&D agendas of many of the world’s most valuable companies, namely, Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, Alphabet and Facebook. AI will shape our work and society.

These new technologies could be used to monitor and manage workers in ways that undermine transparency and make work worse. They could be used to monitor people and make decisions about access to services, entrenching stereotypes and biases in those decisions. They could be used to cut costs and replace workers without a fair transition into new and better roles. Or this could be a positive. New technologies

can make work safer, cleaner and more rewarding as they have before. Prospect has already seen this in areas ranging from nuclear decommissioning to climate science. Our members at the National Physical Laboratory, the Met Office, in BT and at the National Grid are among many others at the cutting edge of developing and using AI in their work. It is clear to us that one of the most crucial deciding factors in whether AI is used for good or ill is whether or not workers have a voice and an influence over its development and application. That includes workers who design and develop the technology itself as well as those using it.

The Google walkout showed that tech workers themselves want new technology to be developed in responsible and accountable ways as much as anyone. Some of those who led the Google walkout have now called for unionisation as the best way to build their power. This is Prospect's experience of recruiting and working with tech workers across the industries in which we organise.

A poll that we commissioned this year showed that 58% of UK workers felt that they would not be consulted or involved in any discussions about how technology would affect their jobs. Meanwhile, there are no union or worker representatives on the board of the Government's Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation or its AI Council. So it is no wonder that people are seeing these sweeping technological changes as something that is done to them rather than with them. It is our job as trade unionists to put workers in the driving seat of these changes as developers and users of the technology, as well as people who need to be protected against its abuse or negative impacts.

We have long campaigned to support diversity in STEM careers, but this is especially stark for AI because of its broader societal reach, so it is critical that we support diversity in this workforce so that we don't entrench the damaging stereotypes and biases that harm people. This can seem like daunting new territory but we, as trade unions, have the experience and the tools to make a real impact. As has been said, we have done this before. Let's not forget that we can use this stuff, too. We must live up to our ideals of how it should be used but as AI creates more diverse and more dispersed workforces, we need to look to new ways to build them into a collective.

Where we have established agreements or a membership presence we can challenge employers to be transparent about how they are collecting and using data on our members and consulting on our plans to develop or deploying new technologies. By showing that we are taking action, we can show existing members as well as those who we need to recruit that we can make a difference around the issues that they are concerned about. So, yes, let's warn about the dangers, let's make sure we understand the risks, but let's seek the positive opportunities that these new technologies offer for improving our members' working lives and for increasing our relevance and influence as trade unions. Please support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you very much, Ellie. I call on Accord to second.

**Ged Nichols** (*Accord*) seconded Composite Motion 6. *He said:* Congress, I am the General Secretary of the specialist finance union Accord to second Composite Motion 6 on Collective voice and new technology.

We have discussed the dawn of the fourth industrial revolution before, we have recognised that the world is changing faster than ever and that new technology is creating new industries, changing existing ones and transforming the way in which things are made and services are delivered. Technological breakthroughs in areas from artificial intelligence to biotechnologies have the power to reshape almost every sector in every country. The UK finance sector, which employs more than a million people in the UK is in the eye of what could be a perfect storm.

There is a need for massive investment to provide customers with the highest standard of product and services as well as to protect those customers from cyber attacks and on-line fraud. In the industry we have disruption created by the Fintech innovators, who focus, in particular, on segments of the customer base of the traditional banks and the rise of the challenger banks and companies operating in the shadow-banking sector, which are often not unionised at all. These issues arise as banks operate in a difficult interest rate environment and when business levels are much lower than planned because of the economic slowdown caused by the political instability in the UK due to Brexit.

At the same time, there is a justified demand to retain traditional branch networks for vulnerable customers and rural communities. Bank branches are an important source of advice on key-life events for people, including home buying, investments and dealing with difficult personal issues such as bereavement. Unless people are using traditional branches the branch networks are vulnerable, especially as the new entrants don't have the branch networks or the associated costs. In this perfect storm, the only thing that banks have under their control is their cost base and that means

employment. Tens of thousands of jobs have gone in the industry since the financial crisis, but those job losses could be insignificant compared with those that stand to be lost through artificial intelligence and robotics.

The Government published their industrial strategy in June, which is high on aspiration, short on detail and silent on the issue of employment.

Congress must call on the Government to establish a Future of Work Commission involving unions and employers, to ensure a just transition and that the digital dividend does not simply accrue to the tech giants and other businesses while entrenching existing inequalities. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Dean Cox** (*Community*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 6 on Collective voice in artificial intelligence and new technology. *He said:* Congress, there is no doubt that there are brilliant examples of artificial intelligence helping to solve some of the world's problems, whether it is in healthcare or support services. There are huge possibilities of artificial intelligence tackling humanitarian challenges. There are also huge challenges in ensuring that humans benefit from its rapid advancement.

Take prejudice as an example. We all know that prejudice exists in certain groups of people and it has serious consequences in the workplace. If done properly, artificial intelligence has the potential to help strip out prejudice. We have already seen those changes being used in job interviews. If you take out a loan or even getting a mortgage, we have serious concerns about algorithmic bias being used in those decision makings. Whether it is discrimination of women or people of ethnic

minority backgrounds, there are crucial questions for unions around who is building the technology and where the data is coming from to identify bias early on. That is why we need new legislation and enforcement on the fair use of algorithms in workplace decision making. It has to be the trade unions which are at the forefront of this legislation and campaigning for ethical and social responsibility in the development of AI and new technology.

Congress, we should be going even further than that. Trade unions and employees should be part of the consultation through an automation process or changes in technology in the workplace. We should be introducing new technology agreements in our collective bargaining and arrangements to ensure that every worker receives the support that they are entitled to at work. Managed properly and correctly, we have the opportunity to create positive changes for workers, such as moving towards shorter hours for the same pay, better working environments and safer workplaces, boosting productivity and crucially ensuring that a diverse group of people are brought into the world of artificial intelligence, by giving people from all different backgrounds an opportunity to be involved and to shape it.

By working with employers, we can help all workers to prosper in our rapidly changing and advancing economy. If done properly, we can all make AI work for everyone. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**Tony Wallace** (*FDA*) spoke in support of the composite. *He said:* I wholeheartedly support Composite 6, Collective voice and new technology. Robotic Process Automation. Those are three words that I never imagined I would be using in the



same sentence. It sounds like science fiction but it is not. RPA is science fact. It is now, and if it has not touched you or your workplace yet, be assured that it soon will. The questions are: what is it and what does it mean for the future? Those are very good questions for this trade union Movement and the collective voice that millions of working people need to be addressing now.

RPA is described in a multitude of different ways. In the public sector, it is described as “A method of making frontline day-to-day processing tasks quicker and easier”. Google is probably the world’s best known robot, but the range and scope of what RPA can do in the world of work is colossal: assessing applications, preparing prescriptions, checking tax returns, moving money and assessing markets. All of those things are within the scope of RPA. However, in the public sector in a way that, I am sure, is treated right across the world of work, it is described as not about swapping people for robots but it is just about using robots to take out some of the more mundane and manual bits of the job.

Those statements might be true because the world of work of a civil servant is light years away from what it was when I began my career 36 years ago. The mind-numbing monotony of some of the jobs I did then is long gone, but make no mistake that many of the people who were doing those jobs have gone, too. The impact of new technology grows at an ever-accelerating rate. PWC has recently reported that by late 2020, 25% to 30% of all jobs across all sectors in the United Kingdom could be automated. No sector will be untouched. I searched RPA on my own department’s web page and got more than 400 hits. Yes, some really dull jobs might go but that doesn’t mean that the people who do them should or need to go with them.

The key is education, retraining, upskilling, the re-allocation of tasks, an increase in considerate jobs and the professionalism of the people who do them. There is a win-win here but if we don't grasp it now then the benefits that should accrue to working people will evaporate and disappear like the early morning mist.

Colleagues, those who do not learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past. Two-hundred and fifty years ago the first industrial revolution began with the small process of the destruction of the artisan class. It led to wholesale exploitation of the mass of working people and to the accumulation of benefits of technology and much of this wealth was in the hands of a tiny all-powerful oligarchy. Working people were the losers. I urge you, colleagues, to learn the lessons of history. Support the proposition today and start the essential work we need to protect the workers of tomorrow. Support Composite 6. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Andy Kerr** (*Communication Workers Union*) spoke in support of the composite.

*He said:* Congress, new technologies and artificial intelligence have enormous potential to improve the world of work, wider society and to tackle the climate crisis. Yet in a free-market economy these critical objectives always seem to end up way down the list of priorities. As the eminent physicist, Stephen Hawkins, said in 2015: "It's capitalism that we should be scared of, not robots". What has been termed the fourth industrial revolution, we are witnessing more rapid and far-reaching change than ever before. Millions of jobs are set to be replaced by robots and whilst millions will be created, there are huge doubts about the quality of those new jobs.

Experts predict that there will be winners and losers on AI and automation by industry sector. For example, the health sector is expected to see strong growth in jobs over the next 20 years, whilst jobs in manufacturing will fall by 25%. Digital platforms like Uber and Deliveroo have more than doubled during the past three years, with 4.7 million adults now doing this kind of work. They pay them poverty wages and are labelled as 'self-employed'. This burdens them with the responsibility of working for themselves but offering none of the benefits.

At the same time we face the threat of employers using artificial intelligence, algorithms and personal data in management decision-making and performance evaluation. But what is certain is that AI will impact all of our sectors. That is because AI includes broad applications like conversational interfaces or chat boxes, as they are known, they can answer customer queries and provide information on products and services. They also include machine-learning algorithms that can analyse past data sets to help predict customer demand, make investment decisions or optimise logistic networks. For example, in Royal Mail the growth of email and the internet, combined with automation in the mail centres has already displaced thousands of jobs. Fierce competition in parcel delivery and online competition from Amazon, Hermes and Google, all of which rely on the fake self-employment world, is creating a race to the bottom in employment conditions across the sector.

In the longer term, not only does the possibility of driverless vehicles present a threat, but there is also the potential of automated drones for the delivery of packages. To help workers navigate the digital revolution, there is also the question of universal digital literacy. Apprenticeships are generally focused on young people, when much

of the training that workers will need in the coming decades will be retraining for older workers in the wake of losing jobs as a result of automated change.

I will finish by saying that trade unions will have a huge role to play in supporting workers through these difficult and uncertain times, but we need to ensure that members have control and can make agreements through collective bargaining over the introduction of technology in the workplace. We must also strike agreements with employers and secure protection for workers to ensure unethical use of their personal data, especially in relation to surveillances and monitoring of staff. We need to be securing commitments from the Government and employers so that our members have access to skills and the training needed to adjust to this rapidly changing world of work. It is critical that this piece of work is done now in the trade union Movement. Changes are already moving at a pace and they need to start campaigning to ensure that workers' voices are heard in all future developments in technologies to assure employees and the wider society well into the future. Conference, I ask you, wholeheartedly, to support Composite 6. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Andy. There being no opposition, I will go straight to the vote. Can I ask all those in favour of Composite Motion 6 to show? Thank you. All those against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Composite Motion 6 was CARRIED.*

## **New Deal for Workers**

**The President:** I now call Composite Motion 7: New Deal for Workers. The General Council supports the composite. It is to be moved by the CWU, seconded by Unite, supported by the GMB and I will also call the National Education Union.

**Dave Ward** (*Communication Workers Union*) moved Composite Motion 7. *He said:* Congress, I move Motion 22, which is really setting out what we need to do to deliver on a new deal for working people and how we need to come together.

I want to start by thanking the General Council, Frances and the TUC for taking this forward in the last couple of years. We had the march, you might remember, a couple of years back where all the unions came together and we had a big demonstration in London setting out that we were fighting for a new deal for working people. It has become a regular feature in the campaign plan and it will be talked about again later on today. We have a charter now, which I think is the first time in decades — unions need to recognise this — that the General Council has sat together, had meetings and come up with a collective agenda that we think we can all get behind as well as all of the individual disputes and issues that we have to deal with as trade unions. We have even got our President, the fantastic Mark Serwotka, with his New Deal badge. You can buy one of them, or are they free, Mark. I'm not sure.

**The President:** They are free to everyone, Dave, but 10 quid to you, of course.

*(Laughter)*

**Dave Ward:** And we've got the hall decked out as well: "A New Deal for Working People". I am here to ask: what is it we are collectively going to do to make it

happen? What are we going to do to shift the balances of forces? What are we going to do, without waiting for political change, to achieve what we exist for, to change the lives of working people in the UK?

Don't take this the wrong way. I think that Heart Unions Week has been useful. It served a purpose. But I think that Heart Unions Week needs a heart transplant. Mark, if there is any evidence of a heart transplant and how you have come out the other end, I think we will be having a general strike in about six weeks if we can dot hat with Heart Unions Week. (*Applause*) The point is that Mark set the tone at this year's Address. He said it is about what we now do in the future. You will hear from Tim Roache from the GMB in a minute that we need to set a day of action that every single union can participate in. We are suggesting, and Tim will be suggesting, that that is the 1<sup>st</sup> May of next year; not a week, but one day where we are all at it! Tim will go into that. I would also say that we need to build towards that. We need to make sure that every union, as well as the individual disputes — I stress the point we are not here to suggest that any individual union's individual issue is not crucial — builds on that and to take it forward. You need to make it relevant to the members in your union but we also need that connecting agenda.

Tomorrow — we've got a dispute going on at the moment, like lots of other unions in here — we will be having what we are calling "National Gate-Meeting Day". Some of our delegation will be out and around in delivery offices near this centre, and I would invite any of you who want to come up and see our National Gate-Meeting Day tomorrow taking place, to see it on our social media channels at the Brighton Delivery Office, and show your support and show your solidarity. You will see our

members come out of their workplace on that day to listen to their trade union leaders saying why we are having a dispute, what we are going to do about it and why it is essential that they get behind our union. You will see that happening right across delivery offices, mail centres and all of our Royal Mail institutions tomorrow. You will see photos of it happening everywhere. I think we could do that replicated across the whole of this movement.

There is also an issue about sectoral bargaining, which has been very well put forward today. Labour is doing a fantastic job on that but, again, I don't believe in waiting for political change. I want to work with the likes of the GMB, with the likes of Unite, in the communications sector, and I want us to come together with a common bargaining agenda and root out insecure employment that is creating the race to the bottom. We have to do it now. *(Applause)*

I have spent my lifetime like most of you fighting for working people, but I have come to the point where I truly recognise that for the life chances of our members, for the life chances of my children and our grandchildren, we have got to come together and we have got to stand up to the economic and political forces that are ruining this country for workers. All I am saying to you is that we sharpen up and strengthen a new deal for working people and all the work that has gone into it. That will not just make people love unions, it will make people join unions and it will mean that we will shift the forces in the UK. We will see the trade union Movement grow, we will see workers get better terms and conditions and our time has come. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thanks, Dave. It goes without saying that we wish well, the CWU, you tomorrow for the National Gate Day call on Unite to second. Unite.

**Sharon Graham** (*Unite the Union*): Conference, I second the motion. She said: Chair and delegates, I just want to talk about some of the things that we are now facing: the stagnation of wages, the biggest squeeze since Napoleon. The distribution of wealth is now back to 1930 proportions. The workers' piece of the pie is getting smaller and smaller. There is a rise in job insecurity, fragmentation and automation. Also there is an increased number of employers buying our members' jobs, jobs that will never return. Conference, this cannot be and must not be business as usual.

Unite's contribution to this motion is about intensifying our focus on our core industrial work. We are unions, and we must ensure that the industrial is key. We need to be much more industrially prepared in actions as well as words. Unite has 36,000 agreements with employers. We sit at the bargaining table 33,000 times a year. Can you imagine how many times that is replicated in this room. Is there a way that we widen and deepen this collective? Could we co-ordinate our collective bargaining better? Could we do some or all of it together? Could we have less anniversary dates, for example; with hundreds of thousands of workers bargaining at the same time?

Given what we are facing, Conference, including the very fight for work itself, now is the time that we have to be serious about co-ordinating our bargaining. This motion calls on the bringing together of our industrial information. It calls for the bringing together of all of our stewards across sectors and employers, irrespective of union;



building where we can a common industrial strategy. We know, Conference, that every time an employer pushes back, sacks our stewards or stays non-union, this hurts us all. They get stronger, more emboldened and they learn. No one can win unless we all win. We need to work together to build strike-ready workplaces, to build confidence among our members and reps and, crucially, not to be risk averse. We need to be rebuilding our shop-stewards' movement, protecting it, supporting it and driving information and resource to the front line. We have to become better able to defend and empower our stewards. If we cannot do this, Conference, we have nothing. That is why we must use more alternative muscular strategies like leverage, an escalation campaign, which has seen employers pushed back. Could we create pro-active leverage, not reactive leverage, but pro-active leverage, starting with the top one hundred employers in Britain and Ireland, irrespective of union.

Conference, real change can come through the collective. Collective bargaining still remains the tried and tested method of pushing up pay and conditions, unions acting collectively, stewards acting collectively, driving and pace-setting pay and pay-setting agreements. We cannot wait — we just cannot wait — for the law to change on sectoral bargaining. We now need to force it. We need to build it from the bottom up so that it cannot just be dismantled. We need to have joint campaigns where this makes industrial sense.

So, Conference, let's re-energise the industrial, build thousands and thousands of leaders, let our heroes be the collective and let's begin the industrial pushback. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you very much, Sharon. I call the GMB.

**Amanda Burley** (*GMB*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7. *She said:* Conference, our Union seeks first hand how easy it is for employers legally to undermine trade unions and keep us away from the people who we seek to support and represent. We are a fighting union. GMB has taken on Uber and we are going up against Amazon in a David versus Goliath fight for decency and respect. We want to deliver real change to GMB members on the way to achieving a fairer world of work. Our campaigning against human exploitation in the so-called gig economy has led to real results.

GMB is proud to say that in February of this year we signed a recognition agreement with the carrier firm, Hermes. This has already made a difference to drivers, some of whom will get holiday pay and guaranteed pay for the first time, but what we are fighting for, basically, is decency. This is why we need a new deal for all workers. We all have experiences of unfair work practices with the burden shift from the employer to the worker. Workers become more insecure, underpaid, stressful and end up exhausted. We can't carry on like this. We know that we have no friends in government. We have to take matters into our own hands. Just look at the words of the hard right-wing mob now sitting in Cabinet. The likes of Priti Patel, who with her Tory mates wrote on the book *Britannia Unchanged*, that British workers are among the worst idlers in the world. How dare she?

I work in social care and my colleagues work flat out, non-stop, until 10 pm at night, caring for the most vulnerable people in society; care workers going out to people's

homes in all circumstances, often alone in complex households, being in greater risk. Too many employers in all sectors will only look at the legal minimum and not what is right. The system is failing workers and we need a big change. It is important that we don't just talk about the new deal for workers but we campaign for it in our workplaces and communities up and down the land.

That is why, in our amendment, GMB wants to nail down the date so that we can all build for Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020, to ensure a high-profile focus of action. Who knows what will happen by then? But at the ballot box and in the workplace we all need to be campaigning hard for change. Let's ensure that we get the new deal which all working people fully deserve. Congress, please don't just support but take part, too. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Fantastic, Amanda. Thanks very much. Finally, I call on the NEU.

**Gawain Little** (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Composite 7: New Deal for Workers. *He said:* I don't need to remind you of the scale of the challenges we face. I don't need to tell you the difference between an unstable, right-wing Tory Government, which in or out of the EU, plans on subjecting us to decades of austerity, and a Labour government, which speaks for the many, not the few. These are the two futures in front of us, and we will have a central role in deciding which becomes reality.

Congress, we are about to enter into the fight of our lives, and that's why we welcome this crucial composite. Going into this battle, we need to take a long and hard look at

our movement. We need to celebrate the successes of those unions which are building their capacity, who are in struggle and who are winning for their members. But we also need to address our weaknesses. As the composite says, we need to co-ordinate co-operation between our unions to develop common sector-wide bargaining agendas so that we speak with a single voice in every area of the economy. We need to work to end competitive recruitment, to end the waste of valuable resources on competing with each other when we should be fighting those who attack our members' rights and their supporters in government. (*Applause*)

But, Congress, we also need to reorient our unions to the four in five workers who are not a member of a trade union. Too often trade unions can be dismissed as simply lobby groups, speaking for one section of workers in a single workplace or a single industry. We need to be embedded within working-class communities, fighting for a new deal for all workers. For the National Education Union, this was the thinking behind our

But, Congress, we also need to reorient our unions to the four in five workers who are not a member of a trade union. Too often trade unions can be dismissed as simply lobby groups, speaking for one section of workers in a single workplace or a single industry. We need to be embedded within working-class communities, fighting for a new deal for all workers. For the National Education Union, this was the thinking behind our *School Cuts* campaign. We have mobilised our members alongside the communities that they live in and work in. We have mobilised support staff, teachers, headteachers, parents and others to defend their schools against the relentless attacks of successive Tory governments. But this community-based campaigning must not be

seen as an alternative to industrial militancy. They need to be integrally combined. We need to look at those unions which have taken a lead in using the challenges posed by the anti-union laws to double down on workplace organisation, to deliver ballot results which smash the thresholds imposed on us and we need to combine our workplace organising with the broad appeal of a new deal for workers. Whatever the future, Congress, this is essential for our movement.

Either we face this Tory Government's constant attacks, be ready to fight and to win in those contexts, or we win a general election and have a Labour government. In that context, our demands remain the same. We will be the conscience of that government, the voice of working people and the guardians of Labour's radical programme. Our job is to speak up for the whole of the working class for a new deal for all workers. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Gawain. There is no opposition, so I am going to move to the vote. Can I ask all of those in favour of Composite 7 to show? All those against? That is unanimously agreed.

\* *Composite Motion 7 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** As an update on the speakers, can I thank those unions that withdrew to keep us to time. This is just an observation, so don't read too much into it, there have only been a few speakers who have got to the red light, so everybody is observing discipline, but of the three who reached the red light all were men and all were full-time officials. (*Laughter and applause*) So make of that what you will.

## **General Secretary's Address**

**The President:** I now have great pleasure in asking our fantastic General Secretary, Frances O'Grady, to address Conference and, in so doing, move the TUC Campaign Plan. Frances works tirelessly on all of our behalves. Anyone who was up early enough will have heard here on the *Today* programme this morning, as on many other mornings. So can we give Frances a fantastic ovation for her address. (*Applause*)

**The General Secretary:** Conference, I am formally moving the TUC's campaign plan, and I want to thank our brilliant President, our General Council and my thanks to you, too, delegates, and to our brilliant workplace reps. Because of your hard work, our collective membership is up by one hundred thousand extra new members. Let's put our hands together and welcome every single one of them. (*Applause*) This movement is growing. There is strength in numbers. We can win and, believe you me, we intend to.

So, since the EU referendum just three years ago, David Cameron *walked* out, Theresa May was *pushed* out and Boris Johnson just strolls on in. We have a Prime Minister, supposedly for the *whole* of the UK, chosen by a Tory party membership, a fraction of the size of Brighton, only somewhat older, somewhat whiter and, without doubt, a whole lot richer!

Boris Johnson faced just one day in Parliament before he announced he would shut it down. Let's remember that this year is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peterloo, when

working class people put their lives on the line to win representation for people like us. So let me remind Boris Johnson that Parliament does not belong to you or your rich mates. Parliament belongs to the people! (*Applause*)

Now, Boris Johnson, I think, is someone who is used to getting his own way, and if people don't do what he wants he calls them "chicken". That's a bit rich coming from a lame duck. (*Laughter*) In any case, he's the coward. He's the one running scared of Parliament and he's the one running up the white flag. He's surrendered to the DUP, he's surrendered to the Brexit Party and now he's ready to surrender our NHS to Donald Trump. So now the choice is clear. Either we win our vision of the future or the hard-right win theirs. Because for the hard right of the Tory Party, Brexit was always a political project to leave the EU, yes, but also to radically reshape this country as a low-tax, low-rights, free market economy; a cold, hard place with no compassion, no help in hard times and everyone for themselves. They want to slash taxes for the wealthy, attack safeguards for our welfare and they insult us, saying that British workers are the laziest in the world! These are the self-styled new bad boys of the Tory Party. They think they're Westminster's answer to the Sex Pistols, but in truth they're just the bully boys of the British elite.

Look at the special advisers who have moved into Downing Street, like Dominic Cummings, Boris Johnson's right-hand man, a man who think he's a genius. To be fair, sisters, in my time, I've met a few of them (*Laughter*). They usually sober up. But in this case, Dominic Cummings' politics belong to the gutter.

I want to tell you something that he said about the campaign to leave the EU, and I am quoting him direct: “Immigrant was a baseball bat that just needed picking up at the right time and in the right way.”

Whichever way you voted in the referendum, I know you will agree that that’s disgusting. It defines our common humanity and it defies our common decency. It tells us everything we need to know about the moral vacuum at the heart of No. 10. It is why we can’t trust them on Brexit.

But I will say this. When I hear people complain that what’s gone wrong with Britain is Brexit, I say the vote to leave the EU isn’t the cause of what’s gone wrong. It is a symptom of what’s gone wrong. And those who think we can just turn back the clock and get back to business as usual, I say think again. We can’t sort out Brexit unless we rebuild Britain, rebuild good working-class jobs, rebuild public services, home and communities and rebuild our democracy, too.

One reason why we’re in this mess is because when the bankers crashed the economy, working families paid the price. Greed and inequality ran riot, while wages and public services were cut to the bone. This country is wasting our best skills and talent. Many working-class people feel ignored and shut out from opportunities. It is hard to rise by hard graft and talent alone. The system is rigged from the start: where you come from, what your parents do, your accent and which school you went to. If you’re from a working-class family, the odds are stacked against you.



And let's be honest, Britain is still blighted by old-fashioned snobbery, too, inflated egos and a sense of entitlement. Just go back and picture Jacob Rees Mogg, treating the Government Front Bench like it's his own living room sofa when he's supposed to be there to work and to serve. (*Applause*)

Now, when I talk about the working class, I'm not harking back to some old Hovis ad. Some people seem to think that working class always white and male, but today's working class looks like modern Britain, as likely to work in an office, as a factory, to be a care assistant, as a car worker, and to wear a hijab, as a football shirt. (Or, quite possibly, both). And it's not just the working class that looks different. Britain is run by a new oligarchy. They own hedge funds, buy property, sell data. They resent playing by the rules, and they don't want to protect workers or the planet and they certainly don't like paying their fair share of tax. This isn't always about which class people come from. It's about which class they're fighting for. (*Applause*)

I'm talking about the likes of Jim Ratcliffe. He used to be the UK's richest man, until he had billions of reasons to move to Monaco, or James Dyson, who now owns more acres of land than the Queen. And multi-millionaire Tim Martin of Wetherspoons, who claims he's being so generous with the price of beer, but is so tight-fisted, he refuses to pay his staff the living wage. (*Applause*)

This is not about the politics of envy. It's about the politics of justice, because workers create the wealth and workers should get a fair share of it. But in Britain today, too often it's a case of who you know, not what you know. Unpaid internships and work trials make the entry ticket unaffordable, and the vocational route is still

looked down on as second best. And even if you go to university and get a top-class degree, it's not guarantee. Compared to friends from better off backgrounds, you're much more likely to end up in a lower paid job, lumped with a lifetime of student debt. That massive gap between those at the top, and everyone else, has reshaped British society.

After all, doing well at school or college doesn't stop you ending up being on a zero hours contract. Working hard doesn't stop your boss watching you like Big Brother. And too often promotion means bags more responsibility but precious little extra pay.

Remember back in the day when New Labour proclaimed 'We're all middle class now'? How times change because today we are all working class now. *(Applause)*

We should be proud of ourselves because we are the backbone of Britain who build the houses, drive the lorries, stack the shelves, wash and feed our older neighbours, teach our kids, take the x-rays, sort our post, deliver our babies, cook, clean, wash and make the tea. Without us there is no NHS, no schools, no shopping, no culture or entertainment, no infrastructure and no transport. The services that we rely on would grind to a halt. And we are ambitious for change. A new deal. A fair deal.

I'm proud that, over the years, this movement campaigned to outlaw discrimination; against women, disabled and black workers, older workers, younger workers and LGBT workers too. Those rights matter, not just to individuals but as a foundation that unions can build on. While we are about it, let's pay tribute to those glorious women of Glasgow — the cleaners, cooks, nursery workers. *(Applause and cheers)*

Thanks to their union, thanks to their courage and thanks to their strike, they have finally won equal pay.

But there's more to do. So today I want to issue a challenge to politicians. It's high time we outlawed discrimination against working class people. Let's change the law and stamp out class prejudice once and for all. But let me be clear. We all know that class justice isn't just about the law. It runs much deeper than that. Long before Brexit, for many working people the world was already harsh. And we were already in the grip of vicious austerity, a political choice that caused untold hardship and heartbreak. That's why it is so important to rule out a no-deal Brexit. As we saw after the financial crash, economic shocks always hit our people first and hardest. We know what recessions mean for our jobs and industries. We know what happens to mental health, crime and communities, and we know that those scars last for generations.

And now we also know just how bad the alternatives could be. Yes, I'm talking about Donald Trump. After Brexit, he's promised us a special relationship. Yeah. Like a dog and a lamp post have a special relationship. *(Laughter)* The President owes favours to his friends in big pharma. They want healthcare in the UK turned into a free market, and he wants a deal that would drive up the price of medicines. Not so much a trade deal, more like a protection racket with secret courts, where corporations hold our NHS to ransom.

So let's be clear. If it takes the last breath in our bodies, we will defend our precious health service. We will do whatever it takes to protect staff and patients. Donald Trump, take your tiny hands off our NHS! (*Applause and cheers*)

It didn't have to be like this. After the EU referendum result, the TUC tried to find a way through that would help bring the country back together. We set out our priorities for a deal, protecting jobs, rights and peace in Ireland. Our bottom line was that workers mustn't pay the price. But as each day passes, it's clear that Boris Johnson never wanted compromise. He never wanted a deal. He will do whatever it takes to get his own way and he thinks he's above the law. The Prime Minister acts like he's the clown prince of Downing Street, but the last thing we need is BoJo the clown in charge! (*Applause*) And Brexit isn't a game.

What happens next matters to people's real lives, and the responsibility for this mess sits squarely on the Prime Minister's shoulders. As we live through this political crisis, I know that many people feel overwhelmed, anxious and intimidated. All the more reason to join a union because in the trade union Movement we stand up to bullies. Make no mistake, we will defend working people. And I'm here to give a warning. If the Prime Minister tries to trick us or refuses to obey the law and workers vote to strike to defend their jobs, then the gloves are off. I want to make this crystal clear — this whole movement will stand up and fight! (*Applause*)

We will stand by our friends who are EU citizens too. We will not allow another *Windrush*. We'll stand up to violent thugs like Stephen Yaxley Lennon, Tommy Robinson. That man is no working class hero. He's a racist, now banged up in prison

where he belongs. (*Applause*) You see, when working people organise, we do have courage and we are the true optimists. We know there is a better way, where this country draws on the talents of all our people, and makes sure that everyone has a voice — and a stake — in rebuilding Britain. A new deal for working people. So let's use our political voice, hold our nerve and get no deal ruled out for good. Then we can have the general election to get the change that working people need.

And, Boris, you bet we're ready. Because we want a government that respects working people, makes it easier to raise a family, helps us win a fair wage, removes the obscenity of families queuing at food banks, builds homes and keeps communities safe, takes care of our NHS, a government that is compassionate and tolerant and, for the sake of our young people, brings hope for the future, a government that will rebuild Britain, and, on Brexit, one that trusts the people to have the final say, a popular vote on any deal with Remain on the ballot paper.

We are only weeks away from a general election. We know that together we can do it, together we can win. A government of the people, for the people. And for the sake of our democracy, for the sake of common decency, let's get Jeremy in and send Boris Johnson packing! (*A standing ovation*)

**The President:** Thanks, Frances, very much for that fantastic address. I hope that everybody watching, whether on-line or the media, will have picked up on the really important messages being delivered on all of our behalves here; how we stand united for the important battles ahead. Perhaps someone can explain to me the reference to

Donald Trump's "tiny little hands" at lunch time. I am sure I will work that one out.

*(Laughter)*

During that address, Frances formally moved the campaign plan on behalf of the General Council. So can I now ask Conference to vote on the TUC campaign plan.

All those in favour of endorsing the campaign plan? Can you just, please show?

Thank you. Any against? That is agreed.

\* *The TUC Campaign Plan was ADOPTED.*

## **Education**

**The President:** Delegates, we now turn to section 4 of the General Council Report: Good Services, the section on Education from page 44. I call paragraphs 4.1, 4.2 and Motion 56: Poverty and privatisation damage children's education. The General Council is supporting the motion. It will be moved in a minute by the National Education Union, seconded by EIS and I also intend to call UNISON and the NASUWT.

## **Poverty and privatisation damage children's education**

**Amanda Martin** (*National Education Union*) moved Motion 56. *She said:* Conference, I am the President of the National Education Union and proudly moving a motion that calls out this vulgar, arrogant Government for damaging our children's future with their austerity, privatisation and downright disgusting policies. The

motion speaks of the stark reality of Britain today and highlights in numerical terms the extensive damage this Tory and the previous Coalition government have inflicted on our kids. It cannot be denied that a situation which sees millions of kids in poverty has grown from 2010 onwards, with the introduction of universal credit, benefit freezes, the two-child limit, which means that with families in schools some have free school meals while their siblings cannot, zero hours contracts, insecure employment and the most vulnerable SEND pupils unable to access the resources just to function in schools.

The worst action has been the cut back of SureStart Centres, a service that was at the heart of our communities, a service that did not judge, was not means tested and encouraged real community involvement and cohesion, which was a lifeline to so many people. All of this leaves schools as the frontline service for so many families who have nowhere to turn, resulting in schools in your neighbourhood and mine providing food banks, Christmas Day and holiday hunger clubs, school uniforms, resources, lunches, PE kit and dealing with people's washing.

I am from Portsmouth, a city decimated by the Blitz. In my city, people are living and facing even harder times than they did then. There are no resources and no places to go to, which is increasing child poverty.

Since being elected, Johnson has promised billions to education, not because he cares about our kids and the horrendous circumstances they live in or because he cares about reducing poverty levels. The point is that if he truly cared about reducing poverty he would not have allowed the scrapping of poverty targets and would not

consider on with austerity. No, Congress. It's because these Tories are electioneering, using our kids and our schools to score points. Well, as trade unionists, we must not let these lies spread. It is up to us to call out the manipulation and ensure that people know the truth.

The NEA members, I am sure, agree wholeheartedly with Steve Turner's sentiments on Boris Johnson yesterday, but as a teacher, should I say that from this rostrum in the way that he did, I wouldn't have a job any more. However, Steve is correct. We must talk frankly, openly and honestly about the reality of austerity on our kids; the rise in self-harm and mental health issues, how girls don't go to school when they have got a period because they can't afford toiletries, how nine-year olds walk their kid brothers and sisters to school, babysitting and preparing meals while their parents are on low-hours contracts, and how plimsolls and sandals have become everyday school wear all the year round. Even, Boris, if this money did come into our budgets and not into the privatised profiteers' pockets, it would not repair the damage that has happened in a decade. It would not fix the lives of those kids and it would not return those workers who we lost.

When Johnson came to my city he said: "The streets of Portsmouth are full of rain. It's one of the most depressing towns in southern England, a place that arguably too full of drugs, obesity and under-achievement." Well, Boris: pot, kettle, take a look in the mirror! Seriously, though, Portsmouth is a very proud city, and if you give us the same resources as Eton and all the private schools have up and down the country, my kids will achieve. As Frances said, Congress, we have had enough of finger-pointing and blaming. We need a government that cares, a government that does not



breed hatred, a government that does not dismiss the most vulnerable, a government that builds a strategy against poverty, a government that has socialist policies and increases public spending, a government that stands up not for the have nots and their mates but everybody else. Only then will we eradicate poverty and build the next generation.

We in this union are a great family. We stand on the shoulders of giants, people who fought and sacrificed. It is our duty in our movement to defend the most vulnerable in our society, because if we don't what is the point? Let's get rid of Johnson, Cummings and other self-centred Tories clinging on to this Government, and give our kids a fair and justice society and an equal chance. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks very much, Amanda. Can I ask the EIS to second?

**Andrene Bamford** (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) seconded Motion 56. *She said:* Congress, in December 2016 EIS launched a *Face up to Child Poverty* survey to gather our members' perceptions of how poverty arising from cuts to social security benefits, poor wages, and insecurity of employment, is impacting on the classroom. The results made for sobering reading. More than half of our members witnessed children with physical illness which they judged to be poverty related; more than 75% of our members observed signs of poor mental health again which were traced in poverty; more than 76% of our members saw an increase in children coming to school without standard items such as pencils, pens, school bags, and PE equipment.

As a union we have campaigned our members to poverty-proof their schools. We ask them to challenge the assumptions that are often made that children go home to do their homework in a quiet private area with access to IT, WiFi, or that all families have money for school trips, or that the failure to bring equipment to school is a behaviour choice. We see children coming to school inadequately dressed for the winter or are relying on a school lunch for their one decent meal in a day.

The Scottish Government have acknowledged that one in four children in Scotland are living in poverty and this is responsible for the attainment gap between children from the least and most affluent areas. Our government are committed to giving schools an average of £1,200 per child entitled to free school meals and this is known as the Pupil Equity Fund, or PEF. While we welcome any extra money we get, we recognise that this is a short-term solution to a problem that has been created by years of underfunding in education, a systemic failure to support the low income households. As a union we are disgusted by the two-tailed cap on benefits and the abhorrent root cause. The cost of the school day adds up and right now it is children who are paying for the Government's austerity policies. Please support this motion.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Andrene. I call UNISON and then NASUWT.

**Margaret Hindle** (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Motion 56. *She said:* Congress, it is no surprise the Tories continue to stand up only for the privileged few presiding over rising poverty and squeezing living standards. This is a weak government that leaves million of people worse off. Child poverty has risen by half a million since 2010. It

is now more than four million, nearly a third of children, and the predictions are that it will continue to rise to 5.2 million by 2021.

Child benefit and child credit tax have been frozen since 2016. Due to the benefit freeze child benefit for your second child is now worth less than it was when it was introduced in 1979. Wages are still lower than they were in 2010 and Universal Credit has caused more poverty whenever it has been rolled out.

Congress, the Tories have made a political choice. There is no eventuality about rising poverty, homelessness, and food bank use in the fifth richest country on the earth. Child poverty impacts on every aspect of children's lives and costs us all. Poverty shortens lives. Children's health suffers. Children's development slows. Before reaching their second birthday a child from a poor family is already more likely to show a lower level of attainment than that of a child from a better off family. All children growing up in poverty are more likely to leave school at 16 with fewer qualifications.

Congress, councils are already at breaking point with huge pressures on budgets for special educational needs. In last week's spending review the Chancellor promised, where it is needed, to reverse the cuts to schools. The money they announced for SEND funding is less than half the funding shortfall and the £400m for further education will reverse just an eighth of the cuts made in 2010.

Congress, we need a government that cares, a government that does not shirk its responsibility like the current one, a government that will make it their mission to

eradicate child poverty. Congress, we need a government that will end privatisation of our educational service and instead of wasting hundreds of millions on free school vanity projects will spend the money on those who need it most. Thank you, Congress. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks very much, Margaret. NASUWT.

**Alan Hackett** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' Union*) spoke in support of Motion 56. *He said:* One of the most profound and damaging consequences of child poverty is the impact it has on pupils' educational attainment, a wider wellbeing, and the opportunities available to them in the future. The evidence is overwhelming that poverty is a major determining factor in children's life chances. Congress, the scale of child poverty in this country, the fifth biggest economy in the world, is frankly disgusting.

The most recent evidence from the Resolution Foundation found that 30% of children or 4.1 million were living in relative poverty after housing costs. In the UK 7% of children who live in poverty were also in working families. Furthermore, as the NCB reports, 3.6 million children are thought to be affected by poor housing. A higher percentage of children live in overcrowded conditions than any other age group, a context which leaves them less able to focus on their school work.

The impact of this deprivation is evident every day in our classrooms. NASUWT research has found that almost three-quarters of teachers see children coming into

school hungry. Many families also rely on food banks to survive. The Trussell Trust stated that over 575,000 children received emergency supplies last year.

These damning statistics show that the economic policies employed since 2010 have failed and must be reversed. This must not be an exercise in cosmetic presentation in order to try and win an election but must be a genuine attempt to invest in our children and young people. The Government must focus on reducing child poverty in a serious and sustained way, not just through the manipulation of statistics. With an anti-poverty economic strategy essential to tackling these issues, schools have a vital role in addressing the impact of their provision on children's lives.

NASUWT research found that parents are spending hundreds of pounds each year on uniforms, compulsory field trips, and other activities. Some schools are effectively adopting policies of selection by wealth to deter pupils from lower economic backgrounds. A quarter of parents have been put off the school entirely because of the potential cost of sending their children there.

Congress, no child should be denied access to education on the basis of children's ability to pay. It is time for the Government to take action. Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Alan. I move to the vote. So, can I ask all those in favour of Motion 56 to show? Thank you. All those against? That is carried.

\* *Motion 56 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** We now move into Motion 57, Curriculum Narrowing. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by the NASUWT, seconded by the Artists' Union England, and the NEU have indicated to speak. Could people come down to the front because we want to try and clear the Congress business this morning. Can I ask the NASUWT to move Motion 57?

### **Curriculum narrowing**

**Dave Kitchen** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) moved Motion 57. *He said:* A curriculum framework should set out a common entitlement for all pupils to receive a broad, balanced, relevant, and engaging education. These frameworks should give teachers the scope to shape the curriculum so that it best meets pupils' needs and interests. Curriculum frameworks should recognise different forms of learning, including both academic and practical learning and seek to develop a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experience. Evidence shows how a broad and balanced curriculum can help to raise pupils' attainments, including their attainment in core subjects. For example, successful schools report that achievement in a range of subjects across the curriculum, including science, humanities, and the arts, helps to improve pupils' confidence and self-esteem, and therefore enables them to tackle more challenging work and develop a positive attitude towards school.

It is the longstanding experience of teachers and school leaders that the narrower the curriculum the more problems associated with poor pupil behaviour are likely to rise. A curriculum framework that marginalises creative, artistic, civic, and sporting skills

and knowledge, therefore cannot be described in the meaningful sense as broad, balanced and fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The NASUWT has undertaken detailed research on the impact of recent reforms on the provision of breadth and balance in the curriculum. This research highlights the troubling extent of curriculum narrowing across the UK. In England the introduction of the English baccalaureate, commonly referred to as the Ebacc, has had a profound impact on breadth and balance in the curriculum since it was introduced by the Coalition Government in 2010. The Ebacc is a public accountability measure that places pressure on schools to privilege a limited range of academic subjects to the exclusion of other subjects that are fundamental to a broad and balanced curriculum framework. Such subjects include art, drama, dance, physical education, and music.

The NASUWT's research confirms that most secondary teachers in England work in schools that have limited the scope of available to pupils to elect and study non-Ebacc subjects at key stage 4 since its introduction. This narrowing is reflected in official data on GCSE and A levels, entry patterns, which show steep declines in entries to non-Ebacc subjects such as design technology and physical education. Of particular concern in this regard, with these research findings, is a significant number of school teachers of non-Ebacc subjects have been made redundant or have seen a reduction in their teaching hours.

The NASUWT work in this area reveals similar pressures are present elsewhere in the UK. For example, in Wales the pressure created by the introduction of the literacy and numeracy framework has resulted in an increasing marginalisation of other areas

of learning and in Scotland teachers continue to point to pressures on curriculum time for artistic and creative subjects.

Congress, the narrowing of the curriculum has limited the opportunities for all children to succeed and flourish, possibly stopping them from taking subjects in which they can show their true potential. Furthermore, at a time when there is much uncertainty over the future of the country and its workforce limiting opportunity for creative subjects when the creative industries are so important to the UK is limiting all of our potentials.

Congress, the NASUWT will continue to use all legitimate means up to and including industrial action to protect members against job loss related to the narrowing of the curriculum. Congress, please join us in campaigning vigorously for a broad and balanced curriculum so that all children and young people can benefit from their entitlement to a curriculum that meets their needs and interests. Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Dave. AUE to second.

**Lorraine Monk** (*Artists' Union England*) seconded Motion 57. *She said:* Speaking to our amendment that asks that art and drama, music, languages, and other creative humanity subjects be given an equal weight to the stem subjects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The narrowing of the curriculum has meant that the overall number of students who took up design A levels this year fell by 1.6% from the year before. The result from the Joint Council for Qualification



showed that in the last nine years all subjects including art, music, drama, dance, all show a decline of 38% in the number of GCSE entries; 38% since Cameron and those nice liberal Liberals took power.

Make no mistake, the Conservative education policy has always been to create and sustain two classes. It is one school for the rich and one school for the poor; one subject for the wealthy and one for those on benefit or even those who are just managing. Huxley's bespoken novel, *Brave New World*, made real as Epsilons and Alphas are selected and educated from birth onwards. The Conservatives' goal, whatever they say with their weasel words, is to promote and bolster inequalities rather than address them. These policies illustrate the blatant and heartless tactics of a cynical government who harp back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century Conservative Party for its morals and its ideals.

The arts are one of the joys of life either making or doing nothing but listening to it all. Of course, the rich know that. That is why the public schools are still teaching a broad curriculum and which is why in the arts it is still difficult to get work if you are not from a wealthy background. If you haven't the network connections, narrowing the curriculum in state schools will only exacerbate this. Without the choice of art subjects some children will have no subjects they enjoy or excel in. Every child should have a favourite subject, one that keeps them going to school.

Technological advances and economic globalisation will transform society. It will affect everyone in every job in every community. We need a holistic open approach to develop a wide response to all of this, a wider curriculum, not narrow-minded

autocratic social engineering. Art in all its forms is something that brings pleasure. It records history and develops new knowledge. It means working together, crossing boundaries and borders, it is sharing skills and hopes and dreams. No wonder the Tories do not want everyone to have it.

Comrades, we need to fight them, and to quote the American suffragette poem, “*No more the drudge and idler, ten that toil where one reposes. But a sharing of life’s glories. Bread and roses, read and roses.*” (Applause)

**The President:** Thank you, Loraine. NEU?

**Jerry Glazier** (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Motion 57 and the amendment. *He said:* I wish to highlight a bit more what Dave Kitchen mentioned about some of the other direct consequences of the narrowing of the curriculum and the funding crisis at schools, that is, on pupil behaviour. There is a direct bearing in this motion to the subsequent composite in respect of pupil behaviour to be debated a bit later on.

Congress, the causes of some of the challenges in the current student behaviour can be directly attributed to what has been happening in the curriculum directly linked to significant funding reductions in schools. A narrow curriculum reduces for students relevance, it reduces for students opportunities, and it reduces for students engagement, especially for those students who find that what is being taught now has little relevance to their actual life experiences and future needs. It limits overall content and constrains variety. It drives an examination system ideologically

interfered with by government, an examination system, as we have heard, that moves away from the more costly interactive assessment, recognising various learning styles to a greater dependence on how good your memory might be.

This also pushes down the value placed on vocational education that should contribute to a vibrant mix that energises all students of all abilities. Importantly, this also constrains how teachers and support staff can do the best possible job, making their job substantially less rewarding and adding to de-motivation and poorer morale, which in turn contributes to staff shortage and a poorer deal for all students. Congress, unanimously pass this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks you, Jerry. There is no opposition so I move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 57? Thank you. All those against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 57 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** I move now to Composite Motion 13, Trade unionism and collectivism in the curriculum. The General Council is supporting the motion. It is to be moved by ASLEF, seconded by the CWU, and then supported by the UCU, both the NAS and the AUE have indicated to speak. We are all going to have to speed up now to make sure we get all the motions in before lunch. Can everybody be ready if they have been called? I call on ASLEF to move Composite Motion 13.

**Trade unionism and collectivism in the curriculum**

**Dave Calfe** (*Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen*) moved Composite Motion 13. *He said:* Despite the good news that trade union membership increased last year by 100,000 to 6.35 million, the fourth increase in the last seven years, just one in ten workers aged 20 to 24 are in a union whilst nearly 77% of union members are over 35 years of age. The TUC, already recognising the need to organise the next generation of workers, particularly in the private sector where most young workers are, is keen to continue with the increase in trade union membership.

This year is the year of TUC's young workers and our motions hopes to build upon the work already being done. We all know that when workers are unionised and organised workplaces are safer, have higher pay, better conditions, and holidays, and the managerial harassment and bullying will be called out and dealt with. Over the decades trade unions have fought for the living wage, the weekend, annual leave, parental rights, flexible working, equality, health and safety, to name just a few. We know in the modern workplace that when technological change comes or unscrupulous employers try to save a few quid by cutting staff or relaxing safety procedures, it is only workers standing together in a union that can stop the exploitation.

Why then do some people not want this protection? Why don't they join a union? One of the main reasons cited particularly by younger people is that they do not know what unions are for, or the relevance for them. To put it mildly, the mainstream media's narrative does nothing to help. The most powerful way to change the narrative is education. There is already some great work being done in this arena and

the more we as unions share our own successes on line the wider our good news will spread, but we cannot stop there. We need to take the message into schools.

We all want to see a future where young people who are entering the workplace will know and value what their union can do for them and join up as soon as they start. There is no reason why our school curriculum should not also include education about working people's history, and about trade unionism, from Tolpuddle, Peterloo, Bryant & May match workers, from Burston to the Shrewsbury 24, and the 1984 and 1985 miners' strike, through to the actions of the police at Orgreave, and through to our campaigns of today. Once we talk about history it is important to remind our members of tomorrow that the underlying causes will be no different, from those who wish to exploit working people, with minimum reward for workers and maximum profit for the employers.

It is rare for schools not to teach about the monarchy or the political forces that drove the Industrial Revolution. We know it was the workers who drove the Industrial Revolution and who then formed our trade unions of today to fight the exploitation of the factory and mill owners. We can see that our 21<sup>st</sup> workplaces in some revolutionary sectors are starting to resemble a 19th century set-up, insecure and unsafe employment, long hours and low pay, with workers having to fight for shifts to keep themselves and families fed. The only things that will stop and change this are people coming together in trade unions organising and fighting back. The foundations for that fight back are in education and that starts in the classroom. Congress, please support the composite. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Dave. Secunder CWU?

**Jane Loftus** (*Communication Workers Union*) seconded Composite Motion 13. *She said:* I want to concentrate on the paragraph second to bottom, which talks about us going into schools and what we do now. In the CWU our young workers have started going into schools, into sixth forms, into colleges. It is very informal and it relies on parents who are trade unionists inviting those people in. They are going in and they are having successes in terms of the same age group talking to each other. I know we have done this previously. I have worked for Royal Mail and the Post Office for 37 years. We used to routinely have schools in to show them what working for the Post Office would have been like.

We are now encouraging all our young workers committees in their regions to make the contacts, to try and get into schools to talk about it. It is all done on an informal basis. We sit here, and we have the teachers unions, etc., but we should be uniting together so that we can coordinate students and our young trade unionists coming together.

I also know that we get asked to go to debates we debate as trade unionists and it is a very visible thing that the TUC would want to see, and if you have that in schools as well as on the curriculum it is then not a shock for a lot of young workers. They do not think they are a worker until they have a proper job. For a lot of those young workers they will have casual jobs; that is a job and should be unionised.

It is absolutely important that we do it and we look at the TUC regionally to coordinate it. I also think it is a great thing for trades councils to do. Let's reinvigorate the trades union Movement. We have every right to talk to everyone, and to students. If you can help us, we can provide those speakers, and if we can provide the briefing we can jazz it all up. We can go and deliver. When they do go into a workplace, which may be a coffee bar, they can say, "What union can I join?"

It is not about us going and recruiting them, it is about them knowing unions protect them and fight for them. Also, we need to listen. I am talking about collectivism. If anything what the students have shown us over climate change is they are willing to do collectivism and activism and we need to get some of their energy into not being so defensive about us. We support the motion. We continue to do the work, but let's make it visible in the name of trade unionism because no one else is going to do it. Thanks, Congress. Support the composite. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Jane. UCU?

**Joanna de Groot** (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 13. *She said:* UCU members educate future teachers and work with teenagers and young people in colleges and universities. We are trade union study tutors and teach in prisons and community education. Now, everyone here understands and has been well made by the previous movers how important it is for young people to learn about the role unions play in our society and how we have done so for a long time. We need to help young people realise that trade unions are the largest single voluntary organisation in our society with millions of members working

collectively for each and all. Of course, that bridges too the wish to recruit young people into our Movement.

We need to tell them about what we do and how we do it and ensure that educators are equipped to do it, equipped to tell them about how we stand up for vulnerable people in workplaces where they are insecure and mistreated, with poor pay and conditions, discrimination, whether it is women, ethnic minorities, gay, transphobic or disabled people, and also more widely in society and I think of the work we do about anti-racism and about migrants and refugees.

Unions stand up for fairness and inclusion in our society against racism, against gender inequality, against homophobia and transphobia, and this is part of a proud history of unions continuing to progress democracy and justice over a long time. For 200 years unions have joined with other people to make society better and as a historian I can talk for ages. I am going to pick two examples. Unions joined the 19<sup>th</sup> century struggles against slavery, including cotton workers in the North West opposing the use of slave-grown cotton in their factories during the US Civil War. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century women in the metal working industry fought gender low pay combining strike activism and union organisation with a campaign for reforming parliament around low pay.

There is our record, standing up for people and their needs and building collective strength and organisation to do so. Students and pupils need to learn how we do those things and that we still do them. Some of the best things in our society have come about through the struggles of the Movement and that is the message we need to put



across. They deserve to know and value our contribution and have teachers, courses, and experiences like the visits that we heard about that can help to do this. Please support the composite and think about the role of education. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Joanna. I call the NASUWT, and then the NEU, and then we move to the vote.

**Mark Morris** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Composite 13. *He said:* Congress, changes to the curriculum introduced as a result of the reforms of Michael Gove stripped away many aspects through which trade unionism, collectivism, and workers' history could be taught. These reforms changed the focus to the history of kings and queens rather than celebrate industrial and agricultural history of working people in this country. Congress, without learning about the history of working people, their fight and struggle for everything, from bank holidays to the NHS, and the welfare state that we have today, we have lost a major part of our history. Let's be clear, this is a deliberate act on the part of this Conservative government: "Who controls the past controls the future," said George Orwell in *1984*. In addition, citizenship has been almost completely removed from the curriculum of many secondary schools and is not taught in primary schools. Citizenship was meant to be the mechanism for teaching pupils about their role as citizens, including their democratic rights, including our democratic right to reform and participate in trade unionism and, colleagues, the TUC has developed fantastic resources in the past on trade unionism to be used primarily in these subjects.

Congress, whilst teacher trade unions are often wary of topics being added to the curriculum as this is often done without an understanding of the workload generated for teachers, there is no doubt, no doubt, that this is an extremely important topic and we also note the motions specifically support the rising tide of CPD for teachers to prepare. Colleagues, Congress, if the trades union Movement is to survive and flourish, then education is required at all levels. All people need to understand the role of unions in a democratic society and need to remember the struggles that have got us to where we are today. Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Mark. The NEU?

**Sheena Wheatley** (*National Education Union*) said: This is a really important motion for us as educators, as other people have alluded to. The fight around the curriculum is as important as the fight for funding: who controls the kind of knowledge that is generated in schools and who participates in that, who designs that, is a key issue for us. Currently, the curriculum, both in primary and secondary, is completely overloaded with subjects and knowledge built around the testing notion as the only way of measuring anything of value, and that leaves very little time for the creativity that the teachers want to put into the curriculum, but also makes the curriculum very rigid and it is a real struggle for us to respond to the needs our students bring to us.

As many people have said, our history is a really proud one of acting in the world and the resources are out there that we have generated through our trade unions and through the TUC which can help us to design and to develop that curriculum which starts from, say, Tolpuddle to the women chainmakers, from Grunwick looking for

dignity at work to the Glasgow women's battle for equal pay, from organising and demonstrating against Tommy Robinson, to sending our delegations to Calais and Dunkirk. All of this is part of our history and fighting exploitation and division and exemplifies our trade union values. These topics really should be part of all teacher training and should be something that underpins the development of the curriculum and how we build relationships for teaching and learning.

Young people have an absolutely huge appetite to talk about and think about the injustices and the discrimination that still affects so many of their lives. They want to talk about, think about, and discuss poverty. They want to look at why we have racism in society. They want to understand what is happening with our work and they want to act upon it. As other people have alluded to, the climate activity of our young people shows maturity, shows their ability to respond, and their desire to act upon the world. That is at the heart of our tradition, I believe, and is something that we really want to connect to and develop with our young people. We want to teach about collective action, we want to discuss and develop ideas around affecting the world and changing the world and challenging the horrors that we see around us in terms of inequality. We want to share with young people our ability to be able to do that so please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Sheena. I will go straight to the vote. All those in favour of Composite 13 please show. Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Composite Motion 13 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** Swiftly on to Composite 17, Pupil behaviour and mental health. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by the NASUWT, seconded by AEP, supported by the NEU, and Prospect have indicated they wish to speak, so could all those unions be ready. Welcome, Chris.

### **Pupil behaviour and mental health**

**Chris Keates** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) moved Composite Motion 17. *He said:* Across the UK teachers increasingly are reporting pupil indiscipline as one of the top concerns about their job. The rise has been particularly marked in the last three years. In the most recent evidence 82% of teachers believe there is a widespread problem across schools with pupil indiscipline and well over half say there is a problem in their own school. For some relentless verbal abuse from pupils is a daily occurrence, and for over a quarter of teachers incidents of physical violence occur regularly. Many teachers experience stress, anxiety, depression, loss of confidence, and other adverse impacts on their mental health. In too many cases physical injury occurs. Pupil indiscipline is now considered to be one of the major contributing factors to the national crisis in teacher supply.

We know there are many factors contributing to the rise in pupil indiscipline, including the narrowing of the curriculum offered leading to disaffection, increase in class sizes as a result of the shortage of qualified teachers, deep cuts to internal and external specialist support, cuts to youth, family, and other critical support services. Too many pupils for whom behaviour issues are a barrier to their learning have been

placed in mainstream schools without the assessments they need and the specialist support that they need. We have children and young people suffering the consequences of flawed social, economic, and education policies, and teachers and support staff are left to pick up the pieces.

Whilst this might explain some of the issues contributing to the pupil indiscipline, it does not excuse the behaviour, nor does it make acceptable practices prevalent in too many schools that place sole responsibility for poor pupil behaviour on teachers. The culture of teacher blaming has become increasingly widespread with employers failing to accept their responsibilities for promoting good order and keeping their staff, and indeed the pupils, safe. Maintaining an orderly behaviour environment in schools is central not only to the safety, health, and wellbeing of all pupils and staff, but it is also critical to ensuring teachers can teach and pupils can learn.

No one should go to work with the expectation that they will be verbally or physically abused. It is unacceptable for teachers or support staff to be told that verbal and physical abuse is all part of the job and if you cannot accept that then you are in the wrong job. It is equally unacceptable for a teacher traumatised by abuse to be asked, what did they do to provoke the child, or, “If your lessons were more interesting you wouldn’t have the problem.”

I make no apologies in situations where employers fail to take seriously the concerns of staff about pupil indiscipline for the NASUWT to be seen resorting to industrial action to refuse to teach certain pupils. I am particularly proud of the fact that the NASUWT won a groundbreaking High Court victory which secured the right for

teachers and others who work with children the right, with the support of a ballot, to refuse to teach violent and disruptive pupils confirming this form of action as a legitimate trade dispute.

Such action is not about demonising pupils. It is about exercising our responsibilities to protect the health and welfare of our members. The NASUWT has taken highly successful action in schools right across the country and not only protected our members but also in every case our action has triggered additional support for the pupils involved, behaviour policies with support staffing maintaining good order, comprehensive violence at work policies, and in many cases additional staffing and resources.

The action has also reinforced to employers their duty of care responsibilities and the right of staff to work in an environment free from violence and disruption. Verbal and physical abuse are not part of the job. No employer should be allowed to take that view and put staff at risk of mental and physical injury. Where employers fail to act trade unions must commit to do so. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Congress. I call the AEP to second. It is great to see you at Congress, Chris.

**Kate Fallon** (*Association of Educational Psychologists*) seconded Composite Motion 17. *She said:* President, Congress, concern for the wellbeing of children and young people is at the very heart of the work that educational psychologists do in our schools and communities. Every day we hear others express similar concern but there is a

worrying trend for the Government simply to focus on poor behaviour. They recently allocated £10m for schools to improve behaviour but their message both overtly and leaked is to adopt a punitive approach. Punitive approaches epitomised by the famous zero tolerance mantra may appear to achieve some short-term results but have a long-term negative impact upon children. Such approaches involve restrictive practices that have led to the growing use of isolation in schools.

Research by the BBC has shown that 200 secondary schools have reported putting children into isolation units or booths as a punishment, sometimes for up to a whole week. Now, there are occasions because of safety issues for children and for adults where providing children with a safe space in which to calm down may be appropriate. Our concern is the extended use of isolation used as punishment and especially the use of isolation booths or units. We believe that they are a breach of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.

The use of these booths is currently unregulated and unreported. There is no evidence that booths or extended isolation has any positive effect on behaviour. There is a great deal of evidence to the contrary. Research shows that socially isolated children tend to have lower subsequent educational attainment and are more likely to be psychologically distressed in adulthood. Some of the children and young people whose behaviour leads to being socially isolated from others are those who may already have a range of specific needs. For example, children with autism and children with mental health needs are particularly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of isolation.

Developing and promoting positive behaviour with consent is more important and effective than control. Congress, the use of isolation in schools should be urgently reviewed by the Government. We want to see this practice regulated and reduced. We strongly believe that the £10m for behaviour should be used to support approaches which promote long-term positive relationships between adults and children within an environment of mutual respect, which will result in good long-term outcomes for all, not to set up more isolation booths. Congress, please support this composite. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Kate. I call the NEU.

**Louise Atkinson** (*National Education Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 17. *She said:* Schools and colleges are at breaking point. Education professionals are at breaking point. Worse still, children and young people are at breaking point. An entire generation has been failed by this pernicious Tory government, ten years of austerity, ten years of less and less for children and young people, and their families, SureStart has been obliterated, school budgets drastically cut, community and youth centres closed, child and adolescent mental health services reduced, and parks, sports, music and theatre facilities shut. Our most vulnerable children and young people no longer have access to services which in many cases literally saved lives.

The increase in serious violence involving children and young people is a direct response to austerity and the situations that they find themselves in. This generation have paid the price for a banking crash that happened before most of them were even born. Children and young people growing up in an unfair, unequal society, lack hope



and have become disaffected. When they are in crisis, when they have had enough, when their frustration turns to violence what should our response be? All the research indicates that punishment, sanctions, and isolation do not work. These children and young people need a holistic approach. They need time, care, and understanding. They need someone to talk to and to listen to them. They need safe spaces to go to, an opportunity and something to strive for, but all this takes time and money.

A recent Home Office report into serious youth violence highlighted the link between violence, deprivation, and vulnerability, and claims that our education system is currently failing many children, in particular those most in need of early support and intervention. Congress, our children are being failed but through no fault of their own and certainly not the fault of wonderful educational professionals who works tirelessly to show these young people a different way. The blame for the current increase in serious youth violence lays solely at the Government's door and the years and years of chronic underfunding for skills and other youth services. (*Applause*) The answer is not more isolation units, more policing skills, and more exclusions. As we have already seen, this will only serve to exacerbate the problems. The National Education Union firmly believes the answer is a substantial increase in the levels of investment for all services for children, young people, and their families. Please support this composite motion and send the message to Government that all our children and young people deserve much better. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Louise. Finally, Prospect.

**Mark Patton** (*Prospect*): I speak to you this afternoon from a context of over 20 years teaching in secondary schools in the North East of England and a further 10 years currently still working with educational professionals and families and children, and councils in the north east.

Congress, education is about individuals. It is not about performance scales. It is about development of individuals and their achievements, achievements that are really, really important in terms of making sure that our children are going to be where we are sitting now since they are our future. Changes in accountability measures, recognised qualifications, and the appalling real terms changes in funding, especially for the most vulnerable children and young people, have led to a curriculum regime that is simply not fit for purpose, and it is not their fault. (*Applause*) It is not their fault. Neither is it the fault of those professionals, those teachers and non-teachers in schools who I see working really hard every single day with those children to help them to cope, to learn, and to prepare for their future. It is not their fault. (*Applause*)

The current system has completely disengaged a significant minority of children and young people. It has significantly disengaged and disenfranchised the professionals who work in our schools, in our colleges, and in our universities. It is simply not good enough. The mental health of our professionals and our children in schools that I see every single day that I go to work is at crisis point. We must do something about it.

Our colleagues deserve and need real tangible support and they need it now. More funding is required, especially for our most vulnerable children and young people as we have heard this morning and this afternoon. Our professionals need more flexibility in what they can teach and what they can provide for all children and young people to meet their needs and their aspirations. If we cannot be aspirational for them, who will be? Our professionals in schools need more specialist support and training.

Colleagues, we must stand firm on this one. We have spoken this morning about a new deal for working people. We really need to take hold of a new deal for our children in this country. They are our future. If we do not invest wisely and appropriately our society will continue to degenerate. We must be their advocates.

**The President:** Can you draw to a close, delegate?

**Mark Patton** (*Prospect*): Thank you.

**The President:** Thank you very much, Mark. There is no opposition so we will move straight to the vote. Composite Motion 17, all those in favour? Thank you. All those against? That is overwhelmingly carried.

\* *Composite Motion 17 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Congress, I want to try and get through all of the morning's business and in order to do that I need to suspend Standing Orders for 10 minutes. Is that

agreed? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much. That means we should get through everything if people stick to time. We are now moving to Motion 61, Resourcing Pupils with Additional Support Needs. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by EIS, seconded by the NEU, and we also have the NASUWT. EIS to move Motion 61.

### **Resourcing pupils with additional support needs**

**Susan Quinn** (*Educational Institute of Scotland*) moved Motion 61. *She said:* This motion reflects on the vital area of the ASN/SEN and the need for resources to ensure the most vulnerable young people get the support they require and deserve. During our recent successful pay campaign, which you heard earlier got our teachers in Scotland a 10% increase in their salary, the EIS surveyed our members across a wide range of areas. At the height of our very hectic campaign over 12,000 members took the time to complete the survey and told us that alongside pay and excessive workload the under-resourcing of ASN was a concern to them. Over 78% disagreed that provision in their school for children and young people with additional support needs was adequate. Responding comments were clear, there is a strong desire and willingness to meet the needs of the children in our schools. However, the presumption of mainstream is grossly underfunded. They further told us that inclusion on the cheap leads to aggression and violence in a classroom and we still are expected to close the gap.

The EIS continues to be concerned about the creeping undervaluing of the specialism of ASN/SEN teaching. Staff in this area have been used to cover short-term absences

rather than work in the areas that they are specialists in. We note the concern that the number of specialist schools in Scotland fell from 193 in 2008 to 114 in 2018, a drop of 41% when pupil population within specialist schools remains static, rising slightly during that period. The impact of underinvestment in this area is clear: between 2014 and 2018 there was a drop of 496 ASN teachers across all sectors; between 2013 and 2016 a drop of ASN assistants, and 10% fewer educational psychologists practising in our schools in 2015 from 2012.

At the time when these significant cuts are happening we see a rising need and in 2018 196,698 pupils had acknowledged ASN needs compared with 55,541 in 2010; in 2018 192,243 pupils with ASN in mainstream school compared to 31,960 ten years earlier. In 2018, just over a quarter of primary pupils had additional support needs in mainstream schools. We see an increase in demand at times of reduced support available.

We need significant investment in this area of education, investment which will see quality professional learning for teachers, significant increases in specialist teachers and assistants, and serious action taken to reduce class sizes. Only then will we be providing the very best of quality for each and every pupil in our schools. Only then will we be able to achieve all that we want for the young people regardless of their needs. Only then will it not matter where you live, go to school, or what support you require. This is the very least we can do for our pupils. Teachers in Scotland have shown this area is as important to them as their own pay and workloads and that they are truly discouraged by the under-resourcing of our schools. We need the materials,

training, and opportunities to do so and we need to make sure that we have all we can to help our young people achieve. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Susan. NEU to second.

**Kim Knappett** (*National Education Union*) seconded Motion 61. *She said:* This motion starts in the right place. Education is a human right and today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in the United Kingdom too many children and young people are being denied this basic human right. In the National Education Union and our predecessor unions we have been campaigning for fair funding for education for many, many years. Even as money has been promised for education over recent days, our analysis shows this is not enough to get back in real terms to the levels of 2015, let alone to those of 2010.

The reality is that even promising £9bn will not be enough for the majority of schools to plug the gaps and in a school where the roof leaks, the windows are broken, and there are not enough chairs, head teachers will have to make difficult decisions as to what little extras they can afford. If you go to the School Cuts website and I strongly suggest you do, you can see the effects of this real term funding lower for schools in terms of the reduction of funding per pupil, but also in terms of what that really means on the ground, the increase in class sizes, the reduction in staffing, and I mean teachers, teaching assistants, and other support staff, and the lack of cash to provide resources.

All of these things have an impact on every single student but they have a larger and more profound effect on those with additional and special needs. The increase in

class size means less teacher time to focus on the needs of specific pupils, both in class and when planning lessons. The lack of funding means that the resources that would really help a pupil are simply not available. These problems are greater and cut deeper in deprived areas. It will not surprise you that the promised money will not be evenly spread and that those pupils who already live in poverty, as a large proportion of children with additional needs do, may also go to a school that will not see an increase in per pupil funding and in fact may get much less than the promised £5,000 per secondary pupil. How can we then expect them to flourish and catch up with their peers?

This issue is one with a relatively simple answer: cash. There needs to be more funding for the whole of our education system; for schools and also for nursery provision, and for post-16 which are often missed out. We are failing a generation of children and young people by trying to provide education on the cheap. The Government need to listen and act by putting the relevant money into schools and colleges because education cuts never heal and we cannot afford to let another generation of children and young people down. Please support the motion.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Kim. NASUWT.

**Dave Kitchen** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Motion 61. *He said:* I was in Harrogate earlier this year in a joint union action over the closure of a special school and that led to a demonstration and a march going around different schools in the town. I got to know Harrogate very well. It involved the head or senior

members of staff coming and highlighting the impact that closure will have on their schools.

The motion recognises entirely correctly that cuts to funding services for pupils with special and additional needs has had a profoundly detrimental impact on the lives of some of the most vulnerable children and young people in our society. It is clear that current levels of resourcing for special and additional needs in the UK are not adequate and need to be increased urgently. However, it is important that public money for special and additional needs is used in a way that is consistent with public service ethos and on which state education should be founded.

This ethos recognises that education is a public good and a human right, and therefore rejects the provision based on wasteful competition rather than collaboration between providers, privatisation, the use of market type mechanisms for determining how resources in the system are allocated, such as training services, and marginalisation or removal of democratic oversight and scrutiny of decisions.

It is clear that simply putting more money into a system that does not reflect the public service ethos will only ever be, at best, a partial solution. Such a system can provide no guarantee that any additional funds allocated to it will be used efficiently, equitably, and transparently in all circumstances. It is regrettable that as a result of deliberate policy the public service ethos of the delivery of special and additional needs services has been undermined.



As part of the work to rebuild our special and additional needs system across the UK greater investment will need to be accompanied by reforms designed to make sure that the needs of children and young people, and the teachers and other members of the workforce that support them, are at the heart of the systems rather than at their margins. Please, Congress, support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, David. No opposition so I am going to move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 61 please show. Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 61 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Congress, we are now moving to take Motion 62 but, unfortunately, we have slipped slightly behind schedule so I will take Motion 62 and all those who requested to speak. It will not now be possible to take Motion 63, Small and rural schools in the name of the NAHT, but I will inform you this afternoon when I hope to be able to reschedule the business to take that motion. We are now going to move to Motion 62, moved by the NAHT, seconded by the NEU, and we have had a request from Unison, the NAS, and CWU to speak. I will take those; with the 10-minute extension we should get them in. We can move on now to Motion 62, NAHT to move.

### **Relationships education**

**Ruth Davies** (*National Association of Head Teachers*) moved Motion 62. *She said:*

This is something that is very, very close to my heart. Let me ask you a question: what is a school if not a society in miniature, with rights and responsibilities, with working relationships, personal relationships, and there are colleagues and there are friends. What we do in school, how we conduct ourselves, how we relate to one another, sets the tone. More than that, it sets an example to the young people we work with about how they should conduct themselves and how they should relate to one another when they are on the other side of the school gates. When we let them go at the end of the school day or at the end of their school career, all of us hope that we have given them a moral compass that will serve them for the rest of their days. We aspire to a state where our young people do not just respect differences but celebrate them, a state where young people function with tolerance and understanding underpinned by democracy.

Congress, we ask you to note the legal expectation placed on schools to provide appropriate relationships education to all pupils from September 2020. Relationships education in schools must be inclusive of all protected characteristics and treat the different types of relationships in our society equally reflecting their equal status under the law and so promote tolerance and respect for diversity. Our grave concern in the NAHT is the difficulties that school leaders face by teaching relationships education. School leaders often have to be brave just in order to do the right thing. This should never be the case. Best practice means taking a whole school approach to inclusivity, to equality, to rights and responsibilities; schools already do this. We did not wait for the Government to catch up with us. It is the 21<sup>st</sup> century and some of our families have two mums, some have two dads, but all families are places where

children should feel safe, happy, secure, and of equal value. Every child is entitled to go home at the end of the school day to whatever family they have without being forced to question whether their home life is any less loving, or safe, or proper, than their friends' families just because of the way they may look, or seem, or sound to be different.

It devastates me that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is sometimes seen that we have so much further to go. What is a school if not a society in miniature: it is nothing. We must have more support if we are to eliminate discrimination and nurture young people who are at ease with themselves and with those around them. In the vast majority of schools there are no problems. Relationships education just happens. However, there are a small number of schools that have come under significant attack from groups of people who quite often have nothing to do with the schools themselves and want nothing more than to disrupt their school from fulfilling their commitment to equality and diversity.

Without meaning to, the Government have put school leaders in an extremely difficult position. The fact that these demonstrations persist shows that more guidance is needed and there is still confusion which needs to be addressed. The Government need to be absolutely clear about what they expect schools to do and to be unequivocal in its support of school leaders discharging their obligations under the law, ironically the same law that protects the protestors' rights to voice their opinions.

NAHT calls for clarity from the Government on three key areas. First of all, relationship education in primary schools must be inclusive of all the protective

characteristics, it must include LGBT content as in the statutory guidance, and that school leaders and their team should receive full support. NAHT calls for the General Council to lobby government to provide clarity and unequivocal support to schools to deliver a relationships education programme which is not just inclusive but ethically sound and morally responsible. Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks very much. NEU to second.

**Julia Neal** (*National Education Union*) seconded Motion 62. *She said:* I am pleased to be supporting this important motion. Congress, I am going to go a little bit further than the previous speech. I am going to say the Government are being cowardly and need to be much clearer. Yes, I agree with that. They are pretending to back schools but also trying to pander to some parents who are objecting. Essentially, primary schools do need to be far more inclusive. Sex and relationships education has to be age appropriate. Teachers do need really good guidance about what this looks like. There has to be a distinction, Congress, between sex education and relationships education. There can be some kind of confusion there which makes it more problematic when people are protesting.

Learning about different family types and relationships helps pupils understand the world around them. The NEU is proud to be producing guidance for primary teachers later this term. Look out for it. What we cannot have is the intimidation of schools and education staff, or schools having to close early because of demonstrations outside. LGBT+ inclusive rights are not an option and they are not an add on. The reality is that LGBT pupils still do not feel safe in schools. If we are silent about the

existence of LGBT pupils, then students who are thinking about their sexuality do not have the feeling of belonging in their school and this, Congress, has lifelong consequences.

As the trades union Movement we must all stand up for LGBT+ workers. In schools and colleges LGBT staff still feel they have to hide who they are. The Government need to be more robust and be absolutely consistent. If we want LGBT students to feel safe and included, then every part of the curriculum has to be inclusive. There has to be flexibility, space, and cash to do this but Dominic Cummings' knowledge curriculum is not the answer for engaging our students and to make them feel safe and happy. To conclude, we passionately believe that it is education that can create a more equal world. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Julia. UNISON?

**Jackie Lewis** (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Motion 62. Congress, protests against LGBT+ inclusive relationships education being taught in primary schools have been spreading. They move beyond the small number of Birmingham schools featured in the media. A minority has gained a platform with rhetoric that seeks to target LGBT+ people and divide communities. This situation is being used by far right groups to promote their racist and Islamophobic agendas.

Congress, the LGBT+ inclusive relationship education at primary schools and relationships and sex education at secondary schools is hugely important. Teaching about LGBT families and identities ensures that children from LGBT+ families or

who might have an LGBT+ identity themselves can see their own lives reflected in what they learn. It also helps to tackle the homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying that is still a serious problem in schools by teaching children and young people that there is nothing wrong or unusual about being LGBT+. Thousands of schools already teach LGBT+ inclusive lessons. The new guidance will apply to all schools in England. The guidance being used was last updated in 2000, nearly two decades ago, and since that was before the repeal of the notorious section 28, the law which effectively banned discussion of same sex relationships in schools, that guidance excludes LGBT+ people and families all together.

Congress, a move towards inclusive teaching marks the beginning of the end of the very long shadow cast by section 28 but it is not just about LGBT+ people. It is about acceptance of people from all backgrounds including race, gender, faith, disability, and class. Congress, the Government cannot be allowed to row back on the rollout of inclusive education. We must never bow down to bigotry and allow intolerance to dictate what is taught to our children. Local authorities need to hear public support for LGBT+ inclusive education. We need people and trade unions to speak up for LGBT+ inclusive education, to come out LGBT+ inclusive education. So let's back this motion and let's come out and back all of our children and young people. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Jackie. There are two to go and then we move to the vote so can I call the NASUWT and ask the CWU to be ready.

**Chris Allen** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Motion 62. *He said:* A nice one before lunch so pay attention otherwise it will be your own time you will be wasting. I am actually really pleased to be here today because otherwise I would now be teaching Year 8. This is nicer.

There has understandably been a great deal of attention on relationships education. This is an important issue and it is right, it is a matter of public debate and scrutiny. Engaging with these debates the NASUWT will continue to emphasise that effective relationships education is only possible when all concerned have, one, an accurate understanding of the full range of their responsibilities under equalities and human rights legislation; two, that they recognise that one form of equality should not be given more protection and status than any other; three, that parents should be engaged in meaningful and genuine consultation over the content of relationships education.

It is essential for everyone with a stake in good quality education to understand that without effective support for teachers in the classroom the content of any statutory framework for relationships education will join the jetsam and flotsam of so many other initiatives. I have another page-and-a-half which I am going to let you off except to say, Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Chris. I call on the CWU.

**Maria Exall** (*CWU and Chair of the TUC LGBT Committee*) spoke in support of Motion 62. She said: Inclusive relationships and sex education will be compulsory in 2020. It has gone through Parliament. There is a reactionary multi-faith LGBT+

phobic campaign to stop this. Most visible to that campaign are the demonstrations in Birmingham but it has also reared its ugly head in Kent, Bristol, the East Midlands, and East London, and other places. This campaign has little to do with faith or local issues.

At our TUC LGBT conference earlier this year we heard from teacher campaigners and LGBT Muslim activists who are at the cutting edge of resisting the politics of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia, being brought into our schools. There is an organised picture between fundamentalist Christians, Jews, Hindus, and Muslims but most people who are churchgoers, go to mosque, go to synagogue, go to temple, do not support their faith being hijacked for hate. The international aspect of this hitch-up is where you hear the propaganda of Bolsinaro's Christian fundamentalism in Brazil expressed on the streets of Birmingham.

Congress, under the guise of parental concern there is a danger that LGBT rights will be rolled back and section 28 could be brought in by the back door. Congress, please support this important motion, support teachers delivering education, and a fair society for all. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks very much, Maria. Can I ask all those in favour of Motion 62 to show? Thank you. Any against? That is carried.

\* *Motion 62 was CARRIED.*



**The President:** I am sure Congress will agree that was an extremely important debate and I wanted you to get to hear all those important speeches so thank you for agreeing to suspend Standing Orders.

Congress, that completes our business for this morning. Can I remind delegates there are various meetings taking place at lunchtime, details of which are displayed on the screens and can be found on pages 10 to 12 of the Congress Guide, or in the leaflet included in your wallet. But, and it is an important but, there has been one change. I want to bring Congress's attention to the following fact. The Trade Union Coordinating Group Fringe, *Action on the Climate Emergency*, is now being held in the West Bar and the Trade Unions for Safe Nuclear Energy Fringe, *Rediscover Nuclear*, is in Meeting Room 8. Please note that that is different to what is advertised in the Guide.

Congress, we lost just one motion this morning and we will notify you how we intend to pick that up. We now will be closing the hall and it will not reopen until 1.45 so could you take anything that you need with you because you will not be able to get back in until a quarter to two. Congress is now adjourned till 2.15. Enjoy your lunches and fringe meetings. Congress stands adjourned.

*Congress adjourned.*

## AFTERNOON PROCEEDINGS

*(Congress commenced at 2.15 p.m.)*

**The President:** Delegates, can I call Congress to order.

Thank you, Congress. Can I ask you all to join me once again in thanking the Penrose Trio, who have been playing for us this afternoon. *(Applause)*

Congress, I mentioned in my speech yesterday that I was hoping today that we were going to be joined by our magnificent strikers from the PCS in an eighth week of indefinite strike action from Aramark and the ISS. Can I ask Congress to turn and look at the observers' gallery and give a warm welcome to some of our bravest workers. *(Cheers and applause)* Congress, I am sure we will hear a bit more about that dispute in the motion that we will turn to later on this afternoon.

As I mentioned also, we have authorised an official bucket collection at the end of today's business. These workers in the gallery are not on the London Living Wage. These are the people to whom I have referred who have had to go to food banks and these are people who are striking for everything best in our tradition, not just for the London Living Wage, but for the right to be back in the public sector and not working for outsourced companies. I would urge everyone to give as generously as possible. Comrades, you are very welcome and I am glad you have made the journey down from London. I hope you enjoy the debates this afternoon. *(Applause)*

Congress, I now call upon Linda McCullough, Chair of the General Purposes Committee, to report to us on the progress of business and other Congress

arrangements. Good afternoon, Linda.

**Linda McCullough** (*General Purposes Committee*): Good afternoon, Congress. The General Purposes Committee has approved a further emergency motion. Emergency Motion 3, Respect ASDA workers, will be moved by the GMB and seconded by the CWU. The President will advise when it is hoped to take this emergency motion. I will report further on the progress of business and other GPC decisions throughout the conference. Thank you.

**The President:** Thank you, Linda. Congress, can we formally agree the GPC's report? (*Agreed*) Thank you. As Linda has just reported, we have approved a further emergency motion, EM3, Respect ASDA workers, moved by the GMB and seconded by the CWU. I will advise Congress when I can take the emergency motion and the lost business from this morning, which was Motion 63, Small and rural schools. As Linda has also reported, a bucket collection will take place for our striking PCS workers at the end of today's session.

Congress, there is just an update from this morning and particularly for new delegates who may have wondered why we were beginning to ask people to speed up. It is important that we get through all of the business because every one of our affiliates has an entitlement to submit motions to this Congress and we want to ensure that we can debate and vote on all of them. It is important, therefore, to respect speaking times: five minutes to move a motion and three minutes for seconding a motion.

I do want to say that virtually everybody has been adhering to that. If you could

cooperate further, it would entail now not taking up your full time, but that is, of course, a matter for you and I agree that over 20 years, often I have not led by example! The reason why we are beginning to rush is because a lot of unions have indicated that they want to speak in a variety of debates. Obviously, when we set out the agenda, we had enough time to move and debate on the motions, but we are now going to ask all unions (and TUC staff will probably approach people this afternoon) just to consider whether or not it is critically important for them to intervene in a debate. I would just want to give Congress notice now, however, that if everybody does still indicate that they want to speak, I will have to give priority to movers and seconders of motions and all parties to composites and it may be possible that I cannot take additional speakers who have indicated that they want to come in. I know that that can be disappointing, especially if delegates have prepared speeches, but I am sure we can all agree that we do have to get through the business. So, I am in your hands and I just hope that people can cooperate. Thank you very much, Congress.

I now move to General Council's Section 4, Good services. We are now going to take the motions on privatisation from page 47. I call paragraphs 4.4, 4.5, 4.8 and 4.9 and Composite Motion 12, Privatised public services: bring them inhouse. The General Council is supporting the motion. It will be moved by Dave Prentis from UNISON, seconded by Unite and it will then be supported by PCS. It is my intention then to take the CWU, RMT and the NASUWT if possible so I would ask people in that order to make themselves available at the front. It is my great pleasure to ask Dave Prentis from UNISON to move Composite Motion 12. (*Applause*)

**Privatised public services: bring them inhouse**

**Dave Prentis** (*UNISON*) moved Composite Motion 12. *He said:* Good afternoon, everyone. Congress, for decades, we fought against privatisation. We fought against Thatcher, against Major and against Blair's New Labour. What we now know is what we have been saying all along for many years -- privatisation has failed. It failed in the 1980s, it failed in the 1990s and it is still failing today.

The costs are borne by the workforce, by future generations, by the people who desperately need those services, and now we face the threat of Boris Johnson hiving off our NHS to the highest bidder, all through a grubby trade deal with Donald Trump. That is why UNISON, the public services union, demands in the run-up to the general election -- an election we want and an election we are ready for -- that we make scrapping privatisation the priority of our Movement.

Congress, over the past decade, a million decent jobs have gone from our local communities. Our elderly, our frail and our vulnerable are suffering like never before. There are privatised care services collapsing, on the brink, starved of money, in meltdown. Public service jobs, decent jobs, have been hived off to hedge funds who care more about private profit than they do about the public good. The rich and powerful are immune to the damage it causes while those who rely on public services suffer -- our people, disproportionately women. Public funds are syphoned off, slipped into the pockets of the powerful and the seedy world of offshore companies.

Congress, it really is an outrage. It is corrupt. It is an outrage that we must end. As we move forward to an election, we need to step up our fight to bring our public

services and our people back inhouse. It is not when contracts end but every single one of them, all back inhouse where they belong. I say to the doubters who tell us that it will cost too much, I will tell you where the money can come from -- no more handouts to the wealthy, stop their tax abuse, close their tax havens, make every company and bank pay their fair share, and (something that my union feels passionately about) stop wasting billions on replacing weapons of mass destruction. *(Applause)* Stop rebuilding Trident nuclear weapons and start rebuilding our local communities. *(Applause)*

Our communities have been left behind with thousands sleeping rough. Six million children are living in grinding poverty. It is an absolute disgrace, but that is what austerity and privatisation leads to. It demeans, it damages, it destroys and we will never accept that privatisation was a necessity. It never was and it never will be. The toxic mix of privatisation and austerity was a political choice by the rich and powerful. Privatisation is the jackboot of austerity.

There is an alternative to privatisation, an alternative to profiteering -- public services for the people by the people, based on need and not greed. That is why I am so proud that my party, of which I have been a member for 40 years, the Labour Party, voted last year to end all privatisation, bringing all our services back inhouse in the first year of the next Labour government. *(Applause)*

But first, we have to get our Labour Party into power. For too long, our class and our people have been failed. Congress, no longer, no more. Now is the time to take back control of our economy, our jobs and our public services. Now is the time to stand

together, united, putting division behind us, to get out on the streets campaigning, talking to others, knocking on doors, not locked in committee rooms triggering each other. That is the road to nowhere at a time when we need the road to power.

We can get there if Labour is united -- a broad church with a broad appeal. Divided parties never win elections and our people need our party to win like never before. So the future we need is within our grasp. It is to build a Movement that will sweep away this wretched Government, getting our public services back inhouse and getting our party back in power. Congress, I move. *(Cheers and applause)*

**Philippa Marsden** *(Unite the Union)* seconded Composite Motion 12. *She said:* Congress, when the next Labour government establishes the presumption that service contracts will be brought back inhouse, it will be an historic moment. It will consign to the history books the 30-year disgrace of our public services being used as a laboratory for the very worst neoliberal policies concocted by the Tories and their allies in the City, the profiteers or "private finance initiatives" (public/private partnerships which loaded our hospitals with centuries of debt), and compulsory competitive tendering, which gifted our community services to bandit capitalism.

We know the profiteers -- CERCO, Veolia, SUEZ, AMI, Interserve and, of course, Carillion, the firm whose collapse represented the biggest corporate failure in UK history. Congress, the con does not even end when they collapse. That is when the auditors swoop in, picking up £50 million in the case of Carillion. The taxpayers picked up the tab, of course, just as we did with the £65 million redundancy costs for 3,000 Carillion workers thrown on the scrap heap. Labour's proposal does not just

kick out the profiteers: it is about restoring accountability and enhancing democracy, putting power back in our hands to decide how our services can be best delivered.

As we turn our back on the last three decades, this motion proposes a programme for the future. It is a future which begins with the principle that there is no place in our public services for free market, a future that ensures that all our contractors pay tax and recognise trade unions, a future in which conditions are secured by sector-wide agreements and collective bargaining. Congress, this future is within our grasp. It is our task to seize it. Support this motion. (*Applause*)

**Zita Holbourne** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) supported Composite Motion 12, including the PCS amendment. *She said:* I want to start by giving another big shout-out to our amazing striking members in the public gallery. I am so proud of them. (*Applause*)

Amongst those impacted by the collapse of Carillion were PCS members at the British Museum. It is shameful that an internationally-renowned cultural institution would allow workers to be treated like this. In the aftermath, PCS called for jobs to be safeguarded and a halt to the scandalous privatisation. Since, PCS has been organising workers in the private sector who provide services to Government departments, workers to face atrocious treatment at the hands of private companies, but who ensure that the workplaces that my colleagues and I work in are safe and secure. They provide us, Government ministers and visiting dignitaries with food, drink and refreshments.



Many of those workers have been in these jobs for decades on horrifically low wages, denied holiday and sick pay and are treated like third-class citizens. Amongst them are PCS strikers who are cleaners at the HMRC, employed by ISS, and facilities workers at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, employed by Interserve and, as we have in the public gallery with us, caterers, cleaners, security, postroom and reception workers at the business department, BEIS, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, employed by Aramark and ISS, who have been now been campaigning for nine months for a living wage and basic rights. Disgracefully, our local PCS branch was forced to set up food banks for these members at the BEIS headquarters.

Since July, Aramark caterers have been on indefinite strike action. They are not asking for much. They are asking for £10.55 per hour and the same working conditions that civil servants have. The vast majority of these workers are black, women, migrant or a combination. The knock-on impacts of how they are treated include a deepening of racism and sexism in the labour market and the pay gap between black and white workers and women and men. Over the past decade, austerity has amplified that racism and sexism in the labour market and at work. These workers have had to raise their families on poverty pay so there is a knock-on impact on the next generation and their life and economic chances.

As the PCS Vice-President for the BEIS Group, I cannot express enough how proud I am of our members for the action they have been taking with both pride and dignity. They have been unwavering, determined, brave, bold and an inspiration to our entire Movement and not just to my union. Congress, if you have not visited a BEIS picket

line, you are missing out. Each picket line is a festival of celebration in addition to a protester treatment. Our picket lines are the liveliest, loudest, most creative and vibrant ever seen with music, dancing, live instruments, dominoes, Caribbean, African and multi-cultural food, and even a rum punch or two is on sale.

So, I ask that you come along and give your support, but to end, the truth is that they should not have to strike in order to achieve basic human rights for workers. It is essential that we campaign for outsourced workers to be brought back inhouse for the same rights as other workers, for trades union recognition for all workers, and for a Labour government to make this a reality so that all of our members, instead of struggling to survive, can live and work with dignity and equality. Please support.  
*(Applause)*

**Mark Walsh** (*Communication Workers Union*) supported the motion. *He said:* In our union, our members still provide a public service, whether it is seven days a week delivering telecoms or broadband to people's homes, or whether it is men or women delivering the mail six days a week to the public across this country. However, we also represent members who work in the post offices across the UK and they are the only public servants that we now have. They are the only separated post office in the world and yet they supplement the work of the delivery men and women each day by offering services and selling the services on behalf of the Royal Mail.

We have members in the Dingle area of Liverpool who have been served notice in their post office that it is now closing and we, as taxpayers, will have to pay their redundancy money. That cannot be right. The local councillors and, I am glad to say,

the city's first black Lord Mayor, Anna Rothery, have been a major supporter of our campaign, along with other members and other councillors. With banks closing in the area, the post office is the last office, if you like, that provides a cash-in service for that area because ATMs are now charging as it is quite a poor area of the city.

Our concern, however, is this: we actually believe that we will win this campaign to keep the post office open, but what the public will not know is that when that post office stays open, it will be franchised. That means poor terms and conditions. It probably will not be our members, but whoever takes on those jobs will not have the same terms and conditions that our members have, whether it is pensions or sick pay. You name it, they will lose it, but the public will not see that.

It cannot be right that the taxpayer subsidises this because a franchised office will not provide the services that our members do. In that particular office, every one of our members is a woman. Those jobs should be kept local and they should be kept on our terms and conditions. The Communication Workers Union supports the composite. Please support. *(Applause)*

**Lee Rundle** *(National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers)* supported Composite Motion 12. *He said:* Congress, I am a bus worker from the West Country and first-time delegate to the TUC. *(Applause)*

Congress, I am speaking up about the motion because I believe that buses are also a vital and local public service. Like many of our services, they were privatised years ago, but now it is time that we had them renationalised. As a bus worker, I have seen

the devastation that privatisation has caused to the bus industry with whole route services cut, withdrawn overnight, leaving our communities cut off from public transport. It does not matter if you are young, old or vulnerable; all that matters to the bus operators is profit. No profit for them means no service for you.

Congress, I am engineer. My job is to maintain the buses and I see first hand that the companies do not want to invest in buses, greener buses and buses that are designed for disabled passengers. It is profit before passengers, dividends before disabled, cuts before climate. It is profit on the back of public money. On top of extortionate fare rises, 40p in every pound of a bus company's cash comes from us, the taxpayer. Congress, they are taking taxpayers for a ride and leaving passengers stranded.

They are the same companies who are also bleeding our railways dry. First, there was Stagecoach, Go-Ahead and Arriva and the rest have carved up our industry too. So, Congress, like the railways, like our utilities and like our public services, we want the entire bus industry taken back into public ownership. We do not want to leave it to some Tory or Lib-Dem council or even a Labour council to decide it. We do not want a postcode lottery for decent services. Whether you are from West London or the West Country, everyone should be entitled to a decent publicly-owned service, and that includes our bus services. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Debbie Hayton** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) supported Composite Motion 12. *She said:* The NASUWT strongly supports and welcomes this composite. Education is a key public service which has been subject to privatisation, outsourcing and academisation with a devastating detrimental impact on the entitlements of students,

the pay and conditions of the workforce and the cost to the public purse.

The NASUWT has a proud record of fighting all forms of privatisation from the PFI contracts, which are now nearly 20 years' old, to the academisation and free school programme under Conservative-led governments since 2010. Since 2010 in particular, education has been the subject of smash-and-grab outsourcing and academisation, with schools being removed from democratically-accountable local authority control. Hundreds and thousands of teachers and support staff and billions of pounds worth of public assets have been handed over lock, stock and barrel to academy trusts and private providers.

Congress, in terms of the workforce, a key factor in academisation is that the teachers' national pay and conditions framework is disapplied. Unsurprisingly, the Government's own data shows that teachers in academies are paid less than teachers in local authority schools, the gender pay gap is greater in academies than in local authority schools, and we now have the scenario of the £500,000 per year academy CEO because there is no limit on the remuneration of chief executives and trustees by academy trusts.

Unbridled greed is the order of the day across the academy sector and this sector, which receives £20 billion of public funding every year, has become little more, in some cases, than an opportunity for academy trustees to enrich themselves and the companies they are linked with at the expense of the public purse and the workforces which they now employ. All this is happening as schools are starved of frontline funding, support staff are made redundant, courses are cancelled and working people

are asked to subsidise state education which they have paid for through their taxation.

Congress, the devastation which privatisation outsourcing has wrought on our members, on pupils and on the public is sufficient for us to demand democratic oversight and control. However, the excesses of the academy sector and the lack of curb on these make it even more vital otherwise this additional school funding, for which the TUC and education unions are campaigning for, could end up in the pockets of privateers, academy trustees and related parties. In other words, it will go nowhere near the education of children and young people. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Debbie. I am going to move to the vote as there is no opposition. Can I ask all those in favour of Composite Motion 12 to show? Thank you. All those against? That is unanimous and I hope that all workers everywhere, and in particular our strikers today, take back the news that the TUC is unanimously demanding that you are all brought back inhouse along with everyone else. So thanks again for coming and thanks to everyone in that debate.

\* *Composite Motion 12 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Congress, I now move to call paragraph 4.3 and Motion 46, NHS and workforce funding. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the CSP, seconded by the RCM and I intend to call Unite.

**NHS and workforce funding**

**Jill Taylor** (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) moved Motion 46. *She said:* I am proud to say that I am an NHS physio. I get huge satisfaction when I treat patients and see the difference I can and do make, often in their most vulnerable moments, but it pains me every day to see that the NHS is struggling to cope, failing to give the best possible care to each and every person who comes to us in need.

An aging population and every more complex needs means that it was always going to be a challenge, but it does not have to be this way. We can, and must, invest in transforming services to ensure that everybody living in Britain can lead active, dignified, healthy lives right into their old age and yet today we are barely keeping the lights on. There is no excuse. Notwithstanding the UK's current economic circumstances, we are a very rich country and we can afford quality public services that enable everybody to maximise their potential whatever their age, social background or walk of life, according to need and not the ability to pay -- you know, that great NHS principle.

To do this, we need to invest. There has been some progress on NHS pay and we are hearing the right noises about staffing and a number of other burning issues, including support for training and professional development, a better work/life balance, bullying, a greater voice for staff and our unions, but where is the Government money to back up these promises?

Budget cuts in recent years mean the system is woefully short on funds to recruit and train staff. There is a dire lack of investment in equipment and buildings. Many of

my colleagues in the NHS are working in aging, cramped and ill-suited facilities and simply do not have the tools to deliver effective patient care. A majority of NHS trusts are a safety risk to patients, including a fire risk according to a survey of CEOs in England.

Physiotherapists and the CSP have long championed a greater emphasis on prevention, but public health budgets needed to help prevent accidents and illness, to encourage healthier behaviour, and so ultimately relieve pressures on the NHS and staff have been slashed and social care is a national scandal. It needs massive and long-term investment, funded and free at the point of use in the same way as the NHS is. With the right resources, the NHS and social care can be fully integrated so that patients get the joined-up care they need and deserve.

Failing to adequately invest now is a false economy. When will the Government get it? We need a properly-funded public service. This issue is not new to the TUC, Congress, but we cannot give up. We must roll up our sleeves together and once again press our demands for investment in our NHS before it is too late. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**Gill Adgie** (*Royal College of Midwives*) seconded Motion 46. She said: The RCM is pleased to second the motion. In some ways, we are still lucky in the NHS because there is some partnership working. We now have an attempt at some long-term planning with the NHS Long Term Plan and the subsequent People Plan. The RCM welcome this. Maternity services are prominent within the plan but (and it is a big "but") the central ambitions do not reflect the reality on the ground for our members.



The NHS is chronically underfunded. Grand ambitions cannot be achieved without the backing of the money.

As the motion says, cuts to public health budgets are huge. Ironically, one of the key areas covered by the Long Term Plan is preventing poor health, particularly smoking and smoking in pregnancy. Quitting smoking is one of the best things a woman can do to protect her baby's health. An RCM survey of heads of midwifery however found that two-thirds do not employ a smoking-cessation midwife and we have heard over the last few days that local authority spending is being cut time and time again. Local authority spending on smoking cessation fell by 30% between 2014 and 2018.

One area close to a midwife's heart is breastfeeding. There are impacts with the funding cuts on breastfeeding. Again, this is a long-lasting public health intervention. Almost half of all councils have cut breastfeeding support services.

One more part of the motion that I would like to speak about is around education and training. Last year, we were promised 3,000 more midwives in training, which is absolutely fantastic for maternity services. The problem is that we need to retain midwives at the other end so the bucket of midwives is being filled, but there are big holes. We need to retain the valuable experienced staff and ensure that the increased numbers of students actually translate to jobs in the NHS. We need clear, funded action to ensure that that happens.

We also need investment in continuing professional development for everybody across the NHS. It has seen huge cuts over recent years and the former chief

executive of the Care Quality Commission admitted to the HSJ that in an effort to increase the size of the nursing workforce, money was diverted from the CPD budget into training for new staff. 81% of our heads of midwifery tell us that only some CPD is provided during working hours. Unless we see proper sustainable funding for the NHS and social care in the Autumn Statement, the plans cannot materialise. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**Joyce Still** (*Unite the Union*) supported Motion 46. *She said:* Congress, I have worked in the National Health Service for my entire life as a nurse, midwife and health visitor. I have seen firsthand how the Tories have allowed -- no, not allowed, wilfully created a staffing crisis. As finances are cut, services are outsourced and waiting times increase. The most precious resource we have left is the goodwill of staff. It is all that keeps a world-class service functioning, but it is a resource that the Tories seem hellbent on squandering.

What does the staffing crisis look like in reality? Well, I will tell you. It looks like health visitors, school nurses and community staff spending their evenings and weekends on paperwork because there are simply not enough hours in the day. It looks like A&E and other hospital staff working beyond their endurance and far beyond their contracted hours. The NHS England Interim People Plan sets out in black and white what is needed and this motion reveals the massive financial black hole which needs to be filled.

But do you know what, Congress? The Tories can start by giving us what they promised. If Boris Johnson thinks we have forgotten about that £350 million a week

he recklessly slapped on to the side of his bus, he has got another think coming. Johnson's Government need to spend less time driving people out of the NHS and more money making nursing and other NHS jobs an attractive career proposition, as it was when I started nursing many years ago. That must include the immediate reintroduction of training bursaries, which Jonathan Ashworth has pledged a Labour government will restore.

Congress, the issue goes beyond just pounds and pence. Ultimately, it is about respect: respect for the hardworking NHS staff; respect for patients and service users; and respect for our beloved NHS, a world-class service of which we should feel proud to be a part. Congress, I call on you to support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Joyce. There is no opposition so I am going to move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 46? Thank you. Any against? That motion is carried and can I thank the FDA for withdrawing a speaker in that. That has helped with the timing so I appreciate that very much.

\* *Motion 46 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call Motion 47, Suspend charging for NHS maternity care. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the RCM and seconded by CSP.

**Suspend charging for NHS maternity care**

**Natalie Linder** (*Royal College of Midwives*) moved Motion 47. *She said:* President, Congress, it is the Department of Health's ambition for England to be the safest place in the world to have a baby. That is a great ambition and it is one I share myself. But shouldn't this ambition apply to all women and families, regardless of their background or migrant status?

In 2017, the Government started more rigorously enforcing charges for migrant women for care during their pregnancy and birth, charges starting at £6,000 and rising to tens of thousands for more complex maternity care. As a midwife, building trust with the women I care for is an integral part of the role. That trust is immediately damaged when I am asked to act as a border guard. The common narrative around this issue is that the women being charged for maternity care are health tourists, but this is not the case. The vast majority of these women are not rich, economic migrants. They are the poorest, most destitute in our society, some of whom are victims of sexual exploitation, human trafficking and domestic violence. They have fled war-torn countries and England is their only safe haven.

Research shows that charging for maternity care reduces the livelihood of vulnerable migrant women accessing and receiving vital maternity care. These women are at greater risk of poor health outcomes. These include maternal deaths, premature births, stillbirths and neonatal deaths and yet these women are fearful about seeking maternity care as they will be billed for thousands of pounds they simply cannot afford to pay. They are scared that the Home Office will be notified of any of these unpaid bills. Where is the safety or confidentiality for these women?

In June of this year, the Health and Social Care Select Committee called on Matt Hancock to explain why he has refused to share the information on the Government's review of NHS charging. The Government claim to be committed to transparency, but all I can see is the opposite. Where is the evidence for the decision to charge for NHS care and what is the health impact of this decision? The Government's plan to recover more money is baseless. There has been no robust assessment on how much money these health tourists cost the NHS. There is no assessment of what it costs to actually recover this money. There is no research into the effects of the policy on health outcomes, nor if the policy has any effect on inflow of migrants into the UK.

NHS charging is not happening in isolation. It is a wider movement of a hostile environment targeting the most vulnerable in our society. Just last month, *The Guardian* reported on the poor treatment of pregnant women in immigration detention. They spoke about a brave survivor who suffered a miscarriage in a detention centre and a woman who attempted suicide and was admitted to a psychiatric ward. This is simply inhumane and it must not be allowed to continue.

The RCM, along with RCOG, are supporting maternity action and medical justice in calling for this practice to be banned. As trade unions we must lead this fight. Maternity care must never be denied or delayed. Women not attending antenatal care and receiving little to no postnatal care risk poor physical and mental health for themselves and their babies. We are calling for an immediate end to charging for NHS care in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of all mothers and babies. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**Robert Davies** (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Motion 47. He said: President, Congress, whilst it is widely acknowledged that the NHS needs to explore opportunities through reduced expenditure and maximised income, surely this should be aimed at those who can afford it and not at the most vulnerable. In June 2019, as Natalie pointed out, the Health and Social Care Select Committee called on the Secretary of Health to explain why he has refused to share information on the Government's review of NHS charging. He still refuses to cooperate with the Committee. What is it that he and the Government are so keen to hide?

The Government have identified that so-called health tourists place a financial strain on our already stretched and beloved NHS yet rather than targeting health tourists, this latest crackdown, focusing on maternity care, is actually targeting some of the most vulnerable in society, with disproportionately poor outcomes for BME women and babies. To make matters worse, they are being charged over and above the cost of the actual care that they are receiving, with destitute women charged at a tariff of 150% of the cost of the care.

The result of this is that these vulnerable women develop a fear of incurring financially crippling debts. In turn, this leads to women not seeking maternity care, which then puts them and their babies at increased risk of harm. The tragedy of all of this is that the women could not be refused care even if they cannot afford to pay it at the time.

Also worrying is the impact that the scheme has on the relationship between midwives and mothers. At a time when midwives are trying to focus on providing

high-quality clinical care to mother and baby, they are asked to act as border guards, putting strain on a relationship which requires significant trust from both sides.

Congress, if you agree that midwives should be able to concentrate their efforts on providing high-quality care to expectant women and their babies, support this motion. If you agree that vulnerable women should not be the scapegoat for the Government's continued failure to properly fund our NHS then support this motion. If you agree that a mother and her baby's lives are more important than aggressively pursuing money from the poorest and most vulnerable in society, support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Robert. As there are no other speakers, I am going to move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 47, please show? Thank you. All those against? That is agreed unanimously.

\* *Motion 47 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I move on to Motion 48, Wholly owned subsidiaries. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the SOR, seconded by UNISON, and I also intend to call Unite, so if the other speakers could be ready, I would be grateful. It is the SOR to move.

### **Wholly owned subsidiaries**

**Sue Webb** (*Society of Radiographers*) moved Motion 48. *She said:* Wholly owned

subsidiaries are increasingly being set up by NHS trusts in England despite a pause being called for by National Health Service Improvement due to concerns from unions that the companies are causing a two-tier workforce. Dozens of trusts have set up these subsidiary companies in the last few years, often to deliver savings from non-clinical services and, in some cases, to avoid VAT.

The companies are set up to deliver services such as facilities in estates, cleaning, portering and so on. This is in order to exploit a current tax loophole. It also means that the staff can be employed on different terms and conditions, with pay and conditions being worse than under Agenda for Change terms and conditions used in the health service. Staff can be denied access to the NHS pension scheme, sickness and absence policies and is a cynical attempt to exploit the poorer paid members of staff in the NHS.

This cost cutting can lead to potential threats to patient safety and care as training is cut and employees of these companies are not trained to do their jobs to the high standards to which the NHS aspires. This is a threat to patients in that cleaning is not carried out properly, leading to infection risks. Food is sometimes not of adequate nutritional value and unappealing so that patients do not eat and compromise their recovery.

This use of wholly owned subsidiaries is leading to back door privatisation of the NHS as the use of these subsidiary companies has spread to the provision of other services such as pathology and radiology, undermining the whole ethos of the NHS. This is despite overwhelming evidence of failure of outsourcing in the NHS. In 2012,



a private company took over the running of an NHS hospital and within three years withdrew from its contract saying that it was no longer viable. The hospital was placed in special measures after a visit from the CQC, the health watchdog. Their report stated that there had been significant failings and expressed concern at staffing levels, which were unsafe. Staff reported that they felt bullied and that there was a culture of fear. Patients also said that they felt unsafe with inadequate staffing levels.

This is not the NHS service anyone who works for the National Health Service wants. Staff want to feel secure and valued with common terms and conditions across the board. This results in a better place of care for patients who must be at the centre of our interests. The Government must block all further wholly owned subsidiaries and guarantee the continuation of national Agenda for Change terms and conditions and access to the NHS pension scheme for all healthcare staff, whether providing clinical or non-clinical services.

The NHS is something that we should all be proud of and protect, free at the point of delivery, or we will end up with a health service where the ability to pay decides whether or not people live or die. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Roz Norman** (*UNISON*) moved the amendment to Motion 48 on behalf of UNISON.

*She said:* First of all, Congress, I would like to congratulate the Society of Radiographers for submitting such an important and timely motion. The establishment of subsidiary companies by NHS trusts has been a growing problem for health unions. For the past two years, we have been fighting the surge of sub-cos, fighting to stop the savings being made off the backs of workers, fighting to make

trusts be honest about their tax-dodging plans, and fighting to keep our members as part of the NHS.

We all know that the NHS has been under massive financial strain and we know that many hospitals are in dire straits due to the Tory cuts. Trusts and managers have to look at ways to protect the services and we appreciate that, but, Congress, this is not the way. It is not the way to have sub-cos. No one trusts these projects to set up and run. They tend to be cloaked in secrecy and surrounded by legalise, hardly surprising given the threats that they all conceal. Staff fear for their own terms and conditions after transfer. They fear for the future of their colleagues who will join them later on and we all know the damage to morale caused by a two-tier workforce. More than anything, staff do not want to leave the NHS.

All too often, it is the lower paid jobs that are transferred. Estates and facility staff are somehow seen as disposable, ripe to be broken off to privatisation by the back door. Not only does this affect those transferred, but it also damages the coordination and team-working for those that remain fully employed in the NHS.

So, Congress, UNISON has been fighting these developments and fighting them everywhere we can. We have sought to raise the profile at every opportunity, working with our sisters and brothers across the Movement, channelling the excellent work

of Health Campaigns Together and other activists. With NHS Improvement having so far failed to turn back the tide, the battle continues, but, Congress, when we support our staff to fight, we do win. The list of sub-co victories is getting longer and

longer. We won in North Bristol, we won in Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh, we won in Leeds, we won in Leicester, we won in Mid-Yorkshire and we won in Tees, Esk and Wear. *(Applause)* Congress, only last month, Bradford Teaching Hospitals agreed not to go ahead with 1st October date for transferring the staff. This came after a sustained and ongoing strike action at the trust, a brave and largely low-paid workforce fighting back. We have to congratulate them for that fight-back. *(Applause)*

So, Congress, let us keep up the fight. Let us back our members when they take industrial action. Let us work together. Let us defend the NHS from any further backdoor privatisation. Please support the motion. Thank you. *(Cheers and applause)*

**Suzanne Abachor** *(Unite the Union)* spoke in support of Motion 48. *She said:* Congress, this motion is about calling out wholly owned subsidiaries for what they are really about. They are private companies established by the NHS trusts, smuggled through the back door, used to provide facility management and functions. These companies are cutting off our special scheme for support workers in the NHS.

Now, Congress, let me take you to the world I work in. I am a proud support worker in the NHS. I am employed by a wholly owned subsidiary company and because I am TUPE'd over, I still have the right to my Agenda for Change, but those new staff who work alongside me only get basic pay with no sick pay, no time-and-a-half at weekends and no unsocial hours. They have to come to work when they are sick. If not, they will lose out in their pockets. That is not right and it is not fair.

Congress, with this, I would like to give you my own quote: do not let wholly owned subsidiaries drag us down to their level. Let us clear our NHS of wholly owned subsidiary companies while we can. It is hard, but it gets easier. The unions are campaigning and will keep fighting until we get it right. Congress, support this motion and make sure that the NHS truly means NHS. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Susan. Can we move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 48, please show? Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 48 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call Motion 49, Financial incentive to undergo NHS treatment. The General Council supports the motion, moved by SOR and seconded by the COP.

### **Financial incentive to undergo NHS treatment**

**Claire Donaldson** (*Society of Radiographers*) moved Motion 49. *She said:* Congress, the Society of Radiographers has always supported a healthcare system that is free at the point of need and properly funded through taxation, but I would like to make it clear that our motion is not an attack on an individual's right to choose private healthcare. The Society of Radiographers has around 3,000 members working in the private sector alongside 27,000 members working in the NHS. All of our members are professionals working hard to deliver the best possible care to our patients.

This motion highlights concerns raised by members working in both sectors about what amounts to little more than a scam. Private healthcare companies are preying on and exploiting people's worries about serious and life-threatening conditions in order to generate profit for their shareholders. My colleagues have spoken about our concerns about any post-Brexit deal that threatens the NHS and leaves us exposed to the very real threat of a US-style insurance-based healthcare.

This motion seeks to highlight one worrying aspect of trying to run an insurance-based health system alongside what remains one of the most cost-effective and best healthcare systems in the world, our NHS. These companies take money from their clients, offering the promise of quicker and better healthcare and in many cases, the NHS provides not only an equal or better level of care, but often also the staff who provide this care. There has been a long tradition of doctors and other healthcare professionals engaging in private practice alongside their NHS commitments.

As I have said, this motion is not an attack on a person's right to choose and when thought about pragmatically, it could be argued that for some procedures, the private sector alleviates some of the burden on the NHS. But now we come to cancer treatment. The promises of better, quicker healthcare no long hold up. The insurance companies cannot cost-effectively provide care and treatment to patients. Let us be clear here: "cost-effectively" means without a big enough profit.

Radiotherapy can be used to cure cancer, reduce the chance of cancer coming back and to help relieve symptoms caused by the cancer. Patients may have it by itself or

combined with other treatments such as chemotherapy or surgery. This vulnerable group of patients is being exploited by insurance providers at the most difficult time of their lives. They are making promises they cannot guarantee they can keep as some cancer treatments need a lot of expensive, specialised equipment which may not be available in private hospitals locally.

A patient who has paid for private health insurance is offered a financial incentive to access treatment and care through the NHS, which has always provided the gold standard of cancer treatment. I want to make it clear that we are not blaming the patient. They require urgent treatment that only the NHS can provide and to which they are entitled, in addition to gaining a financial benefit from investing in an insurance policy which may prove vital during their treatment.

The scandal is that the shareholders of these insurance companies also cash in. They have found a business model that allows them to do absolutely nothing and make large profits. The NHS is able to provide the very best cancer treatment due to investing in research, training and development of its staff members and equipment. These private companies provide relatively small incentives to the patient and reap the benefits of the taxpayers' investment in the NHS in order to turn over huge profits.

Congress, it is outrageous that even for treatments that only our NHS has the skills and resources to provide, private companies can financially benefit. We are calling on the TUC to make a stand against this. The NHS has been chronically underfunded for years and it is quite frankly galling that private companies can turn huge profits benefiting in areas where they know they cannot compete with the gold standard care

and treatment provided by the NHS. Please support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

**Martin Furlong** (*The College of Podiatry*) seconded Motion 49. *He said:* Private medical insurance can be very helpful to those who can afford it simply giving access to increased medical resource, reducing hospital waiting times as well as access to private facilities. Indeed, many of our members who run their own private practices are registered with private health insurers to allow their customers to access their services via their insurance scheme and thus claim back their fees. As the previous speaker suggested, this is not an attack on private insurance per se.

However, the Centre for Health and the Public Interest says that when the Health and Social Care Act was passed in 2012, the treatment of private patients was expected to be a significant source of NHS trust income, but this has not been the case. Potentially, it may be impacting on the availability of care for NHS patients due to the continued squeezing on NHS funding.

Many NHS trusts have made losses on the treatment of private patients, some of which are significant, with one hospital alone making an £18 million loss between 2010 and 2016, plus there is no consistency as to how NHS trusts charge private patients as most negotiate with the private insurance companies on an individual basis, leading to big differences in tariffs which are charged. Indeed, some have not actually ever received the fee they were due, with at least £1.8 million of bad debts being written off each year.

The SOR referred to a particular practice which highlights, in my mind, the depths to

which private providers will sink to enable them to bend the rules by giving cancer sufferers what amounts to a bung to return to the NHS, who then provide the treatment with no questions asked because of the gold standard that we referred to. It is preying on patients at their lowest ebb and those who just want their treatment.

Frankly, it is fraud. It cannot be right for private insurers to collect premiums for expensive treatment which is then paid for out of our pockets while fat cat shareholders get rich and this is only set to increase. We therefore support the Society of Radiographers in their call to stop private insurers making money off the back of the NHS. I second the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Martin. There are no other speakers so I move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 49, please show? Thank you. Any against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 49 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call Motion 50, Healthy Start scheme. The General Council supports the motion. The motion is to be moved by the BDA, seconded by GMB and I also intend to call the RCM. If the other speakers can get ready, I will call on the BDA to move Motion 50.

**Healthy Start scheme**



**Karen Smith** (*British Dietetic Association*) moved Motion 50. *She said:* I am a first-time speaker at Congress. (*Applause*) The old Start Scheme was introduced by a Labour government in 2006 to replace the Welfare Food Scheme offering vouchers for cows milk, fruit and vegetables or infant formula in coupons or vitamin supplements to pregnant under-18s, low-income pregnant women and families with children under four.

The purpose of the scheme is to provide a nutritional safety net, to support better eating habits and to equalise the offer for women breastfeeding their infants. Congress, it is alarming that thousands of women and children are missing out on the vouchers because it is not being properly managed or promoted. Over four million children are living in households who sometimes run out of money for essentials such as food. The vouchers help to keep good food on the table.

The average take-up of the vouchers in England and Wales was only 64% in 2018. That is approximately 135,000 households missing out with no Government funds dedicated to supporting local health service providers to promote the scheme. It is shocking that Government spending on the vouchers has almost halved between 2011 and 2018. It is scandalous that the value of the vouchers has not risen over the years. In 2006, it was worth £2.80, which rose to £3.10 in 2009. There has been no further increase. You cannot buy an awful lot with £3.10.

So, what are the barriers to getting it right? Well, many women and families are getting vital support and information from local Sure Start centres, which are key providers of services to improve health, particularly to encourage healthy eating

patterns, and to equip parents and carers with the information needed to give children the healthiest possible start.

At its peak in 2009-10, Sure Start had 3,600 centres and a £1.8 million budget. This was before the austerity cuts of the Coalition Government reduced numbers by 1,000 and funding by two-thirds. A fifth of local authorities are planning to reduce the number of centres in the future as a reduction in central funding results in them being forced to move to bare legal minimum levels of service.

Then we come to the contract for administration of the scheme which was awarded to the private contractor, Serco, in 2014. This contract was awarded in the full knowledge that Serco had paid a £70 million settlement to the MOD when it was alleged that they had charged the Government for tagging people who were dead, in prison or outside the UK. By 2017, uptake had fallen significantly, but guess what -- the Government decided to renew the contract, which has an end date of 31st March 2020.

In May this year, charities, health groups and unions, including the BDA and the RCM, wrote to the Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, warning him that low-income women and children in over 130,000 households are missing out on £28.6 million worth of free fruit, vegetables and milk due to poor promotion of the scheme, which can be worth up to £900.00 per child over the first four years of life. We were pleased to receive a response to the letter from a junior health minister acknowledging the decline in uptake of the vouchers. However, all that she could offer was information that a digital platform is to be introduced, which will include an online application

form and a payment card to replace the vouchers. This is a little too late for many women and children.

It is very encouraging to see that the Labour Party are to commit to investing £26.8 million in the scheme as part of their future Wellbeing Act. We need action now for the sake of children and to give them all the best possible healthy start in life. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** I call the GMB to second.

**Farzana Jumma** (*GMB*) seconded Motion 50. *She said:* Conference, the Healthy Start scheme recognises that a number of pregnant women under the age of 18 are likely to be much less well off than others. It is in society's interests that parents and children do not fall into poverty, especially at such a key time in their lives. The vouchers are worth a mere £3.10 a week. When your money runs out, even £3 can be very important. We all know it really needs to be much higher. Ministers are not worried in the slightest about their £28 million worth of vouchers being under claimed. Instead of promoting these schemes, our Tory Government are spending £150 million on a propaganda campaign to get ready for Brexit. Seriously?

Under the Tories, Brexit has already led to price rises in supermarkets as imports have become more expensive as our pound is now worth less. If the UK crashes out without any deal next month, then things will get worse. GMB has worked with the charity Sustain and Gordon Brown to highlight how food poverty will increase under a no-deal Brexit. Even a report by this Government shows that fresh fruit and

vegetables will face delays. Ministers don't seem to realise or care that the UK hardly produces any fruit or vegetables during the month of November. Tariffs and delays at ports will increase the cost of every-day food shopping, and when you are on a low, fixed budget it quickly adds up.

We have already heard a growing number of stories of parents going without food just so that they could feed their children during the summer holidays. Holiday hunger in the future could become a year-long tragedy. Food banks are worried that people will donate less at a time when demand has surged. Congress, let's fully fund the Healthy Start scheme and expand it, too. Let's fight against a no-deal Brexit, which will cause food poverty to rise and hurt those with the least. We are a rich country but the wealth is in the wrong hands. We can do so much better than this. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**Sarah Jones** (*Royal College of Midwives*) said: President and Congress, the Royal College of Midwives is very passionately supporting the motion for the adequate management and access to the Healthy Start scheme for all eligible women. The maternity service which includes midwives and maternity support workers see first hand the impact on women and families who suffer food poverty and consequent ill health simply because they don't have enough food to put on the table.

The RCM supports that every eligible woman and child receives support from the Healthy Start scheme. This will provide women with a choice to buy simple food items, such as fruit and vegetables and milk during pregnancy and breast feeding. For

those women who choose not to breast feed, support will be provided through formula feeding.

Healthy Start is essential for tackling food poverty and subsequent ill health associated with poor diet. Congress, please support the motion to give low-income and younger families the right to the opportunity for a Healthy Start. Thank you.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Sarah. I move to the vote on Motion 50. All those in favour? Any against? That is carried unanimously. They were three great speeches. Thank you, colleagues.

\* *Motion 50 was CARRIED.*

### **Bullying and harassment**

**The President:** We move now to Motion 51, Bullying and harassment. The General Council supports the motion. The motion is going to be moved by the College of Podiatry, seconded by the SOR and then I am going to take GMB, Unite, the HCSA and the FDA.

**Martin Furlong** (*College of Podiatry*) moved Motion 51. *She said:* Conference, hopefully, this will be one of the shorter of the moving speeches today. The bullying and harassment of staff in their workplace, wherever it is, is insidious and disruptive. It is vital that this great movement of ours stands up for members who are the targets

of this behaviour. I want to talk to you today about the particular problems that we have in the NHS where our members work and the truly astounding amount of reported bullying which, of course, is not the full picture, because much is unreported.

The 2018 NHS Staff Survey shows that bullying and harassment remains an extensive problem in the health sector. 28.3% of NHS staff reported bullying and harassment from patients; 13.2% reported bullying and harassment from their managers and 19.1% reported it from their colleagues. In addition to that, more than 47% of NHS staff say they regularly witness bullying in the workplace. The NHS employs more than 1.5 million staff, so that is equivalent to 1,931 times each day in our NHS when someone witnesses staff being bullied. All this has a cost. Other NHS research has reported that 29.9% of all NHS staff say that they suffered psychological stress due to bullying behaviours. The maths on that one is easier. It amounts to half-a-million people.

When you add the pressure of staff shortages and the imposition of unobtainable targets, you soon see why the NHS loses 4.2 million staff days a year due to time off because of stress, which means that the people of the UK are not receiving the standards of care that the NHS staff members themselves strive to provide.

Where the bullying is committed by NHS staff against NHS staff, only a very small fraction of these cases lead to dismissal or disciplinary action. To its credit, and I do give them a bit of credit, the NHS is trying. The recent publication of its report following on from last year's *Call to Action*, which is called *Creating a culture of civility, compassion and respect in the NHS*, shows the amount of work that is being

undertaken by unions and employers. Improvements do take place when they work together. However, when the GMB talked to you about what happened in the NHS Highlands, you will see what happens when that goes wrong. Congress, this situation must change.

Whilst the statistics are scary, we do need to be clear about what we mean by bullying and harassment. We believe that a lot of behaviour that is often referred to as “bullying and harassment” is more towards the unacceptable behaviour end of the spectrum. What is needed in these cases is reflection, education and assistance in changing the workplace to one of more civility. However, the more calculated, repeated, targeted and bullying and harassment must be stopped. The College of Podiatry is calling for zero tolerance of this type of behaviour.

We need to lead by example, and it should start here. Leadership from the top of all unions must show that we have a zero tolerance to any bullying and harassment behaviour within our professions, and every workplace must send a loud message to those who set out deliberately to make lives miserable. So we have today, in the College of Podiatry, launched our own statement to our staff and members on the behaviours that we expect. We hope that this can be a start of an education process for our members on the way they behave, and to help and offer advice to them.

Of course, leaders in the NHS need to be committed to making a change to these unwelcomed behaviours. We, as trade unions, need to do more to highlight this culture. No member of staff should go to work and feel frightened or intimidated.

Congress, the bullying and harassment culture within the NHS must be eradicated.

Thank you. (*Applause*)

**Claire Donaldson** (*Society of Radiographers*) seconded Motion 51. *She said:* President and Congress, bullying and harassment in the workplace is a sensitive issue, and sensitive issues are difficult to manage. That is not a controversial statement. Right? The controversy lies in the fact that this is not the first time that this has been debated at conference. In fact, I have been a proud active trade unionist throughout my whole adult life and I have attended several different conferences during this time and it has been in every one of the agendas. The Society of Radiographers has produced policy and guidance documents for members and reps, as have all of our organisations, and every single health board and trust has a policy. Yet our most recent member survey showed more than 40% reported having been the victim of bullying and harassment. It is also reflected in the latest NHS England staff survey. It is clear that a change is needed. We need to understand why it is happening and seek ways to find change.

In healthcare we always say that prevention is better than cure. Before we achieve this Utopian society, we also need to be able to respond more effectively when this happens to ensure that individuals are appropriately supported and to raise concerns. We also need to ensure that appropriate actions are set irrespective of the source of bullying and harassment. It was well documented that bullying and harassment has an insidious and negative effect on the individual, it can ruin team dynamics, destroy trust and ruin careers. It has also been shown to have a negative effect on patient safety and care as well as having a huge financial impact.



A recent assessment by NHS England found that it could be costing up to £2 billion a year, taking into account sickness absence, increasing vacancy rates, decreased productivity and employer relations.

Health services in the devolved nations are not above scrutiny either. A recent review into NHS Highland, carried out by John Stewart QC, found evidence that staff had been exposed to bullying, harassment and a significant number have been left with enduring mental health problems as a result.

Colleagues, I was an IR rep for 10 years and now I am a manager in the NHS. I am not saying that there is an easy answer, but it is about time that we tackled this issue properly for our members, for our colleagues and, most importantly, for the safety of our patients. Please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Claire. GMB.

**Kevin Buchanan** (*GMB*) spoke in support of Motion 51. *He said:* Conference, it is a fundamental liberty to be able to go to work free from discrimination, bullying or harassment. We spend so much of our time at work and, sadly, for some it can be hell. As we all know through experience, no workplace is immune, whether it is in the private, public or voluntary sector. It can feel very personal and an individual matter, but this is a vital trade union issue and another way in which we can demonstrate our value.

The College of Podiatry, rightly, highlight their experience in the NHS. As has been touched on by previous speakers, the NHS is a great institution but no workplace is perfect, as our members in NHS Highland can testify. For years the GMB was told that there was no culture of bullying in NHS Highland. During this time, a deep and destructive culture of fear and intimidation was allowed to prevail for too long, ruining livelihoods and lives. The behaviour of senior directors and managers of NHS Highland became a full-blown crisis. That is why GMB gave a collective voice to whistleblowers. It is why we demanded an independent inquiry into the crisis. It is why we fought a very public campaign to make that happen. The interests of staff had to be defended, change had to happen and GMB acted like a good trade union should.

The independent report led by John Sturrock QC laid bare the toxic culture of bullying and harassment which was, and I quote, “significant and harmful and multi-layered at all staff levels”. But the findings and recommendations of Sturrock merely represent the starting point in the fight to eradicate bullying and harassment in NHS Highland and across NHS Scotland. Significantly, we now have an independent national whistleblowing officer, and whistleblowing officers are appointed to every NHS Scotland health board. That is a major union win. Congress, we must recognise that NHS Highland staff, both past and present, who stood up, spoke out and said “Enough”. Without their bravery and testimony, deep-rooted problems would have persisted and change would not have been possible, but change is now possible to the benefit of so many others. GMB will continue to give our dedicated NHS staff a banner under which they can organise with confidence.

Congress, it is essential, as trade unionists, that we continue to speak the truth and to empower. Not only does it make a fairer case for being part of a union, but in tackling bullying and harassment we demonstrate our values of equality, dignity and justice. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Kevin. I call on Unite.

**Mary Callaghan** (*Unite the union*) spoke in support of Motion 51. *She said:* Conference, this motion has one simple message. When it comes to bullying and harassment, enough is enough! (*Applause*) As President of Wigan Trades Council, I know that members of all the TUC affiliate unions face this issue. It is attacking workers in every industry, every sector and in every union. Our members are facing an epidemic. TUC research shows that 45% of safety representatives list bullying as one of their top five workplace concerns. Overall, it is the second biggest workplace issue after stress.

What I find alarming is that the age group which most commonly reports bullying and harassment is workers between the ages of 19 to 34. I fear that it is no coincidence that suicide is the number one cause of death for this same age group. Bullying is an industrial issue. The reasons why it thrives are material. For young people bullying is most prevalent in workplaces where employment is precarious. Young workers are scared of losing work and bullies always thrive on silence. Interestingly, bullying and harassment is least reported by workers who are aged 55 and over. I suspect that this is not simply a case of age bringing confidence. No! I think it is because older

workers have simply been accepting this problem for so long that they see it as a fact of life.

Congress, just as the causes of bullying are industrial, so are the solutions. We need more facility time, more health and safety reps and better training of the laws which we can use to demand that employers fulfil their duty of care. A unionised worker is a confident worker, confident that they can speak out and that they will be listened to. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Mary. I call the HCSA.

**Rob Quick** *(Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association)* spoke in support of Motion 51. He said: Conference, this is my first time speaking at Congress. It is in this century. *(Laughter and applause)* We are talking about bullying, mobbing, delegated bullying, racism, sexism, discrimination on grounds of sexuality, religion and so on. Every week in our union, representing hospital doctors throughout the UK, we are seeing our case files expand with cases of bullying. There is a crisis in the NHS, not just with funding but with the way in which our members and all the members of the healthcare unions are being treated. It is happening with hospital doctors at every level. Our members are suffering sustained bullying and harassment on a continual basis.

One of my colleagues has just mentioned the epidemic of suicide amongst young men. But you will occasionally read of the suicide of a junior doctor. You might remember the junior doctor who walked into the sea in Devon and never came back.

She and her family are a testimony to what is happening in the NHS in terms of bullying and stress that many of our doctors suffer from.

As a union organiser, like most of you, I am not just a union official representing union members, but I am a counsellor and a mental health first aider. We have had members tell us about their experience of ritual humiliation in healthcare environments. Just recently I happened to speak out in the media about what happened in Dudley, the west Midlands. 42 consultants — very often, you don't even get one consultant — put their heads about the parapet by writing a letter of complaint to NHS Improvement and to the trust board, and what happened? NHS Improvement brought in Capsticks, a well-known corporate law firm that works on behalf of many NHS organisations in England, which investigated and swept most of the complaints under the carpet.

My colleague from the GMB has talked about NHS Highland. I cover NHS Scotland, and we have members in places like Fort William and Inverness who are experiencing bullying, despite the fact that there has been a QC-led inquiry there. Bullying is an insidious virus infecting our NHS throughout the world of work, in every workplace. Let's say, with one united voice, zero tolerance to bullying! Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Rob. The FDA.

**Sam Crane** (*FDA, MIP Section*) spoke in support of Motion 51. *She said:* Conference, the outcome of the NHS staff survey in 2018 is, sadly, proof that bullying and harassment remain endemic in the NHS. We believe strongly that trade unions

can be part of the solution to these problems and that some solutions to exist to creating a better workplace culture for the NHS.

Bullying and harassment makes up a very high proportion of MIP's case load and case work, and like the Royal College of Podiatrists it seems that it does nothing but increase. However, we also believe that by focusing on lessons learnt in workplaces that have been able to make change for the better, we as trade unionists can reduce bullying, harassment and help make the NHS a better place to work for everyone. MIP has learnt significant lessons from sitting on the Social Partnership Forum Workforce Issues Group that bullying and harassment are the most significant and difficult issues that the SPF group has had to tackle.

The SPF's collective call to action on reducing bullying and harassment by creating a new way of partnership working has had positive results across the NHS. The Christie NHS Foundation Trust, for example, developed an informal approach to addressing conflict and promoting positive working environments and relationships. Mersey Care is creating a just and learning culture by asking "What happened?" instead of "Who was responsible?" following errors. A change of HR culture can be particularly helpful. Norfolk & Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, for example, developed in partnership a new attendance policy and encouraged a more flexible approach to its use, so all staff are treated as individuals equally. This has led to fewer staff going off sick and fewer staff being sanctioned as a result of this absence record.

For us it is a question of leadership. HR directors, of course, should be involved but it should go all the way to the top. Tackling bullying and harassment should be a board-level priority, and boards should push for greater partnership working and for more involvement of staff within this through their unions in this process. It is also a question of leadership in trade unions, and to build the development of link members and union reps in the workplace is crucial. Member support is ultimately necessary to reduce bullying and harassment. This is a task in which we all have a part to play.

We in MIP, for example, have seen particular benefits from encouraging employers and union reps to use mediation. One of our national officers is a trained mediator. We encourage this progress. The solution to these problems lies in us working together with employers with a shared goal and while progress is slow and painful, it is, MIP believes, achievable with trade union leadership. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks, Sam. There has been no opposition so I will move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 51, please show? Any against? The motion is carried.

\* *Motion 51 was CARRIED.*

### **Better and active safeguards for whistle-blowers in the NHS and public services**

**The President:** I now call Motion 52: Better and active safeguards for whistle-blowers in the NHS and public services. It will be moved by the HCSA, seconded by

the BDA, but the General Council supports the motion and I wish to call on Dave Prentis to explain the position before we start.

**Dave Prentis** (*General Council*): Good afternoon, everybody. I am Dave Prentis from UNISON. I have been asked to explain the General Council's position on Motion 52, which is to support with explanation. If you look at Motion 52, you will see that it calls on the General council to work with unions to provide better support for whistle-blowers. It is suggested we do this through the creation of a "purposely designed and independent agency", which will be able to scrutinise the actions taken and will also have powers to review and amend any adverse impacts on genuine whilstle-blowers.

Currently the process is managed and regulated through the National Guardian's Office, which is jointly funded by CQC — the Care Quality Commission — NHS England and NHS Improvement. It has a network of more than 700 guardians and individual trusts, and through the CQC's confidential drop-in sessions, the National Guardian's Office also engages with employers and unions through the NHS Social Partnership Forum. It is unclear what failings in the current system might be addressed through the creation of an independent agency. It is also unclear how the powers to review and amend all adverse circumstances fits with respect to employment rights; for example, where these powers may fall short of existing unfair discipline remedies.

Despite this, Motion 59 is broadly in line with the recommendations of the 2013 Report of the Whistle-Blowing Commission, which the TUC endorsed, participated in



and which called on the Government to scope the potential for an independent agency. So on that basis the General Council has decided to support the motion but with the explanation that I have just given. Thank you.

**The President:** Thank you, Dave. I now call on the HCSA to move Motion 52 and to be seconded by the BDA.

**Paul Donaldson** (*Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association*) moved Motion 52. *He said:* Conference, the HCSA is the trade union for all hospital doctors.

Everyone should benefit from the courage of those in the NHS and public services who, with genuine concerns, speak out and expose the neglect, inadequate resources and wrong-doings which harm our patients, the public and our colleagues. It is still the case that those who speak out or who would speak out stand to benefit the least and are likely to suffer the most for it.

Some of the examples are chilling. Following the Mid-Staffs' inquiry in 2013 and the Francis Review in 2015, the NHS introduced a number of recommendations which he identified: the Freedom to speak up policy, introduced by NHS Improvement in 2016, which is bolstered by the National Staff Council Agreement on speaking up, has sought to create an encouraging environment in which NHS workers can feel confident to reveal genuine concerns about failures of service standards, resourcing and adequacy of care. The widespread creation of speak-up guardians in hospitals has substantially aided this goal. These initiatives are welcome but are not sufficient to address the needs and to fully safeguard genuine whistle-blowers.

The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee has looked at the effectiveness of current NHS initiatives and felt that doctors and nurses still fear what is termed to be the “finger of blame” and are reluctant to come forward. Securing whistle-blowers against blame, bullying and retaliation, whether from colleagues or management, both at the time of disclosure and in the longer term, are the essential ingredients of a truly protective framework, but this is not yet in place in the NHS and public services. We have encountered members with genuine concerns about the standards of their services, but are paralysed with fear for their careers and alternative employments when contemplating speaking up.

Those who have bravely raised complaints about continuing short-comings, such as staffing levels, hygiene and the like, soon find their work being closely scrutinised and their whereabouts and movements surveyed. Also there are those who, sometime after their disclosure, found themselves subject to formal disciplinary investigation and even dismissal because of a struck and unmerciful application of disciplinary rules. The employers’ internal processes are not viewed with confidence by whistle-blowers and often with good reason.

Those seeking to create a more protective regime have looked to the employment tribunals and strengthening the protected interest disclosure rules. We do not see in the employment tribunal system anything that could dispel the anxieties and inhibitions of those who foresee the death of their careers, the reconfiguration of their service or missed promotions should they speak out, nor do they serve well those who have suffered retaliatory action. Employment tribunals which dispense after-the-fact

financial compensation, and only rarely reinstatement, find it difficult to make causal connections between much earlier actions of speaking out and later disciplinary proceedings, all of which, of course, are assessed against the virtual test, and which are too remote from the NHS and public service to grasp internal patterns and pressures, do not provide the satisfactory answer.

Whilst we appreciate the Council's observations, the reality is that the current procedures are not robust enough. Therefore, we call on the Council to convene a committee of health professionals to review and revise the current procedures. This is why we ask Congress to call for better and active safeguards for whistle-blowers in the form of a purposely designed agency within the public services sector, which is truly independent in terms of leadership and governance and accountable to a Parliamentary Committee or, better still, a commission of stakeholders. Its remit will give it powers to receive and examine all whistle-blowing disclosures, as well as to oversee and ensure that action is taken to address and remedy any wrong. Its role would, very importantly, extend to safeguarding the genuine whistle-blower from adverse treatment by registering and declaring a complainant to be 'a genuine whistle-blower', maintaining the oversight of the whistle-blower's subsequent treatment at work, having a remit to be or to provide an ultimate appeals body in any case with a decision to dismiss or allegations of discrimination or detriment in connection with registered genuine whistle-blowing and for the findings of an appeal panel to be binding. Such a safeguarding mechanism would be entirely new to the NHS and, as such, would be an asset to it and other public service if the desire to protect whistle-blowers is indeed genuinely to be held. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Paul. I call the BDA to second.

**Annette Mansell-Green** (*British Dietetic Association*) seconded Motion 52. *She said:* Conference, in seconding the motion, I fully accept and thank the General Council for the expressed explanation which is extremely helpful. The All Party Parliamentary Group on Whistleblowing states: “A whistleblower is defined as ‘a person who exposes any kind of information or activity that is deemed illegal, unethical or not correct within an organisation that is either private or public’”. They say that these individuals are vulnerable to retaliation for their actions, and whilst there are laws in place to protect them, sometimes the laws are not adequate or effective in their application.

Congress, every NHS worker should be protected and feel safe when making a protective disclosure. Whistleblowing in the NHS is meant to be easy. No worker should fear making a disclosure because they are afraid of retribution. It takes a brave person to come forward. In this era of under-funding and short-staffing, which causes stress and worry, the situation is even more critical.

When Robert Francis published his report, people were left with the impression that NHS whistleblowing had been addressed. Yes, a fair amount has been done, including the introduction of freedom-to-speak-up guardians, which are not always as effective as they could be because there are still problems. In one very recent case a former consultant who resigned as a result of the way his concerns about patient care were dealt with said that his previous employer had “refused to acknowledge that there had been shortcomings in the care provided to patients”. He went on to say:

“Whistleblowers need to be able to raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously, their concerns appropriately investigated and that they will not become the scapegoats. This will only happen if there is an appropriate body to which the concerns can be reported”.

Other whistleblowers quoted in a recent inquiry report said: “Talking to the whistleblowing champion did not help. I went to the champion and said that I wanted to discuss it. I was told that that’s not what we do”. Another staff member told the investigator: “I blew the whistle once and I wouldn’t do it again. There’s a woman in my hospital who will not come and speak to you because she cannot bear to dig it up again. She was made to feel that her concerns were not valid. She’s an alcoholic now”.

Comrades, we need to care for the carers as we care for the patients. Nobody should be victimised, bullied or lose their jobs and careers for raising concerns that prevent harm to patients. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Annette. There are no other speakers, so I will move to the vote. All those in favour of Motion 52, please show? Thank you. All those against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 52 was CARRIED.*

### **Perinatal mental health services**

**The President:** I now move on to Motion 53: Perinatal mental health services. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the RCM and seconded by the CSP.

**Pauline Twigg** (*Royal College of Midwives*) moved Motion 53. *She said:* Congress, the brilliant campaigner, Lucy Holland, who lost her sister to post-natal depression, once said: “We need to be honest. Not everyone feels that instant euphoria straight after birth. This myth, the rush of love that comes with meeting your child for the first time, that will erase all the pain, doubt and insecurities is one of the biggest lies that mothers are told”. No doubt many women experience this instant connection. We need better support and understanding for those who do not.

Just this morning a friend of mine, a midwife, has reached out on social media. Her post says: “Post-natal depression is just awful. I have everything I could wish for but that does not mean I am immune. The tears just stream out like a waterfall, but the worse is feeling numb. How is it fair that after such a miraculous life event, you can suffer?”

Many of us in this room may be able to relate to Lucy Holland’s campaign and my friend’s post. Up to 20% of women are affected by perinatal mental health illness during pregnancy or within the first year after having a baby. Seven in 10 women will downplay or hide the severity of their illness, even from their families, for the shame and guilt they feel, the failure they feel as a mother and fear of being judged. Suicide is a leading cause of death for women during pregnancy and one year after birth.

Children of parents with severe mental illness are at increased risk of developing mental illness themselves or turning to substance misuse. They have behavioural and physical problems. Untreated, perinatal mental illness is a major public health issue. Women experience debilitating, intense and frightening symptoms. Relationships and families are damaged. A child's emotional, social and cognitive development can be impacted. And all of this is avoidable if perinatal mental health problems were identified and treated quickly and effectively.

As a midwife I play an important role in promoting the emotional wellbeing of women and their babies, ensuring that all women with a mental illness get appropriate and timely care, but it can be frustrating for me and my colleagues as we can feel helpless as we struggle to try and access services for our women. We are passionate about the work that we do and strive to provide the best care that we can. Specialist mental health midwives have a crucial role in effective perinatal mental health care, but not every NHS trust has one. These midwives not only support women to receive the high-quality care that they need, but they also have a role in supporting the wider team to recognise women who may be vulnerable.

It will come as no surprise to those of you working in public services that training budgets in the NHS have been cut. The RCM's Annual Heads of Midwifery Survey showed 81% of trusts only offer some continuous professional development in working hours, with 7% offering no CPD working hours. Almost a third of heads of midwifery have had to reduce training in the past 12 months. In reality, this means that midwives are unable to access training to help them identify, refer and care for

women experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues, which can escalate and become more severe.

The Maternal Mental Health Alliance's Everyone's Business Campaign calls for all women throughout the UK who experience a perinatal mental illness to receive the care that they and their families need wherever and whenever they need it. The campaign focuses on specialist services, including community and in-patient mother and baby units. The evidence shows that specialist services save lives, but they also ignite change across a wider pathway, highlighting gaps in services for women with mild to moderate perinatal mental health problems.

We are calling for increased investment in perinatal mental health services and training for all maternity staff to identify, care for and refer women who experience poor mental health. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Pauline. CSP to second.

**Jill Taylor** (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Motion 53. *She said:* Congress, the prevalence of perinatal mental health problems affecting both women, men and children is wholly unacceptable. Depression, anxiety, OCD, PTSD, birth trauma and psychosis are all noted as perinatal mental health issues affecting mothers, fathers and children in their emotional, social and cognitive development.

The Government made a commitment in the five-year forward plan to rectify issues in specialist services' availability and access for all, and address specialist training needs



for all maternity staff by 2020 and 2021. But instead, Congress, what have we seen? We've seen a post-code lottery in service availability, non-existent services, shortages in specialist midwives and escalating costs in excess of £1.2 billion per year to try and help those in need due to inaction and lack of help when needed. This has to stop. The HSE estimated 283,640 women in England alone suffer some form of perinatal mental health issues every year. This number does not include 40% of fathers reporting issues and the impact on the children at the heart of this crisis. We must seek to campaign together to drastically increase investment in specialist maternity services, access for all in need and training for all maternity staff to ensure early diagnosis and commencement of early intervention for those in need to benefit all of society. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Jill. There are no other speakers. I am going to move to the vote on Motion 53. All those in favour? All those against. That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 53 was CARRIED*

### **Transforming social care**

**The President:** We now move on to Motion 54: Transforming social care. The General Council supports the motion. I call on the GMB to move, UNISON to second and I have also got Unite and the RMT.

**Jo Pitchford** (*GMB*) moved Motion 54. *She said:* Conference, care is close to my heart. I work within social care as a family support worker. My daughter works in a care home. My union represents thousands of mainly women who are vital to the health, wellbeing, dignity and happiness of millions of people across our country.

The reality of life in the care sector right now is insecurity, overwork, low pay and the constant feeling of wanting to do your absolute best for the people you care for but within a system that does not allow it. It is often the choice between giving the best level of care that you possibly can or making it home in time to put the kids to bed, working hours that you are not paid for, seeing your family less and all for a princely sum that sees you in the queue for the food bank. That is the reality of care.

But, Congress, I do not want to paint a picture of a workforce that does not know what they do. What makes it sadder, more urgent and more heartbreaking is that the care workers who I know love their jobs. As my daughter says, care workers don't just wipe bottoms — for those of you who know my daughter will know that she said that in slightly more colourful language — but they meet the social, emotional and physical needs, too. They love the people they care for.

Just think for a second about needing care yourself; the level of trust and vulnerability involved in entrusting your most private moments to a stranger. It takes a special person to work in care.

Congress, we here, in this room, understand the value that care workers bring to people's lives, even if their pay and status in society does not reflect it. We applaud

the work of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Care, which GMB is proud to sponsor. It is not just about shouting regarding the crisis but in trying to find a solution because at the very crux of it, if our members are being failed by the system, then the system must be changed. Change is so desperately needed. This motion is about transforming social care, not tweaking a broken system. We have a broken system riven with private providers and private equity companies that puts profit on the people, a system so broken, so close to collapse yet so essential to each of us. There must be a rigorous focus on professionalization, training, standards and the standing and recognition of the care workforce, recognising the high level and increasingly medicalised skill set needed to deliver complex care. We need equality and integration with the NHS. We need the billions of pounds of funding that goes to the care system, not to shareholders as well as sectoral bargaining and a ruthless focus from care unions on organising to deliver real power to care workers to control their own working lives. A free market, a free for all, will never deliver the sort of system we need.

As a local government worker I see care reaching into the lives of every person I meet. As a mother, I see my daughter supporting life-changing tasks as part of her day-to-day routine. As a person, I want to know that the care system will be there to offer me dignity in my older years. I want everyone to have the level of care and dignity that I want for my parents, my elderly relatives and friends and neighbours. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Jo. UNISON to second.

**James Anthony** (*UNISON*) seconded Motion 54. *He said:* Congress, there is no other area of public services that has felt such an impact of Tory austerity than social care. Societies are, rightly, judged by the way they treat their most vulnerable. Congress, on that basis ours is failing and failing miserably. With local government cut beyond recognition, care services have inevitably suffered, care services that were already on the brink before the austerity years.

The fact that we now have 1.4 million people suffering without the care they need is a devastating indictment on this country, and care workers continue to bear the brunt; underpaid, undertrained and undervalued. We have talk from the Tories but they can't even produce a Green Paper on the issue. It is a disgrace. The sector is crying out for cash, and while last week's Spending Review provided yet another temporary sticking plaster, what we need are sustainable increases in funding to make up for the cuts that we have had during previous years.

However, Congress, it is not sufficient just to put more money into a broken system. We have to reform the dysfunctional social care market, a system based on driving down costs and exploiting the workforce, a system too often owned by casino capitalists, tax dodging and private equity barons. Just look at HC-One, the largest provider of social care in the country, paying out nearly £50 million to shareholders in the last two years, yet avoiding paying a penny in corporation tax. That must end! We must build a system that builds capacity at a local level so care services can be delivered by the public sector. We must ensure that whoever is delivering care are bound by the toughest, legal and ethical quality requirements. We must also make sure that we have collective bargaining for all of those carers. Our recent experience

as a union gives us some hope about fighting back for care workers. Our Ethical Care Charter has gone from strength to strength and is being adopted by councils up and down the country. More and more councils are giving care workers the support, training and time to care and giving them a living wage. The union has seen really strong campaigns across our region, taking the fight to rogue employers.

As a trades unionist in Birmingham, who cannot fail to be inspired by the fightback of the Birmingham home care workers? (*Applause*) They have withstood 18 months of strike action, 18 months of standing up, of low-paid women saying, “No, we are not to be treated like that”. I would like to thank the movement because without you they would not have won.

Congress, the failure to provide the funding and reform must end. The time to act is now. Let’s work together to reform social care. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, James. Unite.

**Dave Allen** (*Unite the union*) spoke in support of Motion 54. *He said:* Congress, there is no doubt that workers in the care sector need sectoral bargaining and to be represented by strong trade unions. They also need to be well trained and well remunerated for the extremely and increasingly important jobs which they perform for society. We have seen in recent years, and as Dave Prentis recently told us, as the political choice of this Tory Government to implement austerity for the financial crisis was not caused by a Labour government or greedy trade unionists but caused by greedy bankers, and almost every single one of them a Tory. This has caused local

authorities to be forced to contract out their care services. This has led to the grotesque situation where service users are having their care packages cut and care workers are having their hours and other terms and conditions also cut. Many of these workers are not even paid for travelling between their clients. Therefore, Congress, we must absolutely support the campaign to unionise and secure selective collective bargaining for the care sector.

However, Congress, I need to point out to you that the second part of bullet point 3 of the action points in this motion calls for the care sector to be integrated with health. This conflicts with the next motion, Motion 55, from the TUC Disabled Workers Conference, which calls for the establishment of a National Independent Living Support Service,

This motion is so important that we must support it. We must support the unionisation, the organising of the care service and to get sectoral collective bargaining. But you must be aware, in voting for this motion, that merging with health is not what your disabled colleagues want. It is not what the disabled community wants. Almost entirely and unanimously, we want the establishment of a National Independent Living Service. Having said that, support Motion 54.  
*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Dave. I call the RMT.

**Martin Russell** (*National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers*): I am a first-time delegate. *(Applause)* *He said:* This issue affects everyone, not just the

obvious unions. It affects everybody in the country. If it has not affected your life so far with the ageing population that we have, I am sure it will do at some time. It is becoming an ever-more important industry.

My partner works in the care industry for a private care company. As a result of TUPE-ing over the years, there are several different contracts within the same company, with different terms and conditions and different rates of pay. However, they all share one thing in common, and that is, as the motion says, the race to the bottom. Examples of this are, although being described as a minimum-wage occupation, carers who travel from call to call, using their own cars often and fuel, only get paid for time on call. That means that they are only getting paid a fraction of the hours that they are actually out working. They could be out 15 hours and only getting paid for eight hours at the minimum wage. So I become a care-call widower, if you like. I work shifts myself so we never see each other, or very rarely, anyway.

Many calls, as carers in this room will tell you, require two carers, one often being driven around by the other using his or her old car and getting no recompense from the employer. That causes disruption between the workers themselves. Rosters show ridiculous start and finishing times, sometimes as early as 3 am and as late as midnight. The answer to that is, "Oh, just cram in, just do what you can", and so on. That is not only unfair to the carers themselves but it is inhumane to the service user, who expect the best of care. These are vulnerable people and they are not getting cared for properly and the carers are getting lambasted in the press. The turnover of staff is great as a consequence of this. The red light has just come on. I don't know what the national picture is unionwise.

I know great works have been done in Birmingham and Doncaster, but we are not just here to pat ourselves on the back. I know that in Sheffield, for example, there is not enough union presence in the private sector of care workers, so I think that the unions need to get in there, recruit, retain and that is the only way we are going to have consistency getting there with the NHS and, ultimately, have a nationalised industry.

Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** There has been no opposition. We are going to move to the vote on Motion 54. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 54 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** I now call Motion 55, National Independent Living Support Service. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by Sean McGovern on behalf of the TUC Disabled Workers' Conference. It will be seconded by the NEU and then Unite have indicated to speak. Sean.

### **National Independent Living Support Service**

**Sean McGovern** (*Unite the Union*) moved the motion. *He said:* Thanks, President. Congress, first of all, I just want to dispel the myth of disabled people being vulnerable. We are made vulnerable by austerity and by a government that does not



value us and does not value the people who support us. (*Applause*) Now I will get on with the boring bit of my speech. Here we go.

Comrades, over the past nine years disabled people have borne the brunt of an ideologically driven programme of Tory austerity. We have seen our services and benefits stolen from us. Social care and support is in a perfect storm of chaos and collapse at the moment. It is estimated that over a million older people are going without essential care and support. Parents of disabled children, and these are children often with complex care and support needs, are being denied vital assistance. As support packages shrink, so young adults are missing out on those rites of passage experiences that many teenagers enjoy.

Comrades, it is known that disabled people assessed to have need are hit by the chaos and collapse in the care sector. Parents, personal assistants, and support workers are all too often working under the most difficult conditions as previous speakers have said. Many are forced into zero-hours contracts, regularly working long hours for minimum pay, and without any real prospect of career advancement.

Comrades, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my personal assistant, who is over there, and all those who work in this sector for the part they play in affording us disabled people our independence. (*Applause*)

Congress, millions of pounds have been lost to social care support across nine years of austerity. The drive of neo-liberalism is also with us and under-resourcing of the National Health Service. Today social care and support has become a postcode

lottery. With dwindling resources local authorities struggle to deliver services for disabled people. However, delivering the Independent Living for Disabled People through the NHS is not the answer. Health and independent living means very different kinds of need. For instance, when I need assistance dressing I do not call my GP. Conversely, if I have a chest infection I do not ask my personal assistant to diagnose my condition.

Comrades, progressive voices within our Movement have been used for Independent Living for Disabled People, that is, independence that does not medicalise our lives. A few months ago the TUC Disabled Workers' Conference in Bournemouth passed this motion. The motion called for a Labour government to create a national independent living support service. This is an independent service that, one, gives universal rights to independent living; two, is enshrined in law and delivered through a new national independent living service co-created between government and disabled people; three, it is funded through progressive general taxation and managed by central government; four, it is free at the point of need and, finally, a service that is led by disabled people and delivered locally in co-production with disabled people.

Congress, affording disabled people independent living is not a treat. Care support packages are not a luxury add-on to our lives. Independent living gets us disabled people to the starting line of the race. Denying us independence bars us from taking part in the race. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Sean. Calling the NEU to second?

**Colleen Johnson** (*National Education Union*) seconded Motion 55. *She said:* President, Congress, if we could just put Brexit to one side for a few moments that would be really helpful as I want us to focus in on what this Government have done to disabled people with their disgraceful policy of austerity, a policy that has driven people to despair, a policy that lacks any kind of human response and one that robs people of their basic dignity, where people with serious health conditions are told they are fit for work, and for some that is the final straw. Most people who can go to appeal about their benefit win at tribunal, if they can manage to survive that long. Meanwhile, the right-wing press and some trashy TV channels have condoned this policy by labelling disabled people as feckless scroungers of little value. Don't even get me started on Dominic Cummings.

It is good to be asked to second this motion, a motion that seeks to redress the balance. This motion requests that a newly elected Labour government establishes a national independent living service. The motion focuses on the social model of disability rather than the medical model because this is the model we use. After all, disabled people mostly need social care in order to be independent so that they can get on with their lives by having, for example, an assistant to help them dress, travel, or complete some aspects of their work.

The right to independent living support in a socialist society should be enshrined in law and it should be paid for from the general taxation purse, which will be a lot fuller if all the tax loopholes were closed and the tech giants and the coffee chains paid their way. (*Applause*) Disabled people should be involved at all levels of this new service so that it works. I am sure you have heard the phrase, *Nothing about us without us*,

and that should be the case here. So, please do vote for this motion as it is what disabled people need. They need rights, respect, and equality. Thank you, Congress.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Colleen. Unite.

**Dave Allan** (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Motion 55. *He said:* I will be as brief as I can, Congress, as we are short of time. For many years now the disabled movement and disabled trade unionists have fought for acceptance of the social model of disability rather than the medical model of disability. We all know the social model says we are disabled not by our impairment but by the way society treats us. This motion was passed by your disabled colleagues at the TUC Disabled Workers' Conference in June. We are asking you to support it in its entirety.

Can I just finally leave you with a vision, comrades: it is five years' time, Jeremy Corbyn is campaigning to be re-elected as prime minister of Britain, we have more trade unionists in this country than we have ever had before, every worker is covered by a trade union recognition agreement, we have an independent fully-funded national health service and an independent fully-funded national independent living and support service. Support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Dave. Can we now move to the vote on Motion 55? All those in favour. Thank you. Any against? Thank you. That is also carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 55 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Congress, as we are still falling a bit behind, in order to ensure we can get through as many of the motions as possible we are not now planning to show the video address from Jacinda Ardern this afternoon. We will try to reschedule that into our agenda later in the week. It is well worth watching so obviously we encourage people to think about the length of their speeches and whether it is really necessary to contribute to every debate.

## **EQUALITIES**

### **Section 3 Respect and a voice at work**

**The President:** Delegates, we now move into section 3 of the General Council Report, Respect and a voice at work, Equalities, on page 34. It is my intention to take all of this in the Equalities section. I call paragraph 3.1 and 3.4, and Motion 34 Equality 2020. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by Unite, seconded by GMB, and I then intend to call PCS, CWU, and the NASUWT, if all of those could be ready. I call Unite to move Motion 34.

### **Equality 2020**

**Diana Holland** (*Unite the Union*) moved Motion 34. *She said:* Good afternoon, Congress. The Equality Act 2010 was a major milestone on the road to equality. It was not just handed to us on a plate. It was driven by the commitment to stop and prevent harassment, discrimination and unequal pay, and by a commitment to advance

equality. It was achieved through collective organisation and struggle with trade unions and the TUC united and right at the heart of the powerful alliance that we built with Labour in government. Ten years on in these difficult, dangerous, and divisive times we need to take stock, to evaluate our achievements and to rebuilt that unified alliance so we can complete the unfinished business from 2010 and defeat the forces rallied against us, forces that are actively promoting division, discrimination, exploitation and hatred.

Before the ink was dry on the Equality Act one of the first acts of the Conservative Liberal Democrat Coalition was to refer it to the deregulating Red Tape Challenge. I do not know if you remember that. Cameron himself publicly belittled our hard fought for gains as bureaucratic nonsense and tick box stuff and began systematically cutting back equality impact assessments, equality questions procedures, protection from third party harassment, and dual discrimination provisions, and Theresa May, as Home Secretary, announced that they would not enact section 1, the new duty on public bodies to consider social and economic inequality. Then, of course, they really went for it, tribunal fees decimated a number of discrimination cases and austerity and cuts entrenched and massively deepened inequalities. That great book, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist*, explained it so well, when times are hard the pressure is on to turn you against those who are closest to you who have a few more or less crumbs from the single slice of bread while the minority make off with the rest of the loaf.

We cannot let this Government's divide and rule tactics succeed. Congress, the daily horrifying revelations of harassment, discrimination, and unequal pay, and the ferocious attacks on equality must not be allowed to undermine our achievements or

our courage. We cannot let the equalities agenda be reduced to the struggle against moving backwards. There is so much more to do. We need to be moving forwards again. We need to come together to bulldozer down all the barriers to equality that we still face, including class discrimination as our General Secretary so powerfully said earlier, and we need to end the second-class treatment of union equality reps. They need statutory rights. (*Applause*) This demand is central to the TUC's *Stronger Voice at Work* campaign and it was in the 2017 Labour Party Manifesto but it rarely gets a mention. Let's bring this demand out of the shadows and into the light. Bob Hessel QC played a vital role over decades in shaping the equality laws that we have today. Shortly before he sadly died he said: "If a new government enacts only one new piece of equality legislation it should require equality representatives at workplaces."

We also need mandatory equality audits with full action to close the equality pay and pension gaps, to ensure fair, transparent pay and pensions for all now. Finally, we need the powerful diverse voices of our General Council and TUC Women's Black Workers, Disabled Workers, LGBT+, and Young Worker activists, and all of us here, to challenge the myths about who trade unionists are, and to build our Movement. When I first became active in our union 40 years ago the most common response wherever I went was, "What are you doing here? Are you in the right place?" I was even asked at a big rally I was organising, "Who's your husband?" No worker should be made to feel like an outsider in our Movement. A great thing about being older, and there are a few drawbacks, is that I know things can change and they can change for the better. Our new deal is for all. We have waited long enough. Now is the time to take action for equality. Please support the motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Diana. GMB to second.

**Barbara Plant** (*GMB*) seconded Motion 34. *She said:* I am proud to second this important motion on Equality 2020. President, Congress, we live in uncertain and terrifying times, the threat of crashing out of the EU without a deal leaving everything unknown, not to mention Boris Johnson's puppeteers pulling the strings, Dominic Cummings and Nigel Farage.

Imagine how much more terrifying times are if you are an EU national, having to jump through countless hoops to prove your right to settled status and even then with no guarantee that the Home Office will come to the right or humane decision. Now more than ever we need to show our solidarity to our brothers and sisters who are migrant workers. Imagine how terrifying it is if you are a BAME person living in a country run by a prime minister who stokes hatred and racism with his policies as well as his words, if you are LGBTQ+ and living in a country run by a man who refuses to apologise or retract his past homophobic comments, and if you are a woman having to stomach a prime minister who thinks it is okay to describe our Muslim sisters as letter boxes, allows one of his own team to get off scot free when they grab a peaceful woman protester by the neck and all the while a domestic abuse bill hangs by a thread.

So much has been achieved through the Equality Act but how quickly that work can be undone. Back in 2010 the Tories and, yes, joined by the LibDems, did not waste any time trying to water down this legislation. Austerity has widened inequality.



George Osborne, remember him, used to say, “We are all in this together.” We believed that to be a lie then and everyone knows for sure it is a lie now. Years of Tory cuts to overstretched public services have left the most vulnerable people in society in harm’s way and more and more costs are passed on to people who are already struggling to get by. It is those who experience the most inequality and discrimination who are hit the hardest.

Without equality there can be no justice. That is why every trade union campaign needs to have equality at its core. GMB believes every win for equality is a win for all of us, from the fight we have taken to Asda on equal pay and punitive contract changes, to the mission for newer diversity and domestic abuse to be dealt with in workplaces across the country, and to the brave, brave women who brought Glasgow to a standstill and won. Those who work tirelessly for fairness and equality are among the best of our Movement. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Barbara. I call PCS.

**Kate Douglas** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Motion 34. *She said:* The Equality Act 2010 has been a useful tool in fighting discrimination in the workplace. As a rep I use the Act in personal cases pretty much every week. It has been useful enforcing the employer to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled staff, in winning alternative working patterns for carers, and better attendance management policies. However, the Act falls far short of what is needed.

It is 150 years since the Civil Service first employed women. They were employed by the General Post Office and paid 14 shillings a week, which was far less than their male counterparts. Now, 150 years later, there is still a gender pay gap but it is closing so slowly that it will take another 40 years before we get equal pay in the Civil Service. The gender pay gap actually increased 1% last year despite the new requirements for large employers to report the difference between what they pay men and women. Eight out of 10 women work for an employer that pays men more and the gender pay gap exists in all 20 sectors of the economy. There is no mandatory reporting of the ethnicity pay gap. A recent audit of public sector workers in London found that BAME staff were paid up to 37% less, on average, than their white counterparts. The disability pay gap is estimated at about 15% and the LGBT+ at 16%. The new pay gap reporting has shone a light on the discrimination but has done nothing to deal with it. The Government hoped that transparency would shame large employers into taking action but they have no shame.

It is the Government's austerity cuts that have had the biggest effect on achieving equality. The EHRC reported in 2018 that public service and benefit cuts disproportionately affect those with least, single parents, disabled people, and ethnic minority communities. The 20% of people in England with the lowest income lost 11% of their income due to austerity contrasted with no loss for the wealthiest 20%. The UN has condemned Britain for the impact of policies like Universal Credit, which has fuelled the shocking rise in the use of food banks, homelessness, and falling life expectancy. Austerity and the Government's hostile environment have fuelled the rise of the far right and have led to an increase in racist, homophobic, and transphobic attacks.

We are a long, long way from achieving true equality and the Equality Act is now not fit for purpose. PCS calls on the General Council to campaign for a stronger Act that includes statutory rights for equality reps and a fully funded and staffed enforcement of the Act. Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Kate. CWU?

**Jacky Morrey** (*Communication Workers Union*) spoke in favour of Motion 34. *She said:* We must make this a top priority to tackle discrimination, unfair treatment, and violence that so many still face in our workplaces and in society because of who they are. The Equality Act 2010 was a milestone in advancing equal rights and in the past was backed by a stronger Equality and Human Rights Commission but the growth of nationalist and anti-immigrant sentiment, and general intolerance to others are backward steps on the path to fairness and equality. Ten years of Tory austerity impacting the most disadvantaged in society whilst the elite grow wealthier still is proof, if proof were needed, that they have no interest in addressing inequalities within society but do have a vested interest in watching those divisions widen.

Evidence tells us that all groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act still face enormous barriers to fair treatment. Black and minority ethnic groups are disproportionately affected by low pay and job insecurity, obstacles to career progression, and bullying and harassment, compared to their white colleagues. The TUC in 2017 showed more than a third of BAME workers have been bullied, abused, or singled out at work, one in five reported being denied training or promotion, and

research for *The Guardian* in Operation Black Vote found that just 3.5% of business leaders were BAME compared with 12.9% in the general population. LGBT people continue to face serious problems with prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harassment, in the workplace and wider society. A recent survey of 5,000 LGBT workers across Britain, commissioned by Stonewall, reported almost one in five staff, 18%, had been the target of negative comments or conduct at work in the last year because they are LGBT. Unemployment and under-employment and low pay is also rife amongst our disabled workers. Fewer than half disabled adults across the UK are currently in employment compared with almost 80% of non-disabled adults within this area, the gap having grown since 2010. Despite progress over recent decades, women remain at disadvantage in the workplace. Investors in People in 2018 found that 80% of women believed that discrimination took place within their workplace and two-thirds of the young female workers experienced bullying and discrimination firsthand.

The Government's own gender pay gap report earlier this year showed 78% of companies paid male staff more than female staff with 14% of firms having a pay gap in favour of women. There are multiple reasons for persistence in rising inequality in the workplace but a key reason is the severe lack of funding for the Equality and Human Rights Commission, weakness in the tribunal system, and restrictions on union rights. We are fully behind this motion and call for action that positively supports union organising, statutory rights for equality representatives, and action to close the pay and pensions gap for minority groups. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Jacky. Lastly, NASUWT.

**Angela Butler** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Motion 34. *She said:* Congress, the protections enshrined within the Equality Act were hard fought for. It brought together all the various pieces of equalities legislation into one Act and now also includes a number of disadvantaged groups not previously covered under discrimination law. When enacted in 2010, the Equality Act was not perfect but along with the corresponding public sector equality duties it has been a useful tool for protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups from discrimination in the workplace and in society. However, since 2010 this vital piece of legislation has been under attack by government, with some provisions, such as the third party harassment protections, being removed and other duties watered down under the guise of red tape.

Congress, there is a marked absence of strategies in workplaces to enforce the duties and a reluctance on the part of government to insist on good practice from employers. The NASUWT has seen evidence of this as it has been consulting with minority and disadvantaged members in schools for a number of years on the impact of equality protection on their everyday lives.

Congress, the NASUWT has long asserted that when teachers face hostility, discrimination, violence, or abuse, including for reasons of their gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, or sexual orientation, this sends a strong but damaging message to pupils about the importance of equality. Therefore, within the Equality 2020 agenda for the sake of the next generation we have a responsibility for ensuring that they have protective rights and recourse to justice whenever these rights are flouted.

Congress, we also know that we would not have had nor retained these protections without the discrimination and employment laws enshrined in EU legislation. Congress, it is imperative, therefore, that equality, solidarity, inclusion, and human rights, remain at the core of our campaigning strategies post Brexit. As a trades union movement we must ensure that our strategic governance and priorities within our campaign plan conveys the message that equalities remains an important priority for the TUC and all affiliates. Congress, please support the motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Angela. Thank you very much. I thank all the delegates for their speeches in that section. It was important we heard everyone. I am now moving to the vote on Motion 34. All those in favour. Thank you. Any against? Thank you. That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 34 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call Motion 35, Class Inequality. The General Council supports the motion. We are going to have this moved by Equity, seconded by the Musicians' Union, and then the FBU. Equity to move.

### **Class Inequality**

**David John** (*Equity*) moved Motion 35. *He said:* I would not be able to study, enter, or make a living for 40 years in my industry as an actor musician if I was starting out today. I got my professional training in the 1970s thanks to government grants. It

seems inconceivable now but I received a discretionary grant from my local authority to pay for my drama school training. Two months after I had left drama school, at the age of 18 I auditioned for the Royal Shakespeare Company and was offered a job. Now this would not have been remotely possible without the financial support I received from the government to train.

Today, inequality and class privilege remain entrenched in the UK, according to the recent findings of the Social Mobility Commission. In the creative sector working class people are hugely under-represented. Less than 13% of people working in film and TV come from working class backgrounds. Even when we are successful in breaking into these careers, recent research has found that we still earn significantly less than our colleagues from more privileged backgrounds, a class pay gap of, on average, £7,000 a year. This gap is multiplied for women, people with disabilities, and BAME groups from working class backgrounds so that black working class women, shockingly, earn on average £19,000 a year less.

If we focus only on social mobility on improving individual access to creative careers, that will do little to address the more fundamental inequalities in the sector. This is what lies behind the barriers to getting on in the industry. It should not be the case that people have to change or escape their working class background if they want to fit into these occupations. Much more needs to be done by creative organisations to address the informal structures within them that help to, in the words of the academic Sam Friedeman, propel the privileged forward. It particularly matters in our sector because of the role of culture in reflecting our national life in all its diversity back to us. The under-representation of working class actors, writers, directors, and other

creative practitioners, affects the stories we are told about working class communities in film, on TV, and on stage. These days we are more likely to see the portrayal of the more caricature working class characters, of the drug dealer, or the violent oddball. Working class performers feel that they are more likely to get typecast in these roles.

Equity is working to tackle the disadvantages and discrimination faced by working class performers and creative practitioners getting into and getting on in the sector, from addressing barriers at school, and a decline of drama and creative subjects as a result of the EBacc and declining school resources, to ensuring more inclusive casting practices. A core issue is the prevalence of low pay and sometimes no pay and the precariousness and short-term nature of work in our sector. This disadvantages those without independent financial means, people working in part-time jobs who do not have the flexibility when auditions are called or are working in a bar until 4 a.m. the night before an audition meaning less time to prepare.

So much of what is needed to address class inequality goes to the heart of what we do as a trade union from fighting to secure financially sustainable careers, improving terms and conditions of work, guaranteeing basic levels of pay to ensuring equal opportunities in accessing, entering, and making progress in work.

Congress, this motion supports the TUC's plan for a major new initiative to combat discrimination and prejudice on class. It asks that it includes measures for closing the privilege gap alongside a much needed focus on improving working class pay and



rebuilding working class communities and power. Congress, together we can smash the class ceiling. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, David. The Musicians' Union to second.

**Steve Done** (*Musicians' Union*) seconded Motion 35. *He said:* We are very happy to second this motion and I am very grateful to have the opportunity to address you on this most important issue, class division, and more specifically, as this motion alludes, the privilege gap that continues to reveal itself as a blight on our society. Is that going too far? I do not think so.

In my own industry, music, we see low income families priced out of providing instrument lessons for their children. My union's recent search shows that the household with an annual income of less than £28,000 are half as likely to have a child learning an instrument as those with an income of around £48,000 or more. The education level of parents also seems to be a factor in children learning an instrument. This is not surprising as it is, of course, a major factor in their level of income. 48% of children of parents educated to university level will learn an instrument compared to 21% of parents who ended schooling at secondary level.

My General Secretary said in the press with certain children priced out of instrumental learning we may well only be hearing the songs and sounds of the affluent in years to come. I am reminded of Noel Gallagher and what he called the middle class state of pop music, saying the working class do not have a voice any more, there does not seem to be a noise coming from the council estates. No lessons.

I am told anecdotally that around 70% of the acts in the chart have people who went to fee-paying institutions.

Congress, I am sure music plays an important part in all your lives and this is just one of the socio-economic disadvantages that this motion seeks to mitigate. Tuition fees, including those of instrumental tuition, are anathema to this labour Movement. We know and support the argument for saying that education like health should be free at the point of issue and this should not just be to secondary school level.

Congress, the motion refers to a major new initiative on class. Ultimately, this means what sort of society do we want to live in, do we want to live in one where only the affluent are able to provide their children with instrument lessons, with school trips, with debt-free higher education; of course not. We want a more equitable society, a fully equitable society, and this trades union Movement can be proud of the work it has done to bring this about. There is still work to do and together we can do it. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Steve. The FBU and NEU have waived their right to speak to it in the interests of timing so thanks to them. I am now going to move to the vote. Motion 35, all those in favour please show. Thank you. Any against? Brilliant. That is carried unanimously.

\* *Motion 35 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Congress, there is a further change to published business. Can I let you know that I will now be taking the role of delegates and the Labour Party after the debate on Motion 23 and we will then take Composite 8, *Free our unions*, following Wendy's address. Can I also remind Congress that Motion 36, *Widening access to the airline pilot profession*, as advised earlier BALPA have withdrawn their motion. They are taking strike action today and are unable to be at Congress. Shall we give a big reception for the BALPA members? *(Applause)* Who needs a passport when you have BALPA, eh? Delegates, we now stay with section 3 of the General Council Report, *Respect and a voice at work*, moving to the section on Trade Union Rights, on page 32. I call Motion 23, Industrial action ballots. The General Council supports the motion. It is to be moved by PCS and seconded by the CWU, and I am going to call Unison. PCS to move Motion 23.

## **TRADE UNION RIGHTS**

### **Section 3 Respect and a voice at work**

#### **Industrial action ballots**

**John Moloney** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) moved Motion 23. *He said:* I hope to be fairly fast as I do not believe this is a contentious issue. When this motion was being drafted we thought that we would be presenting it to a weak Tory government and now, of course, we have actually a non-existent Tory government. Therefore, we know that very shortly there will be an election and, hopefully, and certainly this is the PCS position, we hope that Jeremy Corbyn will actually be elected to lead a Labour government. *(Applause)* We expect that government, though, actually to allow unions to ballot members in any way that it sees fit and amongst

those means that we hope will be allowed will be online voting and telephone voting and, usefully, or fantastically, the Labour Party has also pledged to abolish the 50% rule.

Regardless, however, of which government is elected, regardless of whether the 50% threshold remains in place, we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this modern world all services are being put online. In this century everybody expects to be able to communicate digitally and by phone. This Government, and any other future government, are transforming their services digitally. We are just asking the same. We say we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We say, therefore, members should be able to vote online or by phone. We say that voting will increase turnout and that turnout obviously will allow members more to express their views. We say online balloting and telephone balloting are not only the modern thing to do but are also the democratic thing to do and on that basis I hope you will support the motion. Thanks very much. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks very much, John. Seconded by CWU.

**Tony Bouch** (*Communication Workers Union*) seconded Motion 23. *He said:* This is to make two really strong points. The first is that we completely support the call for online balloting and telephone voting but by supporting it we also need to ensure, and it is vitally important, that postal ballots continue to be an option because without it that will have a significant impact on the interests of postal workers in the form of job security, and we are going to debate Emergency Motion E2 later in the week. The CWU wants to see hybrid voting options for ballots returned by telephone, SMS,

internet hubs running parallel, and the more choices offered to members the greater the likelihood of increasing participation.

The second point that we really want to echo is the point where trade unions must stand up for our membership like we have never done before. We have to raise our game when it comes to representing our members and ensuring that when they have to defend their jobs, their terms and conditions, and ultimately their livelihoods, through industrial action ballots that we leave no stone unturned in ensuring that we engage and we smash the thresholds that are in place.

Dave Ward mentioned the CWU's result in 2017 and E2 has been published which shows you in 2017 we had a 74% turnout and an 89.1% Yes vote. We are in a position where roll on two years and we are back in the same place. We are going to engage our members on an industrial action ballot to protect our agreements and protect our terms and conditions, therefore if we were successful in this, the use of e-balloting would wholeheartedly ensure that we would be in a position where it would make it easier for us to meet those thresholds, but we are not going to rest on our laurels.

Tonight we raise our game to the next level and we continue to innovate. Our General Secretary and our Deputy General Secretary will participate in the biggest Facebook live Q&A event our members have ever participated in. Tomorrow morning myself, and a number of delegates, will be around the Brighton area meeting our members on the gates, telling our members what is at stake in this dispute, and up and down the country we will be doing the same.

We wholeheartedly support the motion but, comrades, let's not wait for this motion to come into force, let's fight back, let's make sure we organise ourselves like never before, and when we need to ballot for industrial action let's make sure we not only meet those undemocratic ballot thresholds in place but let's smash those thresholds, and I am confident that when the CWU announces the ballot result on 15<sup>th</sup> October we will do that again as we rise again. Thanks very much. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Tony. Unison.

**Gordon McKay** (*UNISON*) spoke in support of Motion 23. *He said:* Congress, the ballot thresholds for industrial action are put in place by a spiteful Tory government for one reason and one reason alone, to deny workers a democratic and legal right to take action to defend jobs, to defend public services, and the communities they live in. The Tories believed public sector workers were frightened, they were under attack with their heads down, and would turn away from their friends and stay silent. The effect, however, has been the opposite.

Unison members now know the way forward is to become involved, not just to vote but to engage. Every day of every week of every year Unison members somewhere in the UK are either balloting for or taking strike action, smashing through the Tories' artificial thresholds. Unison members not only are able to take strike action but they can sustain it and employers know they are serious. Our members saw strike action not being someone else's decision but their decision. That is why in Wigan, in Harwell, in Bradford, we stopped privatisation of the NHS, it is why we won equal

pay in Glasgow, it is how we stopped the pension cuts in Manchester in higher education and it is how we stopped the cuts to social care and jobs in Birmingham. Unison is not supporting this motion in order to get ballot results we want because we are doing that already. We are supporting it because it is the right thing to do.

A solely paper-based voting system originated in the Georgian era, a world inhabited by Beau Brummell and Jacob Rees-Mogg. The real world, however, has moved on. We have a complete adult generation more used to and more comfortable with electronic rather than paper communication. Three-quarters of those under 30 say they are more likely to vote if they could do it electronically. Like party political leaders we do our banking and we complete tax returns electronically. It may be that Tory donors do not do their tax returns online because they do not pay tax but the rest of us do engage with IT.

Congress, no one is suggesting that e-balloting is a panacea for addressing turnout or a substitute for engagement because it is not. Our successes have not been based simply on getting people to put a cross on their votes, it is about empowering. What e-balloting can do when used complementary to paper ballots is to increase access to participating in democracy, to make decisions representative and, most importantly, to give working class people a voice on their future. That is why the trades union Movement will always support it. That is why the Tories never will. Please support.

*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Gordon. I move to the vote on Motion 23. All those in favour. Any against? That is carried unanimously. Thank you very much.

\* *Motion 23 was CARRIED*

### **Sororal Delegate from the Labour Party**

**The President:** Congress, it now gives me great pleasure to introduce Wendy Nichols, this year's Sororal Delegate from the Labour Party. Wendy is the Chair of the Labour Party National Executive Committee. Many of you will also know her as President of Unison and, indeed, a Unison delegate to our Congress, and Wendy is a very powerful advocate for our public service workers. Wendy, it gives me great pleasure to say you are very welcome. I invite you to address our Congress.  
*(Applause)*

**Wendy Nichols** *(Sororal Delegate from the Labour Party and President of Unison)* addressed Congress. She said: Thank you, Congress. Mark has introduced me as the Labour Party current Chair (only for another 18 days now) and I am a public sector worker. Congress, if I had been caught loafing about at work I would have been disciplined and possibly sacked. That should apply to you, Jacob Rees-Mogg.  
*(Applause)* I am a lifelong trade unionist bringing fraternal greetings from the Labour Party. I am proud to be a Labour Party member and proud to be a Labour councillor, and proud to be a trade unionist, and proud to be in Unison. I want to take this opportunity to thank my union and my General Secretary, Dave Prentis, for all the incredible support and friendship over the years, and it is an honour to be here today addressing Congress.



This brings together two of the great passions in my life, our Party, and our Movement. For me you cannot separate trade unions and the Labour Party. I have been a trade unionist and a Labour member all of my life. Both my parents were NUPE members. My first job was in school meals, and then hotel catering, and later in a residential home for the elderly as a domestic, working my way up to become a deputy officer in charge of the same home, incidentally, that both my parents had worked at. My late husband, Keith, spent 30 years as a branch secretary for the NUR, now the RMT. You can probably tell what interesting debates we had in our house.

My family are trade union people so it was not surprising that I became involved in my union and the Party. Like so many of you, like my family, this Movement and the Labour Party is my way of life because both have had at their core the values of working people and a determination to protect the interests of working people, people who have suffered incredible hardships under nine years of punishing Tory austerity and according to the TUC nearly four million people, one in nine workers, face insecurity at work, whether it is those employed on zero-hours contracts or agency workers, or the growing number of low paid self-employed workers in the UK.

The Tories claim there has been a recovery in employment and celebrate the employment figures but the reality is that millions of people are in insecure work and low pay. Today working people are worse off than they were before the crash. Jobs are more likely to be low skilled, low paid, and insecure. Most working people today are earning less after inflation than they did 10 years ago.

Labour offers a real alternative with a strong offer to workers: plans for workers' rights that will ensure working people get a fair deal, making a big difference to the lives of people in insecure and low paid work, an end to exploitation at work, and a focus of mutual cooperation and respect.

We all know that the fight against insecure work and low pay cannot be won without strong trade unions. Britain has a proud history of trade unionism but our successes were not given to us. We fought for them every step of the way and we fight on now through the work we all do in our workplaces, often thankless work, every single day.

In my own union, UNISON, I have seen firsthand the power we hold as trade unionists to change lives for the better with protection, representation, support, and organisation. However, under the Tories we have seen attacks on that vital work, attacks on our trade unions and the right to organise collectively.

Only three years ago the Tories introduced the Trade Union Act, the biggest crackdown in 30 years on trade unions and working people. In government Labour will repeal the draconian Trade Union Act and roll out sectoral collective bargaining. *(Applause)* The most effective way to maintain good rights at work is collectively through a union. Labour will enforce all workers' rights to trade union representation so that all workers can be supported when negotiating with their employer.

We have committed to holding a public inquiry into blacklisting to ensure that blacklisting truly becomes and remains a thing of the past. *(Applause)*

Labour will work to give all workers equal rights from day one, such as extending the protections given to employees to all workers, whether temporary, part-time, or permanent.

We will ban unpaid internships because it is not fair, Congress, for some to get a leg up when others cannot afford to.

The Labour Party will work to create a more equal working environment for all workers.

We are committed to doubling paid paternity leave to four weeks.

We will strengthen protection for women against unfair redundancy selection before, during, and after maternity leave, and give equalities reps statutory rights so they have time to protect workers from discrimination and harassment.

We will also introduce a civil enforcement system to ensure compliance with gender pay auditing so that all workers have fair access to employment and promotion opportunities, and are treated fairly at work.

We are committed to introducing four new public holidays to mark our four national patron saints days making sure workers in Britain get the same breaks as those in other countries.

To tackle the scourge of low pay we will raise the minimum wage to the level of the living wage and end youth rates of the minimum wage ensuring that all workers regardless of their age are paid equally. (*Applause*)

Labour is also committed to end the public sector pay gap because those of us who devote our lives to the public services deserve a pay rise. Many these days have to rely on food banks. Congress, that is an absolute disgrace in one of the richest countries in the world.

Labour will scrap the changes brought in by the Conservatives in 2014 to TUPE which weaken the protections for workers transferring between contractors, and we will abolish the Swedish Derogation.

We have announced that in government we will legislate to require that 100% of tips go to staff, stopping employers from creaming off hard working hospitality workers' tips.

It is not just the legislation that needs strengthening and amending but enforcement of existing legislation is paramount to protecting workers. That is why we will establish a Ministry of Labour, which will be dedicated to oversee this for working people and for trade unions.

There is so much about the next Labour government to get excited about and so much we have waited for, for so long. Let's get together on the doorsteps in our communities and in our workplaces and spread our message of hope and change.

Together we are ready for the next general election. Together we can win to end this austerity, and I mean end austerity, not just say so, not just pretend to give extra money to the NHS and education when we all know this is not new money but money moved from elsewhere.

We can get rid of the dreadful Universal Credit, stop the attacks on our people who have disabilities and stop putting them through the dreadful dehumanising process of applying for PIP.

As my General Secretary said earlier, the Labour Party has to be a broad church. That is our strength, and as trade unionists we must play our part in ensuring that remains the case. Let's get on with winning and stop the constant sniping at each other.  
*(Applause)*

Finally, on a personal note, I am taking on Mark's comments yesterday about his life-saving transplant. I myself have experience of this. My daughter has had two transplants and awaits a third. Twice the number of people now are on waiting lists. We as a trade union movement can do more. We can raise awareness. We can ask our members to join the Organ Donor Register and we can elect a Labour government to protect and defend our life-saving NHS. Congress, thank you very much.  
*(Standing ovation)*

**The President:** I am sure you will agree that was an absolutely fantastic address. It is so refreshing to hear an address like that from a Labour Party visitor, I have to say. It

makes me really honoured to say that I now want to present Wendy with the Gold Badge of Congress.

*(Presentation amid applause)*

**The President:** Right, the final part for today, due to the pressure of time we are now going to do the *Show Racism the Red Card photo opportunity* tomorrow afternoon. We will do it but tomorrow afternoon. We are now going to take the last scheduled Congress business and I call paragraph 5.2 and Composite 8, *Free our unions*. The General Council supports the composite motion and I do intend, therefore, to call the FBU to move the motion, seconded by the BFAWU, and then supporting speakers, Unite, NASUWT, POA, and TSSA. If everyone sticks to time we will be able to get all of that in and just about finish on the schedule time. This is the last motion of the day. I call the FBU to move Composite Motion 8, *Free our unions*, and ask everyone else to be ready and in their seats.

### **Free our unions**

**Matt Wrack** (*Fire Brigades Union*) moved Composite Motion 8. *He said:* The anti-union laws represent one of the major constraints working class people face when seeking to organise and make gains in industry and in wider politics. I suspect that, first of all, every single delegate in this hall will have worked hard to maximise turnout and votes in industrial action ballots and we all know the draconian requirements to meet the latest legislation of the 2016 Act. The result of that in all too many cases is that our members end up taking no action or we end up in court, or we

end up facing injunctions. The whole system is stacked against us. To defend our members and to win improvements by mobilising our members we need to break the chains that hold our unions back. That is why we have brought this motion to Congress.

Congress, many people in this hall and affiliated organisations have fallen foul of the thresholds required for strike action introduced under the 2016 Act, denying the right of working people to take industrial action, to take strike action, despite voting that way. The restrictions included under the Trade Union Act are extremely damaging to our cause. They make it harder for us to get organised, harder for us to get disputes off the ground, and the commitment by Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell, and the Labour Party, to repeal the Trade Union Act 2016 in their first 100 days is very welcome and I am sure Congress will support us in saying that.

For us, repealing the 2016 Act and returning us to the status quo prior to that does not go anywhere near enough. The 2016 Act is only the latest in a long line of laws designed by the Tories to undermine the power and organising ability of working people, restricting us and stopping us from fighting back. We need these laws scrapped and replaced with strong positive legal rights that facilitate workers organising and taking action. To revive the trades union Movement on a scale that is needed and to rebuild our Movement we will need creative and dynamic forms of industrial action. We make no apologies for demanding the right to take solidarity action. We make no apologies for demanding the right to take effective picketing action and we should put that on our programme.

The fact that these laws were maintained during the 13 years of a Labour government should be a source of great concern to this Movement and to the Labour Party. It meant that we went into the crisis of 2008 with our organisations weakened and we paid the price for the past decade as a result of that. The transformation of the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership gives us the opportunity of a life time. The Labour Party and its hugely increased membership are discussing these issues and we welcome the decisions of Labour Party conferences in recent years to support the repeal of anti-trade union legislation beyond the 2016 Act.

I was here the year Jeremy Corbyn came in the aftermath of his election and many of you were, and it was an electric moment to have someone as the leader of the Labour Party coming to this Congress and not seeing us as an embarrassing relative but announcing proudly as a Labour Party leader that he was proud to be a trade unionist and proudly supporting striking workers in the balcony. It was a moment of celebration and that was reflected in the hall here in Brighton. (*Applause*)

We need to seize that opportunity. It is the opportunity of a generation. Our Movement has been under attack and on the back foot for 30 years and this is our chance to turn the tables on the bosses, turn the tables on the Tories who want to impose austerity on our people. This is our chance to say that the policies that we agree here now have the chance to be turned into reality by a Labour government, and we need to be clear that that is what we want them to do.

We owe it to a new generation of workers entering our Movement and struggle, whether in established union strongholds or in the gig economy, like all workers in



Deliveroo or Uber, or precarious work in McDonald's, Picturehouse, TGI Fridays, and elsewhere. If we want to inspire a new generation of fighters, then we need to set out on our banners the demands that we want of an incoming Labour government, that is, the rights for workers, including the right to take effective strike action.  
*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you, Matt. I call Ronnie Draper from the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union. Can I just say that this is Ronnie's last Congress. He will be retiring next year. He has been a fabulous General Secretary of a fabulous union. All the very best to you, Ronnie. *(Applause)*

**Ronnie Draper** (*Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union*) seconded Composite Motion 8. *He said:* Thank you, Congress. I am addressing specifically the section on access for trade unions. Congress, ever since I entered the trades union Movement 47 years ago I have seen successive governments legislate to reduce the effectiveness of trade unions in the workplace. Even the massive majority government of Blair failed to release the shackles of the anti-trade union laws. Those days have to change and the seeds are being sown now for a future Labour government to introduce legislation that stops employers like McDonald's and Amazon playing with a straight bat, relying on the lack of trade union access to their workplaces to prevent meaningful engagement between oppressed workers and the very organisations that can end their suffering.

I do not take it personally that McDonald's do not want to talk to me and they do not want to talk to Frances because they do not like talking to the taxman either but I do take exception to their blatant disregard for the 119,000 people who they employ.

We have had a Labour MP, Faisal Rashid, move a 10-minute Members Bill and also host a Westminster Hall debate but we need much more, Congress. For those of us who will question the importance of the right of access and those who ask what difference it is going to make to our Movement let's look at it positively.

There is the difference the Bill of Rights Act made to thousands of unorganised workers in New Zealand. Their government made the necessary legislative move to allow full access into unorganised places. Instantly, it stopped employers saying the workers do not need a union. It left the decision of the trade union membership fairly and squarely down to the workforce. Unite the Union in New Zealand could enter McDonald's, they could talk directly to individual workers in a company on the premises and those workers were free to make an unforced decision as to whether they wanted to have the union recognised on site; no interference from the company, no intimidation of workers, and no scope for the company to hide behind the absence of law. As a direct consequence, comrades, with that piece of legislation Unite in New Zealand have a recognition agreement with McDonald's that is the envy of every country in the world. Thousands of workers have seen their terms and conditions improved because they now act as an organised collective machine and, of course, the trades union Movement has swelled.

Comrades, we need change now. The right to join a trade union has to be totally in the hands of workers and not as a commodity to be shunned by Steve Easterbrook or Jeff Bezos. We, too, are a powerful organisation when we act collectively so let's start today by supporting this motion in its entirety but, more importantly, committed

to use every opportunity to push our case with politicians to ensure we get access to an unequivocal manifesto pledge. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Ronnie. Unite?

**Howard Beckett** (*Unite the Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8: *He said:* I am one of the three shamed male officials who is on overtime and determined to redeem myself! Congress, we live in extraordinary political times. We have finally a Labour leader who is proud to stand on a picket line, proud to give video messages for our comrades in the CWU and proud to be part of our Movement, Jeremy Corbyn as leader working with the brilliant and inspiring Laura Pidcock, who will soon be the new Secretary of State for the Ministry of Labour. They present us with an historic opportunity, Congress, because they believe that the rule of trade unions provides the solution to the reversal of cuts, privatisation, and their historic fall in wages. They believe that organised workplaces offer jobs for generations, real pay, and hope for the young.

In 2017, the Labour Manifesto promised not just a repeal of the Trade Union Act but pledged to create new rights and, Congress, Labour, as we have heard, with the important help of the IER, now offers to go further: workplace rights from day one, an end to the zero-hours contracts, to legislate for equal pay, to bring in sector bargaining to ensure a rate for the job that beats inflation year on year, a minimum living wage for all workers, including 16-year olds, giving workers the right to withdraw labour, to hold a public inquiry into blacklisting, and much more.

Congress, our language and examples to the public matter. Who can deny the example of care and health workers being outsourced repeatedly, each time vulnerable, mainly female workers losing wages and terms and conditions and, comrades, just as importantly each time those elderly and sick they care for suffer as the service they rely upon suffers. Congress, we must follow the language and passion of the wonderful Laura Pidcock, young people must be shown that trade unions present the answer to the lack of hope and inequality, and debt. Congress, there are 30 million working people in the country. They deserve regular work, a decent pay for a decent day's work and rights in the workplace. Now is the time for our Movement to convince those 30 million that we truly speak for them. We support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Howard. Definitely redeemed. Three to go, NASUWT, the POA, and TSSA.

**Russ Walters** (*NASUWT, The Teachers' union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8. *He said:* Congress, the right to form and join trade unions, to bargain collectively, and to strike, are universal human rights. However, the ITUC's Global Rights Index has consistently identified the UK as a country experiencing regular violations of workers' rights. We experience these violations every day through the legal framework in which we are made to operate and in workplaces and by employers up and down the country.

Already, in the last two days, we have heard many speakers talk of their personal heritage in the trades union Movement, being brought up in an environment of trade unionism, of activism, and yet many of our younger workers do not have such an

environment to operate in. They have never known the strength of trade unionism and that is what makes some of the tasks harder and that is why we have to turn that around.

The environment that we endure today is the result of a deliberate ideologically driven assault on the trades union Movement and this hostile environment must be reversed. That is why we need a new set of rights for trade unions and we must campaign to secure those rights, but we must also continue to do what we do best, to protect our workers, to take strike action and action short of strike action just as the NASUWT and many other workers out there in unions have done so to defend our members, to challenge those employers that seek to ignore and disregard our members' rights at work. Congress must seek to challenge employers that seek to intimidate, undermine or disrupt trade union rights or the rights of our members to take action.

Unions are good for workers, good for the economy, good for society, and we need an environment in which unions can function and flourish as part of that society. Congress, we have maintained our strength through these years of opposition so just think how strong we will be when we redeem ourselves, get back to where we should be under the freedom of a socialist movement giving unions the right to take care of their members without the shackles on. I thank you and support the motion.  
*(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. Steve Gillan of the POA.

**Steve Gillan** (*The professional trade union for prison, correctional and secure psychiatric workers, General Secretary*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8. *He said:* Fully supporting this very important motion, I think Matt said it at the very beginning of his speech, that he just does not want rid of the 2016 Trade Union Act but multiple laws in relation to it. I can give you an example of a pernicious legislative Criminal Justice Public Order Act, section 127, that restricts my trade union, my members, from taking any form of industrial action. In actual fact by inducing our members to take any form of action could lead to criminal charges and, indeed, contempt of court.

Congress, I can give you an update on that. Last year, on 14<sup>th</sup> September – and I choose my words carefully because of *sub judice* because we are now going to be taken by this outrageous Government for contempt of court on 22<sup>nd</sup> October – what led to that was on 14<sup>th</sup> September last year we took health and safety action to protect our members and, indeed, those prisoners in our care. We took that action and we got a deal from government without them relying on the courts, but they put in the letter of response that, indeed, if we took further action they reserved the right because we are under a permanent injunction to go for contempt of court.

On 14<sup>th</sup> February this year one of our members at Liverpool was dismissed from the service for protecting his own health and safety and, indeed, of those around him. As a result Liverpool branch walked out under health and safety legislation and I as General Secretary am very proud to say that over the years since 1994 when I became General Secretary, in 2010, not once have I ever repudiated any action in relation to my members' health and safety, and I do not intend doing so now. (*Applause*) So,

the reality is we are in court on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and will resist this disgraceful challenge of contempt of court. Congress, an injury to one is an injury to all. I hope, Congress, President, General Secretary, that Congress gets right behind us on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and you give us all the support that you can. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thanks very much, Steve. I am sure you can rest assured that we are all completely with you, your union and your members, until that disgraceful legislation is revoked. Finally, I call the TSSA.

**Mick Carney** (*Transport Salaried Staffs Association*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8. *He said:* Much of what I had intended to say has already been said so I will keep this brief. I thank the FBU for accepting our amendment. It is this that I will be looking at. No one says that EU membership is a panacea of workers' rights. However, let's look at some of the rights backed by EU membership: limits on working hours, paid annual leave, equal pay, maternity rights, parental leave, anti-discrimination laws, rights that we as trade unions have fought for over many years and are now backed and strengthened by EU legislation. The Tories have said that they do not intend to roll back workers' rights but, oddly enough, we do not believe them. After all, these are the same people that promised us we would not crash out without a deal and the very same people that promised us £350m for the NHS. We know that, they wrote it on the side of a bus. It is already being said that Boris's own brother does not believe him so why should we. It is simple: we do not.

The only way we can guarantee workers' rights going forward is by hitting the streets, campaigning, knocking on doors, and getting a Labour government lead by Jeremy Corbyn. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President:** Thank you, Mick. I move to the vote. All those in favour of Composite Motion 8? Thank you. All those against? Thank you. That is carried unanimously.

\* *Composite Motion 8 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I have just a couple of announcements. Can I, first of all, remind delegates that there are various meetings taking place this evening and details of these meetings can be found on pages 12 and 13 of the Congress Guide.

Can I also remind all delegates as you leave there will be a bucket collection for the striking workers from ISS and Aramark. Can you please give as generously as possible.

That concludes today's business. I found that there have been some exquisite speeches today, really tremendous stuff. I hope everybody else has enjoyed it. I thank those unions for their cooperation in getting through the agenda.

Congress is adjourned until 9.30 tomorrow morning. Have a lovely evening and in case you missed it England lost the Ashes!



*Congress adjourned.*