Official Report
of the
95th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held at
The Spa,
Bridlington

from
Sunday 9 June 2013
to
Wednesday 12 June 2013

General Secretary: Bro R Draper
National President: Bro I Hodson
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[Conference Closes]
Sunday 9 June 2013

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Hello? Oh, it’s on. We’re working. Got a four minute warning. Make that three minutes.

Okay, Conference. Can we shut the doors please? General Secretary, roll call.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Regional Office apparently have got a register which I want to fill in with the individual people who are in the hall, rather than just calling out their name, but I do want the numbers as well, so Region 1, Region 2, Region 3, Region 4 – can you make sure they go to Standing Orders, Roy, when they come in, Region 5, Region 6 and Region 7. There’s 174 Delegates present.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you. Just a bit of logistics. We’ve got no fire drill planned that I’m aware of. The fire exits are clearly marked. The good news is that if there is a fire alarm that goes off, we’re all meeting across the road at the Southcliffe, so that’s always a good point for starting. Please make sure your mobile phones are turned off. The toilets are over there and I believe there’s some food through that door there. There is first aid available, which I believe is at the Reception.

The Standing Orders room is upstairs, which are out of bounds unless you have to go there to pay a bit of a fine or if composite the motion, or if they request that you attend and of course this is a No Smoking arena and everywhere’s a No Smoking arena, but I do believe there are smoking facilities just on the outside of the building, I think it’s called “by the road”. I’m just looking for Olive. Okay. Is there any way we can make it so the people on the back row can hear as well?

Could I, for the first time of the first of many occasions, can I welcome Olive Molloy from Standing Orders to give her first report to Conference.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Olive Molloy – Standing Orders: Thank you. Mr President, Platform and Delegates, good morning to all of you and welcome to yet another Conference.

Part of my duties as Chair of Standing Orders Committee is to put to you for your approval a report on the procedures for each Conference. It is not a case of, as I heard one Delegate say to another who was very nervous about coming to the rostrum for the first time last year, all Olive Molloy does is write one speech and read the same thing out year on year. Conference arrangements and procedures vary very, very little, year on year, but even so, you as Conference, as a Conference body are asked for your approval. I therefore make no apologies for being repetitious and put the following report to you all for your approval. Each Conference session will begin with the roll call taken by the General Secretary.

Morning sessions will begin at 9.30 until 12.30 and the afternoon sessions will begin at 2 o’clock until 5 o’clock. All tea breaks, guest speakers and presentations will be at the President’s discretion and all Delegates must be in the hall for the beginning of roll call or they will be refused admission until they’ve been up to Standing Orders and will be fined for lateness. Delegation leaders must come to Standing Orders room with the names of any absent Delegates. Any Delegate coming to Standing Orders on business, must have the full support of their delegation. Delegates must vote for or against any motion call when asked by the National President and Delegates wishing to abstain must leave the hall until the vote result is announced and return when the next motion is called.

Nomination papers today and ballot papers tomorrow must be brought up to the Standing Orders Office by 11 o’clock each morning. The Office will be closed during the counting of voting papers and will Scrutineers please come up to Standing Orders room by 11 o’clock today and tomorrow.

Please carry your credential cards at all times and do not forget to take it with you at lunchtime. You will not be allowed in the hall without it. Delegates must not leave Conference early unless they have express permission, otherwise could be liable for the cost of their accommodation. Finally, make sure that all mobile phones are switched off during all Conference sessions. We made quite a killing last year on fines for mobiles not being switched off. Now please turn to your Agendas, our General Secretary is ready.

Right, under the Rule Changes and New Rules. Number 1 stands, Number 2 stands, Number 3 stands, Number 4 stands, Number 5 stands, Number 6 is out of order, Number 7 stands, Number 8 is withdrawn, Number 9 stands, 10 and the Amendment are withdrawn, 11 and its Amendment are withdrawn, 12 stands, 13 is out of order, 14 is withdrawn, 15 stands, 16 stands and on to the General Motions now, Number 17 stands, 18 stands, 19 stands, 20 stands, 21 and 22 both stand.

That’s the end of this report, thank you.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the Conference. Everybody accept those reports, please show. Okay, anyone against? That’s carried. It’s now my great pleasure to welcome the East Riding Yorkshire Council Chair, which is Councillor Claude Mole, to officially open our Conference. Please give him a warm welcome and thank you very much. [APPLAUSE]

Councillor Claude Mole: Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the East Riding and Yorkshire Council, I’d like to welcome the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union here to this popular seaside town of Bridlington. As an Authority, we’re extremely proud to welcome organisations such as yours and I know the hoteliers business and residents enjoy welcoming you back. Despite your busy programme, I hope you will find time to look round the Spa during your visit and enjoy the many delights that Bridlington have to offer. It is with the greatest of pleasure therefore that I declare the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union Annual Conference open.

Thank you very much for allowing me to come. [APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: On behalf of the Bakers Union we’re glad you’ve come today and as a token of our appreciation for your visit, we’d like to present you with a tin of biscuits that’s produced by trade union hands and we hope you enjoy them in your office when you (unclear). Thank you very much. [APPLAUSE]

Okay. I believe we have Kate Bradley, she’s from, yes?, from Macmillan, Macmillan Nurses Cancer Trust, yes? and we’re going to get the General Secretary to present the cake. The cake’s been made by Greggs and if you haven’t seen it, it’s absolutely superb and we’d obviously like to thank the people of Greggs for donating the cake and hopefully the people from Macmillan’s Trust will fully enjoy that cake. [APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much. [APPLAUSE]

Okay, Conference, now we’re officially open. Can I officially welcome everybody to Bridlington 2013. Can I welcome all the new Delegates and all the new Delegates hopefully you will enjoy the experience of your first Conference and if you talk to the person next to you, he’s probably an experienced Conference-going, comer to Bridlington. They will be able to advise you all the best places to go in an evening, well on a Saturday evening anyway, from obviously from tonight you’ll be in here because we’ve got a couple of functions lined up for you tonight and tomorrow, but we’d like to welcome all the new Delegates and all the new branches that have arrived with us this week as well. I have a list here of branches that are new and I’d like to welcome, which is Solway Foods in Corby, Aldreds Bakery in Derbyshire and Discovery Foods, so that’s Milton Keynes, oh deery-me, how on earth do I pronounce that name and [LAUGHTER] welcome, Colin Curtis and Maz Verkin, I do apologise to the Branch Secretary at Discovery Foods ‘cause I can’t pronounce that, it’s Ageni-keesz, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, but welcome anyway. Zarecousca?, is it? Ageniaska-zanecousca, what can I say? [APPLAUSE]

Obviously, can I also thank all the stall holders. Obviously, you’ll notice the stalls are at the bottom this year. Obviously they’re out of bounds during the Conference, but hopefully you’ll enjoy the offers and the information that they’re going to provide you this week. Obviously can we thank Walker Smith Way, Thompsons, Watkins & Gunn, Payplan, GFTU, Westfield, the Credit Union, Lighthouse, Right to Work, the Venezuela Solidarity, Union Learn and, and of course Warburtons for sponsoring the tea and coffee and Fox’s for the biscuits and also doing some freelance work for us this week as well is John Millington, who’s somewhere in the building, who’s going to be, is up there, so obviously if you want to make a statement for a newspaper, please go and see John and we do appreciate the fact that John’s actually put his services to our Trade Union and is doing it for free, so we’d like to thank John Millington for that. [APPLAUSE]

I believe we’ve also got a cameraman, who’s over there, who’s going to be taking some photographs for us, which is fantastic, so we’ll actually look good when we go into the, to the FoodWorker. Obviously I’ve hope you’ve got a good, y’know photograph set, a bit of PhotoSmart or something to make me look good. If you make me look good, you can come again [LAUGHTER], so obviously the Executive Council that’s sat up here, obviously this is the Vice President, which is John Fox, next to John Fox we’ve got Julie Summersgill who’s our guest at Conference and I’m sure we welcome Julie to Conference. We’ve got Jason, we’ve got John at the end, Rachel, Lizzie, Jackie, Mark, Butch, Joe, Pauline, Noel, Helena, Cecil, Richard, John Vickers who’s going to do all our computer stuff to make us look really, really professional and obviously I know a lot of ladies will be disappointed this year, because John’s wearing a suit so he’s not showing his
Anyway, I went to bed and next morning I came down and Jim wasn’t down for breakfast, so I said to Alan Milne, who’s
he was a helicopter pilot or something, I don’t know why, I think it’s quite fashionable to be a Trade Union Official, but he
I think he’s currently got and he sends his fraternal greetings to the Bakers Union. Also from Billy Clegg, who used to
We went in the Southcliffe on, last night and it just seemed a totally different place ‘cause I’m used to seeing Jim there with that awful singing that he used to do on the karaoke, not being, I think there was a void left, I think everybody this week will feel the same, that there’s something missing from Conference.
Well, Jim, tell me what the secret is, because there’s lots and lots of people who’d like to know that around the country” and he said “Well, what you do”, he says, “I always give a quote” he says, “from Fidel Castro”.
Dond’esta mantekeer, he says and everybody in the branch gets up and they said “Jim, why do you say that at a branch meeting?” He said “because that’s what Castro used to say”. I said “What, he used to say it at breakfast?” and he says “No, no, he used to say it at his rallies” and I said “Well, do you know what it means?” and he says “No”, he says, “but I know it’s a real rallying call”. I said “Jim, it asks where’s the butter?, where’s the butter? [LAUGHTER]. The Tories will be really going at it, won’t they, if they know that that’s our rallying call.
I think the other one that stands out with Jim was when he first came to work for us and we ran a training course in Quorn, which now the GFTU owns. We’d have a training course over at Quorn and I think it was Jim and a couple of others, Rosemary Conley classes were in, they were doing, all her tutors were in doing a course and I think Jim had told them all he was a helicopter pilot or something, I don’t know why, I think it’s quite fashionable to be a Trade Union Official, but he was a new one and unfortunately he sat with a few of the lads and lasses off the Executive and some of the other full-time Officials and he got worse for wear.
Anyway, I went to bed and next morning I came down and Jim wasn’t down for breakfast, so I said to Alan Milne, who’s his Regional Officer, I said “Alan, where’s Jim? He’s been working for us a week, you need to make sure he’s here, can you go and get him”. So Alan went to his room and he came back after about five minutes and he says, “I’ve been to Jim’s room, I got the maid to open it, he said and all there was was a bathful of empty water”, so I says “ A what?” He said “A bathful of empty water”. I said “Do you mean the bath’s got water in and Jim’s not sat in it? He said “That’s it, that’s it.” [LAUGHTER]. So we sent a search party and Kevin Flood, who was our Vice President, we had Kevin Flood looking around the gardens, we had somebody else looking around the small town of Quorn to see if we could find him and he
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, please stand for a minute’s silence.

(Minute’s silence)

Okay, thank you very much. I’d just remind Delegates, also you can find the obituaries on Page 53 of the Annual Report. Okay, in your wallets you should all have a book and it’s called the Annual Report. Everybody got one? Yes? Okay, could you turn it over to, open it up on Page 5 please. Of course and just for the benefit of the new Delegates, for everybody as well really, if you want to make a point on any of the pages as I read them out, put your hand up and come down to the rostrum to make your point, okay? Everybody open on Page 5? Okay, Page 5. Page 6, then on Page 7 it says Manchester meeting August 8th to the 10th, which is on Page 7. Page 8. Page 9. Page 10. I thought that was somebody’s hand then. Page 11. Okay. The minutes marked 7th to 10th November, which you’ll find on Page 12.

Brother Martin Kelly – No. 5 Region: Just on Correspondence on Page 12, Chair. The only thing I want to know is what is Quorn Grange? There’s something a little bit lower on the page which says, under National Accounts, the National President reported on the new contract with Lighthouse, who are prepared to teach our reps about welfare rights benefits. Could you let us know any progress on that? Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Martin. Just to respond to that, it should actually have said Payplan to be fair and it’s Payplan and I think they’re in attendance at the Conference and we were looking at how they would be able to advise our Stewards in dealing with issues of people who were struggling with debt and hopefully we, our members would then benefit from that support and advice, but obviously while they’re at Conference, if they go and visit Jane, who I think’s going to be on the stall, I’m not sure if she is here or not, but if you go and visit Jane she will be able to give you advice, but as we roll out through the year, then hopefully more and more of our reps will become aware of the support that’s available through Payplan, which are associated with Lighthouse, that’s how we came across them, we just didn’t know the proper name at that time. How you doing?, welcome. I was just saying hello to Jane, she’s at the back.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Chair, the purchase, the Quorn’s being bought by the GFTU. It was originally owned by the Printers Union and when they amalgamated with Unite it went over to Unite and the GFTU have had a, when they sold Central House in London they had quite a wedge of money, but the investments they had you can imagine, anybody who has got investments or anyone who’s looking for interest anywhere, the amounts they had were dwindling against the costs that were going out and so they looked for an enterprise that was actually going to be to bring some business in and also to stay in the finances of the GFTU, so they bought, we got a good deal with the, with Unite, to purchase Quorn as a hotel.

We, as a union, have put quite a few courses in there already and we would love to maybe put a few more in, but the idea is to encourage other smaller trade unions to do exactly the same, rather than using commercial hotels for courses to actually use and those who’ve been, it’s a fantastic facility, marvellous room, beautiful gardens and all that, great training rooms, so that’s what they’ve done, they’ve purchased it and it’s there as an investment, Martin, but it’s one that we would seek to use as a trade union. Incidentally, if anyone from the Midlands is getting married or whatever, or you’re having a divorce party or whatever, Quorn’s the place to go [LAUGHTER].


Brother Martin Kelly – No. 5 Region: Under the Members Grants and Appeals, knowing the finances of the Union that we’re in at the moment, I just wondered if the General Secretary or National President could explain the Polska website renewal of £1,000 and is it really worthwhile, knowing that we have not only Polish members but presumably a lot of other European countries members. Thank you.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, Martin, we sponsor the Polska website because right around the country, I mean, branches in here will know the amount of Polish workers that we’ve had coming within the food industry and it’s about how we look to get in touch with them and make our Union if you like the Union of choice amongst workers in the food industry who come from Poland, but I’ve got to say it’s been a terrific success. Besides the work that the likes of Lukasz and other Polish workers are doing in bringing people into the Union, the Polska website is, they’re actually...
directed there and when you go on to that site, it actually points them back to the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union. It’s run independently of us, we just help to sponsor it, but I’ve got to say we, if we could get 100 websites like Polska where we could, which would bring in the same results, then we’d do it. It brings in 100s of members into the Union from Poland, so that’s why we do it.


**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – No. 4 Region:** Absence Records, office staff and full-time Officials on every report it says “noted”, that doesn’t tell us anything.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Marilyn, that’s exactly what it is, it doesn’t mean to say we’re not looking at it. What it means is a debate took place, but what you don’t do is you don’t hold anyone’s disciplinary record in public, you don’t do that. I mean, you wouldn’t publish a member’s disciplinary thing in a branch report for the end of the year. That’s something that is between them, but believe me and we have these, the staff rep from the office staff and the rep from the FTOs, they will tell you, we actually deal with absenteeism and of course we had quite a heated debate at the last Executive Council, clearly we are going to clamp down on absenteeism within, we’ve got to.

We’ve got so few resources that we can use, we’ve got to make better use of it, but I mean we’re also a compassionate organisation that have to take into account people from time to time will suffer from ill health and the only reason it says “noted” in there is that we don’t list people’s names who would be disciplined or counselled or whatever. It is done between that Committee, that individual and their representative and that’s the only reason it says “noted”. That doesn’t mean to say that we don’t debate these things at the Executive Council, we most certainly do, but it’s how you do it any other way other than saying “noted”.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Thank you. Page 20. Okay. If you put that Annual Report away, inside your wallets you’ll find what we call the loose leaf section, which will have Draft on it. It doesn’t appear in the Annual Report unfortunately, because by the time the Annual Report’s printed we haven’t got these minutes because we haven’t actually held the meeting by the time that meeting’s held. So it should say on the top Manchester Meeting 7th to 10th May. Okay. Page 1. Page 2. Page 3. Page 4. Okay, thank you. That’s the end of that report anyway.

Now inside your wallets you should find a white book. Sorry before I do, I nearly forgot. You can tell it’s Sunday, even though I went to bed early, but I woke up early, so it doesn’t really make up either way does it? [LAUGHTER]. Can I put the Annual Report to Conference? All those in favour? Anyone against? That’s carried, thank you. Could you edit that out, please. Okay, now you can go to your Treasurer’s Report. I was just giving you advance warning we’re going to the Treasurer’s Report next. Okay, could you turn to Page 1, which isn’t where the writing is, it’s on the other side where we start with the income for, from 2011 and it’s got Page 1 at the top. Okay? Are you coming up on Page 1, Pat? Okay.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Mr President, Delegates. CFC, CCFA which is the fund with the solicitors is now nearing its end and also the £53,000 which is on the page will be nearing its end, but in the, on Page 1 there is a surplus of £865,174 which is for the next four years, or that’s the way it works from 2012. My question today, asked to the General Secretary or Treasurer, is how will that be used now, or is that there it says it’s in the excess, so it’s obviously there’s money there. Will that be paid out the way it’s been paid out over the years, like this year I think it’s £157,000 was transferred to the General Account. The same sort of figure last year and so on, year after year. Will this be available? That would cover, if it worked the same way and that expenses or lawyers claims weren’t any bigger than the years past, that would cover four years, is that correct Mr Secretary, Treasurer?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Chair. Yes, Pat. Just before I do start, we can’t hear what they’re saying down from that lectern, it’s awfully up here. Pat, I know what you’re talking about, the CCFA. Yes, that money has to go into a fund and roll-over. You’re not allowed to use CCFA money, it’s there if you like, for want of a better words, it’s rainy day money that when you lose cases you use, you dip into that money and where it isn’t used, we keep it in that fund for four years and roll-over as you’ve rightly said. Following the Jackson report and I don’t want to say too much on the Jackson report now because there is a motion before Conference on it and also there’s one on our legal services which we need to discuss, but what I will say is that we’re in talks with our lawyers now about how we mitigate some of the losses, let’s be honest, we’re not going to mitigate all the losses we’re going to make from Jackson taking away referral fees and the opportunity to ensure cases.

What we will do is we’ll look to see the best way of delivering our legal services in the future. Yes, we’ve got £800 and odd thousand there, it’s rainy day money, but we shouldn’t be complacent about that. I mean, I don’t like to see that there’s anything there we say is an investment with a plan that we’re going to spend it over the next four years. I would like to think that we’ll look at other revenue streams and looking at other ways that we deal with our legal services that will sort...
of mitigate some of that loss. I mean one of the things that we’re going to do is we’ve got our Officials being trained by the lawyers on Tuesday to look at a system of gate-keeping, again that will be explained later on in the motion but, so we’ve got a lot of things in the pipeline that we’re doing, but because the Jackson report’s not, I mean the main parts of it were implemented on 1st April, but some of the things that, the residual parts of it are still carrying on now, like small claims, we still don’t really know where that’s going and so we’re in talks with all the lawyers, the three main lawyers that we have and looking at how we get, how we mitigate that loss, Pat

But clearly we are not going to get that revenue £200+ thousand per year that we get now from CCFA and so I’m sure when the President comes to speak later on, he’ll be talking about the main thing we’ve got to do to get money back into the Union, is we’ve got to go for growth, we’ve got to make sure that we get more members who are paying contributions, that’s where we make our money from and I don’t think we should be reliant on lawyers to keep this Union going, that’s never been what it’s about, it’s just been a by-product of what was offered at the time.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Okay, thank you. Profit on the sale of motor cars. Isn’t our motor car leased, not owned?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Did you say investments, Pat?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary (in the background):** It’s a waste of time having that, we cannot hear a thing back here. We’ve got no monitors here, which we normally have. Sorry, Pat, did you say about the investments?

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** I said the profit on the disposal of motor cars. We did have a profit on the sale of, on the profit on the sale of investments last year, but there isn’t any this year, so that’s not bad.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Yes, I mean it’s what it says it is, it’s when we have a vehicle over, when somebody changes, if somebody retires or they leave the Union and in particular in Ireland where we actually purchase our cars, they’re not done under a lease scheme, that when they come to the end of their time we sell the cars off and because we write down, we depreciate cars and we depreciate furniture, we depreciate buildings, at the end of it it shows in the account. We have to do it, it shows in the account as a profit and that’s what that is, that’ll be that we probably changed two cars in the Republic of Ireland which we buy, as I say it’s not on a leasing system like the rest of the UK and that comes back into the General Fund as a profit because we’ve written down that sum over the three years life of the car.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Okay, thank you.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Cheers, Pat.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Thank you.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, Page 2.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** South-West again: Our Pension Fund is showing a terrible deficit. Will we be able to clear that in the 15 years that is set out to do it, that we have set out to do it. It runs at a cost of £21,000 something to the Union at the moment.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Pat, I’m sorry have you finished?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Pat, have you finished?

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Yes.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** We would hope that we, clearly we want to clear the deficit within 15 years, but bear in mind this doesn’t mean to say that we’ve got this massive hole within a pension fund as per se, I mean prior to Gordon Brown coming into office, we had surpluses as did many, many pension funds. I don’t know of any pension funds that haven’t got a black hole at the moment. I was talking with Premier Foods on Tuesday, Dave Studdards and I and they’ve got a £billion black hole within their pension scheme, but it’s a question of now, if we take one of the younger Officials, let’s say for instance the likes of Gary Johnson, we have to have the finances behind us now to pay his pension, but of course he’s not going to retire for another 10 years or so and so we have to have the money up front and of course there was also the Chancellor plundered the profits of pension funds in way of taxation, so that’s how come we’ve got a black hole and we’ve had to schedule it over 15 years.

You’ll see yourself, it’s a huge deficit that comes in about, round about half to two-thirds of what our income is and so we have to schedule it over 15 years and we have to give guarantees on the pension fund, but yes, we’re taking every avenue that we can to make sure that those debts are paid off. I’ve got to say, I would be hopeful that when we get, because we don’t get the actual area review until is it December? I think it’s December this year, I would hope that given the way that the stock market’s gone since the last actual area review three years ago that the pension funds eased and of course that deficit will come down, but until you get the actual area review and do all the forecasts, then you can’t publish a genuine figure.

It’s like anything else, it changes day to day and all you get in the annual report is a snapshot of time when that was taken,
but come December we would hope that the Pension Fund will be in a better position than what it is now.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Yes, it’s no reflection on the Union or any of us what’s happened. All pension funds are in this position, but although you say it’s half of our income, but they have put a hold on Head Office or properties to guarantee this, they’re making damn sure that they’re going to be right. Now if this continues because our deficit is not coming down, it’s going up each year, it’s what £6 hundred and something, thousand something last year, it’s £5 hundred and something this year, so it’s going upwards instead of coming down that it could be able to be held in 15 years. Now, I don’t know if that is possible or not, but if it’s not it will in the end sink the Union.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Pat, just to let you know why, why these things happen where it goes up, is that well you’ll all know that those with pension funds within the company occupational schemes is that there’s going to be auto-enrolment that’s going to come in and what we did, we changed our scheme from a direct benefits scheme into a care scheme which does salary sacrifice and all that and at the same time we did that, we opened the scheme back up again because our scheme was closed to new starters for a while, but because the government’s going to force us into auto-enrolment as you well know, I mean we won’t be due for another couple of years but the fact is we’re going to have to do it and so it seemed the right time when we reduced the pension scheme down to a care scheme where we could get people, where they do the salary sacrifice part of pensions, that we opened the scheme up and indeed we got new starters and that’s why that’s always going to show a deficit, the more people that you get into the scheme.

That’s the only reason, that’s why that’s increased, but investments hopefully will go the other way, investments will be on the way up, the stock market’s risen, I don’t know, is it about over the last four years or three years it’s risen by about 50%, so it’s a fairly hefty uplift. We hope that will reflect when Rob Hammond, who’s our, actually he comes to do the thing in, produce the thing in December.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Pat?

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Yes, okay, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay?

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Page 3.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Pat Rowley again. Delegates, Mr President. Contributions to the Labour Party’s election funds etc. We used to affiliate to the Labour Party at one time, it used to cost around about £17,000 plus the expenses after. Are we affiliated to the Labour Party now or not?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, we’re affiliated to the Labour Party. We’ve never stopped being affiliated to the Labour Party.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Pardon?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: We’ve never stopped being affiliated to the Labour Party.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: We’re not affiliated?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: No, we are.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We are.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: It doesn’t say it here.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: That’s it, Contribution, that’s affiliation fees.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: (unclear) at one time.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: It’s just a different choice of words by our Finance Officer.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Yes. How many Delegates are we allowed, how many Delegates are we affiliated for?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I mean that’s obviously not in there, but when we go to a Conference, we affiliate, we take two Delegates, but we take two visitors as well, so every Conference that we do, whether it’s the, I don’t know, the Lesbian/Gay one, whether it’s the Black Workers’ Conference, the National TUC, we take four Delegates to every single Conference, but because you have to affiliate a damn sight more members to get four Delegates to the Labour Party, we only go in at the figure that we want to pay the subscriptions on and that only entitles us to two Delegates to the Labour Party, but what Conference agreed some time ago and you were definitely here, Pat, because I think you’ve been here every year I’ve been here, that we take an extra two visitors who will go along and their role would be to play part in fringe meetings, to doing some networking, but I think also to gain the experience of seeing what a Labour Conference is like, so it’s two Delegates, one of whom is the National President and the other one will always be a female member because that’s the way the constitution of the Labour Party is set up, you have to have 50% female representation on your
delegations and so it’s the National President who goes, if you like, as the male and we have a female member, but then we take the next two people on the list, irrespective of gender, they will go as visitors to the Conference.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Yes. How many Delegates should we be entitled to, because if you are to have a democratic society who would elect the number of Delegates that would have a vote at Labour Party Conference, because if you’re at Labour Party Conference and you have no vote, you’re meaningless, you’re not, you’re going nowhere. The Labour Party Conference, as far as I have seen down the years, is just a showpiece for ministers and the public and the Party in general, the Party members in general have very little say and until that changes, no fault of yours or anybody else, Ronnie, it’s the way the Party is run and I see it as non-democratic and a lot of money paid in to it and £6,000, nearly £7,000, to get Delegates there. My view is, money could be wrongly spent in times like that.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Yes, Pat, yes, I understand that, but I mean the issues about the Treasurer’s Report and what we’ve paid out is not really for a debate about whether we should be affiliated to the Labour Party. Obviously you know as well as I do, if you wanted to change the affiliation to the Labour Party, you have to do that through a motion not on the Treasurer’s Report. No disrespect or anything, but I’ll get Ronnie to answer, answer what you’ve said, but we’re not going to get into a debate whether we should affiliate or disaffiliate to the Labour Party at this moment in time, but it was a nice try [LAUGHTER].

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** All I’m trying to do is to try to bring democracy to the Party ......

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I understand, I understand that, Pat.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** which is as non-democratic as you can get.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** [LAUGHTER], I understand that, Pat, but obviously we’re here to talk about the Treasurer’s Report at this moment in time, Comrades.

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Yes, don’t back them, everybody you meet from the Labour Party talks left and when they get to Conference they talk right.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Surely if you read the debated report, the Labour Party, well I don’t know, I can’t speak, if Ian Hudson goes along and speaks right anywhere, I will be so surprised to be honest with you. I don’t believe that we’ve ever gone to a Labour Party Conference, whether it was Ian, whether it was me, whether it was Joe Marino, Dennis Nash and spoken to the Labour Party, I don’t think anybody has ever took a right-wing sort of stance. What we do, we go to Conference, any Conference with this Conference policy. The thing that you pass is what we go there and say.

It’s not about personalities when we get to any Conference. I disagree though, Pat and I will, I mean we shouldn’t be answering this under the Treasurer’s Report, but the Labour Party at times does have a, I agree with you, it’s getting like an American convention with ministers showcasing themselves, I agree with that and I do believe that the participation within the Conference itself is very limited to the great and the good, but the fact is there’s lots of good work that’s actually done outside of that Conference but by networking with people and I’ll give one example was the Union Modernisation Fund. When I went, at a Labour Party Conference with Tom Jones and we got, who was the MP? Jerry, Jerry Sutcliffe, who was in the Shadow Cabinet and Jerry Sutcliffe was introduced to me by Tom Jones from Thompsons and Tom was saying I think it would be a good idea if your Union took up a Union Modernisation Plan and it gave us, if you think of the things that we built out of our Union Modernisation Fund, that was done in a foyer outside of Conference. It wasn’t done from the Conference floor, but I’ll tell you what, if we hadn’t have been at the Labour Party Conference to meet with people like Jerry Sutcliffe, then I don’t believe that we would have gotten any further and that really did produce something for this Union that, well, how do you measure its value in the future? It’s something that we will use forever until the next great thing comes along, but we used it, so I don’t believe that we get a raw deal. I don’t think, I agree with you, Pat, that I don’t think the showcase is that good. I mean I, the best thing that ever happened to me was passing the Labour Party Conference over to Ian Hodson. I mean, I like the TUC, I think it’s a bit more meaty, but I still think there’s a lot of good work that the President and the Delegates who go to Labour Party Conference can do for this Union and it’s all about what policies of this Union, not what the policies of the Labour Party.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, Page 4. Page 5. Page 5?

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** Just a bit bemused under the funds that 1, 3, 5 and 7 apparently have benevolent funds and 2, 4 and 6, which are all even numbers, don’t seem to have any.

Does he want to explain that one to me?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** No. I think 2, 4 and 6 should explain it to you, their declared benevolent funds. Any benevolent fund within the Union becomes the property of the Union, if you’re doing it in our name then, then it’s
our fund. Region 2 is the best, I’m looking for Dave Dash, here’s over there, to the best of my knowledge No. 2 don’t have a Benevolent Fund, is that right Dave? So, that’s why No. 2’s not down there as having a Benevolent Fund, they haven’t got one. If they decide to start one next year, or No. 4 do the same, then we’ll put it in there, once they’ve declared their finances to us we’ll most certainly put it in there, but that’s the reason why it isn’t in.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Page 6. Okay? Can I put the Treasurer’s Report and the Annual Report now in full to the Conference? All those in favour? Anyone against? Thank you and Delegates, can I also remind you that obviously the policy of this Union is that we don’t buy The Sun and can I also remind Delegates in Conference, we don’t want The Sun to appear either.

It’s a campaign that we’ve been involved with as a trade union for many, many a year and obviously, not just because it’s an anti-trade union newspaper that perpetrates lies about the trade unions, but also because of the lies it told about the people of Liverpool as well, so we would ask and remind Delegates of Conference (1) not to buy The Sun, to encourage people in your workplace not to buy it and (2) obviously not to bring it into Conference during this week, thank you.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Conference, can I invite the National President, Ian Hodson, to do his opening address to Conference, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Morning. Obviously quite clearly I’ve learnt from last year, so I’m not going to do any jokes, because obviously I know I’m not very good at them, but I can’t promise not to mention Cameron and Clegg at some point.

Firstly, can I welcome everybody to Conference. We’ve obviously lots of motions this year and obviously I’m looking forward to some great debates covering a wide range of issues and obviously we’ve also tried this year to put on a number of fringe meetings to give people an opportunity to gain as much information about various different subjects more in depth and we’ve got people coming from TULO, we’ve got Hilda Palmer coming from Hazards and obviously Willie Colhoun’s going to be also taking part in one of those fringe meetings for us as well and on Tuesday evening we’re also going to be showing “Spirit of ‘45” across the road at the Monarch Hotel. Anybody who hasn’t seen it, we would encourage you to come along.

This year’s been quite a difficult year. Closures, redundancies, but despite all of that, we have still managed to recruit over two and a half thousand new members and they’ve joined since Conference last year and the EC have also invested very heavily into an organising training programme. That training programme started in 2011 and I know there’s a number of Delegates here that will have attended that course and I’m pleased to announce today that that course has resulted in those people going back to their workplaces and actually recruiting a total of 1,430 new members, so I’d like to congratulate all of those activists taking part in that programme and obviously hope and look forward to more people actually attending those organising courses.

I mean, I’d like to thank all of our activists in every branch across the country for the work that they do to make sure that this Union stays as an independent trade union, because that’s what we intend to do and obviously the work that the full-time Officials do on a daily basis, sometimes 6, 7 days a week, sometimes 24 hours a day as I keep getting regularly told, that’s right isn’t it Geoff, 24 hours a day, yes, yes? So I’d like to thank all of our Officials and obviously all of our activists in the branches for everything they do and making sure that this Union stays independent through its recruitment.

Obviously this year has also seen us introduce a couple of new young people’s forums, an innovative project by our young EC member over there on the end, who’ve actually held two meetings, one in Leeds and one in Birmingham, with a third planned for Manchester on 29th October and obviously those are critical for an organisation like ours, because investment in youth is something that we need to make sure that we do, because we need to make sure that we bring young people through, because once we get old and retire, then if there’s no young people behind us, then this Union will finish, so it’s important that we get behind the young people in our organisations and encourage them to be as active as possible and what we’d also ask is that if you haven’t already seen it on Facebook, if you are on Facebook, we would ask you to go to the young people’s Facebook page, which is administrated by four of our young activists and actually ‘Like’ that page because they’re going to keep it updated, we’re going to run regular polls and do all sorts of stuff on there, I do believe, so we would ask you to take part in that Facebook page. Our Union is committed to both raising the issues of young workers and giving young people a voice. No young person should ever be treated as a second class citizen and if they’re in this trade union, we’ll make sure that they don’t.
We’ve also continued this year to run our shop stewards forums in Regions 2 and 3 and we’re hoping to run another in Region 1 at some point during the year and obviously we’ve continued with our commitment to our members and to our activists through running parliamentary schools, giving visits to parliament, meeting MPs and understanding what the Union does as an organisation on a political basis and we’d like to thank obviously Dave Dash for organising those schools for us and hopefully if people are interested in attending them. I know Dave’s got another few planned, so if you contact Dave Dash, he’ll be able to tell you when the next ones are due to take place and to see if you can make sure that you get a visit to one of those events.

Whilst we’re on the issue as well of politics and innovation, over last year we’ve actually introduced a new micro website. I don’t know if anybody’s seen it, but it’s called Opinion Formers. That website now gives us a new political voice and it’s also been responsible for a new animation video, which we will be showing at some point during Conference, which will help us introduce what we stand for as a trade union into workplaces and in new arenas such as Twitter and Facebook and we hope obviously in every workplace across the country through our learning centres hopefully you will be able to show and showcase the reason why it’s important to be in the union, because really today the question is can you afford not to be in a trade union. This is the problem when I come to read you see [LAUGHTER].

As a union we need to consider new and creative ways of recruiting and I’ve got to say, obviously over the past 12 months we’ve made new partnerships, we’ve made new partnerships with a company called Lighthouse, we’ve made new partnerships with companies called Payplan. We’ve also made new alliances with groups like Work to Right and the LRC’s briefing campaign. We’ve made new partnerships with Unite the Resistance and we’re taking part right across the country in different events and I’ve got to say that those organisations have been very supportive to us and no more so than when we last year, if you can remember last year, at the end of Conference last year we had Gulli who was going back to organise a strike at his workplace. I’ve got to say thank you very much, you will have seen some of the people outside this morning, in the Socialist Workers newspaper, those people actually took their time out to go and stand on the picket line, supporting our members and supporting our activists outside not just their workplace, but actually took part in campaigns outside Marks & Spencers too and obviously as a trade union, I’m sure we’d like to show our gratitude and thanks for the support that they gave us. Alright, we don’t.

Obviously also we’d like to thank the Union’s Learning Services for removing barriers and supporting the members both inside and outside the workforce. Our Learning Services consistently help our members to achieve. The assistance they provide across so many branches and not to mention those facing redundancy should be rightfully recognised and congratulated. The Union would like to give its thanks to Karen Plasm (?), Lisa Greenfield, Kendal Walker, Carol Hillaby, Janet Goodwin, John Vickers, Mark McHugh, John James, Laura Graham, Vicky Watkins and obviously our latest recruit Louise Bennett for all the hard work that they’ve done in this area.

We also would like to give our thanks to the Credit Union directors, because over the last 12 months, in fact for the last 18 months to 24 months, they’ve managed to turn the credit union from something that was at risk of going under into a position where that credit union is now offering a benefit that will make sure that our members won’t be at risk of being shown the door through Wonga.

I’m doing terrible today, I do apologise.

Sometimes we only see misery being heaped on the working people and trade unions within our confines of the UK. It’s easy to forget or even be apathetic about the working people across the nations and across in other countries. I don’t know how many people have noticed that at the recent news out of Argentina, that the Ford Motor Company who in 1976 actually took part in kidnap and attack working rights of people right across the country. The exploitation that was played out in India when the Rana Plaza building collapsed in Bangladesh, it sparked a worldwide debate on Health and Safety, apart obviously from the UK, where the coalition government is hell bent on reducing our safety down to the levels of India and China. Even the World Cup organisers have got themselves embroiled in exploitative issues. Both the ITUC and the TUC are calling on the UEFA to address the appalling treatment of workers’ employers in Qatar and back calls for FIFA to re-run the vote for 2022, because Qatar is making people work and it’s being classed as a 21st Century slave state. Incidents like these around the world and here in the UK demonstrate why international solidarity is needed.

We should not and cannot accept the type of abuse here or anywhere else in the world and before moving on, I would like to just mention, despite the coverage of the mocked-up pictures and the hype and the tributes to Margaret Thatcher’s funeral, which was nothing more than an overpriced tax payer funded party political broadcast on behalf of the Tories, in Venezuela over 9 million people lined the streets for President Hugo Chavez. In stark contrast to the so-called Iron Lady, Chavez provided and sustained the belief that society of people must have the power to determine their own destiny.

Certain sections of the mainstream press over here used to call him a dictator, yet this is a man that won 15 elections. We have a prime minister that didn’t win one. Chavez’s social programme has helped millions of ordinary Venezuelans out
of poverty, providing healthcare and education to the poorest communities, in spite of the many attempts to topple and reverse the important gains that he has achieved. Hugo Chavez was a hero to the working class, not just in Venezuela but throughout Latin America and throughout the Caribbean.

Let’s turn to some of the issues that probably I feel more comfortable with. A recent survey has found that British workers are feeling less secure and more pressured at work than at any time in the past 20 years, with pay cuts, diminished control over their jobs amongst their biggest concerns, according to a national survey of employees conducted by Wellbeing and what has this government’s response been?

If it isn’t hurting, it isn’t working, we’re all in this together, this is used to convince the majority of us to keep the painful poverty pill while the elite take the opportunity to reinforce their position. Look at the recent comments of the disgraced George Young. He is a typical example of a Tory thinker. He stated that the recession was a good time and a great time actually for new businesses due to cheap premises and even cheaper labour. Another, a Tory MP, Conor Burns, who remarked that we have just gone through a period of over-employment. If you actually think of what that actually means, what it means is there was too many people in work which was forcing employers to put up wages and improve terms and conditions.

I’m quite clear, this government programme of austerity and hurt is merely to use the bank of induced crisis as a smoke screen for scaling back pay, pensions and employment rights and to cut back on health education and other public services to those who can’t afford to go private and when you actually look at the rhetoric, standing up for hard working people, really? Charging for unemployment tribunals, if you’ve been sacked unfairly, making you pay to take a witness, is that really standing up for hard working people? If your employer decides not to pay you, it’ll cost you £390, is that standing up for hard working people? Helping working people isn’t giving bullying bosses the opportunity to take you into a room, threaten you, offer you a sum of money and then dismiss you, that isn’t what’s standing up for hard working people. Standing up for hard working people isn’t saying an employer has no responsibility for safety for their employees and it’s no good talking about common sense at a time when we have regulations that protect workers being eroded whilst people are still being killed at work. Work should enrich life and not end it.

What chances are there for our children when the government want their first work experience to be exploitation? There is no difference in my opinion between forced labour, sometimes referred to as slavery and Workfare. I’m disgusted that the Labour Party didn’t stand up for our children and demand that this scheme is ended. What message does forcing people into unpaid work send? It gives people the view that work is a form of punishment. Our children deserve real jobs with real pay and Labour won’t win any election by pledging to be a lighter shade of blue and whilst we’re talking about work, just think about this for a moment. We pay into a fund, that fund is there should we ever find ourselves out of work. Why is this government calling those that are out of work scroungers? Where has the money gone? The truth is they’ve used it to replace the taxes that their rich friends are paying.

It’s not benefits that needs cutting and it’s absolutely absurd to say that you make work pay by cutting benefits. You actually make work pay by paying a living wage, that’s how you make work pay and of course the top rate of tax which was cut in April shouldn’t have been cut. It should have been raised and it’s high time Cameron’s mates actually started paying their tax and in fact I’d go even further and say that if they don’t pay their tax, let’s jail them. The problem is that when we say things like this, we are jumped on for spouting the politics of envy. I say it’s not the politics of envy, it’s the politics of necessity and rather than the ideological politics of world protection, hate and division that we have now. I know some people have bought into the argument by cutting benefits and we need to remind our members as well as others that we talk to that the welfare system was set up to see people through short periods of unemployment. This has been undermined not due to those on benefits, but governments not fulfilling their commitment to full employment.

The welfare system wasn’t designed to fund millionaire landlords, charging exorbitant rents, nor was it set up in order to employ, for employers to pay low wages. If they really want to tackle the benefits system, let’s bring back wage councils, remove the restrictions on trade unions and allow them to negotiate properly, but I do agree with Ed Miliband’s statement last week, where he said they would cap the rents of landlords and then use those savings to build homes, but let’s also increase taxes at the top end as well and let’s use that money to invest in manufacturing and infrastructure projects, creating much-needed employment.

Let’s build a country for us all, not just for the rich and I know sometimes we all get caught up in our own individual issues, it might be disability, the right to work, the NHS and the welfare state, there are many different issues, the hated bedroom tax, the payday loan companies, there is almost an infinite number of issues to get angry about, but let’s get one thing straight, we will not change anything in isolation, we need to work with other organisations, now more than ever. It’s now more important that we realise our collective strength. This government is intent on division. It’s intent on raising paranoia. It’s to stop us all from talking to one another. Its remit is to cause isolation.
They know full well that if we don’t combine, we will not be able to fight back and as a Union that represents hard working people and the real wealth creators in this country, we need to say this loud and clear. If the government is not prepared to play fair and listen, then we need to bring it down and we will bring that down by holding ballots in our workplaces and supporting the call for a general strike, that’s how we bring this government down and let’s create a country and society that’s fair for all, not just those at the top. I’d like to apologise for the beginning of my speech and I’d like to say to you enjoy the week, enjoy Conference, but most of all enjoy solidarity.

[APPLAUSE]

Tea time and the tea is through there. 5 past 11.

Mark, there’s water fountains around the room, that’s why you haven’t got water on ...... they’re not working? Carol, the water fountains aren’t working.

Okay, is everybody in? Everybody back in now please, take your seats.

Okay, everybody sit down. Everybody back in the room? Could we shut the doors? Right, in your packs, we’re on the final Agenda. Just to remind the new Delegates, if you want to get up, you just come down to the front and form an orderly queue and when you do come down, make sure you tell us who you are and which branch you’ve come from, okay? So everybody back in the room? Calling Motion 1.

It’s gone again.

1 New Rule – Branch 450

This Conference agrees to a new rule that mobile phones must be switched off for the duration of Conference.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Can you hear me? Yes, you can. Sorry?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: We could hear you without it.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I know [LAUGHTER]. It’s a gift, if you live in Oldham, they all talk like this.

Morning Conference, Delegates, etc. This Conference agrees to a new rule that mobile phones must be switched off for the duration of Conference. Obviously I don’t mean Tuesday night when you’re in the pub, I mean while you’re in here, the phones should be switched off. We’re not here to be tweeted or chatting on Facebook, we’re here to try to make a difference to the world we live in. Actually, it should actually go a bit further this and include your Kindle and iPad or whatever tablet you’re using. It’s a privilege to be here. You’re not here on holiday. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Were you seconding it? Oh, you were seconding it, sorry mate. Warren, hold on a minute, Warren, he’s seconding it.

Brother Roy Tysall – Branch 414 (Region 4): Mr President, General Secretary. I formally second this motion. We’re here for a Conference, not to chat with friends or tweeting on Facebook. Please show respect for the Conference and all subsequent Conferences and turn your phones off until the Conference is finished. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Warren.

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Mr Chair (clears throat), sorry. Mr Chair, Platform, Delegates. I’m here to speak on this motion to oppose it. It would be ridiculous to impose such a restriction on the people of this Conference. There may be a need for people to be contactable during this Conference by emergencies from branch or from home, but I do understand the sentiment behind it. This is my second Conference and last year I was disheartened to see that there were members of this Conference using mobile phones while Brothers and Sisters were speaking on motions. I feel this is disrespectful to the people standing at the rostrum. I oppose this motion, but could we all please show a little respect. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Branch 253: Good morning Conference. I’m also here to oppose this on the basis of exactly what Warren said really. There are people who are going to need to do, are going to have possibly things on within their branches and stuff like that which we need to sort out as an emergency. Please oppose this motion, but I can understand the sentiment behind it.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I like the new look, Raj.
Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings, Birmingham, West Midlands): Delegates, Platform. I’m in the middle on this one, leaning more towards opposition on the basis like the previous speakers that spoke up in opposition. What we should be doing is having our phones on silent, because all of us are needed either back at the workplace or at home, got small children and what have you, there could be an emergency at any time. We shouldn’t be sitting under the rostrum or in the chairs constantly looking or tweeting or Facebooking, but if you know we can see the lights going off and it’s an emergency, we should leave the hall and attend to it and let the relevant FTOs know from whatever delegation we are with, so on that basis I would request that this gets remitted to the Executive Council to get it re-worded to say that all phones must be on silent as a bare minimum, so that if there is an emergency, one can attend to it. I ask you all to oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, General Secretary to respond.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you, President. The Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the motion. Clearly we agree with Marilyn that phones can be an absolute nuisance when Conference is in session, but I think Warren makes a really good point as well. There’s nothing more distracting when you’re speaking than somebody’s phone ringing behind you. It’s very, very off putting and again I think it’s very, very rude. I do agree with everything that you’re saying, but as an Executive we fail to see the problem with mobile phones being on if they’re on silent, as long as people aren’t talking on them, as long as they’re not using it as a phone, we don’t mind so much.

I’ve got to say, I’d be pretty naffed off if I thought that Delegates were playing games or accessing websites that weren’t appropriate to Conference while Delegates were giving their time to speak here on behalf of their branches, but I don’t think anybody should be cut off from the outside world just because the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union Conference is going on.

Today’s Smartphones allow much more than verbal communications. They allow us to access, in real time, social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and probably a multiplicity of other ones that I’ve never heard of yet. I don’t particularly use Facebook myself, although I did get accused of it once, I don’t use Facebook but I do understand and recognise the value it has in getting the name of the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union out there and it’s most important to young people and Ian Hodson. There’s, we use, lots and lots of people use Facebook. I do use Twitter comrades and I fully believe the value of getting the message of our Union in an easy digestible form out into the wider world as quick as possible. You say something now and it’s going around the world in minutes. That is what we want as a Union, we’re trying to promote ourselves. We don’t want members or indeed the wider trade union movement waiting for the verbatim report of this Conference to come out or waiting for the DVD which is produced by Erwins within these four walls. The Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union has a very important message to get out to the wider society. I’m not sure, well I am sure there is a Morning Star reporter here this week, but think of it, the one thing for sure is that no other reporters, we don’t attract radio stations, we don’t attract television stations to come along to our Conference, despite the fact out of the ones that I’ve been to, I don’t hear a great message coming out of a trade union congress than this one, but we need to get that message out. If we sit on our hands and be bombastic about not using media, then we’re going to be stuck.

Tomorrow there’ll be reports from the larger union conferences that are happening at this time in the morning press and yes, in some circumstances depending on what they’re saying, they will be on television and on radio, but that is because, not because their message is more important to society, because of the sway that they hold politically. Remember tomorrow’s headlines are yesterday’s news. By using social media sites, we make our own headlines at the time (unclear), that is important and as the President said earlier on, for the first time in our Conference we’re using John Millington, who has given his time up for us to come along and he’s being sponsored by Thompsons, his hotel and all that, to actually get the message out about the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union, because he’s got much greater access to journalistic colleagues than we will ever have and so that’s why we need to use stuff like that. Social media allows the public at large to understand what the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union are debating. The problems that are being debated on behalf of not just our members, but the world in general.

We punch above our weight on issues affecting society and that is a must. A salient point or a cutting remark can be out there in seconds, rather than waiting for somebody else’s report on it tomorrow or next week when you get back to your branches. The Andy Warhol 15 minutes of fame becomes a reality for those who come down to this rostrum because of social media like Twitter and Facebook. I’m sure the mover will say that Facebook entries and tweets can wait until breaktime to be posted, but the memory, if you taking everything in at this Conference, doesn’t always last that long and you miss that one little quip that somebody makes, that one really salient point that’s needed and you get it out there and then. I notice that John’s been doing it while he’s been here.
Of course it would also be dependent on the President’s generosity on tea breaks to make sure we’ve got long enough to tweet all the excellent points that are made from this rostrum and the other thing is, at the end of sessions, we have fringe meetings which are equally important to this Union, important to our future, but again important to get our member, our members points of view out there.

Another point to consider is that, believe it or not, we have some unscrupulous employers in the food industry, who could well take advantage of the fact that most senior trade union activists are here and we’ve seen it before, while you’re here, they make changes back at the branch and I think it’s important that there is access to people who are on the shop floor, sorry on the Conference floor here, because you are probably the primary activists within that branch and that’s what happens. Mobile phones on silent of course, allow messages to be received if such a problem arises. You only have to think about the situation with R F Brooks last year. We had a constant developing situation which, because of Facebook and because of Twitter, we were constantly able to update our members around the country and constantly able to change our policy and the way we’re going to do things.

Comrades, I’ve fallen foul of the wrath of Olive Molloy when my phone went off once, I don’t know, about five years ago, I think it cost me a tenner and I duly paid that fine and rightly so, but criticism per tweeter about the Conference was a little unfair. We need to get all the publicity out there that we can and if that means generating our own through social media sites, then so be it. Oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right of reply?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Going to have to wait until next week to send a tweet or something on Facebook. Hello Ronnie, where do you live? Twitter and Facebook can wait a couple of hours. My phone’s in my pocket, it’s on silent. Should anybody need to get hold of me, it can vibrate. I won’t be sat on my phone playing games and following other people’s conferences. You’re here to take this seriously. I’m asking you, take it seriously. If you’ve got an issue, if somebody’s likely to be having a baby, they can get in touch with you while your phone’s on silent. You only need to use your brain. I’m asking again, support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Marilyn, there was a request that you would consider withdrawing the motion and asking the EC to look at it, do you want to withdraw it, or go to the vote on it?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I will withdraw it on the provision that you actually discuss this and not file it in the bin under R for Rubbish.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: If you’re going to withdraw it, what I’d say to you is this, obviously we will consider it in line to what your response was, because your response was different to what the actual motion originally asked for, which was that you want it on silent, which is what the General Secretary said and obviously that’s probably something we could go along with, Marilyn, so yes, we will withdraw it and at the Executive on Wednesday, we will discuss it.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Alright, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Promise you.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Okay.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Motion 2.

2 New Rule – Branch 201

This Conference agrees to a new rule that Executive Council meetings be undertaken, whenever possible, by video conferencing to avoid excessive costs.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: We know the Union’s not in a good place financially. This rule would ask that the Executive Council meetings business, rather than going away for three days, whatever and the cost that incurs, could be done through video conferences via the internet. All the Executive Council members are given computers anyway, so let’s utilise them to their full potential. Let’s actually make use of what we’ve got and save a few quid in the bargain.

Please support.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Speakers? General Secretary?

Brother Brian XXXXXXX: President, General Secretary, Delegates. I’m here in support of this motion. I can understand the annoyance of this, that we need to talk to people, discuss our business and in all honesty we do need to save a bit of money. The technology that’s available to us should be used. Please support this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: Also here to support this motion. As Brian’s just rightly said, we do need to look at ways of saving money, cutting our costs down and this would definitely be a way, especially as we’ve got the facilities there to do it, so please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else? General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. The Executive Council asks Conference to oppose the motion.

We 100% agree with the sentiment, Janine, on saving money and clearly there’d be an awful lot of time saved in travelling, but the motion’s totally impractical to put in to place. I mean first of all, where would you, you want a big screen, big enough to take 19 faces, because that’s how many people sit around the table on a National Executive Council, but more importantly think about it from a health and safety issue, keeping 19 people sat in front of a screen for 8 – 9 hours, because that’s what they do at Executive Council meetings, would not only be in breach of display screen regulations, it would also be in breach of any health and safety thing that we’ve ever negotiated with any employer.

At Executive Council meetings and there’s quite a few people out there who’ve been on the Executive Council before, EC members can stand up, as long as they stay in the room, it’s like Conference, if you want to stand up, stand up, the fact is that EC meetings, EC members do get up and they’ll walk around the room if they’re getting stiff or anything like that, that can’t happen when you’re on video conferencing, because the video camera points at one particular issue. After a break, the President can gather members back here by just sending somebody to get them of course. If you had EC members who were, I don’t know, in their own houses, in a lawyer’s office, wherever they were to do the video conferencing, has no control over how he runs the meeting, particularly as he could be up to 200 mile away from those people. I’m not sure that we could exercise the same meeting disciplines if we were not in the same room.

It’s not a bad idea, Janine, when there’s two or three people and we’re happy to look at that, but when you’ve got 19 or 20 people all sat in the same room and then to say to them go away and do video conferencing, it really is impractical.

There’s also the problem of what to do if an internet connection goes down. At present in an EC meeting, if the business carries on, we carry on until we’ve finished. We don’t let EC business now run longer than the length of the Executive meeting, but if you lost an internet connection, then you may not be able to conduct that business that you would need and you know yourselves sometimes it’s very, very important business that we talk. I use Skype, not very well, but I do use Skype to talk to my sister and it goes on and off, faces freeze and that’s just me on one line to one person. If you’ve got 19 lines all trying to interact, I believe that it could cause even more problems.

At present, we also have paid release for the executives to attend the meetings, but what would be the case for an Executive member to be released to sit in front of a computer all day or a video screen? Would employers be so benevolent in giving time over for that? And what about the cost of equipment at every venue, because whilst I accept, Janine, that every EC member has got a laptop, they haven’t got the technology to video screening over a long period of time and it is very, very expensive to do it, so we would have to buy in stuff that we can put into either every region and get them to go to their regions to do it, or would we buy it for everyone’s individual home? And even if we could overcome those difficulties, we’d still have the difficulty with outside bodies needing to do presentations to the Executive, or give explanations of benefits to those who are going to implement them and a good example is the talks that we’re having with our lawyers, they come to us, they come to the Executive Council meeting and they do presentations.

Jane from Paypal came along to the Executive to make us understand how a benefit would operate, but of course if we implemented this, they would also have to be at the mercy of video conferencing and we’d then be adding to even more people.

Finally and probably one of the most important points to consider is the fact that the Executive Council also wear an employers hat. Every year we conduct salary negotiations with both the full-time Officials and the office staff, which take place at the Executive Council. Changes to working procedures and policies are carried out at the Executive Council and of course the latter stages of grievance and discipline which was raised this morning are also conducted at the Executive Council.
All of these issues would become problematic if we did it, because I’ll tell you what, I wouldn’t like to think that we were disciplining an Official or a member of staff over the internet. I think if you’re going to do these things, you have to do them properly. We fully support the sentiment that Janine’s put forward and we applaud the thinking of the mover, who’s clearly looking to save the Union finances, but this particular solution could cause us more difficulties than it’ll solve. We’ve experienced with telephone conferences in our No. 5 office that they do save travel time and meeting costs and that’ll continue, we’ll continue to explore how we do that for internal meetings. We’ll also look at the options of installing the necessary equipment in regional offices and the cheapest way that we can use that, but the realism is that there are probably more reasons why we shouldn’t do video conference for the Executive than positives and that, I just believe it will be absolutely problematic for the President to try and run the Executive Council over television screens.

We’d ask you to oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right of reply? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? Okay, thank you. Just to make the movers of the emergency motion No. 2 aware, we’re going to take emergency motion out, hopefully everybody’s got a copy of it? We’re going to take it after motion 5. So that’s the emergency motion 2, we’re going to take after motion 5. Okay, motion 3.

3 New Rule – Branch 450

That this conference agrees that members with 50 years membership should receive a pewter Baker in recognition of a remarkable achievement.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: That this Conference agrees that the members with 50 years membership should receive a pewter baker in recognition of a remarkable achievement. Well, this is exactly what it says on the tin. If you’ve completed 50 years membership with the mighty Bakers Union, you do deserve the pewter baker and not just a badge. Not sure about the tin of biscuits, but that’s for another day. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Speakers? General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Conference. We would ask Conference to support the motion.

The Union used to give a gold badge years ago for 50 years membership and the rule was changed back in the early 80s, I think, I actually think it was my brother who moved the motion at the Conference to change to a 40 year badge because of the destruction that was being done within the industry and people moving out, so that’s why we ended up with a 40 year badge, so this change during the Thatcher era made 50 years a really tight achievement to make. When a member reaches the 40 year badge now, they get, they stop paying their contributions, they receive a silver badge in honour of that achievement and they also get a certificate and a cheque for 150 quid and we obviously want to continue with that, we think that’s the right thing to do and even though potentially we’ll get no more contributions for the following 10 years, we still see that loyalty to the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union for 50 years is a great achievement, so we’d ask Conference to support it.

I would say that these pewter bakers, they’re not cheap, so it’s a question of how many people stay in the Union 50 years, but they’re 100 quid each, we’re happy to donate one of them to the people who do 50 years alongside their 40 year award which they will already have had and like any other rule, it will come into effect as soon as Conference finishes, so we ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. To the vote. Those in favour? Anyone against? That’s carried. Motion 4.

4 New Rule – Branch 450

That this conference agrees elected delegates to Trades Union Congress, Labour Party conference and such, must attend and stay to the close of said conference unless there are genuine emergency reasons to do otherwise.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Again. You’ll notice that they’ve moved me to the front to save my little legs from wearing out. This Conference agrees elected Delegates to a trade union congress, Labour Party and such must attend and stay until the close of said conference unless there are genuine emergency reasons to do otherwise. Another one that does what it says on the tin. If I put my name forward to attend the TUC Conference and become elected, I must attend, otherwise I’ve stopped one of you people from going. It’s not good enough, if there’s an emergency reason, a genuine
reason why you can’t attend, fine, but people take the mickey. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Formally seconded?

**Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford):** Secretary, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. Exactly what Marilyn’s just said there, people who want to attend these conferences, put their names forward, should have at least have the decency to stay until the end of conference. Support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, Conference, the Executive would ask you to support the motion.

We believe that anybody who gets elected from this Conference should attend both the trade union and Labour conferences and any other conference in its full, but we do accept that there are times of emergency when people do have to leave because they need to go home, so we welcome the fact that the motion actually includes a recognition of that, but would ask the Conference to support it on the principle that when you do get elected, you are there to do a job of work on behalf of this Trade Union and it’s important that you attend and you attend for the full period and full duration. But we also recognise during conference there are fringe meetings, so it’s not just about staying in the main conference hall, but attending other events out and around conference as well, but the mover is asking us to make sure that the people who attend goes and attends the full duration of the conference, so we would ask Conference to support on that basis.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? You were waiting, weren’t you? Anyone against? No? Emergency motion 2.

Oh sorry, sorry, my mistake. Sorry, motion No. 5, you’re quite right, we’re just catching, I’m just seeing if I can catch you out. I caught myself out, caught you out. No. 5, motion 5.

5 **New Rule – Executive Council**

*This Conference agrees that, due to the damning Jackson reforms, the EC has the authority to amend and implement any changes necessary to ensure that we are able to offer our Membership a competitive Legal Services package, without impacting on the Union’s economic viability.*

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Conference and President. It’s obviously an Executive motion, so you won’t be surprised that we’re asking Conference to support the motion. Probably everybody in this hall is familiar with the Jackson report and how we’ve put articles out, it’s been on the website, we’ve had our lawyers at meetings promoting the difficulties there’s going to be, but the problem is that nobody, including the lawyers, can predict the impact that this is going to have on our legal industry and therefore the legal benefits that our Union can offer in the future.

Before April 1st we had insurance against losing claims, by putting aside the money that Pat Rowley talked about this morning. If you go back, those of you that have been coming to Conference for a long time, in 2003 we scrapped a system where the Union used to take 7½% of successful claims and that money was then banked in exactly the same way as we do now, it was banked and it was used to subsidise losing cases, but from Conference 2003 we changed to a system of insuring cases, which actually yielded a premium on successful cases, that again were used to subsidise those losing claims and on top of this, the Union also received from the lawyers a referral fee, if you like a loyalty thing for us putting our business to them, but from April 1st of this year those funding streams will stop, not just for this Union but for every union and so we have to look as I said this morning in response, we have to look for alternative ways to fund our legal services.

Clearly we can’t just write a blank cheque because we have a deficit within the Union anyway and so we have to be very careful. One way of course is to re-introduce that levy that we had before. I’m not saying that we’re going to do that, I’m not saying that it would be 7½%. I’m saying this is a potential avenue that we could go down and that is given that under the new system, when Jackson made all these changes, one thing he did do is he allowed an extra amount of money on successful claims, so if you got a broken leg prior to April 1st, you got x amount. After April 1st, you get x amount plus 10%, so there’s an actual uplift in the value of claims by 10% following Jackson and so there is the opportunity there to look at a levy on that, but we didn’t want to shoot from the hip, it would be absolutely crazy for the Executive to take a decision by putting a motion to Conference, getting you all to vote on it, yes, that’s what we’re going to do and then find that we didn’t need to do it, or that we hadn’t quite gone far enough in what we’re to do and hence the reason, if you like, for a less definitive motion coming before Conference.

There’s one thing that we can be sure of and that’s that the claim farmers, these people who do the no-win, no-fee out in the fields, their scams are going to come to an end, but now what they’re doing, they’re advertising that they will run
your case and they will charge you no longer no-win, no-fee. They’re going to charge you 24% on successful claims and whilst they’re not going to take anything less than stonewall cases, when they do you’re going to lose 24% of your claim if you go with them, so clearly no matter what we do and we wouldn’t be crazy enough and the lawyers wouldn’t be crazy enough to oppose a levy that was anywhere near what you would have to pay on the high street. It’s got to be a benefit to be within our legal system and so that’s why we’re looking at the most that we’ve got.

Clearly there’s going to be financial implications for the Union and that we need to look at different ways of funding cases, but until all the details are released and as I said earlier on, they haven’t been yet, we’re still looking at the questions of small claims, until they are released, then we’re hamstrung, if you like, as to giving a definitive answer on where we’re going to be in the future.

As the President said in his opening address to Conference, at present, or prior to April 1st, all tribunal claims are paid for out of the monies that have been made through successful cases, lawyers actually giving us free representation at tribunals, the cases going through, because there was always this money that was generated back in subs, but of course that is going to end. In the past our Officials would send paperwork over to the relevant lawyers, who would evaluate the strength of the claim before deciding whether or not we had an opportunity to take that claim forward. It was almost a given that you did that. It didn’t matter what people got dismissed for, there was always bang the ET1 in, go along to see the lawyers and see what their views are, but now because of the way the legislation, not because all of a sudden we’ve got rebellious lawyers, because if that was it obviously we’d change the lawyers, it isn’t that. We’ve now got a system through Jackson been introduced where they have to charge, they’re honour bound to charge, they’re legally entitled to charge, they’ve got to do it and it’s not just the charge for going to court, it’s a charge for looking at papers, it’s a charge for determining whether this case will go forward to a tribunal, whether there’s an unfair dismissal case to answer, a breach of contract or whether there’s an illegal deduction and we already heard from the President on where that can be a scam, where you’re not guaranteed if you go to a tribunal to get the money back if it’s a loss of earnings or an illegal deduction because of the money that you pay up front to go to that tribunal, so there can be a loss to members directly, but what the Union are proposing to do is to introduce a system of gatekeepers.

We’re going to train Full-Time Officials and that’s going to happen at Conference Tuesday, we’ve got one of Thompsons lawyers coming over, an employment expert, he’s going to come along and obviously we’re happy for other lawyers to be there to obviously add their weight behind it. Full-Time Officials, fully trained to understand the merits of a claim, who themselves would take the decision on whether that claim goes forward. So as I said in the past, you might get that frivolous claim, a bit of mischief, let’s bang an ET1 in, let’s see if we can get something back off the employer. Now that’s no longer an option because of the costs of going to tribunals, so our Officials are going to be trained to a high enough standard to be able to make those decisions.

Clearly when there’s a borderline case that we’re going to pursue, we’re not absolutely certain whether it’s not cut and dried, then we’ll refer it back to the lawyers and those people will make the decisions and yes, we will pick up the cost of that, but since the inception of Jackson, there are now charges for pre-hearings. A full blown tribunal now costs £1,200, with absolutely no guarantee of return and whilst we haven’t fully costed it out, because of course it’s a moveable feast, we don’t know how many people are going to be fired, we don’t know how many people are going to be putting a claim in for unfair dismissal or constructive dismissal or breach of contract, it’s very, very difficult to cost but that is what we’re trying to do with the experts, if you like, from our legal group, but the Union have got to look at, we’re going to look at financing loans, so we don’t have our members suffering detriment because of the financial implications of Jackson, so if you get dismissed and our gatekeepers who are trained or our lawyers following reference to them if we need to, think that that case should go forward to tribunal, then the Union will make a loan to the member and in successful claims we will take that back. If we lose, then we’ll stand the cost of that money that we’ve put up, put forward, so that’s one of the things that we’re looking to implement.

We recognise, comrades, that any change to our legal services is a difficult pill to swallow, but we cannot allow the Union’s finances to suffer irrevocably. Under the Jackson proposals, the maximum you can claim for loss of earnings following an accident or occupational illness is £4,462.20, God only knows where they arrived at the 20p on the end. Going back to the tribunal costs, if you call a witness who might know everything that’s gone on in the case, it didn’t matter what people got dismissed for, there was always bang the ET1 in, go along to see the lawyers and see what their views are, but now because of the way the legislation, not because all of a sudden we’ve got rebellious lawyers, because if that was it obviously we’d change the lawyers, it isn’t that. We’ve now got a system through Jackson been introduced where they have to charge, they’re honour bound to charge, they’re legally entitled to charge, they’ve got to do it and it’s not just the charge for going to court, it’s a charge for looking at papers, it’s a charge for determining whether this case will go forward to a tribunal, whether there’s an unfair dismissal case to answer, a breach of contract or whether there’s an illegal deduction and we already heard from the President on where that can be a scam, where you’re not guaranteed if you go to a tribunal to get the money back if it’s a loss of earnings or an illegal deduction because of the money that you pay up front to go to that tribunal, so there can be a loss to members directly, but what the Union are proposing to do is to introduce a system of gatekeepers.

We’re going to train Full-Time Officials and that’s going to happen at Conference Tuesday, we’ve got one of Thompsons lawyers coming over, an employment expert, he’s going to come along and obviously we’re happy for other lawyers to be there to obviously add their weight behind it. Full-Time Officials, fully trained to understand the merits of a claim, who themselves would take the decision on whether that claim goes forward. So as I said in the past, you might get that frivolous claim, a bit of mischief, let’s bang an ET1 in, let’s see if we can get something back off the employer. Now that’s no longer an option because of the costs of going to tribunals, so our Officials are going to be trained to a high enough standard to be able to make those decisions.

Clearly when there’s a borderline case that we’re going to pursue, we’re not absolutely certain whether it’s not cut and dried, then we’ll refer it back to the lawyers and those people will make the decisions and yes, we will pick up the cost of that, but since the inception of Jackson, there are now charges for pre-hearings. A full blown tribunal now costs £1,200, with absolutely no guarantee of return and whilst we haven’t fully costed it out, because of course it’s a moveable feast, we don’t know how many people are going to be fired, we don’t know how many people are going to be putting a claim in for unfair dismissal or constructive dismissal or breach of contract, it’s very, very difficult to cost but that is what we’re trying to do with the experts, if you like, from our legal group, but the Union have got to look at, we’re going to look at financing loans, so we don’t have our members suffering detriment because of the financial implications of Jackson, so if you get dismissed and our gatekeepers who are trained or our lawyers following reference to them if we need to, think that that case should go forward to tribunal, then the Union will make a loan to the member and in successful claims we will take that back. If we lose, then we’ll stand the cost of that money that we’ve put up, put forward, so that’s one of the things that we’re looking to implement.
It’s an estimate that 130,000 people within the legal profession will also lose their jobs, because of the cuts to the money that the government are putting forward and I’ve got to say, just while I’m talking about that, if you go to, I know Watkins have got and I’m presuming the other lawyers have got one as well, there’s a petition, you can get the address from Watkins & Gunn or any of the others, they’ll give you the address of a petition. I would urge every single person in this room to sign that petition, but more I would urge everybody in this room to go back to their branches and go back to their families and go back to their friends and get them to sign the petition.

If we can get 100,000 signatures, I think we’ve got 80,000 at the moment, if we can get another 20,000 people, we will force the government to debate this in parliament, because it isn’t just you, the people in this room, who are going to lose, it’s right across society that the justice system, reportedly to be the best justice system in the world, is going to be affected irrevocably and so we’ve got to do something about it and I do believe that the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union can get our voice out there, yes, whether we do it at Twitter or we do it at Facebook, but most certainly get people to sign this petition to try and pull something back from the government, because if we lose 130,000 people it isn’t about the individuals within the legal profession, it’s about the service that those people are going to be able to promote and it won’t be ‘Oh well, Thompsons haven’t got the lawyers any more or Watkins & Gunn or Walker Smith Way, they haven’t got the lawyers anymore, we’ll go somewhere else’, because it’s going to affect everybody in the same way. It’s not, it’s a disproportionate attack on the justice system and that’s what the Tories want. They don’t want you, working people, to have access to justice.

This all came, the government is saying, because of the exorbitant charges that were being made to their friends in the insurance business, but instead of targeting the ones who were putting malicious claims in, false claims, the motoring claims, instead of targeting those people and doing something about it, what the Tories do, they throw the baby out with the bathwater and target everybody who’s in our class. The picture that they paint is that the UK is a claims culture, but it’s nothing more than a myth, but it’s kept the public quiet as they go through the destructive path within a justice system.

Comrades, we understand that it’s difficult to ask you to make your mind up on a motion that hasn’t got any details, specifically when you don’t know what you’re going to be voting for, but we can’t allow ourselves to be forced into a situation where we either pitch too high or we pitch too low. We’re asking that you give us, the Executive Council, your trust that we can be flexible to shape our legal services in the most cost-efficient way.

We’ll not do anything that makes us an unviable proposition, that’d clearly be turkeys voting for Christmas, but neither can we allow the rule as it is written now to drive the Union into bankruptcy. That’s what the government would like, don’t give them that satisfaction. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Speakers?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’m here again. Yes, I do support the motion. The only thing I’ve got a bit of reservation about is loan to the member. Will this be paid direct to the legal team dealing with the issue, or will it go straight into my bank account? If it does, I can see issues there.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: It’ll be paid direct to the legal team who are doing the representing, or into the tribunal. It’ll be paid direct by the Union.

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Conference, Delegates. Conference, yes Mr President and Delegates. Conference, yes we can support the resolution if it’s going to save the money or save costs because there is a ruling in the rule book where the existing Conference Delegates should be called on any emergency. Now, that’s taken away or it would be replaced by this. The one thing you have to be careful with is that this motion could lead to we know best and be implemented in many, many different ways. Once you start that, it does, so be ready to change, to re-change this resolution, rule it out in years to come if it becomes too much of we know best, but otherwise at the moment support the resolution. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): General Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. I’ve put the emergency resolution No. 2 in. Before I go into that, what I’d like to say is I had the pleasure or the displeasure this year of attending a tribunal with the National President and a number of Delegates here of Peter Barzac. You may be aware, those that came last year, Peter was a shop steward and dismissed. We had seven days at the tribunal. I must say Thompsons legal services, Mr Gary Martin was the barrister, absolutely fantastic. Outclassed the company’s in my opinion, outclassed the company’s barristers, they did a fantastic job. We haven’t got an outcome to that as yet, the tribunal’s meeting again on 1st July, but this is what we need to be able to afford to pay for, because shop stewards, members, they are getting attacked. We all last year at Conference and all were passed a motion for a strike fund that we would all go back to our branches ......
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Dave, Dave, this isn’t the emergency motion.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): No.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You do know that?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): I’m going to remit that. Well, I’m here then to support this motion and I’ll come up and discuss this one afterwards. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Halliday – No. 7 Region: Here to support the motion, but on listening to Ronnie, I think we didn’t go far enough. I’ll get on my high horse again about the Labour Party. We’re saying we can go back and lobby our families, our friends, get 100,000 signatures and that will force a debate, can we depend on the Labour Party to support us? I don’t think so. They’ve already stated again that they’ll not repeal Tory law, so how the hell are we going to get something that is a common right for people who can’t afford to defend themselves, having to pay for it, but I would still ask you to support, but have we got friends in the Labour Party to take it forward? Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Emergency motion No. 2.

**Emergency Motion 2 – Branch 561**

*In view of the Jackson Report and the detrimental changes to Employment Law that this conference give the EC the right to add 5p or 10p to our weekly subscription solely for the purpose of raising a much-needed strike/legal fund*

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. Again, like I said on that motion, I’d like you to support this motion, again exactly for what I was talking about with Peter and like I said with the strike fund last year, we all as branches said we would go away and raise money. I can say for myself I didn’t do that at branch meetings. I think this, by putting an amount on it, would put a definite amount on what we could raise. I’ve done rough sums, 5p’d raise around about 50 grand a year, 10p would raise 100 grand a year. We’re talking two pints of bitter a year, that’s all we’re asking for with this.

I do think we need to act and like I say again, I’d like to reiterate with Thompsons and the legal services, what a fantastic job they did representing Peter. As I say, we’ve not had that outcome yet, but we believe it’s going to be favourable hopefully, but you can never tell with tribunals, but I would ask you to support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Second it? Do you need a seconder? You’re seconding? Right, okay.

Brother Carl Thorne – Branch 543 (No. 5 Region): I’ll second this motion. Delegates, Chair. I ask you to support this motion, to give the funds to protect all BFAWU members, not just now but in the future, we need this fund. I think it would be detrimental to us if we haven’t got a fund in the future to protect our members. Thank you. I ask you to support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Sean Molloy – Branch 558: I’m here to support this motion. In fact most of the members of 558 believe we should be paying at least £15 a month anyway.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Halliday – No. 7 Region: Conference. Earlier on this morning I was asked to sign a bit of a document and it led to food for thought. I know that the National Executive were asked to consider a strike fund and would they be generous in dipping in their pockets. Members were asked the same last year, but I don’t think anything ever came of it, but the document this morning led me to think. Several, maybe 20 years ago, before we amalgamated, I in my wisdom agreed to buy shares. The Union now want the shares transferred or any outstanding funds from other branches transferred. I’m quite willing to do that, but let’s match it. I transferred the profits of the NEC, put the original amount of money in a pot for legal aid and strike fund. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I have to oppose this just on the wording, ‘much-needed strike fund’.

If you pick up your verbatim report of last year’s Conference, Page 105, I actually brought forward to Conference that we have a strike fund and I’m pretty sure that that was carried. We don’t need two strike funds, we just need one, so on that I...
have to oppose it.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, just briefly, Conference. The Executive Council would ask the mover to remit the motion. I know, I think you were going to do that to start off with. Just to explain, I mean we’ve got, let’s be honest, we’ve got a great Union. We want this Union to survive. There’s too many general unions within the country who are trying to represent everyone. We’ve got a specific Union that looks at one industry and that’s a great thing. Trade union movements need independent trade unions, but we’ve got to have the money to survive.

Pat, you’re right, I mean in the rule book it gives the right, if we want to do something like this, for the Executive to recall Conference, but you can imagine the cost of recalling Conference. We’d have to bring you all at least here for one day, some of you would be travelling that far we’d have to put you up overnight and we’ve still got all the travel costs that we have for a four or five day Conference, so that is probably something that would be out with us, but to say with the Labour Party, I don’t know what the Labour Party’s going to do, but let’s be under no illusions that I at the last Trade Union Co-ordinating Group, on the Executive which I sit, raised the issue with Jon Cruddas and Jon Cruddas, if you like, he’s a MP and he is the sort of trade union liaison between Ed Miliband and the trade unions and I made this very point to Jon Cruddas about employment law yes?, the way the austerity programme, all those things which everybody was talking about, attacks on the public services, but I made the greatest play about members being denied the access to justice and why one of the first things that Labour does is to, they’ve got to get in and they’ve got to reverse this.

It’s not about making lawyers rich, it’s about giving you the opportunity to get a fair deal in work, because you can’t compete with a company. It’s very difficult for our Union to compete with the big companies, they’ve got loads of money and the lower they drive your terms and conditions and cut your pensions, they’ll be even richer. That’s the reality what’s happening, they’re building a fighting fund of their own that they can take on working people with and we’ve got to have the ability to do that back. I don’t, I mean I agree with Marilyn, I don’t think you can have two strike funds, we’ve got the ruling there that enables a strike fund, but I do believe and that’s why motion 5 was not prescriptive, it wasn’t definitive, we didn’t put any figures into it because we need to look at what the impact is going to be on this Trade Union going forward and I’ve got my Finance Officer doing this on a constant basis, looking at what’s coming in, looking at what’s going out. So we’d ask the mover to remit it.

The EC will always put in money. If we’ve got a dispute, when we had a dispute at R F Brooks last year, the Executive put money into it. We put resources into it and we will continue to do that, so it’s not, we’re not going to look at just match funding anything. We will target the finances that we’ve got where they are most needed to help the most people at the best time. We’ll always do that, but as far as this legal cuts that the government have implemented, we need to do something almost immediately and so it’s a constant debate, a constant dialogue between the senior partners within our lawyer group and the National Officers and then with the Executive Council to make sure that we can deliver a service that is fit for purpose, but also fit for the Union and finances. So I would ask this, I would ask Dave to remit the motion, purely on the basis that it is a bit prescriptive, 5 or 10p, we may not need to raise revenue in that way at all, we’re going to look at every avenue that we can and if we do, we’ll obviously be holding Regional Councils and whatever and we’ll inform people of what we’re doing, but it will be done for the very, very best reasons and to make sure that this Union remains great and that this Union can continue to deliver the service that you deserve.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, I remit the resolution in favour of No. 5. I think so long as we’ve got something in there, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Dave. Okay, motion 7.

7 Rule 5.4: Retired & Unemployed Members – Executive Council

In the first paragraph, after the first sentence, insert: ‘Qualifying Retired Members may choose to make a one-off £25.00 entitling them to Retired Membership for life; this payment cannot be reduced to reflect contributions already paid’

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Conference. The Executive would ask Conference to support motion 7.

If you remember last year, you passed a motion that asked the Executive to look at the feasibility of retired members
paying a lump sum, rather than paying on quarterly or indeed annually. We did it because of (a) we knew the escalating costs of postage was going up and that every time we had to write out to tell them what they owed, it was costing us a damn sight more to write to them to tell them what they owed and to get the money back in than we were actually getting in revenue. What we’re looking to do is and we had quite an extensive debate at the Executive, the Executive would propose that we put a one-off payment, so people who retire would pay £25 and that would be a lifetime membership to the Union.

It’s not retrospective, so people who retired and paid x amount of money, they can’t come along and say well I want that knocking off the £25, they will, that’s been paid, but what they will have, they will have the opportunity then to pay going forward a £25 lifetime contribution, or if they want to pay a smaller amount, they can continue to pay that, we’re totally ambivalent about it.

We still have the worry, as an Executive Council, of how we keep in touch with our members. It isn’t so bad with younger people, because we said before social media, texts, mobile phones, all these things, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, we can contact younger people and younger people can contact us that way, but of course with the older element and no disrespect to them, the percentages of people who are computer literate would be slightly lower. I’d urge them to go and speak to the people of our Learning Service because we can actually do something about that, but the fact is we’re worried about how we keep those people in, when they’ve got no email address or they haven’t us a telephone number.

So we’d run the dual membership system for existing retired members and then presumably have the one-off payment for all newly retired members I think and that was what the motion was talking about last year. The Executive Council’s carefully considered what would be the best way to deliver last year’s motion, I think it was motion 98, in a fair and equitable way, whilst ensuring that we don’t disenfranchise those who have a long standing link to our organisation. We believe we’ve addressed all the questions and would ask Conference to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Formally seconded? Speakers? It’s cause it’s getting near dinnertime, isn’t it? To the vote. Those in favour? Anyone against? I tell you what we’re going to do then, we’ll close Agendas for now and, and I’ll ask the, I’m sorry yes, that was carried, yes, I was getting excited for dinner as well.

I’ll ask the General Secretary to, to us it’s very, very important that we recognise people with long service to the Trade Union and, and, and we’ve got two, two major awards that we want to give out on the first day of Conference. I mean obviously anybody who does a year with this Union is fantastic. Anyone who does 20 years is unbelievable. Anyone who does 40 years, then we owe them, what we give them is just a small token of our respect and I’m just waiting for Ronnie to get down there, who’s taking his time, because we would like to invite up two people and I don’t know which order you’re going to do it, but okay mate.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Thank you, President. These are one of the greatest things that we do with them, besides I know all the fighting and campaigning and speeches and meetings that we go to, I’ve got to say one of the most enjoyable things that I have to perform was when you go and give long service awards to members and if you think of all the choices that we had in the trade union movement, we’ve got a damn sight less trade unions now than we used to have, but these people who we’re going to award today actually had the opportunity of going to other unions, there were other unions even within our industry, most certainly in one of the cases there was an option of joining other unions but no, these people have stayed loyal to us.

So the first person I’d like to present a card to is Brother Martin Kelly. You know Martin, I think he was the first speaker at Conference this morning, but Martin does an absolutely fantastic job for this Union on the TUC Disability Executive. He goes there religiously. I know how passionate he is about disabled rights and what he can do and that’s what we’ve got to do, get people with this passion and desire to make sure that this Union has a real input at the Trade Union Congress, so Martin I’ll ask you to come forward and present you with your gift.

[APPLAUSE]

There’s a 40 year certificate, there’s a silver badge, you’ve got a really posh and you’re one of the first people to get this, this is the new free card that members of 40 years will get, it’s a really posh one and of course, most importantly, you’ll get a cheque there for 150 quid, so I’ll be round your hotel tonight, so don’t spend it all before I get there.

Martin, thank you very much for your loyalty to the Union.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Martin Kelly:** Thank you.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Okay, that’s fine, no problem. Okay, there we go. I’m sure we can arrange it,
we’ll arrange, we can arrange a tin of biscuits, can’t we? Martin, well we’ll get one of the EC members to bring it over, bring you a tin of biscuits over.

The second person who I’m going to award today I have known for many years. He’s, when you talk about life’s jokers, this guy really is, he’s been a really good friend over the years, we’ve been in many, many scrapes together from when I first became a full-time Official, Brother Steve Finn’s going to come down and get his award, he’s the longest serving Official in the Union, in fact he was longer serving than the General Secretary prior to me, Joe Merino, he was longer in the Union, than Joe.

I’ve got to say that my first introduction to Steve Finn was at Margate in 1979, he was, we both had, I had longer hair, I think he had longer hair as well, we definitely weren’t as grey that as we are now and it was actually when Steve had been awarded the TUC award for organising, the gold, the men’s gold badge, he got and that’s some achievement when you think at that time there was probably 13 million plus people in the trade union movement and for Steve Finn to be picked out like that, he had to have something special. I know that in the early days, he used to organise Tesco’s, he used to go round the in-store bakers before they got pilfered by another union. The fact is that we had a growing membership right around the country in Tesco in-store bakers and that was solely down to Steve Finn, the work he’s done.

Steve’s progressed, he was a Regional Organiser when he started and he’s now, I’m proud to say, he’s the Regional Officer in No. 1 and that’s come in during my watch as well, he got lifted up to Regional Officer. He’s a great character, a real joker, a great Official, but mostly he’s done a fantastic job for the members in No. 1 so Steve, can I ask you to come down and get your free card.

[APPLAUSE]

So again, same as what Martin’s got, your free badge, I hope you wear that with pride, I’m sure you will, cheque for 150 quid, I’ll see you later as well after I’ve finished with Martin, your free card and of course your certificate which, okay, is a bit of paper, bit of cardboard, but to achieve that is something. If you view the pride in getting that, the same as I view it in giving it you, then it’ll take pride of place somewhere. Cheers, Steve, thanks for your loyalty. Of course you can, yes.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Steve Finn – Regional Officer for the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union (No. 1 Region): General Secretary, National President, Executive Members and Delegates, guests to Conference as well. Quite a surprise because I wasn’t expecting that, so thank you very much and with regards to the debate we’ve just had about a strike fund, I’m lucky enough to be working for a fantastic trade union. I’m not going to talk too much about the salary, whether it’s enough or whether it isn’t, but what I want to do is, I don’t need the £150, because I draw a wage from the Union which people contribute through their membership, so as far as I’m concerned, when we get the strike fund, the first £150 can be from Steve Finn.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, but I just forgot to say whatever Ronnie and Ian do, please don’t tell my five grandchildren [LAUGHTER].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, okay, Delegates, there’s a Greggs meeting which is going to be held in the Harbour Spa Suite, I believe, over there which will be straight after Conference. Maybe five minutes to get a cigarette. For everybody else, it’s 2 o’clock back, okay? and if you’re late, you get fined, so don’t be late.

Afternoon Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can we have the doors shut now, please. Everybody in their seats.

Just before the General Secretary takes the roll call, has everybody signed the get well card to John McDonald that’s been going round? I mean obviously John McDonald’s been a regular visitor to Bakers Union and he’s been a massive supporter of ours, both inside and outside of parliament. Unfortunately he got taken ill just a few weeks ago and he’s been told he’s not allowed to do any work until September, which I know will probably hurt him probably more than what the illness he’s currently suffering is doing, but I’m sure from this Conference we’d like to send, obviously with the card, our best wishes to John and wish him a speedy recovery. I’ve also been asked to pass a message on from Sarah McClennan, who asks us to thank Conference and thank the Bakers Union for all the support that she was given and to wish our Conference and all the Delegates an enjoyable Conference and to wish us all well.

General Secretary for the, call the roll call.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you, President. Region 1, probably took the National President’s directions like this morning. Coffee was over there, when it was actually over there. Region 2. Region 3. John, did you say 48? So it was 48 this morning, was it? Region 4. You had 38 this morning. Making a mess of my register here, you.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: [LAUGHTER]. That’s the problem with 4, isn’t it.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Region 5. Region 6 and Region 7. Thank you. So we have 176 Delegates this afternoon, we did have 177 this morning.

Can I just say before the President moves on, if anybody’s received an email from Joe McSherry from Warburtons in Bolton, it’s a spam email that’s, somebody must have hacked his account. I’ve got one this morning. Don’t open it because obviously it’ll infect your phone, unless of course you’ve got a iPhone or something, but don’t open it, just delete it. He hasn’t sent emails out to anybody, so if you’ve got one from Joe McSherry just delete it. Not every one he ever sends, just that one.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay and just for clarification, the reason why I sent them all over that way this morning is cause I can’t point to the right. Okay [LAUGHTER]. If I always talk left, it’s because I am left.

Okay, we’ve got the nominations for the Labour Party and the TUC. I’m going to read out your names, if they’ve been put down there and you don’t want to go, just shout out “withdraw”. Okay. You were supposed to take them up for 11 o’clock this morning. I mean, Olive Molloy said from here, it was agreed by Conference, you agreed it, are you, I mean I can delay it if you want. She said it from here in her Standing Orders Report, all nomination forms to be upstairs for 11 o’clock.

I’ll tell you what I’ll do, right, because obviously we don’t want anybody to miss out, right, if you can make sure they go up now, right and make sure ours go up here as well, right, right, make sure these go up as well and by the way, I’ve just ruled theirs out of order, so I’m only doing it because there’s Delegates down there on the shop floor, has everybody else sent their nomination papers upstairs? Yes? Right, okay, can you make sure they go upstairs then and obviously they’ll do them again. Never say we’re not fair. Okay, I believe before we get back to the Agenda, there’s a Delegate that would like to make a statement if he wants to come up.

Brother XXXXXX? Speaker: Right, I’m new to this and my behaviour last night was unacceptable, so I apologise to each and every one of you. I’d like to thank Joe for putting up with me, Ronnie for smartening me up and I thought Ian’s speech this morning woke me up, so I really have appreciated the fact that people are like letting me off the hook on this one, but I’d also like to give a personal apology to Mr Ian Wood, because every time he turns up at my site, our membership grows. He’s not like a full-time Official, he’s like my big brother, he’s got a football with him, he’s a right lad. Also while I’m here, we should be paying £15 a month to keep these guys afloat. Strength in Unity.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, mate. Thank you very much for that. Okay. Okay, motion 9.

9 Replace Rule 14.3 – Executive Council

That Conference agrees to remove the entire rule and replace with the amended wording below.

‘Each Branch may elect Union Learner Representatives. The Learner Representatives must normally complete a Union Training course in Learner representative skills within 6 months of election. Upon successful completion of this course they will be issued with Learner Representatives Credentials by the relevant Regional Council. Regional Councils shall elect one Learner Representative per Region to attend the National Union Learner Representative Committee plus a substitute. The role of the National Learner Representatives Committee shall be to discuss the progress of the Union Learner Reps programme/learning activity within the Union/Industries and to make recommendations to the EC on these matters. The National ULR Committee shall not have decision making powers. The National Learner Representatives Committee shall consist of one Learner Representative from each Region the National Officers plus co-opted members. Only Learner Representatives who are working in workplaces recognised by the relevant Regional Council can be Learner Representative under the Rule and serve on Learner Representatives Committees at whatever level. Meetings of the National Learner Representatives Committee shall be held at least one week prior to the quarterly EC meetings. National Learner Representative Committee members will hold office for a period of two years, be eligible for re-election and paid fares and fees as per Regional Council members. Where a Learner Representative Committee member is unable to attend a meeting, substitutes are allowed.

Each Branch or Regional Council will include on their agenda the item ‘Learning and Training’ to encourage discussion of this important subject.’

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Conference, Executive Council would ask you to support motion 9.

I’ve got to say there’s nothing sinister or clandestine about the motion or the reasons for bringing it to Conference. It’s
both a tidying-up exercise as well as being an enabling motion for learning going forward. The tidying-up element allows us to be in compliance with the learning structure that we actually have. For instance, the present rule states that National Union Learner Representatives are elected by the Regional Learner Representatives Committee which is held the week before the September Regional Council meeting, or is it? In essence, how many regions actually have that meeting at all? and because they don’t have it, we’re therefore out of compliance.

I believe that we have evolved into a present system because Regional Learner Representatives meetings were not being held and so Regional Councils elect the Learner Representatives that they believe best can represent that region at National meetings. Everyone in the room understands that paid release is a premium and getting released for Regional Learner Representatives Committees is going to prove extremely difficult, but the very action or inaction of not having these meetings places the legitimacy of National Union Learning Representatives Committee in doubt. If you have a rule that signposts how elections take place and then which path you must take from there, no meeting, no election, no election, no Delegates and no Delegates means there’s clearly no meeting.

The change of rule, if you like, brings us back into compliance. It’s a, another exercise in sensible tidying of the rule, is an inclusion of the word “learning”, to stand alongside training on branch and regional council agendas. Too much emphasis is placed on the training and the instruction of what needs to be done to make training successful, whether vocational or educational.

Learning gives us the necessary skills to undertake training. Learning enables us to understand demands and instructions, but also allows us to make choices in life, one of which may be the choice of whether we undertake training or not. Too many companies that we deal with think learning centres are to access training, instead of being a conduit to improving the learning experience for our members. From an enabling standpoint, we have to understand that the present rule was written and implemented at a time when we had only one learning project in the UK and that covered England only. Now I’m pleased to say, we don’t have one National Project Manager, we have four Project Managers covering England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

We already, as a committee, invite all four to attend our meetings and I don’t see any reasons if we change this rule that that’s going to change, unless of course if we lost future funding. If that happens, the new rule gives us a strong foundation for sustainability. The important thing to understand is that the rule does not cut across any project or undermine any Project Manager. Union Learner Reps are branch Officials, not employees of the learning project. The National ULR meeting is a union meeting which is funded by the Union, it’s not funded by any government. If we lost funding, we would not have either Project Managers or project workers and so would be out of compliance with the rule as it stands, but the new rule allows us to co-opt whoever we need, retaining the relevant skills and the level of debate needed for sustainability and learning.

Comrades, the Executive have absolutely no plans to change the make-up of the National meeting, but must have the means to introduce flexibility should funding end. We recognise the importance of all learning projects, but also need to stress that we need to give Union Learner Reps the ability to progress, this rule allows that. In finishing, I’d like to ask that all branches seriously consider bringing in the learning services onto their sites to assist with the essential skills needed. We’re in the envious position of having members who, because the length of their hourly contracts or the low wage exploitation of their employer, are dependent upon benefits.

The government are moving to a situation where benefits have to be claimed on-line and there’s no doubt that this is going to have a negative impact on those we represent. People who have difficulties with reading, with writing and with IT skills are going to be at a severe disadvantage. As more companies announce redundancies, there are many members who need assistance with making claims or writing CVs and enhancing the skills that make themselves more employable out in the tight market that we have now. This is where the service of our learning teams are invaluable.

So, as a plea from the Executive, please contact your relevant project workers. Get them in on your site, listen to what they can do for you because, believe me, they can offer a damn sight more than lots of other benefits that we have and help them to make a difference to the members that we represent. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

12 Rule 20.1: Duties and Payments of National Officers and the Executive Council – EC

That this conference agrees that this Rule be amended to read: “The general management of the Union shall be invested in a committee of management termed the Executive Council consisting of the National President, General Secretary, and members elected in accordance with Rule 22.6(b)”

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Delegates, we would ask Conference to support the motion. Again, it’s very much a tidying-up exercise. As Rule 20.1 reads at present, it says one member from each district. Given that we don’t have districts any more, we’d be out of kilter with the rule, every time we hold an election. It also says that they would be elected by and from Annual Conference Delegates. Clearly that’s no longer the way in which elect our Executive, that changed last year. There’s really nothing to be gained or lost by the motion, except that it takes the last reference to a district structure out of the rule book and at least we hope it’s the last one. If we look through it properly, we believe that the last time we’d be coming back and trying to take reference to districts out of the rule book. On that basis, we’d ask you to support and it’s just purely a tidying-up exercise.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? No speakers? To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 15.

15 Rule 22.2: Nomination and Election of Delegates for Annual Conference – EC

That this conference agrees to delete the whole of rule 22.2 and replace with the following:
There shall be no restrictions on nominations. Each Branch shall be allowed one Delegate per 100 members or part thereof with a maximum of three delegates from any one Branch. A branch will be able to elect a further delegate if they elect a member under the age of 27? However, where there is a shops section within the factory branch, additional to factory branch delegates, nominations shall be held within the shops section and election on the basis of one delegate per 50 members or part thereof with a maximum of two delegates from that shop section.

Sister Rachel Mullen, Young Members REP EC: Moving on behalf of the Executive Council. Obviously you can all read through the motion for yourselves, so I’m not going to go through it. I urge you to support this motion and I ask you to do so because I think it is important for Conference and for the Union because like I’ve said many, many, many, many times before, that we need to get more young people involved in being active within the Union and I think attending Conference is important for young people, after all Conference is where it all happens, it’s where the policy-making is done and I think it would be very beneficial for the young members to come and see and understand what exactly goes on here. At the first young members forum held, there were a few people that didn’t even know about Conference, had no clue that Conference went on and that shocked me and I just couldn’t believe that they didn’t know that this important thing at the centre of our Union, apart from members obviously that are the centre of the Union, was just, they didn’t have a clue about it. We need to give the young members a chance. Look what happened to me or Chris Lay at the back, stop talking, or Sarah Woolley when we were given the chance. We got out there and we got active, but we need more young members doing the same.

I do believe that it is vital we get young members going along to events like Conference, but at the same time I don’t want to push the older, more experienced, Delegates out of a place at Conference, as we need them also to offer the stories and experiences and share their knowledge with my generation, otherwise how will we learn and gain information of our best people and effectively what the motion is saying is if you elect a person under 27 in the place at Conference, you then get an additional place for somebody who perhaps may go or have already been before, or go on a regular basis. We know that the money is tight, no question about that and we know that there will be criticisms about the money and if we can afford to do this, but my question is can we not afford to do it? Can we not afford to invest in the future of this Union and future generations of this Union? I move the motion. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding it?

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: Platform, President, Delegates. I urge you, I’m here to formally second it, I urge you to support this motion. We need to look at the future. Where are you all going to be in 10 years? Where will this Conference be in 10 years? If there are people like myself, Chris, Rachel here to learn now, we need young members here to be nurtured, so that we can carry this Union, carry this Conference on for years to come. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: I think it was either Ian or Ronnie said earlier that we are the specialised Union for Bakers. If we look at our, if we look at a lot of people now, we’ve got a lot of youngsters, youths working within, I know for myself I have a lot in my shops where I’m the shop steward, these sort of people we need to start bringing in to the Union, bringing in to the trade union movement. This motion’s here to help that movement. We’re not asked, we’re asking for, we’re asking for the more maturer people, the ones who’ve been here the longest, the people like Pat Rowley and people like that, to help us along so we can have this Union, which has supported you for 10, 15, 20, up to 40-odd years, we want that Union for us for 40 years, so please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other speakers? Those in favour? Anyone against? That’s carried. Absolutely fan, that’s fantastic, I think that’s absolutely brilliant, well done.

[APPLAUSE]

Okay? 16.

That Conference.....

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: Sorry about that. Mr President, Platform, Delegates. What we’re asking for here is, Greggs take up nearly a quarter of our Union’s membership. Now Greggs is a retail business with bakeries, not a bakery business with shops and we feel, as shop workers, that we are, there’s not enough of us at Conference, there’s not enough of us to say what goes on in our shops. So what we’re asking for is an extra Delegate from the shop section. We don’t want 10, we just want one, at the moment we can only bring two of us, so we want to make that to three, just to give us a fairer voice whilst we’re here, so please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding?

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: Seconding the motion. Obviously I work at Greggs, I’m from the shops and I absolutely 100% support this motion. Yes, you’ve got to realise the point that yes, if we do have a place for three people to come from the shops, it won’t always be the case that three people will come, because obviously the company aren’t going to pay for three people to be released to Conference, so it’s all about if people are willing to come without the paid release from work, but I think if people use their holidays it shows how dedicated they are to this Union. I mean, the only reason why the bakery gets more Delegates, it’s because back in the day when the rules were made, the bakeries had more members, so they needed more representation here, but obviously with Greggs growing and growing and growing there’s a Greggs, if you turn every corner there’s a Greggs there, you can’t get away from it, but obviously where small shops are going to have more members, so the roles are reversed and we’ve got a bigger percentage of members in the shops than the bakery, not membership density but actual numbers of members, we’ve got more in the shops, so we need a better voice for the shop workers at Conference. I support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: I’m also here to support this motion. It’s so important, as Rachel and Sarah have both pointed out, we’ve got more and more Greggs shops within the, within our, within the Union now. It’s hard to get round and see all the shop, all the shops and try and get more and more members, it’s very, very hard. It’s, I just think that we need to make sure that we are represented to the maximum which we possibly can do as shops, so please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings): President, General Secretary, Delegates.

Here to fully support this motion, on the basis that the recruitment is a big, big, big issue within Greggs shops and the more Delegates that we get to Conference from the shops would help in making sure that we (a) improve our recruitment and (b) retention and there’s an open minefield out there within Greggs, there is so many members that are not being captured and every year, every quarter when you look around, you go to your regional councils, come to Conference, there is always a reduction in membership due to site closures and this and that and everything else, so it is a must that each and every one of us in this room supports the motion which shows encouragement and which will show the support for increasing our membership, so that we remain independent because we are a specialist Union and we are one family, so I urge everybody, including the platform, that this motion gets fully supported and gets endorsed and gets implemented and next year I would look at it further yes, there would be a cost, why not increase it to say 5? Yes? because there is a potential, awful potential for greater recruitment. I fully urge everybody to support this motion. Thank you.
Sunday June 9 afternoon: Motions 8 – 26

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, obviously it would be hypocritical for me to get up here and say anything other than the Executive would ask you to support the motion. I mean, obviously we’ve just had a Greggs meeting next door and a discussion was about how we get the shops more involved and to be quite clear, this is one of the ways that we believe that shop workers can be better represented at this Conference and making sure that this Union reflects the interests of shop workers as well as bakery workers, so the Executive Council would ask you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Anyone against? That’s carried. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, well done. Obviously that’s the end of the rule changes, which now means it’s just a straightforward vote. It’s just a majority vote, the difference between obviously this morning with the rule changes was it was always two-thirds, now it’s just a simple majority vote. Okay, so calling motion 17.

17 Rights at Work – Branch 313

Conference agrees to condemn the practice of companies within the food industry using scanning devices to undermine our members at work including the threat of dismissal. This is a serious infringement of basic rights at work.

National officers to send a letter to all companies using this type of system demanding the eradication of such threats against our members employment

Brother Robin Henderson – Branch 313 (Hardings): General Secretary, President, Platform and Delegates. I hereby move that this Conference agrees to condemn the practice of companies within the food industry using scanning devices to undermine our members at work, including the threat of dismissal. This is a serious infringement of our basic rights at work. National Officers to send a letter to all the companies using this type of system, demanding their eradication of such threats against our members’ employment. (coughs) Excuse me, first time (coughs). Basically what it is, we’ve had scanners at our place, the companies are now using them as a means of time and motion within the company, forcing more and more people to work harder, faster, getting rid of people when they want to get rid of people and I find that we should move this, or ask them to move it. If you’d please support this motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Congratulations by the way on your birthday as well, Robin. Happy birthday, mate.

Brother Robin Henderson – Branch 313 (Hardings): Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding this, Raj, yes?

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings): Yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings): General Secretary, President, Platform, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion.

As my colleague’s already pointed out, the system we’re talking about is (unclear), it’s across the whole of the Hovis spectrum. No doubt it’ll be rolling out to other employers as well. I am fully aware of sites where they employ, especially our Hovis employer, have tried to use the scanning devices to penalise and bully our colleagues and our members. When the company adopted the use, the use of scanning guns, they assured us that it will not be used to punish members but aid in better and safer working practices and I had to laugh and chuckle at that when I first heard it, because I said there has to, being Hovis there has to be some form of hidden agenda.

The employer then tried to use this to monitor the workplace and scare people into working into a zone which was beyond their comfort zone and you even had people that were working against each other, setting up targets for the other colleagues to say well, I’ve achieved so much, what have you achieved? and then you had certain managers saying well, if so and so can do so much, why are you not doing it? and they tried to go down the road of discipline. To overcome the problem we went and we utilised the dispute procedure and quoted all the health and safety legislation and I said look, this is a minefield, you gave us assurances at the time you wouldn’t be using it in a derisory manner, here you are, some six months on, four and a half, six months on and you’re trying to penalise our people, have you done adequate risk assessments? The employer said yes, well can we see them?, so when we as a Union saw the risk assessments we said well, there’s loads of things missing on here, for example VDU, because this is a visual display unit, the risk assessment,
this factor, that factor, so we entered into a dispute, believe it or not it died away, they stopped the monitoring process, they didn’t discipline everybody and so forth and so forth, but you have to challenge these employers, so I urge all the Delegates to support the motion and the Executive, as it says in the motion, needs to write to the employers to say that we will not tolerate this in any way, shape or form, because this goes against working practices and the health and safety. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion, obviously another Hovis site. I believe these things started out of Tesco, I don’t know how true it is, but I believe Tesco now have one which fits to your arm and measures how many arm movements you do per minute, per hour and they’ll use it as a tool to discipline. What the employers need to realise is we’re human beings and not robots. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201 (Hovis, Avonmouth): I’m here to support this motion. When we were told about these new scanners, some’s coming in, it was raised obviously by ourselves that they were going to become a big brother and they were going to be used so they could be disciplining people. We were told quite categorically that wasn’t going to be the case. It was, because three or four weeks ago, four of my members were due for a disciplinary on not being quick enough and all that. I immediately asked for the time and motion study, which they didn’t provide. They decided they weren’t going to discipline the members after all, but this was supposed to be for product improvement not for monitoring staff. It doesn’t take into account anybody’s abilities or disabilities, they pit one person against the other and they’re set up in a system that sets people up to fail. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Sean Molloy – Branch 558: I’m here to support this motion because my main concern is we’re heading towards a Victorian style workplace.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, the Executive would ask you to support the motion and we give a firm commitment as well. If you do support the motion, then we will take this to the National Health & Safety Committee and we will write out to all the branches to find out where these type of activities are taking place and then obviously we will look at putting together some best practice guides, so the Executive Council would ask you to support this resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 18.

18 Rights at Work – Branch 561

That this conference agrees to keep up pressure on this government to stop making detrimental changes to employment law. Workers do have rights and should be able to exercise them without fear.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): I’ll ask you to support this motion. It goes back again to the Jackson report and what we’ve just heard with the, these devices, there’s fear in the workplace. It’s time that these rights were given back to the employees. I hope the next Labour government and I hope the Executive and the Union, Executive strongly or whoever takes to the Labour Party Conference, urge the Labour Party if they do get in government next time to make the changes back. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]


General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you, Chair. The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the motion. What, of course we go beyond supported just by a show of hands, because that means very little outside of this hall. There’s got to be support by direct action. Whether that action is industrial action or whether it’s campaigning on the doorstep. Whether the action’s lobbying parliament through the parliamentary group that we’re very effective in, or withdrawing funding, or taking our campaign out to the general public, we need direct targeted action. You may ask why I’ve mentioned the withdrawal of funding. Well, the reality is that the most, most of the changes that we’re looking for, as Dave said, will be inherited by a Labour government in future and therefore the issue of funding becomes a very, very real issue. I met Jon Cruddas, as I said this morning, the MP, who’s Ed Miliband liaison guy with the trade unions and he was left in absolutely no doubt whatsoever that the funding of the Labour Party by this Trade Union was not a given, it was something that they’d got to deserve before they get it.
The days of blindingly funding anyone, because we’ve traditionally done it for years, have come to the end, but returning to the reason that the motion is before Conference. It’s about the actions of the most right-wing government in living memory and the effect on the workforce across the country. This government doesn’t listen to doctors, it doesn’t listen to eminent economists, it doesn’t listen to lawyers or even their own members, so I suppose expecting them to listen to us is going to fall upon deaf ears. The only thing that this government takes, besides large political donations, is direct action. Can I just qualify, I’m not advocating a donation to them, whatever its size to the Tories or their political clutch the Lib Dems, I’m not saying that we should be looking at donations to them, but a good result of direct campaigning was our campaign that we ran against the Pasty Tax. Our Union, a major employer like Greggs and hundreds and thousands of signatures gathered on the street by the Regional TUCs, by our branches, in the shops, by our members. That has been the same for many of the other U-turns that this government’s made. I couldn’t tell you how many they’ve made because it seems that they do it every week, but the reality is that since the No. 5 Regional Council put this motion on, workers rights have been eroded further.

I said before, access to justice, tribunal fees have come into play, the Jackson report in the main’s been implemented and the onus of proof has changed from the employer having to prove that they’re not guilty into you having to prove that the employer is guilty, potentially, as I said this morning, with no financial support. Attacks on protective health and safety legislation, combined with the further erosion of the funding and powers of the Health & Safety Executive, all destabilised the rights of workers at work. The half-baked idea of trading shares for employment, for your rights, is so dangerous if it’s pursued. What value will these shares have if the company goes bust? What value do they have in the protected conversations that have been introduced into employment law, where the employer can dismiss almost at will? The internal battles that the Tories are having on Europe may be advertised as being about the economy and the power of Brussels, but let’s be unequivocal, it’s about workers rights, that’s why the battles are going on within Europe, within the Tory party.

When Cameron talks about negotiating a better deal for Britain in Europe, that’ll include the scrapping of the legislation that gives protection to workers, protections that say or that have been seen as milestones around the neck of employers. Don’t forget your right to go on holiday comes from European statute. The working time regulations that are there to stop workers being exploited on the length of the working day, the length of the working week, the length of the working month or indeed the length of the working year, they come from Europe, that is European legislation and in health and safety, other regulations such as the six pack which we’ve used for year, after year, after year, came from Europe. Indeed that list goes on and on and I’m sure when we come to the health and safety debates later on, the President will be making reference to them, but the reality is that Cameron is allowed to get his grubby little hands on protective laws. Watch how quickly it can affect and their protections are diluted for workers in this country.

Comrades, the trade union movement has never been more relevant to working people and why we don’t have people knocking our doors down to join is an absolute mystery to me, but still we’re a powerful force when we’re united. The reality is if we don’t stand up and fight back, the biggest change to the word that this motion will be that workers no longer have rights. Yes, you should be able to exercise those rights without fear. We should be able to return home in the same physical and mental state as we went to work. We should be able to have a decent standard of living, the promise of a decent pension, paid holidays, realistic shift patterns and the right to join a trade union of our choice. That has to be recognised and we should have the right to legal redress when we’ve been wronged by our employer or hurt by their negligence, but Delegates, these are all rights that are being eroded before our eyes. How much longer will you allow it?

We will continue to question government, whatever its colour, but the real answers to fighting back lay in this hall, they lay in the members back in the branches, they lay with people in society, that’s how we’re going to bring about change in this country, by taking direct action and not just showing our hands here, so by all means support the motion, but make sure you take that message out from this hall, that there’s got to be something, direct action that we do. Colleagues, I would ask you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. I’d now like to welcome back Olive to give a further Standing Orders report.

Sister Olive Molloy – Standing Orders: Thank you. Turn to your Agendas, to motion 23. Motion 23 stands, 24 stands, 25 stands, 26 stands, 27 is withdrawn and all the following motions stand, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 40. That’s the end of this report, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So Conference, everybody accept that report? Anyone against? That’s carried, thank you. 19. Motion 19? No. 1 Regional Council? No? Going once [LAUGHTER]. Is there nobody from Region 1 that wants to move that?
**19 Rights at Work – Branch 116**

_That this conference supports this resolution and agrees that pressure be applied to employers by the trade union to return Christmas Day to the employees and that Christmas Day December 25th becomes and remains a non-productive and non-working day._

**Brother Peter Berry – Branch 116 (Greggs, Enfield – Region 1):** Mr President, Platform, Delegates. This is pretty much what it says, Conference, we ask Conference to support the resolution to put pressure on employers not to put, not to introduce Christmas Day working. I’m moving this on behalf of one of my brothers who hasn’t attended. It is what it says. Please, I move.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconded? Are you seconding? Okay.

**Brother Chris Lay – Region 2:** Totally agree with the motion, so please support it. I’d even go further as to say put it on Boxing Day as well. There’s no reason why we should be open on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. If we can’t cope without a bloody loaf of bread for two days, it’s ridiculous.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford):** General Secretary, National President, EC, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. I put one in two years ago which got thrown out, I don’t know whether this one will because it’s worded better than what mine was, but yes, I’m here to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings):** President, Platform, Delegates. I’m not supporting this motion and I’m not totally against this motion, however I want to give you some food for thought. There is branches within the whole of this Union that has, over the years, negotiated away Christmas Day in way, shape or form. It’s okay when one tends to start lobbying and demanding and getting Christmas Day back, but the employer will come back and hit the Ts & Cs and will want some money back. I do not believe for one moment that we as branches, as a Union nationally, would get full membership support in any potential ballot, so as I said I’m not opposing it and I’m not really supporting it either, it’s food for thought. I’ll leave it open, but personally, gut instinct, if I was still at my branch, I wouldn’t be putting this through because for starters we have already negotiated away Christmas Day, it’s on a voluntary basis but we’ve got a premium for it and we’ll keep that premium and we’ll still be volunteers, but there’s other branches within the Union that have given away the right, that are asked to do Christmas Day, that do get premium for it and if we want Christmas Day back or the Boxing Day back for that matter, although that’s not in the motion, so at this moment it’s Christmas Day, there would be detriment and I don’t think we’ll get the support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201:** I’m here to support this motion, because we’ve given our Christmas Day away, we didn’t want to, we had no choice. We were given contracts that said a day is a day (unclear), so we have to come into work on Christmas Day for not a penny more. I’m here to totally support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Sean Molloy – Branch 558:** Again. I’m here to support this motion because basically the current government that we’ve got in charge don’t want to pay you for it anyway, simple as.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, clearly the Executive would ask you to support this motion. I mean, it’s absolutely ridiculous that people can’t do without bread, as Chris said, for one or two days, it’s unbelievable in the modern days of fridges and freezers that we’re unable to make sure that there is a steady supply of bread to supermarkets and we’ve got to remember, this is a supermarket-driven agenda and when managers insist that people actually have to give up their Christmas Day, I think what we should be also saying to that manager is, if you want me to work Christmas Day, then you come and stand next to me, because if you expect me to do it, we should expect them to do it, because we shouldn’t give up our Christmas Days for anybody. In fact we shouldn’t give up holidays or bank holidays for anybody either.

[APPLAUSE]

We took action, we took strike action in the past to make sure we got them and if we have to do it again, we should be prepared to stand up and fight and do it again and quite clearly, quite clearly, the attacks, the attacks we’ve seen in recent years on working people and this is just another one of them and what we’ve got to do as a trade union is make sure that we
raise the issue of what’s happening to people in the food industry and the consequences of those actions on the workforce in the food industry. Recently what we’ve seen in the food industry and getting told in shop supermarkets like horsemeat as pies, horsemeat pies going into supermarkets, that’s a consequence of supermarkets forcing terms and conditions down and when they’ve got them down to the lowest part that they can achieve, the only thing that they’ve got left is to attack the ingredients, so we’ve got to make sure as a trade union, we explain to people and the buying public that the consequences of continually allowing supermarkets to drive down the terms and conditions of working people, we can no longer sit by and stand up and say we’re not going to take it, we’re going to take it, we’ve got to stand up and we’re going to have to fight and this year, this trade union will be making sure that we bring it to the forefront, we’re going to make sure that people understand the consequences, because we’re going to run a campaign.

We’re going to run a campaign that highlights the issues around the terms and conditions and the undermining of the terms and conditions of working people and especially those in our industry and we want everybody in this hall and everybody back at the branches to get involved with that campaign. That campaign is going to get the full support of our parliamentary group and we should make it a general election issue. This should be an issue.

Working people matter and standing up for working people is the most important thing that we do as a trade union, so we cannot sit idly by and allow those people to take our rights away. We stand up and we fight and that’s what this trade union will do and we make sure ......

[APPLAUSE]

and we make sure that we support this motion and we get behind that campaign. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. I’m on the wrong page. Motion 20.

20 Rights at Work – Branch 390

This conference applauds the introduction of a national living wage and the employers who are enlightened enough to pay it. We now, as employers ourselves, seek to join the scheme and be accredited with the Living Wage foundation. This will mean that from now on, all BFAWU employees will be paid a living wage.

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Mr President, Mr Chair, Platform, Delegates. That this Conference supports the introduction of a national living wage and the employers who are enlightened enough to pay it. We as employees ourselves now seek to join this scheme and be accredited with the Living Wage Foundation. This will mean, from now on, all BFAWU employees will be paid a living wage. I think everyone deserves a living wage, which reflects the true cost of living in Britain in 2013, instead of being on a minimum wage which is unrealistic. That’s why I ask that this Conference supports this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Any other speakers? General Sec ......

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: This is so important that people get a living wage, I mean the prices of everything is just going up and up and up, whether it’s in your supermarket, your insurances, whatever it is, the prices are going up. The living wage will help people actually live the life which they are entitled to. They shouldn’t be put on the poverty line, they should get that living wage for them. Thank you. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – South-West: Mr President, Delegates. Conference, we must support this resolution. People have to go to work and they can’t have enough money to keep them when they come home, that’s a disgrace in any country. No wages in this country and high rents are destroying the social services, that’s what’s happening and it’s happening around us. This motion was here before and I’m glad to see that it’s back again and that we will fight for a living wage, that’s what you go to work for, you don’t want work, you go to work for what you, to make your living, for to get your food and everything you need. Conference, we have to support these kind of resolutions because while we won’t and you will have to take action in some cases. Conference, support this resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you, President, Delegates. We’d ask Conference to support the motion.

I’m pleased to say, Warren, that we are already an employer who not only pays the living wage, but surpasses it by some way and if you like, as a pre-emptive strike to the motion, sometimes we do look through the Agenda, indeed Dave
Suddards was in parliament with Ian and I last week and can testify that we actually do talk about stuff that’s coming up here, so we don’t wait for it to get passed, we actually do something about it, but I’ve already sent our name to the Living Wage Foundation for accreditation, although I’m not sure what we actually get out of there, because I mean people expect a trade union to be paying decent wages to start off with. I’m not sure who runs or who sponsors the Living Wage Foundation, I don’t know that much about them, although I believe Boris Johnson definitely supports its aims, so let’s get it on the record that this is probably the only time that we will sign ourselves or align ourselves with Boris Johnson and the Tory party.

Seriously though, think about when we had the Investors in People, which probably all the companies that you work in signed up for it and what did it mean? It meant that the employer got a nice smart plaque or a certificate that he put up in the reception, but you tell me what difference it made to your employers. How many of your employers walked through of a morning, the director and say good morning, Janine, good morning. Dave, they don’t do it, it meant absolutely nothing, it was a, I don’t know, it was obviously a get rich quick scheme for somebody, Somebody must have took the decision that having a plaque up there was going to be good. For me it made the people who developed Investors in People rich, that’s where it came from. Somebody, some probably had it covering a blemish on a wall in reception or in a manager’s office, because that’s all it did, it meant absolutely nothing.

We’re clearly not the best paying employers in the world, I’m talking about our organisation, we’re most certainly not the worst paying employers in the world, but irrespective of whether we have a badge, a plaque, an accreditation, we don’t need any outside organisation to accredit us, to tell us that we’re a decent employer. Ask the people who work for us whether we have a decent employer. Ask the girls who work in the office whether we’re a decent employer and whether we pay decent wages. Yes, we have a beef over wages at times, but the one thing that the Living Wage Foundation wants and I’m sure you will accept what I’m going to say now, when I actually phoned them and I registered us as a living wage employer, they said right, what we want though, to give you a certificate, you must pay us for every workplace you’ve got, £100. I think they’re having a joke. We can produce it ourselves, we’ve got enough people in our learning service to produce some certificate that says we pay the living wage, without joining an outside organisation at £100 per certificate. Think about it, where is the value if we have it at head office? How many people in this hall have visited head office, to come and see whether we’ve got a Living Wage Foundation thing or not? We’ve wrote to them, I’ve got an acknowledgement from them that we pay above the living wage, well above the living wage and I think that’s also, I mean I, with your indulgence we won’t actually register with it, I think it’s a waste of your money, a waste of Union money and it’s money that could be better spent elsewhere. I’m not one for certificates for achievement, it’s about actions and we do the action, we actually pay above the living wage, so please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? Okay. Just for a point of information, unfortunately the mover of 28 has lost her voice, so we’re going to move you to No. 40 and hopefully you’ll get it back. You’ll have to be quiet tonight, won’t you?

[LAUGHTER]

Okay, 21. 21’s withdrawn, okay. And he’s really disappointed that 22’s also been withdrawn as well, because that was a pop at me, so thank you very much Region 1 because I was going to be the butt of that. Motion 23 and I have noticed, Roy I have noticed this year you haven’t mentioned anything about me wanting to make an announcement about football. I just thought I’d mention that while the mover of motion 23 was coming down. Last year I had a bit of stick, didn’t I?

23 Branches – 2 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees that Branch meetings in March will be called at any time in March which is convenient for Branch Secretaries and its Branch Members.

Sister Janine Cokayne – No. 2 Regional Council: This resolution was put in because last year and for previous years before, I understand that but I wasn’t a branch secretary then so it didn’t affect me, but last year I had a letter from the Executive Council saying that I had to call my branch meeting for my elections for Conference Delegates the first week in March. It didn’t fit in with my branch.

When I call my branch meetings, I want as many people to come to my branch meetings as possible, that means I call my branch meetings when we have a shutdown week, they fall, nobody has to work and everybody can come along to my branch meetings. By this being so rigid, it did hamper the branch meeting, there was a handful of people there and that’s not what I aspire to, I want everybody to get involved in my branch meetings and in the election of Conference Delegates so they feel part of the branch.
This year, I’m very pleased to say it was done differently. The forms came out and we were told to hold a branch meeting in March, to have the nominations by the last weekend of March into head office and I’m over the moon with that, so let’s keep it the same and pass the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Formally seconded? I’ve just got to mention the fact that, Janine, what that makes is the General Secretary very benevolent and he feels very proud that you came up here and pointed that out to everybody. Obviously, as far as the Executive Council’s concerned, we believe that is already in the rule book, it’s covered in 14.1.

Unfortunately what this motion didn’t do, if the mover was intending for it to actually change the cyclo and the election of Conference Delegates, it didn’t actually do that which is why it doesn’t appear in the rule changes, so we do support it because obviously if you look at rule 14.1, it says you can call a branch meeting at any time, but obviously if there is an issue around the election of Conference Delegates that has to come back and be specific about the election of Conference Delegates, so the Executive would ask you to support the motion, but obviously we want to make it perfectly clear this does not change the current cyclo that will come out for the election for Conference, but one thing we can give you an assurance on is that bearing in mind what we believe is the issue, we’re going to look at what we can do to assist branch secretaries going forward and we’ll do that at the first Executive Council meeting, but we’d ask you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 24. Actually, before we do 24, I’ve just realised it’s half past 3, no it’s not, it’s 3 o’clock, it’s alright, 24 [LAUGHTER]. I had my watch upside down. He said what about tea break? It’s alright, it’s alright, it’s Sunday. Can you edit that, can you edit that? I told you, I can’t go right. It’s motion 24, coming down at a leisurely pace. I don’t recognise you without your hat, y’see.

### 24 Branches – Branch 313

**Conference agrees that all Branches ensure an effective Branch Structure is in place to enhance recruitment and retention. ORGANISE, ORGANISE, ORGANISE...**

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings):** Well this is the new me, so you’d better get used to it.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I’m loving it, loving it.

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings):** Because I’m not going away.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** It means unfortunately Janine can’t come down and make any rude comments.

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings):** Janine’s alright, you leave Janine alone. Here to move motion No. 24.

We wanted, when we had the discussion, we wanted to change this motion but what we actually decided was this isn’t about the motion, this isn’t about attacking branches or branch secretaries, I’ve been a branch secretary for 10 years until recently, it’s not about attacking or anything, this is about let’s wake up, have the wake up culture built into us because some months ago, I went on this organising course and it was an eye opener and I personally thought that we were doing everything possible for increasing membership, retaining membership and everything else and to be honest, we were far from it, far from it.

I came back with my colleague after that course and overnight we increased the membership by around 40 people, because we had an element of yes, yes, we’re fully covered, but if we all and that’s why we haven’t said the Executive or the FTO or this or that, is for the branches to go back and be tasked in the relevant areas, make sure who’s a member, who isn’t and try and get as close as to 200% as you possibly can, so it’s not about teaching everybody how to suck eggs or anything like that, it’s not to be derogatory, it’s just that we as a Union need to be, remain independent and we need to be on the ball with retention and recruitment and this is for all the branches to go away and look at the branches, look at the members, see if they’ve captured anybody, anybody missing, what’s the issues, what’s the reasons and you will find if each and every one of us branches went back and did some work,

I assure you you will increase your membership by a percentage. If we were all honest and up front with one another, without any external interference from FTOs or the Executive or anybody of that nature, we will have that increase if we’re honest, so it’s a personal request from me and it’s a challenge if we go back, let’s look at our branches and I’m sure there’s room for improvement. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Are you seconding? Are you seconding? Okay.
Brother Robin Henderson – Branch 313 (Hardings): General Secretary, President, Platform, Delegates. I can speak from a personal point view at Hovis, Birmingham where I was when Raja and H Rashid both went on this course. Our general membership was quite low, the atmosphere within the Union itself was low because they were trying to do everything themselves rather than delegate into some of us shop stewards and people like that and our membership increased dramatically within the place and with what’s recently just happened to us, with obviously Birmingham closing, it was a great, it was really good as we were totally united. For the first time I could honestly say that all the membership, which we had nearly 90 odd percent membership, was united for the first time. I ask you to pass this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Mr President, Mr Chair, Platform, Delegates. I would like to fully support this motion. I think there’s little more important than to be organised. Talking from my own experience within my own branch, around five years ago our branch took it upon itself to raise its game, be more organised, more professional and provide even better service than we had been. The result of this shined through in recent times when Brother Wainwright was taken into intensive care and during his month he was away from his branch, we had a chairperson and an organiser in place and familiar with all the branch business and day to day tasks, so the branch could continue its business. Organising is not just important, it’s essential to the success and strength of this great Union. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Sean Molloy – Branch 558: I support this motion, firstly speaking not just about me, our branch has grown and it’s growing all the time, but the point is here, is the main fear that we’ve got at work is we’re returning to a Victorian-style workplace. Your members need to be aware of what’s going to go on, we need to be more pro-active and be more active as trade union people to make sure that doesn’t happen, okay.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Obviously the Executive would ask you to support the motion. I mean, to ensure we’re able to support our members, to ensure we can function, to ensure we are able to sustain membership and grow, a well-organised branch is the key to achieving all of that and to make sure that we stay as an independent trade union. As I pointed out this morning at some point, it’s so critical that the branches that you are representing are well organised and well structured, because you are the key, you are the absolute key. For us to be able to make sure that FTOs are able to go out and offer benefits at other sites, we need to make sure that your branch is organised and structured and in that way, we can make sure that the full-time Officers are going out there and giving an opportunity to other working people in our industry, so they can enjoy the same benefits that you and your members and your workplace do, so we believe that this is a key, a key element and a key plan to what we do as a trade union, so we ask the Conference to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 25. 25? Fifteen minutes, I was going to call that earlier, wasn’t I?, but you would have all laughed. It was half past 9, yes, but I always saw it very quickly, Mark, yes. Fergie time, Moyes’ time now.

25 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 450

That this conference agrees tea and coffee will no longer be served on the balcony, this is a health and safety issue. It needs to be at the back of the hall

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: That this Conference agrees tea and coffee will no longer be served on the balcony, this is a health and safety issue, it needs to be at the back of the hall. Well, actually they beat me to it. This year they’ve done it. Much better in my opinion, we just need to make sure that it happens every year. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconded? Formally seconded? General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, the Executive Council asks Conference to support it. We’ve already done it, it’s one of those pre-emptive things that you can do. I just wish that every motion was as easy to action as this one’s been. The only point I would make is that part of the debate that we had with like obviously Jan and with the tourist board here in Bridlington and the Spa staff, was the question of where we put the stalls and you’ll notice this time we’ve put the stalls at the back of the hall instead of having them in the room at the back. The reason we’re doing that is that if you’re having your tea down here, no-one’s going to up and see the stands and so we’ve put them down here. So the only thing that would detract us from doing it again in the future is the noise level.
So basically what we’ve done, the stalls are out of bounds, obviously the Delegates will be going there, but there’ll be other visitors who could potentially visit those stalls during the day, so it’s about keeping the noise down, so we’re doing it as a trial this year to have the stalls downstairs, that’s not guaranteeing it’s going to be there every year, but most certainly we will make sure the tea’s not on a balcony somewhere. Okay? So support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? It’s tough if you didn’t like it, it’s there, it’s happening. Okay, 27’s been withdrawn, 28 we’re feeling sympathy for aren’t we, so we’ll go back to 26 now. 26. I knew it was going to take Raj a little bit of time to come down, so I thought I’d just fill in a little bit of time, you know what I mean?

26 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313

Conferece agrees to lobby Government for the implementation of ‘tougher penalties’ against Employers found guilty of failures in Health & Safety legislation. Derisory fines are unacceptable and we demand custodial sentences as required.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings): 15 or so many years we’ve been coming, we’ve always been based down the front. This year, you’ve decided to put us on the back, so no apologies. I’m not going to bore you, I’m going to make it even quicker than Marilyn’s. It’s there, it’s on the tin, derisory fines, health and safety, we need to apply pressure on the governments, yes? Because it’s our members, it’s the future generations that are affected. The penalties need to be tough and tough and tough, they need to be as tough as possible and we should, as a union, at all times be applying pressures to make tougher penalties for the employer and the health and safety, so I urge you all to support and this should be an on-going campaign day in, day out, month in, month out, year in, year out. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Oh, are you seconding? Oh right, okay.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. Yes, they pay lip service to it, but we do need tougher fines and more rigorous health and safety. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers, no?

Brother John Owens – EC Member (Region 4): Yes it is me, I am wearing the suit and I’m not in court later on [LAUGHTER].

Responding on behalf of the EC. The EC asks you to support this motion.

For too long company and company bosses have got away with murder, literally. Pathetic fines dished out hardly eat into their profits and so many employees are repeat offenders and sometimes serial killers. In the Hatfield rail crash in October 2000, four people died and 102 were injured. Balfour Beatty were fined £10 million. The lawyers got that reduced in 2006 to 7½ million. The same year they had a pre-tax profit of £152 million. Was anyone sent to prison? No. In this last week, a roofer has appeared in court, putting workers lives at risk. He put himself, a casual labourer and an employee from the furniture warehouse with no safety equipment, no risk assessment or method (?) statement. The owner of the company has, in 2007, been prosecuted before by the HSE after an employee fell the skylight. The victim who fell through the roof was paralysed from the waist down. Was the company owner imprisoned or fined? No, because he was declared bankrupt and received a conditional discharge.

There is a misapprehension that killing or injuring people at work is not a real crime, as organisations will kill workers and members of the public through their neglect and cost cutting are somehow not real criminals, so the penalties inflicted upon them need not to be too severe. Some years ago, a group of people formed a national campaigning group called FACK, Families Against Corporate Killings. They had one thing in common, they lost loved ones in the workplace and were angry and frustrated. They felt robbed twice, first their loved ones were killed in the workplace by employers simply not obeying health and safety and secondly, justice. If anyone has seen the FACK DVD “Face the Facts”, they will see how much devastation losing a loved one in the workplace, one moment that sticks out to me was when Lizzie Hibbertson spoke about the death of her husband, Andy and they were in court and the managing director was fined £9,997.00 and he just pulled out his cheque book and said do you want me to pay now?, without a care in the world, it’s sickening.

It’s not just in the workplace. Another group of people fighting truth and justice are the ones who lost loved ones at Hillsborough, a tragedy close to my heart, with those untold breaches in health and safety. We knew the truth then, but the official truth came out 23 years later. Yet again, families who lost loved ones having to fight for the truth and justice.
We have the truth, now justice must follow. Being killed or disabled at work bring untold upset and financial burden on the families, while company bosses sit back knowing they probably won’t go to prison or get a hefty fine. It’s now time that employees and this and any other government face the facts and acknowledge death at work and being injured is a crime, a crime that should be punished with stiff fines and imprisonment. Unfortunately due to lack of positive legal duties on directors and general managers to be responsible for health and safety of their workplaces and because of weak enforcement of health and safety laws, this is not always the case. With cuts in health and safety and HSE and a government who think health and safety is a burden in the workplace, we do not hold much hope. I’d also like to mention the great work that Hilda Palmer and the Hazard team do in highlighting these problems and Hilda is here on Tuesday, speaking at a lunchtime fringe meeting. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? He was responding on behalf of the EC.

Brother Jake Dunwoody – Region 7: Sorry, comrades.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, okay, yes, okay, cool.

Brother Jake Dunwoody – Region 7: Sorry I’m nervous here, but we’ve been discussing all day here. National President, General Secretary, Comrades. I’ve seen a few of the motions here which I am in support of. There’s been a word which says lobby, now it says we’re going to have to lobby government. Unfortunately where I come from in Northern Ireland, it’s really difficult to lobby government for anything because we do not have a right in Northern Ireland to vote for the party of my choice. The only party in Northern Ireland who can actually form a government is the Conservative party in Northern Ireland and if I had a choice between death and voting for the Conservatives, I would take death. The point is, I would like to say to Delegates here today that we really need to get a bit of help here in order to organise the Labour Party in Northern Ireland, because if I’m going to lobby any government, I want to lobby a Labour government and I want to have a choice to vote for the Labour Party and I want to have a choice to form a constituency Labour Party in my home town. Thank you for having me, letting me speak.

[APPLAUSE]

Sorry, comrades, Jake Dunwoody, Region 7.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers mate, okay. Cheers, pal. To the vote. Those in favour? Those against?

That’s carried. We’ll have a 15 minute tea break, quarter to.

[BREAK]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Delegates, can you start taking your seats now please. Okay, everybody in their seats? Ready to rock and roll? Has everybody signed the card? No? Okay, settle back down.

If you remember when we came back after dinner, I was told that Regions 3 and 4 hadn’t got their nomination papers up. I said we could try and send them back upstairs, but I’ve been advised from Standing Orders the rule is it’s got to be 11 o’clock so they weren’t prepared to accept them, so obviously I’m sorry about that. I’m sorry about that, but obviously the nominations are as they were from when they were delivered at 11 o’clock this morning to Standing Orders.

Okay, so if you don’t want to be nominated you just need to shout “withdraw”. This is the nominations for the Labour Party Conference. David Rhodes, Paul Scunthorn, Vi Carr, Chris Lay, Chris Lay withdraws, Rachel Mullen, Joe Napper, Joe Napper withdraws, Dave Dash, John James, Malika Bensala, Pauline Ozea, Pauline McCarthy, Sarah Woolley. Did you say “withdraw”? Did you say you withdraw, Pauline? Okay, let me confirm then, David Rhodes, Paul Scunthorn, Vi Carr, Rachel Mullen, Dave Dash, John James, Malika Bensala, Pauline McCarthy. All the others have withdrawn, yes? Okay. David Rhodes withdraws and Paul, right, okay. TUC, Pauline Nazeer, Frank Loveday, Dave Saddards, Paul Scothorn, David Rhodes, Pauline McCarthy, Sarah Woolley, Lizzie Dinnin, Joe Napper, Joe Napper withdraws, Mark Brookes, Jason Moore, Jason Moore withdraws. So I’ve got Paul Scothorn, David Rhodes, Joe Napper, Jason Moore have all withdrawn, so going for the ballot will be Pauline Nazeer, Frank Loveday, Dave Saddards, Pauline McCarthy, Sarah Woolley, Lizzie Dinnin and Mark Brookes, yes? Okay.

Also could I announce the Region 2 Karaoke Night which is on Tuesday the 11th of June, which is being sponsored by Watkins & Gunn and it’s the Wooden Spoon. Oh sorry, it’s for the Wooden Spoon, sorry it’s a Charity and it’s being held at the Seacourt Hotel, which is just along the promenade, not the Wooden Spoon, no. Also the proceeds of the Wednesday night in Region 7 will all go to Suicide Awareness and if you want to see members from Region 7 for your ticket, they’re to get a music and a buffet evening and it’s always a great night at the Irish Hotel, so you can go along and join them for a wee drink and no doubt if you spend any time in Noel’s company he’ll get you on some Potcheen and it’s the...
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President, Delegates. One of the most unexpected things I was going to have to do today was to start sending tributes to Trade Unionists abroad, but one that I do want to and I hope a message can get back and I know that John’s going to tweet it out for us, is that we get a message from this Conference to wish Nelson Mandela a speedy recovery, he is in a desperate position [APPLAUSE] but when we see the sacrifices that he gave for his nation and for his people, he’s got to be an inspiration to Trade Unionists everywhere.

Comrades, what a year we’ve had since we were last in this hall. Wiser than 12 months ago, but still our members and our class gets hammered. No, I don’t mean going to the pub, Ian, I mean we get hammered by the employer. Not falling down drunk. I mean oppressed. I mean exploited. I mean taxed to the hilt and I mean devalued by the people who employ us. While our government split itself over Europe, the in-out debate, Germany concentrates on health, education, social and economic benefits and of course investing in a strong manufacturing base.

Whilst we all knew prior to the election in 2010, that any government that represents the opposite class to us, would be bad for our health and our wealth. Nobody could have predicted how savage the cuts were going to be. Yes? People have lost patience with the Labour Party during that election in 2010. Indeed many have never forgiven them for our involvement in Afghanistan. The Blair lies about weapons of mass destruction and the way in which they dealt with the banks and the bankers bonuses. Labour pretending to be Tories. It didn’t work then and it won’t work in the future.

I doubt if there’s a Union Activist in this room whose members have not been touched adversely by this heinous right-wing rag tag coalition that we serve under now. No family member who has not had their living standards affected adversely by the policy of adversity driven by this Tory government. Policies that couldn’t have got through if it hadn’t have been for the crutch that’s being given to them by the Liberal Democrats. But you know the worse thing for me, is the fact that Labour fails to condemn.

The Labour leadership clearly need to do more to inspire people. I see they do quite the opposite. We were in parliament a few months ago and actually witnessed the Labour Front Bench supporting the government over the non-payment of benefits for those people who refused Workfare schemes. They abstained. Instead of it didn’t matter if they’d had lost the vote, because we’d have ended up with the same result we’ve got now, but Labour leadership abstaining on an issue such as Workfare, something that means so much to the Trade Union Movement, they abstained. We’ve seen Labour ranks digging the Tories out, digging Cameron out of a hole when his own party were putting him under pressure over Europe.

Yes, we heard Ed Miliband saying that the Tory policy on austerity isn’t working, but we heard nothing about his plans for the alternative. We all know it’s not working, we live under it, we feel the real effects of austerity, but where is Labour’s opposition? Where is Labour’s alternative? It seems to us that the only difference between, prior to the 2010 General Election, was the pace at which austerity was going to be carried out. A rubber stamping, if you like, of the speech that was given by George Osborne at the Tory Party Conference, where he said that we can’t leave future generations in debt.

What’s wrong with debt? So long as the debt is properly managed. You know John Maynard Keynes is an eminent economist. During the depression said that what you should do in times of recession is you should invest. Austerity doesn’t work, you must invest to get your way out of recession and that worked in America. Look where the American economy is now, it is the strongest economy in the world. Germany invested, they took the Keynes line to invest after two World Wars. A country that was devastated and where are they now? They’re the strongest economy in Europe.

On Tuesday night in the Monarch Hotel, we’re hoping to show the new Ken Loach film, which is called “The Spirit of ’45” and it really does show in dramatic terms how a Labour government re-built a nation that was devastated by war. A war that cost our nation dear, your parents, your grandparents. A war that left us with massive debt and a debt that we didn’t finish paying until December 2005.

I was brought up in council, sorry terraced housing in Liverpool. We had absolutely naff-all. We didn’t have hot water when I was a kid. I don’t want anyone collecting for me, or anything like that, or playing a violin, but the reality is that was where I was brought up and I can never, ever remember my parents or my grandparents ever talking about the debt...
that had been left on them by societies that went before, because people expected after you come out of war that we invest in an economy to make sure that we make the country great again.

That’s what they did. Without being accountants, these people understood what sacrifices they needed to make and what sacrifice had brought. The election of that Labour government in 1945 was seen by some as a political earthquake, it really was a devastating thing. I mean Ian will tell you, it was awful wasn’t it mate [LAUGHTER], but what a difference it made to society. From the ashes of despair and destruction, a Labour government built a welfare state to be proud of. A welfare state that covered everyone from the cradle to the grave. At that time people needed housing.

If you come and see that film tomorrow, you’ll see what abysmal conditions people lived in, but people needed proper housing and so the Labour government invested in decent housing, not mansions, but I’ll tell you what probably the best housing those people had ever seen or ever been near. Working class people had never had housing like that. It took them out of rat-infested squalor into dignified living conditions. We needed better healthcare than the sort of hit and miss treatment that was available under that Tory regime and so the NHS was born in 1948. It was despised by consultants because they thought they were going to lose out on it and opposed by the BMA, the British Medical Association, but it was a saviour to so many people. Born out of Labour principles, praised by the British working class and resented by the Tories and I’ve got to say it’s still resented by the Tories because it wasn’t their idea.

Free secondary education and the nationalisation of industry in an effort to gain one of those guided principles, the principle of full employment. They were the pillars on which our welfare state was built and they were the pillars on which we build our reputation as a Labour party, but now 68 years later we’ve seen Thatcher privatised all the nationalised industry, water, rail, electricity, telephone, building societies, gas, the list goes on and on and on and we know there’s going to be more coming from this particular government, because they’ve got things lined up for privatisation as well and what did we get out of it? I’ll tell you. We got shares.

If we happened to invest with those people, or we were customers, we got shares. We got a few, maybe a couple of hundred pounds. All those shares ended up back with their rich friends and what did we do? We sold them. Okay, we maybe got a holiday, we might have bought a new washing machine, a second-hand car, the fact is that now we are paying the price for those pieces of silver, allowing them at that time to sell up our nationalised industry. She sold off our council houses, she sold them cheap. Okay, people would enjoy that, but she kept the capital receipt. She didn’t allow councils then to go back and re-invest that money in affordable housing and new council homes, so actually cut off and what did it do? It boosted homelessness and it created a market within housing which was boom and bust. We’re now seeing the people who are stuck with houses in negative equity, because they can’t sell them because nobody can afford to buy them, with the price so high to cover what they paid for them.

The NHS, as I said before, it was never an idea of the Tories to have it and they’ve treated it with absolute distain ever since that day. Until they found out that in some areas of the health service there’s a fast buck to be made. A fast buck that’s to be made by privatising the lucrative parts. Private enterprise sponsors the Tories. Private enterprise will mop up any amount of the National Health Service that is lucrative, but I’ll tell you what, look at the parts that are failing. The parts that cost money, Mental Health, Dementia, all those areas will be under-invested and we’re going to see and I’m not going to take any fire away from the motions that are going to come later on that debate, you’re actually seeing what happens when you privatisate the lucrative part of the National Health Service and leave the rest. Comrades, we can’t wait until it goes, until we lose it totally. The National Health Service gone before we take action.

Don’t just think about you. Think about your kids, like your parents did. Think about your grandkids like your grandparents did. Think about them either having to pay for treatment or suffering the consequences of illness. If ever there was a reason for the public to rise up against a government, whether we call it a general strike or co-ordinated action, a political dispute, or society rebellion, the defence of the National Health Service rings all the bells and pushes all the right buttons. Nothing should unite us more, or ensure that we should succeed.

What Attlee and Bevan and their governments achieved, a future Labour government can also achieve, but we need them to change. In 1945 the difference between Churchill’s Tories and Attlee’s Labour Party was what we would call coherent policy. A clear manifesto at the time that demonstrated the clear blue water between the parties. A difference that gave voters a clear choice as to who they would vote for. If Ed Miliband and his Labour opposition is to successfully rule, they support the Keynesian view on austerity, but still we have virtual silence from the Labour leadership. We want a little bit of that spirit of ’45 to come back to the fore within the modern day Labour Party. Less of the fudges, less of the dodgers and less of the spin.
All they’ve done is deflect the working class from what our true aim should be. If we want our movement to realise its full potential, then we’ve got to start looking back to some of that spirit of ’45. We had the meetings with Greggs and I know there’s reluctance amongst people, but despite the fact that people are reluctant to take action against the government cuts, we all know who the enemy are and should we ever want to realise that potential, people will not cry over the demise of the Tory/LibDem coalition.

We know the enemy. We know they’ve always been anti-Trade Union. We know that they have never represented our class, despite the fact that they could never have been elected without Trade Unionists voting for them, but our problem is when we have a Labour government, they continue with the same attacks after being elected. Hollow manifesto promises which built up our hopes and then we get them elected, before we start blaming the past government for all the economic mess and the reason for non-delivery. We don’t want another Labour government that is just another shade of blue. So right-wing that they’re almost Tories in disguise. We want a Labour government that remembers where it came from. Remembers why we founded it. Remembers the spirit of Attlee and Bevan [APPLAUSE].

We want a Labour government that supports its supported class, in the same way that the Tories represent theirs. No more, no less, but similar to what they give to their people. I was going to say the same way that the Liberals represent their class and their members, but of course they don’t, they’ve betrayed every policy that the Liberal Party ever had, a proud party, but they betrayed every policy they’ve ever had just for five years in power. Five years in power, where they do hold a pendulum and they do absolutely nothing with it. All they do is nod like dogs in the back of a car to the Tories dance. We want a Labour government that delivers manifesto pledges. Yes, we all know, we forget, but we know that there were some concessions from Blair and from Brown and their governments, but the successes were far outweighed by the perceived failures. Many of the promises of the Warwick agreement, we’re still waiting, don’t know whether they’ll get delivered when we get a future Labour government, but they haven’t been delivered in full up to now.

If you think about it, think about this Conference year on year. Policies that have gone through, there are some absolutely rip-roaring vote winners out there and we should be taking advantage of the government’s unpopularity and the government’s weakness to capitalise and we shouldn’t be afraid to use those sticks to beat them. Complacency about a 10 point lead in the polls is a road to disaster. If we in the Labour Party and I’ve been a member of the Labour Party now for 40 years, were doing our jobs in a positive way, UKIP would still be a small insignificant Fascist party instead of the third power in the UK and I think that’s to the shame of the Liberal Democrats. The only thing that has raised the UKIP profile, besides the fact that the BBC has a fascination with Nigel Farage’s face, is the inertia of Labour’s politicians. We can condemn Farage to the political dustbin if we’re prepared to grasp some juicy political nettles. We should use some of those really big vote winners that are out there, before dear old Nige pinches some of them. I think it was Denis Healey who said that what we should do is tax the super rich until the pips squeek. Say it again Ed, that’s a vote winner.

Let’s make those who earn the most in this country pay the most tax, instead of putting the burden back on working people. Reversing the £40,000 tax cut that he gave to his rich friends. Millionaires, giving them a £40,000 tax break. Keep it, reverse it and get rid of the bottom rate of tax, that’s a vote winner.

Pledging to scrap the Bedroom Tax that has caused so much despair on Day 1 of a Labour government is a vote winner [APPLAUSE].

Restoring the NHS to its former glory, free at the point of need, paid for by a realistic tax rate on the rich and by closing loop holes that allow business to evade and avoid paying their just taxes is a vote winner.

Free to all education is a vote winner.

Building council and affordable housing not only puts builders back to work, it cuts reliance on benefits and reduces homelessness, that’s a vote winner.

Introducing a mandatory living wage instead of a poverty level minimum wage that needs government handouts to subsidise employers who exploit people with low wages, that’s a vote winner.

Keeping the banks that we bailed out with our public money, our taxes, keeping them in public ownership, allowing their profits to benefit those who suffered most to save them over the last few years.

These are clear blue water policies, none of which the Labour leadership are promoting. Instead we get spin, we get inactivity and we get silence. In the workplace we’ve seen protective legislation being withdrawn without any Labour leadership opposition. We should demand that the Labour Party manifesto for 2015 includes immediate plans to reverse the two year rule on unfair dismissal and tribunal access, including the scrap of access fees. We demand that access to justice for industrial accidents and occupational illnesses is reversed. If there is a problem with false claims, then as I said earlier on, deal with it, but let’s get rid of these no win/no fee exploiters, stop the fraudulent claimants instead of giving the employer a green light to injure, which is exactly what their policy does.
We’re going to see in the coming years and remember you heard it here, you will see the amount of fatalities within industry, not just the food industry, start rocketing and it will be as a direct consequence of these protective legislations, these laws being withdrawn. Better that we use the access that we have through our parliamentary group to get our demands across to the Labour leadership. No pussy footing around, a clear message to Ed Miliband and his party that if you want our financial support and from other Trade Unions and from working people, then you need to support them. That must be a reciprocated value.

Our demands should become manifesto issues. Our promises and our aspirations should become policies. Fifty Shades of Grey I believe did a lot of good for a lot of people, but Fifty Shades of Blue will do absolutely nothing for working people.

Thank you for listening.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, obviously this evening we’re back in here and I believe at half 7, is it half 7, we’re kicking off at half 7, half 8, half 8 is it, do we have any more on half 7, 8 o’clock or half past 8? 8 o’clock, right. Okay, depending on whose watch you’re wearing, right if you’re wearing Mark Baker’s it’s 8 o’clock, if you’re wearing mine it’s half 9, back in here tonight.

Anybody that went to the do last year on that Monday night with that rock and roll band, everybody knows they were absolutely fantastic, so we’ve got them back tonight, so come along tonight, make sure you enjoy the evening and like I say please, please, please do come along because when you’re here it makes the evening so much better and that’s why we put these evenings on. See you tonight at 8 o’clock. Thank you very much, see you in the morning. Half past 9 in the morning and as well if there’s any young members, apparently Rachel’s got her purse with her [LAUGHTER], oh sorry, if there’s any young members, Rachel’s going over to the South Dene and if you’d like to have a quick chat and find out what the issues are that you would like Rachel to pick up on, she’s more than willing to do so, but apparently you’ve got to put your hand in the pocket.
Monday 10 June 2013

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference [LAUGHTER]. That was a bit loud, wasn’t it? It woke me up. Can you please start making your way to your seats.

Hopefully ...... we had a rough night last night, so nice and low, nice and low. I have a rough night every night and then I have a rough morning when I get up. Obviously, Marilyn, you would never have a rough night because you’re perfect, in every way. Apparently they can’t hear what I’m saying at the back, which may be a good position for them to be in. There’s probably a few people out there that wished they couldn’t hear me as well.

Are you ready, Ronnie? Okay, General Secretary to call the roll call.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Region 1, cheers Steve. Region 2. Region 3, 51 are you breeding in No. 3?

Okay. Region 4, okay. Region 5. Region 6 and Region 7. Bring Kevin Flood along and he can’t manage it on his own, aye?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: They still can’t hear at the back.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: 177 Delegates present.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Before we get into the motions, Conference, I’ve received a message from John McDonald. It says he’d like to say he’s really sorry not to be with us today. In the five years since the formation of the BFAWU group, this is the first annual Conference I’ve been unable to address. My colleague, Dave Crausby, for Bolton North East will be presenting the report in my place. Dave is the Vice Chair of our group and a dedicated supporter of the trade union movement in Westminster.

Over the past five years, parliamentary group has established itself as an effective means of taking forward the Union’s campaigns in parliament, but it is clear from this year’s Queen’s speech that the government is pressing on with its programme of cuts, privatisations and attacks on the livelihoods of members and their families. What we are facing, to use an old fashioned phrase, is class war. I want you to know that the BFAWU parliamentary group will be using every means at its disposal to speak on your behalf, not just on the issues of our industry as important as they are, but on the whole range of class war being waged against us. Issues such as Workfare, the bedroom tax, personal debt, the benefit cap, the desperate need for council housing, the shame of homelessness and low pay and the disgraceful attacks on health and safety and the rights of those with disabilities. On issues such as these, our movement needs and expects a clear response. You should know that whether it’s on the picket line or on the floor of the House of Commons, I give you my commitment, I will always be with you, absolutely, solidarity, John McDonald.

[APPLAUSE]

Okay Conference, we’ve also been asked if we could send a message of support to the IFFCO in Egypt, who are currently on strike. The reason for the strike is that they signed a recognition agreement and the management over there have decided to unilaterally de-recognise the trade union, so they’ve been on strike, they went on strike and on the second day of the strike, the chairman of the company issued a decision to close the plant. The entire union committee in addition heads up three branches, bringing the numbers of victimised union activists in total and there isn’t a number there, so I can’t tell you the number. It appears the management hired thugs to smash the strike, these thugs also fired shots at workers and then went to the police station and made false reports that the incident, accusing the union of causing trouble in the factory in order to overthrow the current Muslim brotherhood government. They even stopped workers from collecting their monthly wages in order to force them to end the strike and obviously they’re asking us if we’ll send a message of support to them. Do I take it Conference we’ll agree to that? Okay.

Okay, to your Agendas. Obviously for those that were in here last night, you may have also noticed that we’ve got the next contender for Strictly Come Dancing due to be aired on BBC, isn’t that right Des? I think just on that note of Strictly Come Dancing, I also want to say what a fantastic job that Jason did on the DJ-ing last night, it was absolutely superb.

[APPLAUSE]

And it was very cost effective as well [LAUGHTER], always wins. Motion 28.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Just whilst the mover’s coming down, just to say that we have a celebration – come down Angie, I’ll be finished by the time you get down – we have a celebration in the hall today, Ian’s wedding anniversary. He and his wife, I was speaking to his wife last night and she said she thought it was the best 40 years she’d ever had in her life and I had to remind her she’s only actually been married 24 years, it just seemed like 40, but if anyone’s any good at making cards can you do one, ‘cause he’s forgotten to buy one [LAUGHTER].

Monday June 10 morning: Motions 28–31
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: But whatever you do, don’t tell her [LAUGHTER].
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I think she’s noticed by now [LAUGHTER].
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No, I stuck out.

28 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 580

That this Conference agree to lobby government to ensure employers support shop workers to have procedures in place to protect all shop workers from attacks and robbery and make sure employers support staff and ensure employees do not suffer any money losses when off work due to stress.

Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580: I’m sorry I can’t talk. That this Conference agrees to lobby government to ensure employers support shop workers to have procedures in place to protect all shop workers from attacks and robbery and make sure employers support shop staff, ensuring employees do not suffer any money losses when off work. I’ve personally worked for Greggs for 16 years, I know at least 10 people that have been attacked at work. One, he’s not here, yes, there he is, young Ali, he was attacked, somebody held an axe to his neck. What do Greggs have in place to protect him? Nothing. What support did they give to him? Nothing. As a union we need to make sure, as shop workers, as Ian said rightly before, we are here mainly as, I’m a shop manager, get it right shop manager, I’m not the devil, I’ve been told more than once I’m a manager, I’ve got no right to be here. I have obviously put them in their place. I’m here to support my members. Just as we are as a union, you’re biggest growing bit in the union is your shop, you’re shop-based, that’s where you’re going to get your members, so I’m here to support it and that what’s the Union need to make sure that we support our members, because if we don’t do that, we’re not going to have a union. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Good to see you’ve got your voice back. Are you seconding, yes? Are you seconding?

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): Yes, I’m here to second. President, Platform, fellow Delegates. Acts of violence are inflicted and have been inflicted on shop workers unfortunately for quite some time and it seems to be an increasing problem. Our company each year spends hundreds of thousands of pounds on refurbishing and updating, re-fitting, call it what you like, but they’re doing all these alterations to the shops. I’m not sure how much of those hundreds of thousands of pounds are actually spent on thinking about the staff and their security. I think we should, as a Union, we should be looking to our GNC reps and asking them to put through at our wage negotiations next year that we should be looking at the company financially support victims of violence, so they get 100% pay, not sick pay that runs out after a few weeks. These people when they’ve been attacked, it’s not just the physical scars, it’s the mental scars. They can be off for months and months and months with stress. I think we ought to get our wage negotiators to say right, enough’s enough, you’re going to pay these people who are victims of violence until they’re ready to come back on full pay. Thank you.

[SAPPLAUSE]

Sister Dawn Scott – Region 253: Chair, Platform, Delegates. I’d like to support this motion as I have witnessed too many of my colleagues being attacked in the shops and the stress that this causes my colleagues. Please support.

[SAPPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Branch 253: Unfortunately I was a victim of one of these attacks. I got punched while working the other week. I filled in the necessary incident, health and safety forms. Not one person from the department phoned up to make sure I was okay. My area manager, it took her two weeks before someone, before she found out about it and that was only because another manager had decided to tell her. She didn’t see the harm in it, she thought it was okay. It’s wrong. Management need to take account that this sort of acts of violence, the verbal abuse, physical abuse, is happening within our shops all the time. Please support this motion.

[SAPPLAUSE]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Chair, Platform, Conference. Clearly here to support the motion. Just a few things I want to raise. No. 1, as employers, Greggs have a duty under law to protect their workforce. Clearly when issues are happening like this across the industry nationally up and down the country on a month on month basis, they must be held accountable as employers. Legally they are automatically accountable under the terminology of the vicarious liability, so even under law they can’t try and wriggle themselves out of it, so I think our national people need to take this on as a national issue and try and deal with it as a matter of urgency before someone gets killed. Thank you.

[SAPPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. General Secretary?
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Chair. Yes, the Executive Council clearly would ask Conference to support the motion, although I’ve got to say it’s probably one of the most difficult ones to achieve, it’s an unknown thing. I’m not actually sure what good it’s going to be to the Union or to the people who works in Greggs lobbying government, irrespective of the shade of government, because what government does is legislate, they don’t go out and protect and the legislation I’m sure, we’ve got a MP there, I’m sure he’ll put me right on it but I believe that the legislation’s already there, we carry out risk assessments and of course then the thing that follows on from that is control measures.

I think a much more productive way of dealing with this is to put pressure and I mean real pressure on the company, to make sure the company carry out their obligations to you as workers. I mean we’ve had some heated exchanges over the years with Greggs management on the GMC on health and safety issues, I mean one of the big ones was the question of cash collection, you’ll all remember that. We got their health and safety manager in and it was when the women from the shop were going on their own, carrying bags which had got a couple of thousand quid in, along the road to a bank and they weren’t allowed to go to the nearest bank, they had to go to the cheapest bank and we were saying that’s wrong, nobody should have to carry cash at all. I mean in fairness, part of our biggest enemy was our own members because they were doing it, they were saying oh well, I don’t mind, but the company’s argument was that it’s not an unsafe act because we haven’t had anyone who’s been clobbered in the last year or something well, it makes a folly of health and safety.

It’s like and I used the analogy when we actually had this debate at Conference, it’s like running backwards and forwards across a motorway and the fact that you don’t get hit by a car is claiming that it makes you safe, of course it isn’t, it’s that you haven’t had an accident. So pushing the company, I believe, is going to be the best way that we’re going to do this. We had quite a long debate and I’m sure Keith will remember this, over the opening of city centre shops, I mean the first ones they opened were in Leeds and because they were open and they were serving people who were coming out of the pubs and clubs of a night, we were exposing our members and the staff of Greggs to drunks, to people who couldn’t control themselves after ale and in some of those shops at the time, the only protection between the staff and the outside world was a 4 ft high plywood door and most of the time it had one of those little locks on the top which is like what you have in a toilet, you could have bitten off never mind pushed it off and that was the whole sum of the security that people had. It really did take minimal effort to push it.

We on the GMC actually sited the likes of Threshers and said look, if you go into a Threshers shop which is open late of a night, what they do, they have glass, a perspex bullet proof there to stop attacks on the staff and on the product and they thought no, it was an over the top response to it and they obviously declined it. In the light of that, what some of the shops did actually get was security, they actually got people who stood outside, but those people themselves then became a target for the same drunks who they were trying to protect the shop staff from.

So far as payment for those workers who have time off due to stress caused by being exposed to danger, then I really do believe there’s a moral duty, if not a legal duty on the company, I do believe there’s a moral duty on the company to pay those people without going through any type of claims or whatever. We’re not talking about the best paid people in the world, the living wage will be a good thing if the people in Greggs get it and that’s the situation and the aftermath of a robbery like this in particular and we’ve had it on a number of occasions where they lose their own cash, the aftermath of it can actually place them from a family point of view in a very, very precarious position and I can remember when I was the District Secretary in Manchester, dealing with a problem in Liverpool when the store at Walton Vale got held up, a guy with a gun and the girl in the front of the shop was trying to protect the girl in the back of the shop because she was pregnant, she was about 7 or 8 months pregnant and she got everything robbed but she did protect her fellow colleague from being attacked, who was her manager, but there was never a phone call like Chris said there, There was never a phone call to any of those people who were victims of a crime.

The only people who phoned them was the trade union, we were the people who got in touch, as soon as we knew we tried to deal with it. I had a little heart to heart with Mel Gerson who at the time, I think, was a sales director or something in the Manchester division and of course the next day a big bouquet of flowers was there at their homes because both of them were off and of course they got full pay, but they only got it because of the intervention of the trade union. Clearly there would have been absolutely nothing from the company had I not been told and then given the opportunity to intervene.

Companies do really need to be reminded of their obligation to provide a safe place of work and a further duty to reduce risks in the workplace to the lowest possible level. Denying risk is not enough, but more importantly putting workers at risk rather than paying for protection, in my mind, is very irresponsible. Conference, we will see if there is a possibility to pursue greater protections through our parliamentary group and the people at the back there, I’m sure they’ll be making notes, but as I said initially, I don’t believe it’s going to be a parliamentary issue, I think this is going to be an issue that we are going to have to push Greggs on and when we talk about having block grievances, maybe this is one of those issues that we really do need a block grievance on. I would ask you to support the motion.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 29.

29 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees that all trade union safety representatives should have the legal right to be involved in all stages of Risk Assessments within the workplace. Executive Council to lobby Government through our Parliamentary Group.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hardings): Mr President, Platform, Delegates, good morning. Here to move motion 29. Safety reps, the legal right to be involved in all stages of a risk assessment.

Currently as legislation stands, the safety reps do not have a legal right to be involved in all stages of a risk assessment. What the motion is asking for is for the Executive to lobby the government through the parliamentary group to make sure that it gets entered into legislation. We’ll do everything we can to make sure that there’s legislation covering that. It must be fully recognised that in the duration of risk assessments, that the safety reps should be involved from the onset. What this motion is not saying is that the safety reps will have a duty of making sure the risk assessment is written, that they’re going to have to write it out, they just need to police it. The onus is on the employer to make use of risk assessments, our job is to make sure that it’s being policed and it’s done in the right manner and that we’re involved from the onset, so we know when the risk assessment’s placed in front of our members that we have been involved and we can go by, so I strongly urge you to support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder?

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here seconding the motion. At present employers are meant to carry out risk assessments every 12 months. Even back at our workplaces, you go to the Health & Safety Committee meetings every quarter, there’s no mention of the word risk assessments. The reality is, what this motion is asking for is that our reps who know first hand what the risks are involved associated with any task across the site, to be involved, not to actually do the job for them because that’s not what we’re there for, our job is to police, but to ensure that the risk assessments are relevant to the tasks and ensure that preventative measures are put in place to minimise/eradicate the risk of injury to our people. Thank you.

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Chair, Platform, Delegates. I’d like to fully support this motion, but just to add to it. At Branch 390 over the years, we’ve found that building a healthy working relationship with our employers is one of the key goals to success. Our relationship is one of mutual understanding. We’re all working together to make Stoke a safe place to work. Some examples of this would be our nine man health and safety team which each have a seat at the company’s Health & Safety Committee where our voices are heard, issues are discussed and worked through together, but only through hard working co-operation from both sides has this been achieved. I support this motion, but the parliamentary group does not work on our shop floors, we do. Thank you.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m on the fence with this one, although the sentiment and everything I totally agree we should be involved with risk assessment all the way through, to legislate it. Some of our employers are very, very quick to want to attribute blame when serious accidents happen, they ultimately have the responsibility to manage health and safety. If we legislate that we have a hand in that, then I believe that they could use it to turn it back on us. I’m on the fence.

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: I’m here to fully support this motion. I think it’s the right and proper thing to do. Too many companies have decided that they’re going to write risk assessment with a manager’s head and a manager’s head is not a real person’s head in my opinion, because part of my job now involves me being part of the risk assessment. To do that, I had to go on a training course with management. We ended up having a bit of a difference of opinion over slips, trips and falls. The one manager said you should be looking where you’re going and I said have you ever trod in dog dirt? and he said yes, I said why weren’t you looking where you were going? They’ve got a different mindset, they don’t live in the real world, we need to be (unclear). Please support.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. Clearly the Executive Council would ask Conference to support the motion. I mean, obviously safety reps should be involved already in conducting risk assessments but obviously like the mover’s said, they’re not actually looking to enforce that situation. What they’re looking for is legislation to enforce the rights of safety reps to be involved in risk assessments and obviously if this motion’s passed, then obviously we’ll give a commitment that we will take it along to our parliamentary group, along with the other health and safety issues that we’re currently putting forward. So I would ask Conference to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

And because I’m not sure whether Dave was for it or against it, I don’t know whether you want the right of reply? Do you want the right of reply? No, okay. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried, thank you. No. 30.

30 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313

That this Conference supports the concept that all Branches ensure they have ‘DEFIBRILLATORS’ within the workplace and the safety representatives to ensure this happen

Brother Robin Henderson – Branch 313 (Hardings): General Secretary, President, Platform and Delegates. We are asking Conference to support the concept that all branches ensure that they have defibrillators within the workplace and the safety representatives ensure that this happens. The reason being if none of you do know what a defibrillator is, it’s obviously a monitor that goes on your heart that can bring people back from having heart attacks. Now, it only needs to have one in every branch or whatever and it only needs to save one life and it would be well worth the cost. Thank you. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder?

Sister Stephanie Irish – Branch 339 (Manor, Rugby): I’m here to support this motion. This is something that is very close to Manor, Rugby’s heart because 18 months ago we lost a very popular member of this Union, Brother Bert Dawson, to a heart attack and the circumstances of his death brought this to the forefront and we actually did an awful lot of research on this and took it to the Health & Safety Committee. Unfortunately Premier Foods’ opinion on defibrillators seems to be a lot different to ours, it was more about the cost than about the fact that it could save somebody’s life. We did the research and they brought the company occy health into the health and safety meeting and she decided that because we have an ambulance station two minutes up the road, that it wouldn’t be worth it. The fact that the call goes God knows where before it comes to Rugby and the ambulance is despatched, could mean that it would be 15 minutes before an ambulance came to Rugby. First aiders recently did their refresher courses and came back and the evidence again for defibrillators was overwhelming and the response from the health and safety manager was of course they’re going to recommend it because they sell them, so again we put it forward at the Health & Safety Committee and again it got rejected because it’s not a Premier initiative to have a defibrillator. My concern is that the company says it’s too expensive, but you can’t put a price on life. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. I’m a first aider and I’ll put it to you in simple figures, just like a manager does. If one of you has a heart attack on that floor now and I’ve got to give you CPR, I’ve got approximately a 4% chance of bringing you back. If, on the other hand, I’ve got a defibrillator I’ve got a 40% chance of bringing you back. Now, there are certain managers and types that will tell you defibrillators are expensive, they’re not. I’ve actually priced them up. They’re about £1,200 and £1,200’s too much for a life? I don’t think so. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580: What are you laughing at, Angela? Platform, President, fellow Delegates. I’m also here to support this motion. I too am a first aider and I agree with the previous speaker. The figures he quoted are correct. We’ve been fortunate at Greggs in Leeds, we have had and I use the past tense a defibrillator for quite a number of years. At that time when we bought it, it was quite expensive. The price of them has come down dramatically now and they really are an affordable item, but unfortunately last year the battery started failing, as I say we have had it for quite a lot of years. We’re fortunate to have one, also fortunately we’ve not had to use it, we haven’t had anybody had a heart attack for a number of years at the bakery, but you never know what’s around the corner.

I personally have had two heart attacks, not at work though. I’d just like to say that we had sort of entrenched discussions for quite a number of months, I’m not going to gloat, but finally last week I heard yes, you can have your defibrillator back. I think they’re essential, they’re not a luxury, they’re an essential commodity and they should be in every workplace.
I’d even go as far as to say every shop, okay. Please support, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): General Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to strongly support this. Hovis, Bradford last year, we had a URTU colleague at Bradford, close friend of mine, climbing into his wagon, massive heart attack, died. I strongly campaigned at Hovis, Bradford to be allowed to go and do a sponsored walk or a sponsored something to get a defibrillator for the site. It’s taken the management six months to decide to allow me to, but we have had a commitment from Hovis at our national meeting that all sites will be getting defibrillators. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hardings/Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here clearly to support the motion. Clearly year on year you look around and we come here every year and you see the attacks that companies are doing on people’s terms and conditions, re-structures, any excuse to save money. Stress in the workplace, I believe, is an absolute massive problem throughout industry and no-one seems to recognise it. You raise it at health and safety meetings and the employers are really not interested, they just fob you off as if it’s nothing.

The reality is year on year our people with the workforce is getting put under more and more pressure year on year and that’ll continue and the reality is all that’s going to do is increase the risk of having a potential heart attack and a little price and a little device like a defibrillator to help people or potentially give them the opportunity of saving a life here, is absolutely nothing. Within the workplace the employer under the health and safety legislation has a duty of care to the employees, a basic right under the ’74 Act. We, as individuals, should have the right to be treated with respect and dignity and a little bit of money being spent on a couple of defibrillators on every single one of our sites is very, very bleak. There should not be a life having to go and someone get killed as a consequence of employers not being bothered to spend a bit of money on the employees. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Owens – EC Member (No. 4 Region): Still in my suit, getting used to it now [LAUGHTER].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You had long trousers last night as well.

Brother John Owens – EC Member (No. 4 Region): I know, I’m getting a bit of a wimp, aren’t I? Speaking on behalf of the EC. The EC asks you to support this motion.

In Liverpool, the average response time for an ambulance is between eight and 10 minutes. Your chance of recovery decreases by 10% every minute that passes after a cardiac arrest. Research shows that applying a controlled shock within five minutes of collapse provides the best possible chance of survival. Although it may be possible to keep a person alive using CPR, the individual concerned might not recover through that process alone. Researchers say that the instant availability of a defibrillator in a public place or workplace saves lives. We recognise that defibs do not always save lives, but we feel it would give an improved chance of survival if they are available.

Sudden cardiac arrest can strike virtually anyone, man, woman, young, old, even management, even though I sometimes wonder whether they have a heart. If a professional footballer, Fabrice Muamba, who’s as fit as a butcher’s dog, can have a cardiac arrest, it can happen to anybody. Unfortunately many purchases of defibs have been the result in a workplace event that moves then to see the need and value in having one. If your workplace has never had a cardiac arrest, then the perception is that maybe the unit may not be used or needed. Unfortunately this method of risk assessment is flawed. We welcome the position that some forward-thinking companies have taken this up, but on the other hand a lot haven’t. Greggs has one until recently, but now it’s been taken out, but I’ve just heard that they’re getting it back again and Hovis bakery in Bradford clubbed together to buy their own, thanks to Dave Suddards.

Even in my workplace, management don’t think there’s a need, stating that we have a hospital nearby and it wasn’t right to put anyone under pressure to use one. We have spoken about defibs at the BFAWU National Health & Safety Committee and fully support the introduction of defibs in our workplace. To raise this profile of the issue, Graham Morris, MP, tabled an early day Motion 544 on this issue on behalf of our parliamentary group which achieved 38 signatures. Although early day motions do not have time allocated for debate, but this remains an important means of building awareness of the issues amongst MPs. A defib is extremely easy and safe to use, both for the casualty and the operator and at around £1,000 per unit, it would be money well spent. So as well as supporting this motion today, we need to put pressure on our MPs to support this and go back to our workplaces, whether it’s through our Health & Safety Committees or not and convince our bosses that defibs are a must in the workplace. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Okay. Conference, obviously we’ve now been joined on the platform by the first guest of Conference this year and obviously if you live in Bolton North East of course you’ll already know who Dave is and Dave’s been a great friend of the Bakers Union. He’s been involved in I think it was Peter Hunt’s dispute, the Hampson’s dispute, the Sayers dispute and every time you’ve probably been involved with us has probably been a dispute, but yes and obviously he knows Ronnie and he had to go out drinking with Ronnie, so more than likely there was always a dispute [LAUGHTER], but Dave is also one of those rarities who actually had a real job outside the Houses of Parliament and not only did he have a real job, he’s actually a skilled engineer and not only that in his workplace, an even rarer sight in the House of Commons, he was actually a convener and he was a convener right up until the day he became a MP, so it’s our pleasure and privilege to invite along Dave and welcome to our Conference.

[APPLAUSE]

Dave Crausby, MP – Parliamentary Group report

Dave Crausby, MP: Thanks very much Mr President, Conference. It’s a pleasure to speak to your Conference this morning. John McDonald has already, to some extent, sent his apologies, but as you know he’s not been very well. He attended a conference, I understand, with Ian and he fell ill at the conference and he’s since that time resolved to look after his health a bit better and he says that he won’t be sitting next to Ian at any conferences any more [LAUGHTER]. He’s not exactly blaming him, but I there’s a sort of hint there that Ian might have had something to do with his illness. The parliamentary group report has been circulated, I understand, but it’s for me to present the report to Conference.

Just first of all is some background to the parliamentary group. It was formed in 2008, it has a membership of 24 MPs, Labour MPs, one Plaid Cymru and one peer. It meets every two months whilst parliament is sitting. It’s a trade union parliamentary group rather than an all party parliamentary group and the difference in that is that it remains the property of the Union rather than the property of parliament and the all party parliamentary groups have specific rules that mean that you have to have a cross-section of members from different political parties. We don’t particularly want the Tories in our group, to be perfectly honest, so we don’t form it as an APPG.

As I say, it works to the agenda as determined by your Officers of the Union who are very active in the group and Ian and Ronnie have put an awful lot of work into the group to ensure that we present your case and the case for working people within parliament. It’s a group that’s professionally administered by union services Simeon Andrews, who’s at the back and his team, Michael, doing an awful lot of good work in liaison with your head office to take forward a programme of work on a daily basis. There’s a full report back to your Executive every quarter and since its formation, there have been a reputation in parliament raising the issues of concern, punching, I have to say, well above its weight for a trade union of your size. It meets with government at all levels and provides detailed briefings to MPs and peers. Its objective is to use all parliamentary mechanisms available to build a body of knowledge amongst MPs on your key issues that can properly hold government to account and influence key policy makers. There are regular Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union group interventions and they include the following specific at meetings for example to update MPs on issues of concern to the Union, we brief MPs before key debates in parliament, we put down amendments to government legislation, there are interventions in debates, John McDonald is very, very active in debates on the floor of the Commons, we produce as earlier mentioned early day motions to promote issues of importance to the Union, we’ve organised parliamentary events of seminars and hosted political schools, events giving union members introduction to the work of the group and a brief glimpse of how parliament works.

The President has already indicated that I’m a sort of, something of a tiny minority in the House of Commons in the sense that I’m a working man who left school at 16. There’s not a lot of members of parliament like that this days, there used to be but there’s not any more. Now I take the view that parliament is not a job, it’s a representative position. Members of parliament should represent the people, they share a cross-section of all sorts of people, men and women, black and white, working class, middle class, upper class, but the truth is that working class people of this country are very, very much under-represented in parliament and it’s getting exceedingly difficult to become elected as a member of parliament. The reason I’m a member of parliament is because I was ably supported by the amalgamated engineering union who pulled me through and I think that the trade union movement’s got an important job to make sure that when I finally hang up my hat as a member of parliament that I’m replaced by other working class members, people who have actually had a real job in life, not just left university and got a job with a minister and then become a member of parliament, but people who’ve experienced the difficulties that life presents us with, so I would urge you out there and the union to make sure that we do bring forward working class members and support them, because they do need a good deal of support to compete with the
sometimes what I see as superficial skills of those people who get themselves elected to parliament, it might be difficult to do. I assure you it’s very do-able and absolutely necessary.

It’s necessary because we need members of parliament to pursue the kind of campaigns that you expect us to pursue, not just on an academic basis but with a real understanding and one of the key Bakers Union campaigns has been related to the power of supermarkets and this has been a concern since the formation of the group. Supermarkets put enormous pressure, as you will know, on suppliers to drive down costs and sell bread at below cost price as a loss leader, creating a race to the bottom in terms of pay and conditions right across the industry. The government announced that they would create an adjudicator to enforce the groceries code which is meant to protect the suppliers from unfair pressure from the supermarkets, but they initially said that the adjudicator would only have the power to name and shame and important as that is, it really isn’t sufficient.

The Bakers Union worked in alliance with other campaigners like the National Farmers Union, whose members in the dairy industry had similar problems as far as milk was concerned and various charities with concerns about treatment of suppliers in developing countries and we campaigned for the adjudicators to be given the power to fine supermarkets when necessary. Members of the parliamentary group worked closely with Ian Murray, MP, Labour’s Shadow Minister for Business Innovation & Skills and intervened at each stage of the bill’s passage through the Commons. Eventually through the tabling of an amendment by John McDonald, the government was forced into a U-turn, conceding the power to fine which was, in my view, a significant victory for us particularly with this Tory-led coalition in power. The group will now be seeking a meeting in parliament with the new adjudicator to make her aware of our particular concerns and monitor the enforcement of the code within our sector.

On the question of bakers asthma, we’ve pursued the issue of bakers asthma vigorously in parliament. Bakers are 80 times more likely to develop occupational asthma than the average worker due to the exposure to flour and other bakery dust and on behalf of the group, Teresa Pearce, MP, tabled an early day motion on the issue in the last session of parliament which 35 members of parliament signed. More recently the group has been in discussion with world-renowned experts in occupational and environmental respiratory disease, Professor Sir Anthony Newman Taylor and Professor Paul Cullinan at the Royal Brompton Hospital and Imperial College, London who came into parliament to brief MPs on this very important and family-devastating issue. Health & Safety Executive, Professor Cullinan, identified the problem as much more prevalent than would appear to be from the number of cases officially brought, being particularly acute in supermarket branch bakeries and in small family-owned bakers. I think we accept that the bigger employers may be a little better, but as always the case, I think right throughout British industry it’s the small employers who are sometimes more difficult as far as health and safety is concerned.

Health & Safety Executive it is struggling, we have to say, under government cuts is not required as things stand to undertake investigations and hasn’t got the capacity in all honesty, whilst most supermarkets did not respond to Professor Cullinan’s efforts to work with them to tackle the issues, but finally Morrisons did agree to work with him to develop best practice guidelines to minimise exposure to flour improvers and enzymes in the air. If we can get one main employer to support it, it will be a huge step in getting an industry-wide code established and we very much welcome Morrisons’ support. The mesothelioma bill in parliament at the moment has been brought through within the Queen’s speech by this present government and we’ll be seeking to raise bakers asthma in the context of the debate around compensation to victims of asbestos-related lung disease and to possibly broaden the scope of the bill to include other industrially-contracted lung diseases and even if the bill can’t be amended in that way and it might well be that it will be difficult to amend that bill in that way in this session, we’ll still seek to raise this issue during the bill’s passage through parliament.

On the question of maximum working temperature, I spent many years in the engineering industry working hard, as far as minimum temperatures are concerned and we’ve always had, within the old factory sites (?), legislation to protect us against minimum temperature, but I’ve always taken the view that it’s not just legislation really that protects workers as far as temperatures are concerned, it’s individuals prepared to act within the workplace, but it’s enormously important to have that piece of legislation to back you up and to say to the employer that you are actually breaking the law as far as temperature is concerned. In the good old days when I was a works convener, whilst we had the legislation to protect us from low levels of temperature, the most important thing was that I made sure that all of our shop stewards had a thermometer and as soon as the temperature went below 60°, we all stopped work and it’s amazing how the employer responded to that, not just as a result of the legislation which they were breaking, but as time went on they made sure that the temperature didn’t go below 60°, not just because it was against the law, but because we always stopped work as soon as it dropped to a degree below and pretty quickly all the foremen had thermometers as well, so we had a few quarrels about whether it was 59° or 61°, but anyway, the point was that prior to that we were working in incredibly cold temperatures and it’s always seemed to me quite ridiculous there’s legislation there for the bottom end of the temperature
scale but nothing for the top end and whilst it’s difficult to deal with, it’s something that really must be resolved in my view and the group has sought to raise the need for a legal requirement for employers to introduce control measures to prevent exposure to excessive heat in the workplace like those, as I say, which apply to very low temperatures. This is an issue of course not just in heavy industry, but also in classrooms, offices and in transport and we seek to gather support from other trade unions. The group has campaigned on this issue since its formation in parliament, meeting with government and shadow ministers, as well as meeting with the Health & Safety Executive and other trade unions and campaigning organisations and as a result to initiate the Cool it! campaign, bringing together a wide coalition of unions for a maximum working temperature, we had it passed as official TU policy at congress this year. We need to press the TUC to campaign to make this part of Labour’s next election manifesto.

We managed to get Ed Miliband to come to speak to the bakers group of MPs last year and he agreed that his ministerial team should look seriously at this issue. I thought we were making some very real progress up until the point where we lost the election in 2010 and to some extent with a new leader we needed to start again, but Ed was pretty supportive. Since then, the group’s held meetings with the Shadow Labour Minister Gavin Shuker and Toby Perkins. The current Labour front bench position is that they want to show us that it has the support of employers. Now, later this month we’re reconvening a meeting of the union sponsors of the campaign and which Toby Perkins has agreed to attend. We also are in discussion with Richard Gravely, an academic at the Institute of Occupational Medicine in Edinburgh, about establishing an evidence base.

Now other industrial and political issues, the group has been active on a range of other issues that have been brought to our attention and we’ve put down a number of EDMs, defibrillators in the workplace has been tabled and Fabrice Muamba has mentioned, he’s was a Bolton footballer and I’m clearly as a Bolton member of parliament a Bolton Wanderers supporter although it’s not been a fantastic season but we’ll do better next year, I think the truth is that if Fabrice Muamba had had his heart attack in Bolton town centre he’d have died, but he was in some respects lucky enough to have his heart attack at Tottenham Hotspur and they had all the equipment there and they had all the benefits of the heart hospital in London and it really does make a difference and when you see that in the effects of Fabrice is still alive and well, although maybe not playing football but working hard to help other young people to play football.

Other industrial and political issues we put down an EDM as far as R F Brooks were concerned, we tabled on attacks that R F Brooks had on jobs and pay and conditions. There was an EDM on Hovis over the 900 job losses at Hovis plants, the Bakery, Confection & Tobacco Workers’ & Grain Millers International Union, a sister union in the USA, we tabled an EDM in solidarity with their industrial action against Hostess Brands, one of the largest industrial bakers in the US and I think you heard earlier about some of the activities of that organisation and typical way that the Americans are treating trade unionism. The Bakers Union operates within the trade union co-ordinating group and it’s one of the finer unions of that group, set up in 2008 to co-ordinate the campaign and actions of a number of trade unions on issues of concern in parliament and beyond. The Bakers Union is, to some extent, unique in that group in that unlike the others it is affiliated to the Labour Party and I take the view that the Bakers Union has the right attitude to that, because whilst there might be some individuals within the trade union movement who are unhappy about the record of Labour, the reality is that the Labour Party is our Party, we own the Party, effectively created the Party and it’s the truth that there are people within the Labour Party and within the trade union movement that would like to see the back of each other.

There are people within the Labour Party who would like to see the back of the trade unions, no one can deny that, they quite actively say thanks very much for the Labour Party that the trade union movement created, 100 years of history, all that money you put in, all that support, a Party that is the only Party that has the opportunity to become government after the next election and if the trade union movement wants to leave, the Labour Party to us, organisations on the right of the Party, they say well thanks very much and goodbye, don’t call us we’ll call you. Now I take the view that the trade union movement should hold on to the Labour Party, it’s our Party, don’t let it go so easily. You don’t like what it does, get involved with it and change it and as I say, change its members of parliament, put proper people in there, put people who understand what’s going on, not just people that want to go to parliament for a career. So I think that the Bakers Union has exactly the right attitude within the TUCG group in the sense that it actively campaigns when the Labour Party doesn’t do what it wants to do, but it stays in there to keep involved to hang on to possession.

The trade union co-ordinating group has been lobbying, as you may know, extensively on the question of pensions, consistently arguing against the cuts in public service pensions by the way of the public service pensions bill and we’ve secured numerous interventions in the bill’s debate with tabling amendments on behalf of a number of unions. On the enterprise and regulatory reform bill, which is attacking employment tribunals, health and safety regulators, TUPE and equalities requirements and despite numerous amendments and co-ordinated lobbying interventions, the bill still became law.
It seems to me that the same people within British politics, who are now demanding less regulation for employers as far as health and safety is concerned in employment tribunals, are the same people who demanded less regulation for the banks and that didn’t go very well, did it, either, but the same people are now saying well it’s the way forward, we really need to be competitive. Well the banks really needed to be competitive and look what happened there, they nearly brought down the whole of the capitalist system because of the question of deregulation and it seems to me that it’s the very last thing that we should do is allow them to deregulate health and safety until so many more people, before we see sense.

Now the government have been very active, this coalition Liberal-Tory coalition have been very active with the use of SIs to attack trade union rights and SIs are Statutory Instruments and no statutory instrument has been defeated in parliament since 1979 and they use a SI as a notice for collective redundancy to reduce from over 100 employees, 90 days, down to 45 days. The TUCG co-ordinated over 30 MPs to pack the committee and intervene, but they were still unsuccessful because statutory instruments are just such a device. Statutory instruments can last as little as two minutes effectively. The sitting committee pass a very important piece of legislation through without any scrutiny at all and what it does need is opposition members of parliament to make sure that they don’t last two minutes and I think we were effective in, whilst not effective in getting our way, we were at least effective in ensuring that this issue was in fact debated. There’s also, within the Queen’s speech, the deregulation bill and the government attacks again, more attacks, on health and safety and trade union rights to continue.

I just wanted to say in conclusion, Mr President, that we are heading now less than two years to go to the next election. The pressure is starting to come on the opposition, you’ll see that the tabloid press is making life quite difficult for us but opposition in itself is quite difficult in the sense that the real difficulty with opposition is that you don’t have a say in what’s going on, you have no say as far as the running of the economy is concerned, but you’re expected to have a solution and the press are demanding that we have a solution. The reality is that in two years time one thing is absolutely certain, the level of our debt won’t get better. This government, whilst cutting public services in a failed austerity programme, is increasing the debt month by month simply because it’s making life so difficult for working people, living standards are falling, tax revenue’s falling, there’s absolutely no growth in the economy and as a result, instead of people in work not receiving benefits, paying taxes, we have the absolute opposite and whilst we have a government that talks loudly about cutting the deficit, they are on a monthly basis increasing the debt. It is something that we must challenge. We will have the opportunity, probably, two years from now because I doubt very much that the Liberals will want to risk their political futures on an election, but you never know.

So thanks very much for the opportunity to say these few words. I’m very happy to answer any questions that you may have.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. If you’ve got any questions, if you raise your hand. We’ve got a mobile phone, so you don’t need to walk out down here either. Anybody got any questions? If we do them in groups of three, John, do them in groups of three.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Labour should indeed belong to the trade unions, but very few of us are millionaires, put your hand up if you’re a millionaire, oh nobody, there we go. What does Ed Miliband know about the trade union movement? He knows absolutely nothing. A few years ago when I was at the TUC conference, nearly all the public sector workers were balloting for strike action for 30th November and that clown appeared on the television and said people should not be talking about coming out on strike. Strike is our last weapon, it’s never the first weapon of choice, that guy is so out of touch with reality. My husband fully intends to stand as a MP in Salford in 2015, he will not be standing for Labour.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Jake Dunwoody – Region 7: Hello, you talked there about an election two years from now and we need to get behind, as a union to get behind the MPs. Unfortunately for myself and for my fellow colleagues here from Northern Ireland, we don’t have that opportunity. I can be a card carrying member of the Labour Party but I cannot form a Party as such, a constitutional Labour Party in Belfast. What is your views on that?

Brother ? Speaker: I’d just like to ask then after Maggie Thatcher’s year and then John Major’s years, Blair came in and basically didn’t change any of the policies that hit the working class man. Is Miliband going to do it this time and get rid of some of these what’s basically ruining working class people, regulations coming in now, is he going to get rid of them?

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, do you want to answer those? Right, he’s going to answer those three
questions and if you raise your hand so John knows where he’s coming.

**Dave Crausby, MP:** Well, first of all Labour belongs to the trade unions, it certainly does. Is it easy?, no it’s not. I’ve always said that as far as my life in Labour politics is concerned and trade union politics, I’ve always expected effectively to die a disillusioned man, that’s what the Labour movement is a bit like, but you should do your best, practically, pragmatically, not just saying things and standing for things in the hope that you’ll have said something or felt good about it, but to make a difference and the truth is your husband will lose in Salford in the next election, Labour will win the election.

Now, okay, people are entitled to stand, but I just take the view that the best way to have an influence within the Labour Party is to be a part of the Labour Party. Ed Miliband, as leader of the Labour Party, was effectively selected by the trade union movement, that’s the reality, that’s one of the criticisms of him. The membership of the Labour Party voted for David Miliband, the MPs of the Labour Party voted for David Miliband, the trade union movement voted for Ed Miliband. You get the leaders you deserve at the end of the day and you should research these things in advance, you should be more involved, that’s why I say so importantly you should have people within the Labour Party who understand what’s really going on in the world, who understand about the issues in the world, not just on their long-term career prospects, so I hear what you say about criticisms as far as Ed’s concerned, but the trade union movement chose him.

I’m of the view that whatever you say about Ed Miliband, he will fight the next election largely because the reality is if he doesn’t fight the next election as leader of the Labour Party then, who will? and if we don’t sort ourselves out within the Labour Party, supporting Ed Miliband as leader, then we will lose the next election and if you think that this Tory/Liberal coalition is bad, wait until you get the real thing. Now I heard all of these things prior to the last election, for instance, the Liberals are left of the Labour Party, don’t anybody ever say to me again that the Liberals are left of the Labour Party after what they’ve done, so you’re right, it’s imperfect. Politics is imperfect, it is difficult, but there is no alternative really but to persevere with it, get involved in it, have a say in it, be a part of it and change it if you don’t like it.

As far as Northern Ireland’s concerned and the opportunity to be members of the Labour Party, we’ve traditionally had an agreement that the Social Democratic Labour Party in Northern Ireland should be supported individually. I think the English have had a view, certainly the English Labour Party have had a view that there’ve been enough problems in Irish politics for us to disturb them and to some extent we wanted to support the Social Democratic Labour Party in Northern Ireland. To be fair, they are very, very supportive of the Labour Party, sit on the Labour benches in both government and opposition and I have to say I’ve got quite a lot of time for those members, but I understand your point.

The Conservatives used to take the same position, in that they wouldn’t allow their members to stand in Northern Ireland because they supported the Conservative & Unionist Party in Northern Ireland, they’ve taken a different view, although the reality is they’ve not been very successful in Northern Ireland as a political party, it’s still very much a three, well four-way, Democratic Unionists, Ulster Unionists, Sinn Féin and SDLP. For us to introduce the Labour Party into that mix seems to me just a further complication and I would have thought that we’d had enough of that as far as complications in Northern Ireland were concerned and I’m of the view that we should leave it to you guys to make your mind up really as to what the pattern should be.

On the question of Thatcher and Blair and the future, I have to say I’m back on my theme of realism. Listen, I didn’t support, you can tell my sort of political background, I think one of my proudest achievements is I led the longest strike in Bolton’s history, so I’m not a sort of natural Blair-ite, but the reality is that Blair won a series of elections, he won it by, to some extent, his charisma and I have to say as well that it seems to me that politically Ed Miliband is a very serious improvement as far as policy is concerned in comparison to Blair, but Ed Miliband doesn’t have Blair’s charisma and I’m afraid British politics is a bit like that, the British people elect people like that, the British people elected Margaret Thatcher, God knows for what reason, but they elected her for a long time and it’s no good pretending they didn’t and whilst she was there, she did a great deal of damage, so we have to be pragmatic about these things, because at the end of the day it’s about winning elections and I have to say I think that Miliband’s political position is about right and it’s always a combination of how far do you go to the left in order to win the government of the day and the truth is that the British people don’t elect left-wing politicians, they elect right-wing ones and I think I said in my speech, opposition is really difficult, you have to manage it the best way you can, but the most important lesson of all is to be actively involved within the Labour Party to try and steer it in the right direction.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, the last three questions now, so two more hands, who’s the next two hands?, one there and one at the back, that’s it.

**Brother Speaker?????????????????????:** Okay, thank you, President. Dave, last week, Ed made a speech on Thursday about capping the welfare benefits. Now, yesterday, apparently in a TV interview, we couldn’t see it because we were here,
Ed Balls has now said he’s going to put a cap on the pensions. Now, if this was coming from David Cameron and George Osborne, we can understand that. This is so-called Labour leadership. Now, I do agree with you that it’s probably too late to change your leader now, but I don’t think it’s too late to change the Chancellor now.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Give us a free press. Why haven’t we democracy within the Party at the top? The Conference Arrangement Committee on the Labour Party throws out everything it doesn’t want and makes sure that the right always prevail in the Party. We have enough trade unionists on the EC, but why do the right always win?

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Sam Vickers – Full-time Official:** Morning, Dave. One of the things I’d like to ask, a few months ago David Miliband was raising the living wage. He raised it a couple of times and all of a sudden it’s gone dead. One of the things that would help benefit, the reduction in benefits, is a living wage. You’ve got working people claiming benefits and let’s, the way the government slurred benefit claimants and that’s just been let to ride, there’s not been any challenges to it as I can see, or hear, but you’ve got a living wage that should be putting out there. I know there’s more people probably above the living wage and there’s not much capital to be made maybe, but it’s a moral issue and where is the morality in the government, in the Labour Party, where’s their principles? There isn’t any. We need some.

[APPLAUSE]

**Dave Crausby, MP:** I mean first of all on Ed Balls’ recent comments on a number of things, I watched that interview, I didn’t think he quite said he was going to put a cap on pensions. I think he clearly has said that he will not reverse the cut in family benefit to those people on the top rate of income tax, but I didn’t think he’d say he would put a cap on pensions. I think what he did say was that any Chancellor of the Exchequer has a maximum amount of money to spend and there’s a cap on everything in that sense. Everybody has a, there’s a cap on the National Health Service, there’s a cap on immigration, there’s a cap on what you spend and that’s the reality of politics and economics. I think it’s really partly what I said earlier, you have no say whatsoever in opposition as to what will happen to the British economy over two years but one thing’s certain is it will get worse and Ed Balls, as Shadow Chancellor, will come under enormous pressure from the national tabloid media, which by the way is the worst tabloid media in the entire world and if anybody deserved Leveson it was them, well it should have been Leveson plus in my opinion and I think the truth is as well, I have to keep saying this, don’t believe all that you read in the tabloid press. Ed Balls knows that over the next 12 months or so Labour’s economic programme will be torn to pieces by the media in this country and the argument will be that it just simply doesn’t balance, so he’s attempting to try and argue that.

Now I wouldn’t have made those statements personally, but I’m not the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think the reality is that we will have to see where we are in two years time and we don’t know, in truth, how bad it will get, so for me I wouldn’t be making any statements about anything just yet, although the real danger is that this government won’t run two years and we could find ourselves with a fairly early election and we need to make sure that the British people see Labour as a party that will manage the economy well, because the harsh reality is we are still paying the price for the arguments that’s been presented by the opposition that we didn’t balance the books, that we spent too much money during the period while we were in office, that’s the argument that that’s why the country’s in so much debt, but there’s no argument as to why the country’s getting in more and more debt. I think by the time we get to the next election, we’ll have borrowed an extra quarter of a trillion pounds under this present regime and I think what Ed Balls is trying to do is, wrongly in my view, present himself as a reasonable individual who can manage the books.

I’m of the opinion that we should be a bit more radical than that and the way to cut the deficit is to reduce dependency on benefits, not by way of cutting benefits but by providing jobs, that’s the way that we will get ourselves out of trouble. I’ve always taken the view all of my life that whenever you get yourself in financial trouble, the best way to get out of financial trouble is to work your way out of financial trouble, work harder, do a bit more and you get out of trouble. It seems to me that that’s what the country should do. What you don’t do when you’re in financial trouble is start to borrow more and work less. It seems to me that that’s what this government wants us to do, put people out of work and borrow more money, that occurs to me as an absolutely recipe for disaster and what we need, I think, is a programme not of austerity but of investment to ensure that we create jobs and decent living standards for the working people of this country.

On the question of the Conference Arrangements Committee and the conference and the NEC, well the trade union, the right always wins, I’m sorry to say that some of the right come from nominations from the trade union movement and that’s something that you need to deal with within yourselves. Some of the people that end up on the NEC and the Conference Arrangements Committee, as far as conference is concerned, are trade union nominees and that’s why it’s so important not just to maintain our link with the Labour Party, because you think it’s bad now, imagine what it would be
like without the interests of the trade union delegates that sit there on the National Executive Committee.

On the question of the living wage, I have to say whilst the living wage is a good aspiration, it just seems to me that the most important thing is a decent minimum wage, statutory minimum wage and I don’t really see the difference between a living wage for some people that you would argue who work in for instance local government and a minimum wage for others. I would just simply argue that the living wage would not be necessary if we argued a decent level for the minimum wage and that really is what we should campaign on, to make sure that the minimum wage is at a point where people can live off it and when people say to me that a Labour government does nothing here, does nothing there, etc., etc., I have to say one of its greatest achievements during the last parliament, under Blair by the way, was the minimum wage, the first time in all of our history ever, never before in this country did we have anything relating to a minimum wage, the Tories and the Liberals both opposed it in parliament, they say they’re in favour of it now because they recognise that there are some things that are very popular. They’re in favour of the National Health Service they say, because they understand that the British people believe in the National Health Service and I think one of the greatest achievements of the last government was to make the British people believe in the minimum wage. What we need to do is make the minimum wage a living wage for everybody.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Listen Dave, thank you very, very much. I mean obviously I think you can feel some of the frustration some of the Delegates feel and you probably feel that wherever you go in the country, because working people are crying out for leadership and yes, you’re right about unions backing Ed Miliband, we were one of those unions that backed Ed Miliband and we did it on the basis that when he was standing for election what he was suggesting was how important it was to represent working class people and he seemed to talk the language and understand the issues we were facing. I mean obviously we want to see this government removed and obviously I’m sure you’ll take back the message to the Labour Party of the frustrations and we want the Labour Party to stand up for our class like the Tories stand up for theirs, but we really, really do appreciate you coming along, listening to what our Conference has got to say and thank you very much.

Dave Crausby, MP: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Dave, obviously we want you to take a gift away with you to remind you of your time with the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union. I’m not going to unpack it, but what it is it’s a limited edition pewter baker, so don’t show it to too many places in parliament, they’ll all want one. Honest to God when they see this, they’ll want to get their hands on it. I hope it takes pride of place, whether in your office or in your home, but I say to come along and step in at the last minute for John McDonald, I think you’ve done a fantastic job. Cheers, Dave.

[APPLAUSE]

But probably more importantly is that you’ve got a tin of Fox’s biscuits, these are really good ones these, you can see it says they’re Fabulously Fox’s on the front. I don’t know whether you have to declare these in parliament, but I’d declare them from Bolton. Leave these in the house first, you and Ian as of a night sit down in front of the telly, glass of wine and a Fox’s biscuit.

Dave, thank you very much for addressing the Conference.

[APPLAUSE]

Dave Crausby, MP: Thank you. Can I just say, as long as they’re not worth £250 I think I’m alright, although they look pretty valuable but I don’t think, it’s funny actually that you should make this presentation because I have a presentation for you actually as I understand that you’ve done 40 years with the union, so I have a presentation for a number of things here. I think there’s a little badge to wear, 40 years of being an arse which I don’t know why (laughter and applause), I don’t know why anybody could suggest that, I mean I’ve only known Ronnie about 25 years so I don’t know him for 40 years and 25 years, I think, is an arse and a number of other things, I understand there’s a badge in here and your certificate from the Executive Council on completion of 40 years unbroken membership, so congratulations.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Cheers, Dave.

[APPLAUSE]

Dave Crausby, MP: I’m afraid I haven’t got a box of biscuits.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]
Right, I’ll remember that, Vickers, I’ll tell you, I’ll remember it. Well what can I say, thank you. Very, very unexpected and thanks to Steve Finn, I’ll do exactly the same with my cheque that Steve Finn did with his and donate it to the strike fund.

[APPLAUSE]

Fantastic, thank you.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, Conference. Obviously the General Secretary will have to gather his thoughts and gather his composure and so we’ll give you a brew. If you come back for 10 past 11.

[BREAK]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, Conference as everybody’s just settling back down, just a reminder. Obviously when Dave was talking before, he was talking about the fact that if you really want the Labour Party to change, we should be playing a more active role inside the Labour Party and just to remind Delegates today, obviously we’ve got the fringe meeting when Conference finishes and I’ll have details of which room we’re in, but we’re going to have somebody from TULO, who will be explaining to us how you start to influence the Labour Party from within, how you could become a councillor or those people that would be interested in standing as MPs, how you could possibly become a MP. Obviously we did send three people earlier in the year, Sarah, Haroon and Chris, I was just looking for you Chris, I couldn’t remember where you were sat and obviously we’ve got great hope that those three people at some point in time will go and stand as candidates for the Labour Party and when they do, obviously this Union will throw its full support behind them, so I do encourage people to attend the fringe meeting, which has been kindly sponsored as well by Thompsons, so as well as coming along and getting lots and lots of information, we’re also going to feed you. I don’t know if there’s going to be like beer and wine, but if you don’t come along you aren’t going to find out, but obviously I do encourage you to come along.

Also another point of information that I’ve got to give you, obviously yesterday as I became really excited because you passed motion 15, unfortunately I made a technical error and Sarah quite rightly asked me if she could proceed and obviously in that moment of enthusiasm I said yes and obviously hands up, my fault, although I am absolutely saddened that unfortunately motion 16, although you passed it, has to fall because unfortunately we can’t pass the same motion or a change to the same motion at the same Conference, so it is with great sadness, because it was fantastic, it was going to give us equal opportunity and equal representation for shop workers to come to Conference, but unfortunately because it’s contained within that same rule, it falls. I do apologise to Conference, I do take full responsibility for it. Okay, Sarah.

**Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580:** All due respect, Ian, but it’s the Conference that should decide whether it falls or not. You don’t have the power to do that, we do. We passed the motion, both of them.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** It should have fallen.

**Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580:** It should have done, but I asked you and you let me move it.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I know I did.

**Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580:** So it should be down now to the Conference to decide what happens to it.

[APPLAUSE]

**Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580:** Do we accept that?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** It doesn’t matter whether you accept it or not, it can’t happen.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It can’t stand. That is, I really, really am sorry. I’ve have loved it to have gone through, absolutely loved it, absolutely loved it and I do apologise and I apologise to the shop workers of Greggs because to me it was a very, very important motion that we’ve been trying to get through for many a year, but I’m really proud and pleased that Conference passed a lot of new people, which is equally as important, but it just goes to show we’ve got work to do to make sure we can be a Union that fully reflects the opportunities to bring people to this Conference that should be here and like I say, I do apologise. I mean but yes, by all means have a pop at me yes, but just understand I can’t do anything about it. Sorry.
Cheers, cheers, Sarah.  
[APPLAUSE]
Okay.

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): I’d like to make a point of order please, Mr President. I don’t think you should take the blame entirely, I really don’t. I think there was other missed opportunities here. The EC must have looked at the resolutions before as the Agenda was being formulated, Standing Orders have gone through them, we went up to Standing Orders yesterday because we could see that if one went through the other would fall, that’s why myself and Rachel went up to see Standing Orders to see if we could composite. Okay, we were told it would be an amendment rather than composite, but that was another opportunity lost and then the final opportunity was obviously when Sarah spoke before she moved resolution 26, so I feel that I don’t think you’re entirely to blame at all, Ian, I think this has been a catalogue of missed opportunities to stop this happening, what’s happened. I really think we should maybe be allowed to put another composite in, an emergency or something like that and then just ask for guidance what we could do to try and rectify the situation that we’re in. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Just, I mean obviously we can’t composite it now because obviously motion 15 was passed, sorry motion 15 was passed so 16, yes 16 was the one that has to fall unfortunately, but motion 15 was passed, so therefore I should have ruled it out and that’s why I’m in this position and I have to take responsibility for decisions and I accept those responsibilities. It was my bad advice. I mean, Sarah asked me before she actually moved the motion and in my enthusiasm to see quality, I made an error and I apologise, but I take responsibility for it, it’s not the Executive Council, it’s not the Standing Orders, it’s me and I take full responsibility for it. Obviously I very much doubt whether there’s anything we can do on the rule. If you do go to Standing Orders and talk to Standing Orders and see if there’s anything we can do, then I’m sure that there’ll be somebody in there that may be able to give you advice, but I don’t believe there is anything you can do at all. Okay. Is it a point of order? Okay.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Mr President. The point of order is quite simple actually. All this morning I’ve been looking at the rule book just in case there’s something missing. The only thing that I find is No. 17 which is Rescinding a Resolution which you can or can’t apply in this situation and that even goes as far as to say no resolution shall be rescinded or amended at the meeting at which it is passed, no minutes shall be rescinded or amended unless notice of the motion is given at the subsequent meeting, such notice having been given, it shall lie on the table until the following meeting when it shall be considered and a decision arrived at. The minutes shall not be rescinded or amended unless by the consent of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting when it is considered, but furthermore every Conference that I’ve been coming for the last 16-odd years, whenever we have a motion following a motion of similar nature, it is pointed out to us if such a motion carries, the other one will automatically fall and we will not be having the debate and discussions around it. We have a situation here whereby motion 15 was debated, discussed, arguments for and against, carried, we then had motion 16 where the mover quite rightly approached and it’s not your fault, it’s the fault of the whole organisation, it’s gone past everybody, then motion 16 was debated on and it’s gone through, so Conference has passed that motion. There is nothing in the rule book which says once a motion has been passed, the Executive or the Standing Orders or anybody or Conference has the right to say that it’s fallen because somebody’s made an error. This is a big blunder, yes? and everybody, as well as Standing Orders, more so the Standing Orders than yourself, Mr President, yes? It should have not happened, somebody should have intervened at the time. We’re too late about it now, it’s not a detriment to the Union, in fact it’s going to help the union movement because it’s about retention and increasing the memberships, so whatever’s happened has happened, there is no way that we should be overturning the decision of the original ballot.

[APPLAUSE]
All the Delegates have participated and that .......

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Raj, Raj, please don’t give a speech, just make your point of order, mate. I understand .......

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: The point of order is there’s nothing in the rule book which says once a motion has been carried, anybody in this hall, whoever, whatever position, has the right to request that it be ignored and it be rescinded or taken away, there’s nothing in the rule book.

[APPLAUSE]
And if there’s anywhere in the rule book, somebody kindly explain to me, because I don’t understand it if it’s in there, I can’t find nothing in there and I spent the whole morning looking for it.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. I get the point, I get the point, Raj, but unfortunately what I’ve said is correct. It should have fallen, I take responsibility.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: But the fact is, the motion stands because it’s been debated, because it’s been voted on, we’ve had overwhelming majority, it has to stand, it can’t fall just because somebody’s made an error and Mr President it’s not your error, it’s all, it’s everybody’s error, yes? so it’s not one person to blame. The ballot’s taken place, we’ve had the vote, it stands, it’s simple, simple as that.

APPLAUSE

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is this a point of order, Marilyn?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Not a speech?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: No, I don’t do big speeches.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Point of order.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: You know I don’t do big speeches. First of all, why was it not flagged up yesterday that this was out of order and secondly, we’re always being told that Conference runs this Union. Let’s have our say.

APPLAUSE

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: The motion wasn’t out of order. The problem was that the moment you passed 16, sorry 15, it changed that rule and 16 was about the same rule and it was this Conference that passed the motion a few years back, probably about four or five years ago, that said we couldn’t change that rule for a period of three years. I’m quite happy to bring Olive in from the Standing Orders if you want, so she can clarify on the Standing Orders.

Sister Olive Molloy – Standing Orders: Can I just say that the mover of motion 16 came to me with a request to composite 15 and 16 and reading them through, 16 asked for three representatives, 15 asked for two and I said but you can’t composite and alter words from one, they must agree, so I said what this needs is an amendment and it is too late for an amendment to be submitted, they have to be submitted from the April Regional Council meeting, so I’m afraid there’s nothing we can do. Motion 16 was read out by me because as far as the Standing Orders were concerned, that motion was in order, the wording was right, the sentiment was right, everything about it was right and I couldn’t rule it out of order in case 15 fell. If 15 had fallen, 16 could have carried, but fortunately or unfortunately whichever way you look at it, 15 carried, 16 should then have been announced and Ian’s accepted responsibility. In light of 15 being carried, I’m afraid 16 falls. I couldn’t pre-empt it would fall in case the one before it fell as well, so that was it. Attempts were made before ever the speech was read out to put it right, but you were just too late and it doesn’t, to me that decision now that Ian’s made that 16 falls, does stand. There’s nothing we can do about it, nothing at all, I’m sorry, but there it is, but that was the view of Standing Orders, that’s how this situation arose.

APPLAUSE

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And just to clarify, if you look in your rule books on rule 22.11, Resolutions involving alterations of the rules shall have the precedent over all other Conference resolutions and shall be debated on the first day of Conference. Any change of that union rule shall not stand, shall stand for a period of at least two years and that rule changed, so it’s in place for two years, not three years, sorry, it’s in place for two years, so we can’t alter that rule, we can’t alter it at the same Conference and we can’t alter it next year. That’s the rule, our rule book and our rule book is what we have to, sometimes we like the rules, sometimes we don’t and the fact of the matter is it’s our rule book and we have to have guidance and we have to have rules and we have to make sure that we follow the rules. You wouldn’t want us making stuff up on the hoof, you wouldn’t want us to accept some and ignore others, we have to make sure that we fulfil our obligations to you, because you bring these rules to Conference, you sit here and you debate them and then you make sure, as an Executive, we implement them.

Now my job is the National President over this Conference and I take responsibility if I give bad advice. I expect managers when they make bad decisions to man-up and take their responsibility, so it is my responsibility, it’s nobody else’s responsibility, it’s mine, I made the mistake, I take the responsibility for it. I do apologise, but unfortunately I have to rule it unfortunately out of order, despite I wanted it to go through because rule 22.11 says that’s what I should have done and I didn’t do it and that’s the problem. If you’re not happy with rule 22.11, bring a resolution to Conference next year to enable you to do something different, but until that rule’s changed, then I have to enforce the rules that you put in place, I have to do it and it doesn’t matter how many points of order that come up, unfortunately I cannot and I will not change your rule book without a resolution and that’s the position and I do apologise, but that’s it.

APPLAUSE
Monday June 10 morning: Motions 28–31

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Mr President, a straight point of order, a straight point of order, not a long debate, a straight point of order. All the previous years, Standing Orders representative in this case, Vi Carr, comes down, goes through the motions, says No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., etc. all these stand and previously it always has been pointed out if such a such a motion carries, the next motion will fall and we had the discussions......

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That’s not a point of order, Raj, Raj.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Of course it is.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No it’s not, it’s not, it’s not.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Of course it is.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It’s not.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: What is it then?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It’s not a point of order, that’s a speech. That’s a speech.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: It’s not a speech. Does it, did it or does it not happen, the point of order is in the past 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, if 7 carries, 8 falls.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Raj, Raj, Raj, I’ve taken responsibility for it.

Sister Olive Molloy – Standing Orders: If you’ll turn to your Agendas, motion 41, the following motions all stand, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64 is withdrawn, 65, 66, 67, 68 and 69, that is the end of this report. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, thank you. To the Conference, everybody agree with that report? Please show. Anyone against? That’s carried, thank you. Motion 31, please.

31 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 580

That this Conference agree to lobby government to protect employees against adverse weather conditions within shops and that employers provide correct heating or cooling systems within workplaces.

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): President, Platform, fellow Delegates. I’m here to move resolution 31. It’s quite straightforward, I won’t read it out, it’s there above. Basically although I work in a bakery, I am aware of the problems that the shop staff do have and in Greggs we have all sorts of different shops. I’m sure most of you in the Conference hall will have seen a Greggs shop somewhere or other, but we have them in petrol stations, we have them now in service stations, Moto service stations, we have them in arcades, in big places like Meadowhall and we also have the traditional one on the high street. Each one has its own little problems with regards to what this resolution is referring to. The company do have what they call an open door policy, they like the shops to be welcoming, the door has to be open, they also like the aroma of the ‘freshly baked for you today’ aromas of bread and things going down the high street, but when it’s cold and it’s wet outside, the people in the shop, the lads and the lasses, they freeze. We don’t get them that often, but occasionally we do get nice days, nice weather don’t we and we’ve also got shops that are like little ovens, they’ve got ovens in the shops, they’ve got freezers in the shops, they’ve got chill units, sandwich selectors, they’re all chugging out heat, right? so the shops get very, very hot, so they’ve got problems at both ends of the temperature scale. Most of the shops do actually have air conditioning now, but how many of those units actually work efficiently when they’ve got to have the ruddy door wide open, they might as well try to air condition the whole of the universe really. Anyway, I’d like you to support this motion, thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Second? Are you seconding?

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: I don’t know if you remember, but a few months ago we had some snow and in my shop I worked a full day with two pairs of socks on, a pair of tights, a pair of leggings, my work trousers and then I had a thermal top on, my work shirt, a jumper and a bodywarmer and I was still frozen. I have got air conditioning in my shop but like David said, what good does that do when my doors are open from 8 until 5. We need to support our members, that’s not good enough going to work and freezing, equally it’s not good enough going to work and feeling like you’re going to faint because you’re so hot. We need to support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: In the shops, like the other two have just said, you’re either freezing cold or you’re boiling hot, there’s no in between. The company have just tried to save their money to put all our air conditioning units to 21° and that’s it. We’re not supposed to change them, so if it’s freezing cold we can’t put the heating up, if it’s boiling hot we’re not supposed to be turning them down, otherwise we’re going to get into trouble. This is wrong, this is a wrong practice. At the end of the day when you go to work you should feel comfortable to do the work, so please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Dawn Scott – Region 253: Chair, Platform. I would like to support this motion. I work in the shops and believe me, you freeze to death in the winter or you sweat to death in the hotter months. All shops should have correct heating or cooling systems within our workplace. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Paul Pemberton – Region 3 (Branch 303, Greggs, Birmingham): Secretary, President, Chair, Platform, Delegates. First time Conference, first time speaker. Thank you.

I’d like to say that although this motion is about lobbying government, I think basically the answer could be sat right here in this room. Almost everyone from Greggs is here, branch secretaries, shop stewards, we could get together, we can actually have the information ourselves, pass this around, we know the people who sit with the main boards up at Greggs. If we did this, got organised ourselves, as this Union put the pressure on, not only would we manage to actually put the pressure to get this done, we could also in turn manage to actually send enough of a voice out to the shops to enable us to get recruitment and if we can manage the recruitment, surely that’s going to help us in the long run. Thanks very much, support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well done, comrade.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to support the sentiments of the motion. The reality is lobbying a government would, I personally believe, achieve nothing. Bearing in mind that this government as part of their austerity measures see attacks on health and safety as a big priority for them, cuts to the health and safety has been astronomical and with future cuts planned in the forthcoming months. More appropriate would be to challenge the employer directly. We have the Health & Safety at Work regulations. We have workplace regulations where the employer under law must provide adequate temperatures and working conditions and if nothing else, has a bare minimum need to provide sufficient PPE to ensure people are not having to suffer detriment of freezing or on the other side heat. I think our Union through the parliamentary group have already raised this as a massive item through government. Risk assessments need to be carried out to identify exactly what protective clothing is required, what is deemed appropriate and adequate and I think the employer needs to be made very clear that they’re actually breaking the law. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Rachel Mullen – Young Members Rep (replying on behalf of the Executive Council): Obviously the Executive wants you to support the motion. Really it just goes hand in hand with the Cool it! Campaign apart from it covers the other end of the scale with extreme cold and yes, it may not apply to everybody’s workplace like heaters, but there are people in this Union, mainly the shop workers in Greggs, who have to put up with extreme cold in the middle of the winter. As one of the speakers pointed out that Greggs does have an open door policy, you’ve got to have the doors open no matter what. It could be 10ft of snow outside and you’ve still got to have the doors open. I’ve done shifts where my hands have been that cold I could barely feel them and I could barely move them, I could barely get the change out of the tills for the customers and I could even see my own breath, that’s how bloody cold it was, so it’s just unacceptable and we just need a sensible approach to all extreme weathers, not just heat but cold as well. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Okay, Delegates, normally we always invite the female representative of the Executive Council to do her stuff on a Sunday, but obviously this year we’ve had a little bit of a change and we’re doing it on the Monday, because we wanted to see if you knew which day of the week you were on, so obviously it’s our pleasure to welcome for the first time doing the lady’s bit on the Executive Council, where is Helena? Oh right, okay. Are you going to ….. Okay, anyway, obviously we’re going to introduce Dorothy, who’s going to introduce herself?

So, please welcome to the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union Conference, give her a warm welcome.

Sister Dorothy Gibson’s address to Conference

Sister Dot Gibson – Executive Council Female Representative: Thank you. Can you hear me, can you hear me okay? Can you hear me okay?

Right, well I’m Dot Gibson and I’m General Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention and I don’t know how many people know that that organisation exists, perhaps you’ll tell me if you do? Right, in that case, the National Pensioners Convention is the largest campaigning organisation of pensioners. We have affiliations amounting to about 1.5 million pensioners throughout the country. We have a democratic structure, it’s organised by pensioners. We have a biennial delegate conference, which we had this year and every year we have what we call the pensioners parliament and it’s taken place in Blackpool for a number of years. The thing about the question of pensioners is that it’s quite clear when you become one that you should have thought about it much earlier, not only from the point of view of what it means to be a pensioner in terms of the state pension and all the other things that affect pensioners, but also because we still have to be organised, pensioners must be organised and it’s pretty obvious that this is the case because last week Ed Balls, who’s waiting in the wings for the general election, announced that if Labour get in then they’re likely to means test the universal benefit, particularly the universal benefit relating to the winter fuel allowance, which would mean that the so-called top grade of pensioners wouldn’t get it, but it’s not really the point.

The point is it’s a principle and the more you undermine universal benefits, the more you’re undermining the welfare state and I know from a long history of this Union that I’m speaking to friends on that issue. Yesterday, I think it was, he made another statement which is in the papers today, saying that Labour in office would probably break the triple lock link on the basic state pension.

This is an agreement by government to increase the state pension each year, either in relation to earnings or the consumer price index or 2.5%. It has been downgraded from the retail price index to the consumer price index, that was done by this government, but earnings was motivated by Labour when in power and put through by the coalition, but now he’s talking about getting back into government and breaking that triple lock or he will bring forward the increased retirement age because the less, the more people don’t retire at 65 and then onwards to 67, the more money they can save and he links all this with social care, so I think we have to give a very big message on this, because the pension is paid in throughout somebody’s working life through the national insurance fund, it’s paid in for a pension, it’s not paid in as a perk or as a benefit, it’s paid in for the pension and therefore we have to look very, very clearly at what we’re talking about here, because one of the things that you notice when governments announce the sort of money that’s being paid out is they’re constantly telling us that pensioners have more than anybody else and the figure they use includes the amount of money paid out in the state pension, which is not a benefit and they try to divide older people from younger people on the basis, they say, that older people are not affected by the austerity measures whereas young people are and this is not only entirely wrong, because you only have to look at the closure of day centres and the cuts in social care and all the other things that are going on, to know that pensioners are just as much affected by the austerity measures as anybody else and we reject completely any attempt to divide us older people between us and younger people when the real division is between the rich and the poor and I think it’s very important that we stick to that and avoid that.

In fact the National Pensioners Convention has got a campaign which is a Generations Unite and we go out of our way to try to bring the generations together on all the issues, because the National Pensioners Convention doesn’t only stand up for today’s pensioners, we stand up for tomorrow’s pensioners. So I was asked to speak about pensions here and I had to open on that because of course that’s the latest news and we put out a press statement today which might get some news, some space, I don’t know, but it is very, it is a very big problem for pensioners if they are now going to attack the state pension even more. I don’t know whether anybody remembers, but when the first, when the Labour government came in in 1997, they gave an increase to the pensioners of 75p and there was an absolute uproar to do with that and they eventually had to apologise for this, well if they go on like this, not only are they not going to get pensioners votes, but they’ll end up having to apologise to millions of people up and down the country for an attack on the basic right to a decent state pension.
So when I made my notes to come to this meeting, it was in relation to this government’s single tier state pension that is in there, we’re all discussing at the moment in committee stages and all the rest of it, but now of course Ed Balls has well, as I say, Ed has thrown the balls up in the air, if I could put it that way and I think that we have to give him a clear message that he better think again, but if we look at the pensions in this country, I think we have to get one thing very clear and it’s a criticism of the unions actually and I have to say this, that whereas in Europe, on mainland Europe, the trade unions negotiate the state pension, in this country the main, the big unions opted for occupational pensions and left the state pension to fend for itself, in other words if you become a pensioner and you haven’t got any economic clout, you’re then supposed to be fighting for your pension, whereas in Europe, that’s why you get these big demonstrations in Europe as soon as pensions are mentioned, because the unions negotiate with governments the state pension and it doesn’t happen here, so if we look at this situation that has meant that we’ve got two key pillars of pension policy.

One is a means tested top-up for those on low retirement income which is called Pension Credit, currently £145.40 and then they argued that they would have a healthy and generous occupational pension system, but both of those were sort of put forward by successive governments in order to keep the state pension low, but the whole system is now unravelling and has been unravelling for a whole number of years. First of all the pension credit remains one of the most complicated schemes imaginable and we’ve found that although four million pensioners are eligible, in fact about 1.8 million don’t claim for it, it’s very difficult to administer, very difficult to understand and difficult to claim.

The other plank of this policy, the final salary schemes, are closing I mean every day and over 80% have now been closed to new entrants and others are changing the rules as we, almost as we speak, particularly in the private sector. So the government then came along with a new idea which was a pensions scheme called the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) and this is for everybody who works in a company of a particular size, automatically gets put into this scheme and the only way they can get out of it is by individually deciding that they don’t want to go in and it means that the worker pays 4%, the employers pay 3% and the government 1%, this is only 8% of salary and everybody who knows anything about pensions know that if you’re going to get a decent pension at the end of the day, you have to be paying at least 16% of your salary to get a decent pension. Not only that, but this scheme which is being run through government is actually a private scheme. The money goes into, is collected at source, goes to the government, but it’s actually farmed out to private companies. In that sense it’s related and relies on the performance of the stock exchange and we all know what that means in terms of pensions. So both of these developments raise seriously for all of us the necessity for a more robust and a better state pension system.

Now what they’ve come up with is this idea for a single state pension. It largely comes from Steve Webb, who’s the LibDem Pensions Minister in this coalition government and he claims that it’s very simple, that it’s much better because it’s across the board. When we ask questions, he says he hasn’t got time to explain because it’s too difficult to explain to us and quite frankly, we’re represented on what is called the UK Advisory Forum for Ageing and he comes along regularly to these meetings and we still haven’t got a decent explanation of what this really means. They talk about encouraging people to save, but I mean they never mention the fact that everybody starts work and starts saving immediately in the national insurance fund, that’s left to one side, they don’t mention this, but in fact that’s what happens. Everybody does save for a pension because they pay their national insurance fund and the question of this NEST now being put forward by government is it’s set to try to get people to pay for their old age, but it’s set at a certain point at which people who get NEST and then get a single tier pension at the end of the day if they put this through, it means that they get just above the rate of pension credit and if you’re on pension credit you’re entitled to certain benefits, but if you get above that you’re not, so questions of a very low pension and then paying for things like rent and tax and so on and so forth, council tax and so on.

They’ve also changed the indexation of pensions from the retail price index, which is higher, to the consumer price index, which means that over the next 10 years there will be about a 15% loss in pension income, regardless of all the other things they’re doing. So the assumptions they make are that first of all there are more people living and longer, they’ve got to deal with this, secondly they say that they don’t want a pension scheme that is too complicated and because people don’t save money, but the fact is that it’s not that they don’t save money, it’s simply that people don’t have the money. If you take in turn the rents increases, fuel increases, the fares increases and all the rest of it, people just don’t have the money to look after their kids, perhaps even try to get their kids to go on to further education and the kids, I don’t know whether you’ve got grandchildren any of you, but mine have all got debts as a result of going to university and they say that people can easily work longer, so they’re pushing everybody down the scale to work longer, but they don’t take any consideration of what this means in terms of the type of work that you do. I mean, there’s a great deal of difference even in a single area between the length of time somebody lives in one area, I mean John McDonald’s supposed to come here I think, he often quotes that one part of the borough, the constituency that he represents lived 10 years longer than another part of the constituency he represents and it’s the same all over the country.
Now if you’re saving for this retirement pension, most people will end up at the end of their working lives with a pension pot of about £35,000 and that gives them just £40 a week pension on top of the state pension which, I mean basically, is nothing but that £40 can push them over the limit, which means that they don’t get the consideration of not being able to pay their rent or their council tax and so on. So it’s very much a thin end of the wedge and it’s far from simple and this is why this is quite a difficult subject to speak on because it is quite difficult. At the moment we’ve got a basic state pension and we’re going to have a second state pension, those are going to be pushed together and at today’s prices the government says that the single pension will be £144 a week. To receive this new pension, you have to work, paid up, work 35 years. At the moment it’s 30 years, they want to put it up to 35 years so that you’ve got enough national insurance or credit for taking time off to look after children and so on, so that you make it up to 35 years.

Anybody already retired will not qualify for the scheme and those already in work when it comes in will have a combined pension when they retire, made up of the existing system and the new system and he says it’s simple. Those starting work for the first time after 2016 will go straight into the new system, but listen to this, the government says there’s absolutely no new money going in to the scheme, so basically it means that those going into the scheme will be paying for longer, paying more and getting less, so they’re working longer, paying more and getting less at the end. The scheme is another cut in the income of working people. One of the most significant changes is that they’re going to abolish the so-called contracting-out system of the state second pension. A lot of people who go into another scheme can contract-out at the moment from the state second pension, but they’re going to be merged but it actually ends up with employers paying their amount and workers paying that amount extra to what they’re already paying, if they were able to contract-out.

So basically again this is put onto working class people. The government recognises that employers may wish to recoup this, in other words if you put in a scheme which is is government’s scheme called NEST and there’s already a scheme running, then a lot of the employers will say well to hell with our scheme, this one is cheaper, we only have to pay 3%, maybe they’re paying more, so they will either reduce the generosity of the pension scheme they’ve got or they’ll increase the contributions from staff and that is already coming forward in the discussions, but the other thing which I don’t think has been noticed very much is this.

They plan to give the private sector five years to bring this scheme in and they don’t have to have the consent of the pension fund trustees. I don’t know why there isn’t a bigger row about this from the TUC, because I know for a fact that over a large number of years there’s been considerable effort put in to training people to be trustees of pension schemes. In fact if I go and speak to like the, sometimes I go to speak to the RMT or the ASLEF and other retired members, there’s always somebody there giving a report as a trustee of the pension scheme and yet the government now says in its legislation that they can do all this without, change all of these trustees pension schemes without the consent of the pension fund trustees and I do think there should be a big effort to make a big outcry about that because after all, the pension fund trustees who are put there by workers in the pension fund are there to represent those workers and it’s absolutely crackers that they can legislate to say that they don’t have a say. So one of the things is that they’re telling people they’ve got to work for longer than, up to 68 and it’s all been described as a radical reform, but I know that this is a very dull subject in many cases, but if we don’t get to grips with it and start dealing with what these pensions mean in terms of the workers today and how in fact we can build a movement not only of workers but with pensioners together, we’ll find that we’re being done in by these governments.

The thing is that the official poverty level is £178 and yet on today’s basis they’re saying that £144 at which they will bring in this new scheme and the cut-off of April 2016, when we’ll have the two tier pension scheme because the existing pensioners will be left out of it, the new pensioners will be brought into it at that level, they’ll be a whole lot in the middle that are having both things and it’s going to be a complete muddle and one of the big sections that are going to be in a terrible state about it are the vast majority of women pensioners. We have, in the National Pensioner Convention, many, many women who have paid in to what was called the women’s stamp over many years, that has now been stopped, but in fact it means that many, many women are only getting between £54 and £75 a week for their pension and that is made up with pension credit and the indexation arrangements are also very complicated, it’s going to be a big gap between today’s pensioners and tomorrow and that is set to widen over this period, so I’m not bringing a very good message, but I can say that we can fight this, it’s still there and there is an election coming up in 2015 and I think we should tell Ed Balls and others exactly what we think of this and what we want.

So who will gain? Actually self-employed people, who currently don’t qualify for a state second pension, will find that it’s going to be a bit easier for them to be included in the scheme. Existing state pensioners on less than £144 won’t gain, anyone starting work in 2016 for the first time will lose, because at the moment if you pay the state second pension and get the state pension, you can get £150 a week on today’s terms, but they’re saying that they’re going to limit it on today’s figures at £144.
You’ll have to work longer and many people who are currently, don’t have a company pension and have built up many years of state second pension, they’re going to get nothing under the new scheme and probably less. So it’s absolutely clear that we need a concerted effort to combat this decision and there’s still time to bring in some proposals especially with the Labour Party who is now looking towards standing and winning in the next election. To me, they’ve got to listen to us because this is currently going to be a really bad deal for future pensioners.

We can’t have a system where particularly women on less than £144 a week, so we need this better state pension and we have, I think, to get together to really work for this. It can be paid for, it definitely can be paid for, there’s around 38 billion in the national insurance fund.

Higher earners don’t pay the full national insurance, if you earn over £42,000, that’s the ceiling on paying the national insurance fund, you stop the 12%, so actually the lower you earn, the more you’re actually paying in relation to your wages on the national insurance fund. They will pay about 1% in relation to their earnings, somebody on a very low rate will be paying 12% of their earnings and the proportion of people who are on that lower level of course is getting more and more with the lower wages system and then we’ve got the tax evasion, I mean let’s deal with the tax evasion and stop attacking ordinary working class people and pensioners. So basically what I’m saying is, the message for us is we’re fighting this issue like mad amongst the pensioners and we ask you to join up with pensioners wherever your area is, make sure that you take part with us in the activities against the attacks on pensioners and if you can perhaps you might become, while you’re still at work, friends of the National Pensioners Convention.

We’ve got a scheme which we put out at last year’s TUC asking people who are not yet pensioners to pay maybe £1 a year towards the National Pensioners Convention and the campaigns that we run. I think that we’ve got a lot on our plate, but I think if we explain this question and we stand together, we can do something about it. I know that the TUC are going to have two coaches going around, I think this year, I don’t know when they’re starting, but they’re going around campaigning in about 45 centres. I know Unite the Union are going to have a coach going around, so let’s make it a fight back on all of these issues. I think that pensioners have got a lot to answer to, because it was our generation if you like that were working at the time that perhaps left this question of pensions and what it meant and all the other issues that are now coming up and we think that pensioners owe it to a younger generation to stand up and fight for their future and it’s not just a personal question for our own families, it’s a question of everybody’s family and everybody’s children for the future. So basically that’s the message from the National Pensioners Convention.

Thank you again for giving me the chance to speak to you. I hope that some people will think about becoming friends of the NPC, I haven’t got any forms with me but we have got a website and it’s NPCUK and you’ll get it, so thank you very much, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Dot, obviously thank you on behalf of the Union for a very enlightened speech on pensions. I know it’s a minefield area to be in, but I think the one thing, you made the really salient point at the end is that you as the General Secretary of the Pensioners Convention, you’re not just fighting for pensioners now, you’re fighting for every person in this hall because hopefully everybody here will eventually become a pensioner and that’s we want, so we do need some more involvement. I’d just like to make a couple of presentations to you, unfortunately they’re both quite heavy, but first one is a limited edition pewter baker, don’t take it out because it’s got all sorts of plastic and all that, foam rubber guarding it, it’s a limited edition to remind you, it’s an old traditional baker in there and it will, to show the heritage from where our Union came from. I hope it takes pride of place and I hope you enjoy looking at it and it reminds you of today, so that’s, there we go.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Dot Gibson – Executive Council Female Representative: Thank you very much, thank you.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: And also a wonderful tin of biscuits, made by future customers of yours.

Sister Dot Gibson – Executive Council Female Representative: Oh, right.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: All trade union members. Incidentally we were just saying, the President and I, what we will do we will raise the issue on our Executive Council on Thursday. We do have people who go to the conferences. Dick Punshon has been sat there all week and he’s moved now, but he was sat at the back. We sent him to, is he up there, oh yes he’s up there, so he’s gone to the conferences before, so we will do what we can to promote it at our Executive, but thank you very much once again.

[APPLAUSE]
Sister Dot Gibson – Executive Council Female Representative: Thank you, thank you very much for having me, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. We’re not going to go back to the Agendas now, but we are going to make a couple of presentations. Just while the General Secretary’s making his way down, I’ve got some winning tickets and if you see Vicky, if you’ve got a strip beginning with No. 1, 1 – 5, 16 – 20, 221 – 225, 156 – 160 and 56 – 60 and go and see Vicky and pick up your prize. A reminder of tickets for Region 7, it says party, party, party, see Noel, but obviously there’s a late bar, the tickets are £2.50, all monies going to charity, see Noel, Billy and John. No. 4 regional do Wednesday night as well, Ransdale Hotel, top class cabaret, bit of bull’s-eye, play your cards right, deal or no deal, £500 worth of prizes, what can I say, it’s got to be a hot ticket hasn’t it? They’re £3 a ticket and I assume it’s the Officials, Roy or Marilyn, Marilyn normally does the tickets doesn’t she? There was something else wasn’t there? No, it’s not. General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Right, thank you, President. Delegates, we always do at Conference, we present awards to people who’ve shown real passion and ability and made a real difference to the areas where they’re organising. Could I say they’re not in any particular order and other people who organise could also get a certificate, the fact is that we pick so many per year that the Executive will reward. One point I will make is that we have paid Officials within the Union whose job, first and foremost, is to organise, but let me be quite clear that this Union would not be in existence if it wasn’t for the assistance that’s given to us by lay members, they do an absolutely fantastic job. So thank you to all of you who go out organising and do the work that you do and of course thank you to all those activists back at the branch who are doing organising on a day to day basis that helps this Union to survive.

So, the first award I’m going to give is to Lukasz Bemka, who’s a Polish rep from No. 3 region. Remember the question being asked yesterday about Polska, well if you want to know anything about the Polska website speak to Lukasz, because he’s a director of Polska. One of the things he does do and he does it for free, gives his own time, he translates all our benefit leaflets, he translates all our organising leaflets into Polish, he does that free of charge and then we just get them printed up and he makes sure he goes out and speaks to those Polish people working in the factories and the leaflet he did was done in conjunction with Thompsons Solicitors. To date he’s been actively campaigning in Discovery Foods, Parripak Foods, Solway Foods in Corby and the one we haven’t got into yet, although we are very hopeful of soon, getting into Worksop. He’s campaigned at TMI Foods and Dunkleys in Northampton. A total and this is the official, he’s reckons there’s an estimated total that he’s recruited into the Union, Polish workers, 600 people and I think that’s a fantastic achievement.

[APPLAUSE]

So Lukasz, can I ask you to come down and collect your certificate please.

[APPLAUSE]

Okay, do you want to say a few words? It’s up to you .......

Brother Lukasz Bemka – No. 3 Region: Yes, yes. What can I say? Thank you, thank you for the reward. I think that I will keep up with the work for the Union. I won’t concentrate only on the Polish workers, I will try to tackle Eastern European workers as well, I think that we have a lot of them in our region and the other regions. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: The second award is unique in that it’s not going to be to an individual, although I’m going to call an individual down to get it. It’s actually an award to a branch for their organising, it’s going to be to Burtons, Llantarnam in South Wales. It’s one of those branches, I’ve known the reps there for a long time, who’ve almost certainly had 100% membership or just below it for longer probably than any other branch in the Union and it’s down to the reps on site actually getting all the people on Day 1 of joining. Colin Morgan, who’s the branch secretary, going to come down and take the award, but I’ve got to say Colin’s been the bane of general secretaries and national presidents from this lectern for years and I mean he goes us up, but one thing he does do is he goes us up and shows by example what his own branch can do, so he runs a good ship there, so Colin on behalf of the Executive, can I ask you to come down for your branch to pick up a gold award.

[APPLAUSE]

Do you want to say anything?

Brother Colin Morgan – Branch 238: Yes. Well, thanks for the award, it’s not just Colin in our branch, it’s all my shop stewards, it’s like this when I’m away, the company are taking on 12 members, we will meet them on the first day and...
we go in a room with them after they’ve been on site for three hours and we tell them they have to join the Union and we explain to them why and we tell them the benefits of the Union, but we say to these people they wouldn’t be there, they wouldn’t have a job, they’d be there as agency workers. We are not fortunate that we’ve got 99.96 members, because we work at it, it’s not easy, it’s hard. What you’ve got to do, you’ve got to say to your companies we want to be there on the first day of induction, we want to speak to these people because we tell them you could be working for an agency on site. We don’t allow agency workers on our site, we never have and we never will, they go out through the gate. We are where we are, we’ve got a good strong branch, it’s not easy, but people before me like John James, he had nearly 100% membership, so we work at it. It’s been a good year for me personally, Margaret Thatcher’s died, God bless her ......

(laughter, cheers and applause)

I never wish ill on anyone, but I hope her last breath she was in flippin’ pain, I tell you, I do.

[APPLAUSE]

And Cardiff City in the premiership, you Mancs, you Scousers, look out, the Bluebirds or Redbirds are coming!

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Hedging a bet eh?, sometimes wear red, sometimes wear blue, just in casey.

Right, the last award that we want to make is and we do it again every year and we have done for a number of years in conjunction with Thompsons Solicitors and prior to that it used to be with Whipples??????????? and it was a trophy that we give for, we pick one of the outstanding achievers within organising every year.

In this particular case, the person who’s going to receive the trophy this year is Brother Colin Curtis from Solway Foods and let me tell you that when Solway was bought out by Northern Foods a number of years ago, we tried to get in and the company really, really were aggressive against letting the Union in anywhere, probably saw what was happening at Park Cakes when they were owned by Northern Foods, they didn’t want another bunch of rebels somewhere else, so we fought a long, long time to get into Solway Foods in Corby and then we got a breakthrough and we’ve got and I’ve been down there on a couple of occasions, been down organising them but also speaking at branch meetings and I’ve got to say when you do a branch meeting there it’s a big branch meeting, but when I went down and this was prior to getting recognition with the company, met up with Colin Curtis who’s the branch secretary, we had 110 members and this was before we went to the ballot for recognition, which we won incidentally with a lot of people, but we started off I think with about 110 members when I came down at that time. Colin and his team had been around and doing a lot of organising and since August last year to now, our membership has increased from 110 to 460. That’s ......

[APPLAUSE]

…but it actually goes further than that because Solway Foods, which is part of Two Sisters, a great company, great company, not, they have a sister company in Worksop, sorry yes Worksop, so Colin and his team along with the recruitment team from the Union have been over there, I know Richard’s been over to organise and we bring some of the Officials in from No. 5 and we’re actually organising, I tell you the company are fighting like mad, they do not want a union in there but we’re over 100 members now, we think we’re going to get them to go to ballot there and I think we’ve got a team there that’s going to convince them but because we can actually now show Colin’s branch as a shining example of what happens if you get a trade union on site and what we can do for members, the potential in the other one is 1200 people and that is a glittering prize if we can get that, but they are really working tirelessly, so can I ask Colin Curtis to come down and receive the Thompsons trophy from Julie Blackburn please.

[APPLAUSE]

You get a certificate as well.

**Julie Blackburn (Thompsons Solicitors):** Morning everybody. 30 years for me this year working for the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union. I’m very proud to say it’s the first time I’ve addressed Conference and I’ve been longing to do that from the back of the room for a very long time, so it’s a great honour and pleasure to be doing that, present this award to Colin, who has obviously worked tirelessly at Solway Foods, part of the Two Sisters Group, a pernicious employer, anti-trade union in the extreme and he’s done a fantastic job. I know he’s done that with the support of the Officials in the region, his terrific new stewards who are working with him and I know he’s a very organised person who has got a system and he’s going to make a real difference and I think will continue to grow the membership at the rate he’s currently growing it and he’s done a fantastic job. He’s not completely perfect as I understand he might be a Sunderland supporter, but we’ll forgive him [LAUGHTER], we’ll forgive him that and it gives us great pleasure to present with this award Colin. It’s the Bakers, Food & Allied Workers’ Union Award, that’s very important because that means that the members are the people that wanted you to have this award, it’s simply sponsored by Thompsons and we wish you every good fortune in the future in your sterling efforts. Thanks very much, Colin.
Brother Colin Curtis – Branch Secretary: Okay, I’d just like to thank some people for this award. First of all I’d like to thank Ronnie and Thompsons for the award which they’ve just given me, I’d also like to thank the three full-time Officers who’ve been very supportive and helpful, that’s George Atwall, Tony Lewis and John Higgins, also Lisa and Carl from the Union Learner who are now setting up classes in our factory and I’d also like to thank my reps, as this is a team, it’s not an individual and three of them are here today, that’s Mark, Brian and Lawson.

I’d also like to tell you a little bit about the company we’re actually working for, the Two Sister group. As you all know, Brooks in Leicester was shutting, now a lot of you won’t know this, but whilst they were making them redundant and not offering them jobs, 20 miles down the road in Corby we were starting 200 jobs on and still they haven’t offered any of those people jobs, that’s the type of company we’re working for and when I look around, we’ve got Solways, hopefully Mountains, we’ve also got Fox’s, we’ve got Gunstones and Pennine. Now we’ve got a campaign going on at the moment called Unite and what it is, is have a national strike. There’s no reason why we should sit back and let this company destroy our workers’ terms and conditions.

We’ve got big companies who should stick together and work together and sort this mess out. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. We’re in the, the fringe meeting’s going to be held in the Harbour Suite, I do believe, which is through those doors and on the first floor. I actually know where I’m sending you today, but obviously for those, I was facing that way and it’s to the left, which is over there and we’ll be back, dinner, 2 o’clock.

Afternoon Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Just to tell Delegates, I understand from one of my colleagues on the EC there’s a number of people that are upset about the decision that I took this morning. Just to make an offer, I’m more than willing to stop behind this evening to talk to those people to explain the situation and sit down with them to make sure that they understand what I can and what I cannot do as the President and The Chair of this Conference and also to explain to them what happened yesterday and what happened as a result of that, which obviously most people know you passed a motion, but I’m more than happy at the end of Conference to sit down with you, if that’s what you want me to do and talk to you. Okay? The door shut? Roll call. General Secretary to call the roll. Region 1. Region 2. Region 3. Region 4. Region 5. Region 6 and Region 7. Okay? There’s 179 Delegates here. We’re getting better, aren’t we? Fantastic. Listen, in a minute we’re going to show the latest animation that we’ve done as a recruitment tool for organising in workplaces, but just before we do, I’m going to read out the ballot results. This is the ballot paper for the Labour Party, for the Labour Party Conference and the results are as following – Rachel Mullen 93, Pauline McCarthy 90, John James 59, Vi Carr 44, Dave Dash 26, Malika Bensalah 13, so elected Rachel Mullen, Pauline McCarthy and John James.

For the TUC Congress, Pauline Nazeer 86, Sarah Woolley 63, Dave Suddards 52, Pauline McCarthy 41, Mark Brooks 27, Lizzie Dinnin 22, Frank Loveday 15, so the people elected Pauline Nazeer, Sarah Woolley and David Suddards.

For the Labour Party, which obviously are here, we need you to fill in the documentation and make sure that we have a photograph of you, which is a passport-size photograph and that goes for the TUC as well. I’m assuming John James has gone, has he? Are you ready, John? Yes, if you want to go down the front. Hold on a minute, John. Cheers, right, go down the front, yes, you’re more than welcome. Is everybody okay now, are we all down? Yes? Okay, right, there you go, here we go.

Yes, I mean obviously the idea, what we’ve been advised is that the shorter the message, the more likely people are prepared to watch it and the idea is that we’re going to make it available for all your learning centres, we’re going to send out discs and give discs and fobs to full-time Officials and hopefully to Branch Secretaries to help you recruit. So if you’re running open days, if you’ve access to TVs in your canteen or anything like that, you’ll be able to play it, or at least be able to play it at induction anyway and hopefully it will help us as we go down the path of getting our message out there to as many people as possible. Also we’re intend to use it on Twitter, on Facebook and any social media that we
can actually get our message promoted, because there’s a lot of young people out there that use different forms of social media and hopefully that’s the type of message that they will understand and see why they should become members of this great Union and benefit like the people in this room know is such a great asset and such a great benefit for them.

Point of information, Marilyn?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Please. Yes, really good. I thought you were promoting the Credit Union, why was there no mention of it in that, did somebody forget?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: If it does come under the benefits, but obviously we got the content in and that’s the content we got it, but you’re right, there should be more promotion of it.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Of course I’m right, I’m always right Ian, I’m a woman.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: [LAUGHTER], I told you this morning, you’re perfect in every way, Marilyn.

We try and get everything in, but we’re going to have another message going out this year as well, so we will get in that other message about the Credit Union because we will be talking about the attacks on people’s rights in the workplace and the debt that people are being forced in to and promoting the other benefits we offer. As I said on Sunday in relation to companies like Payplan that we’re working with now and obviously making sure we promote the issue of the Credit Union which is a fantastic benefit and it is something that ensures that our members don’t have to rely on payday loan companies like Wonga so yes, you’re absolutely right, Marilyn.

Right, now I’ve seen this lady talk, she’s absolutely phenomenal and I’ve got to say I’m absolutely over the moon that Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Please. Yes, really good. I thought you were promoting the Credit Union, why was there no mention of it in that, did somebody forget?

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Right, now I’ve seen this lady talk, she’s absolutely phenomenal and I’ve got to say I’m absolutely over the moon that you’ve been able to come to our Conference. Conference, please give a warm welcome. You’ll never get an economics understanding like this lady’s going to give you. Ann Pettifor, please welcome to the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union.

[APPLAUSE]

Ann Pettifor’s address to Conference [Slideshow]

Ann Pettifor, Economist: Thank you very much, Ian and thank you Conference for giving me some of your very precious time and I was very glad to hear the mention of a Credit Union because that’s exactly what we need in a world in which our banking system is broken and dysfunctional and corrupt, if I may say so. So what I want to do today and there’s quite a few slides here, I want to tell you that I’m an economist and I’ve worked on international finance and banking systems and financial monetary policy for a long time, but my mission is to ensure that as many people as possible understand key economic concepts and I’m looking at the women in particular. Girls, when we leave the banking system to the boys, they mess up major (laughter and applause) and we left it to them because we believe that people in pinstripe suits and bowler hats were cleverer than us and understood the system. They did not, okay? You can understand it and only when you understand it will you be able to take control of it or influence it, or influence politicians, who would like to blind you with the science of economics. I’m going to try and make sure you’re never blinded. Right, let’s go.

So let’s start. I’m going to start with this quote. This quote is from a very famous bond dealer. He’s a big, bad buy who sits in trading rooms in the City of London and he’s written a book about the financial system, the modern financial system and he says “it’s generally incomprehensible to ordinary men and women. The level of comprehension of many bankers and regulators like the Bank of England is not significantly higher. It was probably designed that way, like the wolf in the fairytale, all the better to fleece you with” [LAUGHTER]. Right? So understand that by making it complicated, they’re making sure that they can fleece you. If you don’t want to be fleeced, you’ve got to get a grip on this stuff. Right, let’s move on. So there is a big, big debate going on in the country at the moment and the debate centres on the fact that there’s no money. There’s no money for investing in jobs. There’s no money for disabled people to have an extra bedroom. There’s no money to pay pensions, it appears. If anything that Ed Balls said this weekend is correct, what I’ve heard the reports of, we don’t have enough money to pay the pensions of our older people who’ve worked all their lives for that and contributed towards their pension. No, there is no money is the general saying.

So carry on, so first of all we have our Chancellor who tells us that the British government has run out of money, because all the money he says was spent in the good years. The money and the investment and the jobs need to come from the private sector, he says. So this is what you and I feel like when we’ve lost our jobs and there is actually no money in the bank. When both partners in the household lose their jobs and we’ve run out of income. When we’ve spent the money in paying off the mortgage or going on a holiday or whatever we may have spent our money on and now there’s no money in the bank. This is what the Chancellor is telling us the British economy is like. It’s like our economy. He’s lying. It’s not at all like your economy and that’s what I want to show you today. But he’s not alone. This man, Liam Byrne, wrote this very foolish letter to his successor when he resigned or he retired at the end of the general election, Liam Byrne and
he said “Dear Chief Secretary, I’m afraid to tell you there’s no money left”, but it gets worse and I don’t think I’ve got Ed Miliband’s quote here, but Ed Miliband has said when there’s a Labour government, there’ll be less money and then last Tuesday, Ed Balls said “Oh, there’s not going to be a lot of money y’know, we’re going to have to cut back”.  

Now, because we all think that the government is like our household budget, the government’s budget, we’re all saying yes, we’ll all have to cut back won’t we. We’ll have to cut those pensioners, we’ll have to hurt those disabled people because we’ve got to save money in order to have, for what, but anyway that’s how we all feel. When I go around, people say “Oh, y’know I have to balance my budget”. The problem is, your budget is not at all like the government’s budget and I’m going to show you why.

Next one – now I want to give you this number. I don’t know if you can calculate that number from those noughts, but it amounts to £1,000 billion to bail out the bankers in 2008/9. Now, most of us have put money on the lottery. We know how much a win of £500,000 pounds would be roughly. We know what we can do with £500,000 pounds. We could buy a few houses, we could go on a few holidays. If we’ve got a million bucks we might even be able to buy a one bedroom flat, somewhere in South London, okay. With two million we might be able to buy a flat in London. With five million we might be able to buy a house in London. So we have an idea, roughly, what that is. Very few people have an idea of how much money this is, £1,000,000,000,000 (one thousand billion pounds) and that money was found to bail out the banks. As Mervyn King said in a speech “Never in the field of financial endeavour has so much money been owed by so few to so many”. Now where do you think that £1,000 billion pounds came from? After all, Liam Byrne told us when he left that there was no money and Mr Osborne tells us there’s no money in the bank. So where did they get a £1,000 billion pounds to bail out the British banks?

Well, let’s think about that a bit more and then I want to just point you to today’s Times. I don’t often read The Times but I found it on the train. Headline, front page, “RBS has made a loss of ten billion pounds on its bank in Ireland”, it’s called the Ulster Bank and the government, you and me, because the taxpayers pay for this, have found ten billion pounds to give to RBS to pay to the Irish to compensate for the loss on that bank which is a subsidiary of the RBS. Ten billion pounds. Where did that come from, because our Chancellor and Ed Balls tells us there’s no money. Keep all this in your heads. Let’s move on.

Now, just after the financial crisis in 2009 the Governor of the Federal Reserve of the United States of America, whose name is Ben Bernanke, he’s the opposite number of Mervyn King, one day he found a $160 billion and he gave it to an insurance company called AIG that had messed up major and was about to bring down the whole global financial system, $160 billion dollars and he’s a very open and transparent guy, he went on television. It’s the first time ever that the Governor of the American central bank has been on tele and they asked him in this interview and you can find it on the web if you look for it, they said (next slide, please), the journalist says “Mr Bernanke, where did you find a $160 billion, was it taxpayers money, do you get this from American taxpayers?” and he said “No, no, no” he says “It’s not tax money. The banks have accounts with the Fed, much the same way that you have a bank account with your bank, a commercial bank (next one), so to lend to a bank we simply use the computer to mark up the size of the account they have with the Fed”, $160 billion dollars with just pressing one, two, three and then lots of noughts on the keyboard of a computer and that, comrades, is how money has been created since 1694 when the Bank of England was founded.

In the old days they had fountain pens and they entered the number into a ledger and they charged it to your account and they gave you some notes and coins, but mainly the charge to your account meant that you could register in your account that you had money from the bank and then you could spend that money as cash or as bank money. Today you don’t pay for stuff with notes and coins. I bet you’ve got a bank account with the Co-op or whoever. When you pay your rent, you probably pay this via your bank account. If not, you might use a cheque. Very seldom do people go in and pay cash. Of course some people still do go in and pay cash, but that’s used less and less. You’ve probably got a credit card. You probably go on eBay and go shopping and you never touch the money that you use when you go on eBay to go shopping, right?, because that’s bank money as opposed to the cash, the notes and coins that we use on a daily basis and we’ve had bank money since we invented banks in 1694 and thank God we have, because when you’ve got bank money, when you can create money using the keyboard of a computer, you can bail out a banking system and you can save the economy from going down the pan, but you can bail out the disabled as well and pensioners and I’m coming to that in a minute.

So here you have it from the Governor of the Federal Reserve, to lend to a bank who use the computer to mark up the size of the account. Next one, please. So orthodox economists, Conservative right-wing economists, they have an old fashioned theory which many people in the public have as well, which is that money is a commodity, that you and I exchange pieces of gold when we do business, or if we don’t exchange pieces of gold we exchange the equivalent of. No. We haven’t done that since before 1694. So because they think of it as a commodity, they think there can be a shortage of money and there can be too much money, just like there can be a shortage of gold or there can be too much gold, just like.
there can be a shortage of tomatoes in the market, or too many tomatoes in the market. No. Money is not like tomatoes and it’s not like gold.

Okay. Next one. The second mistake that Conservative economists make and sometimes I think this is not accidental, but then I don’t want to be too much of a conspiracy theorist, we’ll come to that in a minute. They argue that you can only have money to invest in jobs if first of all you save. So if you think if we go back to the beginning of time with the farmer who wants to plant seeds and he had no money. The idea is he would plant his seeds, he would wait for them to grow, he would harvest his seeds in tomatoes, he’d take the tomatoes to the market and he’d get some money and then, only then, could he buy himself a bigger plot to grow tomatoes in. It doesn’t work like that. Where did he get the money for the seeds in the first instance? He gets that through the banking system, through credit. So the orthodox economists are wrong, but the reason Osborne is saying we have to cut, cut, cut, cut is that he says we can’t get the money to invest in jobs unless we cut, cut, cut, cut. But that’s wrong.

Next one, please. So what they argue is we can only afford what’s already in the bank in the form of savings. Mrs Jones has put her savings in the bank. Mrs Jones’ savings will go to Mr Smith who wants to build a new factory. Rubbish. It’s never been like that. We’ve never relied on savings to create credit for investment. So this is what the mainstream economists argue, the ones in the Treasury and elsewhere, who are very dominant and who have messed up the international financial system because they don’t understand the way money works.

Okay, next slide. So in a monetary economy, now I’ve worked for a lot of my life in Africa. In Africa they don’t have monetary systems. Their central banks, they might have a central bank but they won’t, for example, have a legal system to enforce contracts. They won’t have a decent accountancy system for double-entry book-keeping. They won’t have a criminal and justice system for fraud and deception. You promise to pay your loan and you never pay it back, you cheat, you run away with the money, there’s got to be a system. So the banking system has a load of infrastructure around it to keep it going, to make it work. In Africa they don’t have banking systems. They barter and they use dollars and they use cash. I’ve just come back from Accra in Ghana. They don’t have credit cards in Accra and the people I spoke to don’t take out mortgages because they don’t have a banking system. The bank doesn’t know for sure who owns the land, because they don’t have property law, all of that infrastructure that you need to make a bank, they don’t have that. So they have to save, they have to work for 50 years to get enough money to buy a house. We don’t have to do that, we’ve got a banking system, we can get mortgages and we can get credit. So in a monetary economy, the relevant consideration is the availability of finance not savings. You don’t have to wait on savings and there need never be a constraint on the amount of finance in the economy, because it’s created literally out of thin air, believe me. Let’s move on.

So credit’s not like gold or oil, it’s not a commodity, so it’s not subject to the laws of supply and demand. There need be no limit on the creation of credit, believe me. We watched, between 1979 or the early 70’s and 2008 as the banks created credit like there was no tomorrow. A vast bubble of credit, which was then used to buy property for example, works of art, brands, stocks and shares and that inflated the value of those assets, okay? So that’s because credit can be created like there’s no tomorrow. There need be no limit on its creation.

Next slide. But there are limits. If you create more credit in the economy than the economy has capacity for, then you’ll get inflation, right? So think of this. If I pump too much money into the economy, there’s too much money chasing too few goods and services, then you get inflation and inflation is a bad thing.

Now I want to just stop here for a moment because this is a really important point for the Trade Union movement. In the 1970’s we had inflation and I lived through that period, I’m an old lady and I remember the Unions took all the blame for the inflation, greedy unions demanding wage increases. To this day, the unions are blamed for the inflation of the 70’s and it is true that if prices rise, the unions put up wages or they demand higher wages to keep track of prices and they did and it did make things spiral, but the unions were not causal.

Who caused the inflation of the 1970’s? A de-regulated credit creation system. De-regulated by Anthony Barber and the Tories, okay? So before the 1970’s, between ’45 and ’70 when we had a Keynesian economy, you couldn’t take out a loan just by making a phone call and a voice on the end of the phone giving you 10K, right? It didn’t happen that way. You have to go through hoops and jumps and you had to be really carefully looked at. You had to prove that you could re-pay that loan. But then the Tories came to power and they said no, we trust the market, we trust the banks and the market to create enough money and that’ll be fine. They know how to manage it, they won’t do anything silly and go bust, why would they, it’s not in their interest, said the Tories. So they took away all the controls over credit creation. You could then borrow money like there was no tomorrow and people did, crazy money, who couldn’t pay. That creates inflation. So when inflation started, the unions reacted and ratcheted it up and demanded higher wages and that made the inflation worse, but the unions were not to blame. Credit de-regulation was to blame.
Now, there’s another problem with credit, which is the problem we’re facing now and I would love you to understand this because it’s terrifying and it affects the way you negotiate for your wages. We’ve never lived through an era of deflation. Deflation means prices are falling and you know if you’re shopping on the high street, if you’re going to Primark you think that’s a good thing, but the people who are growing the clothes for Primark, or growing the bread for Allied Bakeries, are having to lower their prices for reasons that have to do with, that I don’t want to go into here. When they lower their prices they lower their profits. When they lower their profits, they lower their staffing levels. Unemployment rises. Now our economists and our politicians don’t understand this phenomenon.

The Japanese understand it, they’ve lived through it for twenty years. The Japanese were much richer than we were and I don’t want to go into that, but your wages with deflation are going to fall. It happens. It will happen because there’ll be greater pressure on pushing wages down because prices will be going down and profits will be going down and the horrifying thing is this. Prices can fall below zero. I grow my tomatoes, they cost me 30p a tomato to grow, or whatever, when I come to the market the market will only pay me 25p. That happens, I make a loss, but I decide I’m going to chuck my tomatoes onto the market because I’ve got to get back home and I don’t want transport costs, etc. Debt and the rate of interest can’t fall below zero. So when prices and wages fall, the cost of debt rises. So if you’ve got a mortgage and your wage goes down, your mortgage relative to your wage rises. It becomes harder to pay it off, that’s logic isn’t it? But that’s what’s happening across the whole economy and we’re now living through a deflationary era, it’s terrifying.

Now what Mervyn King is hired to do is to prevent prices and credit from becoming inflationary, too much credit chasing too few goods and services and his job is also to prevent it becoming deflationary, too little credit, which causes prices to fall. They’re not managing the economy very well at the moment. Anyway, so let’s move on.

So commercial banks, your bank can conjure money out of thin air. I want to go through this quickly. When you apply for a mortgage, say 300K or a £10,000 car loan, it’s not in the bank when you apply. There ain’t no money in the bank when you apply. There will be money in the bank because somebody will have put deposits in the bank, somebody will have put their savings in the bank, but it won’t be the money you’re applying for, okay? What the bank needs when you apply is a contract, I promise to pay, I promise to pay at this rate of interest over 10 years and I will pay every penny of it and fourthly I’ll give you some collateral, you can take my house if I don’t pay or my car, or whatever, okay? Only when the bank has that contract will they put the money, will they enter the number into a keyboard and charge it to your account. You’ve got to get this into your head because this is how it works. This explains how you can create too much credit, okay?

Next slide. So the bank loan gives the borrower additional spending power without forcing savers to reduce their spending power to compensate. Next one. So let’s move on because this is complicated, this is Schumpeter. So now we come to the big debate about can government afford to spend. Can the government afford to spend? Now the thing about your money and your bank account is that you’ve got limited assets, you’ve only got one house and one car against which to borrow and if you don’t have a house or a car, if you live in a council house you can’t borrow at all, except perhaps from your Credit Union, but the fact is this, that you need to have an asset.

The government is not like you. You don’t have a bank printing money for you. The Bank of England’s never printed money, I hate using that word, but I’m just using it to help explain. You haven’t got a bank that does for you what Mervyn King does for George Osborne. The government has a bank, it’s called the Bank of England. It’s a nationalised bank. It was nationalised by the Labour government in 1947. It works for the government. All this talk about independence from Gordon Brown and Ed Balls is rubbish. It works for the government. It also works for the private sector. We sometimes spend too much time looking after the private sector, but it’s there to finance the government. So we have this big thing about we’ve got to cut the deficit and we have this thing about who’s in favour of cutting the deficit and then people like me are accused of being deficit deniers, you don’t want to cut the deficit. I want to cut the deficit. I think it’s a good thing to cut the deficit, but it’s not a debate between do you want to cut it or don’t you. It’s not a debate between deficit cutting and stimulus. It’s between expenditure cutting and stimulus.

Next one. So everyone says let’s cut the deficit. Next one. So who will cut the deficit? Mr Slasher or Mr Spender? This is the debate that we should be having. Who will cut the deficit? The one who cuts spending or the one who spends like crazy? And I’m speaking here as a government. Next one. The private sector is not going to invest in the economy. The private sector is bust. The private banking sector is effectively insolvent. When you look at RBS and their liabilities in Ireland, they’re effectively insolvent. Y’know we invented a banking system to lend into the real economy. That’s what banks are for.

We’re now in a situation where the real economy is lending to the banks. That is bizarre. It’s never happened in our history before. The banks aren’t lending and they aren’t lending because with de-regulation we allowed them to gamble and to borrow to gamble and so as well as lending to us and sometimes they made lousy loans, they gave loans to people who
could never pay, they also went out on the capital markets and they borrowed money and then they speculated with that money and they got themselves effectively insolvent and they’re being kept afloat by taxpayers, by the Bank of England and by pretending that they’re solvent so they can’t lend, so the private debt in the UK is a very big problem.

Next slide, please. Public debt is not a big problem. Here you see the red line is British private debt. It’s more than 500% of our income. Imagine if your debt was more than 500% of your income. Imagine if your mortgage was more than 500% of your income, you’d be in deep trouble. Whereas public debt, which is the blue line, is rising as a result of Tory policies to about 70% of GDP, but it’s not as bad, as serious as private debt.

Next slide, please. I think I won’t go through this, but the Treasury told us in 2011 that private debt was a big problem. Move on and they kept explaining it, move on and I talked about this on Newsnight and then comes the 2012 report. Next one and this is McKinsey showing how huge the private debt is in the UK versus the public debt, which is the pale blue bit right at the top, okay? And when I started making a big fuss about how big the private debt was, the government changed its report. Next, keep going.

Next one. So in 2012 they said the problem wasn’t the private sector, it was public and private. They changed their minds in response to this. So I want to move on. We’ve got to stop telling lies about what the crisis is in the economy. The crisis is, the banks have got too much debt. Corporations and probably including your employers have got too much debt. Households have got too much debt. They can’t spend, they can’t invest. That means there’s only one body that can and that’s government, the public sector.

Next one. So government must intervene by stimulating investment in both the public and the private sectors. So if they build schools, they should involve the private construction sector in the building of the schools. That stimulates the private sector as well as the public sector. Next one. So we know, you know from your own experience that when you get a job you get income. It’s not complicated. Employment creates income and that’s true, not just for you but it’s true for the economy as a whole. Employment, get this in your heads and say it after me, employment creates income and the reason why that’s really important is this, keep going, it creates jobs. Investment by the public sector would create jobs, would create employment, that would create income. You would get, if you got a new job, a young person got a new job, they’d get some money in their pocket. They can then go and spend that money at a shop, but by getting money in their pockets and spending, they increase profits for firms and so you get wages and salaries and profits rise and they can use that money to pay down their debts, because they’ve got huge debts.

If they’re unemployed, if you make them unemployed, which is what Osborne is doing, you prevent them from paying down their debts and therefore you hurt the banks. Next one. So the best thing about employment is that it increases tax revenues for the government and it means that the government collects more money and it can pay down the deficit and reduce the public debt. That’s why employment is good for Mr Osborne. Mr Osborne is only against employment for ideological reasons. He doesn’t really care about the deficit. If he cared about the deficit, he would know the way to cut the deficit is to create employment. He doesn’t care about that, he’s using the opportunity to smash up the state, it’s not complicated.

Next one. Now this is from an ancient Labour Party document, from 1944 and it is as true today as it was then. The means to restore the public finances to health is to restore employment and the means to do that is to re-position finance as servant to production and labour. Next slide. The condition of the public finances are only a symptom of the failure of private finance to provide employment. That’s what they said after the crisis of the 30s. They understood economics, the Labour Party of that time in a way that I’m afraid today they don’t. Next slide, please. So what we had in 1946 was the Labour Party went on a spending spree. Now you must remember this is after the War. All of the nation’s resources, its money, its labour, its human beings, its people, have been deployed to fight a war. It’s been very hard to borrow money internationally because that’s expensive.

When you have to buy dollars, that’s hard. Your bank can’t create dollars, it can only create sterling, right? So if you have to pay for something in dollars, you’ve got a problem. So the bank created money here and created massive employment for women as well as men and generated the resources needed to save the war, but at the end of the war they had a very high level of debt and that was because despite employing a lot of people, most of the people were out at war and they were engaged in destructive activity, they weren’t at home in employment. So the government in 1946 had debts of 246% of GDP. Compare that to 70% today. 246%, five times as much debt and the Labour government started to spend. They spent on the National Health Service, the Butler Education Act, on public housing, on roads, on nationalising the coal mines and this is what happened to the debt. Next slide. So here you see this the point, the high point at the top of the pinnacle, that’s the end of the War. That’s 1946/1947 and then you see as the Labour government spends, it revives the economy, it revives employment and the debt, the public debt comes down to about 20%, where by the way it stays there until Maggie Thatcher comes to power, by which time the Tories actually caused the debt to rise.
Next slide, please. So we’ve got to stop deceiving ourselves, deluding and evading and we’ve got to have plain speaking.

Next slide. So the cause of the financial crisis is first the unprecedented inflation and then deflation of a vast expanse of de-regulated liberalised private credit created by banks and financial entities, that’s the cause of the crisis. Not you and me, it’s the banks that went on a binge and the politicians that enabled them to do that. Next slide. So the easy credit was expensive and eventually it blew up these massive assets, property prices as you know just went up like that, but paying back the debt was expensive because the banks, now that they had control not just on how to create credit, they also had the control over its price, the rate of interest, so they put up the price of credit and people were borrowing at what were very real high rates of interest in real terms and there comes a point when you can’t repay your debt anymore because the interest is too high.

Next slide. So who benefitted? Here it shows you the finance sector and this is a chart which shows you the cumulative excess returns to finance from de-regulation and it starts in the late 60s and you can see how well they did out of this massive de-regulation of finance. Next slide, please. So this was eventually, the bubble was punctured, this vast bubble of credit by high real rates of interest. Next slide. And here you see the rates of interest as they, just before the crisis of 2008, you see that red line? That’s the United States, the UK is the one behind it, Australia’s the one above it and so on in the EU. Now, that ratcheting-up which looks like a pyramid, you must think of the top of that pyramid as a dagger pointed at a vast bubble of credit. That’s what burst the credit bubble. The people couldn’t anymore pay the interest on their debts and the banks were ratcheting up the rate of interest.

Next slide, please. So now we’re having to de-leverage that debt. If I take out a mortgage which is 500% of my income, I’ve got to de-leverage that debt. So what do I have to do? I have to work like crazy, work 15 hours a day, I get my kids out to work, I dig deeper, I do more. I’m working harder and harder and harder to create the money to pay back that mortgage, but I can’t pay back that mortgage, it’s too big, but I’m trying to pay back some of it. Then the government comes along and makes me unemployed and then it’s hard to pay back the mortgage, but anyway what’s happening now is that it’s being de-leveraged in a chaotic way. The government’s not in charge of that process, so it’s a big problem.

Keep going, next. So it’s slow and then in addition to that austerity is contracting income and the government is saying “Nothing to do with me, guv. I’m not worried about that huge amount of private debt over there. I’m worried about this public debt here and I’m only going to talk about this and I get you, the public, to only talk about this, to ignore that”, so I go on the TUC demonstration for example to defend our public services and I think to myself why am I on a demonstration to defend our public services, our public services are not the problem, right? So the government has turned us almost into allies, because we’re all now talking about this public debt here and we’re ignoring this here which is slowing down the economy. So by our defensiveness and we’re right to defend the public sector, but by sort of if you like walking into their territory and responding to the way they’ve defined the problem, we’re allowing them to get away with murder and I just want to say that for your thinking. So the government’s not doing anything about the real problem.

Next one. So we know how to solve this problem. I want to tell you that we know how to get out of this crisis. Economists know, they’ve known for 50 years, we know how to do it. The fact that it’s not happening is ideological, but it’s also ignorance, because you guys are not standing up on your hind legs demanding these solutions, the politicians are not responding. So how do we do it? Let me show you. The first thing we have to do, next slide, this is what happened, these tools were used in the golden age of economics, ’45 – ’71, let’s move on beyond that. This shows you, no let’s move on this is too complicated. This is too complicated, next one.

So John Maynard Keynes gave us the tools with which to stabilise a chaotic out of control financial system. Next slide. He devised these policies as a result of his direct experience of austerity after the First World War and of the collapse of the credit bubble of 1929, so he worked out what to do about that. Next slide. So the five tools we have are these. Next slide.

So first of all, the Bank of England can create money and it can make sure that that money is directed towards productive activity. Right now it’s doing what is called quantitative easing. It’s creating money and it’s giving it to the banks and it’s saying do what you like with this and the banks are saying why should I invest that in a new factory? It’ll take 10 years to build or three years to build, by the time you hire people I won’t get my profits back for five years. Instead I go and gamble on the global markets, on whether the Brazilian Real will go up or come down or whether the cotton price will go up or come down, I’ll gamble on that and I’ll make a load of money overnight.

So they’re taking the Bank of England’s money and they’re gambling with it, they’re speculating. We want the Bank of England to give that money to the banks and say to them “Thou shalt invest in the real economy and if you don’t, we’ll take away your bankers licence and you won’t get any QE”, that’s what we want them to say. Next one. We want our banks to create credit, to give to our companies so that they can invest and we want them to do it at very low rates of interest and we want to say to them if you don’t, we will take away the taxpayer guarantees. We won’t be giving RBS 10 billion bucks to bail out the Irish bank. We will be withholding that taxpayer money unless RBS takes its money and it puts it into the
sound economy, into sound investment in the economy. We’ve got to be saying that. I don’t hear the Labour movement saying that. I hear the Labour movement saying our bankers are horrible, but that’s not enough. We’ve got to know what we want them to do.

Next slide. Then when you create finance, that’s all very wonderful and miraculous and the economists talk about it forever, it’s not the finance that matters, it’s how it’s spent. It’s got to be spent wisely and in sound investment and the government mustn’t do what the private sector can do. The government must do what they’re not doing, which for whatever reason they can’t do at the moment. Next slide. So we want to regulate the banks and we want to regulate credit creation. You will not be allowed to borrow money to gamble. It won’t be allowed. Whether you’re a bank, whether you’re a big investor, whether whoever you are, you won’t be allowed to do it. Then we want low rates of interest, so that I can borrow money and take a risk on a new investment and know that I can repay it, because the rate isn’t too high.

Next one. And then we want capital controls. We don’t want and this is one of the most important things we request in Conference. The reason why we have, if you like Labour mobility, is because we have capital mobility, right? Money can move here, it can go out tomorrow. If I fancy putting my money in Malaysia or in Japan or in Mali, in Indonesia tomorrow, I can just take it out and go. That makes things very volatile for us. It also makes it hard for the Bank of England to fix the rate of interest. It also means Russian speculators can take their money from Moscow and dump it here and push up house prices in London, or they can take it out tomorrow and deflate house prices in London. This is chaotic and it should not be allowed, so we want capital controls.

The Robin Hood tax is a form of capital control. Sand in the wheels of money moving across borders and this is not exchange controls, which is what would affect you if you were going on holiday abroad when you would have currency limits, we’re not calling for exchange, we’re talking for taxes on the flow of money in and out of the country, to slow it down, to make sure it stays here and it invests here. That’s managed finance. Next slide, please. No, let’s move on from this. So these are the six steps to economic recovery. Next slide. Introduction of capital controls, reform of the banking system. We’ve got to downsize the banking system, we’ve got to regulate it, we’ve got to prevent it from engaging in speculation. Next slide. But our Chancellor, George Osborne, says we don’t have enough big banks, we’d like to see more.

God help us if we have more of those.

Next slide. We want the creation of jobs in the public and the private sectors, that’s a fifth step. Next slide. We want reform of the government’s debt management policy and we want government investment in a green new deal, to help us deal with climate change and energy shortages and energy insecurity. Next slide. And we want the generation of income, wages, profits, tax revenues for government. Next slide. Because we believe that if we look after employment, the budget will look after itself. Last slide. Then we’ll get recovery and we, the Labour movement, this is our fundamental ask, this is the thing we want more than anything else, why aren’t we asking for this, why are we going along with cuts, but not as fast as Osborne?

Thank you very much. I’m sorry if that was too long.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We’re going to take about six questions, so if you stick your hand up, John’s going to come around and if you’d ask a question. Put your hands up? I know she’s not like an MP, but obviously she’s more, she’ll answer any questions on economics.

Ann Pettifor, Economist: And there’s no stupid questions on this one.

Brother ? Speaker ??????????????: Why did you not become an MP, because you’d be a damn good one.

Ann Pettifor, Economist: Can I speak here?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Ann Pettifor, Economist: Y’know I have tried to become an MP, but the Labour Party thought I was too left-wing I think, so I’ve given up, I’ve given up (laughter, applause).

Brother ? Speaker?????????????: Why weren’t the banks nationalised when we had the chance to get them truly nationalised?

Ann Pettifor, Economist: That’s a good question to ask Alistair Darling and Gordon Brown, because the markets, the private sector terrorised them and said if you nationalise the banks it’ll be the end of the world. Give them loads of money, give them billions and billions of pounds, but don’t nationalise them. It was the lack of spine by a Labour government, that was the only reason. A lack of political spine. Now I’m harsh with these guys, but people only get political spine when there’s people behind them stiffening their spines and we weren’t doing that, okay? We were also, most of us were out there with credit cards and mortgages shopping on eBay, right? And we thought this was a great party and we enjoyed being at the party and so we got sucked in to this thing and we weren’t there holding our politicians to account, so I blame us as much
as I blame them and we got the politicians and we bended the knee to them, okay? We’ve got to stop bending the knee to our politicians who don’t have enough sound economic sense behind them.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother ? Speaker: Hi, Ann. Before I ask my question, could you maybe give me a bit of financial advice? My understanding is a million is six noughts, yes? A billion is nine noughts and a hundred billion, a thousand billion is 12 noughts. Well you said a thousand billion, but your thing had only nine noughts.

Ann Pettifor, Economist: Did it?

Brother ? Speaker: Yes [LAUGHTER]. If you need any advice, I don’t charge too much.

Ann Pettifor, Economist: I knew there’d be someone in the audience that was much cleverer than me, so you’re right. You’re right, I didn’t have enough noughts, but you know when I look at that, I can’t picture it and I fell for it, so I apologise.

Brother ? Speaker: My question is to do with the financial markets. How big a role have they had to play in the downfall of the banks?

Ann Pettifor, Economist: The financial markets?

Brother ? Speaker: Yes, because a lot of the speculators are driving up prices and everything else.

Ann Pettifor, Economist: Yes, the financial markets are now our new masters. They run the world. They run our country. They tell us whether or not we can nationalise the banks or not. They tell us whether or not, what the rate of interest must be. They tell us what our exchange rate must be, what the value of the £ must be. What do our politicians do? They sit on those green benches with their arms folded and they don’t do nothing. They leave it to the financial markets. I was horrified to see that Mr Mandelson’s been hired by some Russian oligarch to advise him and the Labour Party has lost its way. It’s too closely tied in to the City of London and to the financial markets and we’ve allowed the financial markets to take over and it’s not just us, we started here.

The fact is, it’s happened to an extent in the States but not as much as here. We are classic, we are inside the belly of the beast here, the beast of financial markets. They don’t have such big powerful markets in the US and they don’t have them in Europe like this and they don’t therefore have the debt that we have. We are the most indebted nation on earth when it comes to private debt. Only Japan has a touch more debt than we have, but their private debt is much lower than our private debt. They have more public debt, okay? But the Germans don’t have huge amounts of private debt. The Americans don’t have vast amounts of private debt. Britain does. Why? Because Britain had the biggest financial markets. It’s got the biggest City of London, right? And what’s happened is we’ve conceded powers to these guys, to these, we don’t even know who they are, they’re invisible, they sit behind machines somewhere and we, in the Trade Union movement, have sat on our butts and y’know what we do? We like to think about things we can dirty our hands with, that we can touch, like the Health Service.

Oh, the Health Service, easy. I go to the Health Service, my granny goes in to the Health Service, my kids use the Health Service, it’s something I know and touch. Or Social Security, or I don’t know, anything, local government. I know about local government, I’ve been in local government. Financial markets? I’ve never been in financial markets, no, I’m not interested in that, no, that’s for someone else. That’s our problem. It’s too easy. Dealing with the public sector’s too easy for us and we’re just focussed on it and these guys are running the show over there and we’re not focussed on them. We don’t do our homework. We don’t go and study this stuff. We don’t do the hard graft of understanding this stuff and they therefore run the world. But it started here, I need you to know, it started here.

The liberalisation process started with the Brits. We’re famous for our banks, for our City of London, we’ve spread the disease of globalisation around the world. I go to Accra in Ghana last week and they’re pretending that they’re London. They are selling properties at the same, they’re selling flats in Accra for a million bucks, even though they don’t have a banking system. So we’ve spread this thing, but it started here. So we therefore are in a very powerful position to do something about these financial markets, but we first have to understand that we have that power and the first power that we have is to say “Sorry mate, we’re not going to vote for you if you are going to give taxpayers money to the banks unconditionally”. I need you to know that these arguments are subtle. Me, I was in favour of bailing out the banking sector. Why? Because I wanted you to be able to go to the ATM the next day and draw out your salary, right? Now the way they had us, they had us by the short and curlies as they say. I shouldn’t be using this language in decent Trade Union Conferences, but they had us in a vice, so we had to bail out the banking system and I’m glad that we did.

What I’m very disappointed in, is that we did it with no terms and conditions. If I give you, RBS, 10 billion bucks, I want you to sign here that you’re going to do something with that that’s going to benefit me, your beneficiary. But did we do that, did the Labour government do that? No, they said take the money and run and what did we do?
We never said a word, because we didn’t understand what was going on and we are therefore complicit in that failure, complicit. Sorry, I’m not starting another sermon, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, last question.

Brother ? Speaker????????????????: Ann, you touched on briefly there what I was just going to ask. There’s a lot of people think like you do, but we’re all sidelined and called nutcases, but one of the things you were touching on there is all this money that we, we’ve lent to all these banks, where is it and when do we get it back, that’s what people ask and when does it come back, or does it ever come back, or do they just give it away, or the bank is sold to somebody else, do we get that money?

Ann Pettifor, Economist: To be fair the banks said and the government said you’ll have to repay at some point and the question is whether they will. I mean what it sounds like now is that Osborne is trying to privatise Lloyds and RBS before he gets the money back, okay? So we will be ripped off twice and again who’s complaining about this? Not us. Who’s moaning about this? You might find some people in the City of London might be objecting to it, but is the Labour movement objecting to this? Have you heard a huge uproar? No. So I don’t know where the money is.

A lot of it’s going, I tell you what, the banks, their balance sheets are in such a mess, they’re trying to make quick bucks to fix them. Speculation, if I had to win the lottery tomorrow I could fix my balance sheets, so I’m spending all the money on the lottery, okay? Because going to work for five years to get the money is taking too long, I’ll be kicked out of my house before that happens. That’s what the banks are doing, right? And we’re not saying anything to that.

So I don’t know where the money is, because they don’t really have enough. They are in trouble. They are still not effectively solvent and there’s no, some money has been repaid and no doubt some day they will repay, but we don’t know. We don’t know and we don’t know what’s going to happen, because the other problem is they are creating new bubbles. We’ve now got a bubble in bonds, government bonds. We’ve got a bubble in the stock market. We’ve got a bubble in London property. London is crazy, you would never think there is a recession going on in London. Nobody can buy anything for less than a million bucks in the middle of London anymore. The prices are rising by the day. Mr Osborne’s helping that along as well.

Now those are bubbles and they’re going to burst. Like all bubbles, they burst. Then what’s going to happen, or the Russian oligarchs don’t pay, or something happens like it happened in Cyprus. In Cyprus they had a big catastrophe and oil, something leaked oil and they had catastrophic failure which affected their economy. We could have something like that, I don’t know. It’s risky, it’s really risky and there are no terms and conditions really, but that’s because the public is too passive.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Ann. I’m sorry for those people that now want to ask their questions, but obviously we do have a Conference to run and we’re running out of time, but obviously, Ronnie, General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Thank you President.

Ann, we have a tradition of anyone who speaks here, we give them a memento of their time with the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union and what we’re going to give you is a pewter baker. It’s actually an old fashioned thing, they’re collectors items, but don’t take it out because it’s got all wrap around it and all that, there’ll be everywhere and you’ll be on your hands and knees for hours but Ann, thank you very much.

Obviously I heard you speak to the GFTU, very enlightening. I’m sure the audience that you’ve had today will start thinking more about the damage that banks are doing. In fact we’ve got a debate later on in the Agenda, probably tomorrow, so thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

And we’ve also got a tin of biscuits, luxury biscuits which were made by Trade Union members. I’ve got to say who incidentally work for a company who would be very good for the economy because you can actually print money, the owner of this company. What it does is it cuts terms and conditions for every single person who works for them and it generates lots and lots of money. It’s a company that’s going, it picks up businesses that aren’t working too well and at the end of the year takes £24 million out as a bonus for himself and his wife. Not too bad is it, aye? George Osborne could do that, we’d be in happy land.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference. If you can turn back to your Agendas. Motion 32.
**32 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313**

*Conference agrees to raise awareness through the Trade Union Congress of the ‘avoidable’ accidents & tragic loss of life caused at Level-Crossings across the United Kingdom and demand action to revise, review and implement improved safety systems.*

**Brother ? Speaker – Branch 313:** President, Platform, Delegates here to move Motion 32 in relation to level crossings. I won’t bore you by reading it out, but the facts of the matter is there 8,200 level crossings in the UK, that’s a figure from 2005, of which 1600 were road crossings. In 2004 there was two major accidents which resulted in seven fatalities. In 2011 there was 6,500 level crossings in the UK, of which there is only at that particular time, of the 6,500 there was 2,400 that had a full inspection carried out within the previous period of time, which was around the 12 months or so. Clearly there is not enough being done because there’s too many fatalities and no so long ago in Nottinghamshire there was two girls aged 13 and 14 that died. The problem on that particular level crossing was highlighted some 14 months before those two actual girls died and nobody did anything about it, so I’m here for support on this motion. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Formally seconded? Okay. The Executive Council would ask you to support the motion. All those in favour? Those against? That’s carried. Motion 33.

**33 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 450**

*That this Conference agrees to lobby the Government and the TUC to make high visibility clothing mandatory for all cyclists and motorcyclists.*

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** That this Conference agrees our Executive Council lobby the government and the Trade Union Congress to make high visibility clothing mandatory for all cyclists and motorcyclists. On dark nights, the little flashing lights on the front of a cycle is neither use nor ornament. This is a huge health and safety issue. As a driver, I have certainly noticed how many cyclists don’t use high vis. Once we get to dusk, which is very early in winter, it is very difficult to see a cyclist who is not using the high vis and relying on these silly little flashing lights in the hope they will be noticed. I do not wish to be involved in a potentially lethal accident with any cyclist. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Formally seconded? Are you speaking? Yes, you speak, before we second it.

**Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359:** As a cyclist and a motorcyclist and a car driver, let’s get one thing clear. You can dress in a Mr Blobby suit, with a blue flashing light on your head, if somebody’s turning like that, they don’t see it. Unfortunately there are too many drivers that do not look where they’re going and the other problem is if you say right, we’ll make it mandatory, if for some reason some cyclist or motorcyclist goes home and they’ve not got one on for one reason or another, say you come out, your high vis jacket’s been pinched from your locker room, you’ve got to get home, you’re 15 miles from home, you’ve got to go home without your high vis. That’s the one night you have an accident, the insurance company go “Got you, you didn’t have a high vis on”. No, driver education is the answer. I’d ask you to oppose this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Chris Lay – Region 2:** I’m here to support the motion. It is so important. I can sort of understand where the last speaker was coming from, that drivers do need to be more aware and things like that. Yes, they do need to be aware, but then cyclists have also got the opportunity to make themselves seen more by wearing this high visibility. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Sister Joanne Henderson – Branch 529:** Mr Chairman, Platform, Delegates. I oppose this motion. As a rider of motorcycles myself, I have spent a lot of money on my bike suit which has reflectors sewn into the suit. As far as health and safety issue, I do a risk assessment every time I go out on my bike. Cyclists, motorcyclists, car users, anyone using the road has a duty to use due care and attention. Are we going to ask pedestrians to wear high visibility clothing in dark nights, just in case they wish to cross the road? Oppose this motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** No other speakers?
Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): Cycling deaths hit a five year high in 2012, with 122 fatalities. Among them were two eight year olds, 16 teenagers, a 94 year old. There were also 362 motorcyclists killed and the total casualties were 9,990. Now I’m not suggesting all could have been avoided by the wearing of the high vis clothing, but some would. So on that basis we would ask Conference to support this motion, because anything that makes our road safer for all users has to be something we all want. Please support, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Would you like to reply?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Just very briefly, in response to the guy that said what happens if your high vis clothing gets pinched while you’re at work, well what happens if my lights fail? I’ve still got to get home, sometimes we have to take risks, it’s one of those things.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s lost, okay. Motion 34.

34 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 450

That this Conference agrees to lobby the Government to pass a new law enforcing the wearing of a cycle helmet for all cyclists.

Brother Mark Baker – Branch 452 (Park Cakes, Oldham): Bear with me, I’ve forgotten my glasses. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to pass a new law enforcing the wearing of cycle helmets for all cyclists. At the minute there is a law which says you could wear, just put in there you should wear. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded?

Sister Janine Cokayne – Branch 201: I’m here to oppose this motion, not for the sentiment because the sentiment is amazing. Anything that can protect people is good. But what about the kids? Let’s be quite honest. Kids don’t do as they’re told. They want to fit in with their friends. They want to be cool. You say you wear a cycle helmet, they say yes, chuck it in the grass and go out on their bikes. Please oppose.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: Cycle helmets, yes it’s a wonderful idea, only two problems with that. One, not everyone’s got a cycle helmet with them all the while, again they get stolen and the other issue is, most of the cycle helmets, unless you spend an awful lot of money and I know an awful lot about helmets, both as a motorcyclist and as a car driver and most of the so-called helmets out there, they’re a bit of polystyrene with a plastic acrylic shell on it that’s thinner than a Tory’s smile and they’re about as much use as a chocolate fireguard and if you really, really want to help get cyclists safety up, encourage it, don’t make it compulsory, but while you’re about it, go and kick the helmet manufacturers and make them, force them by legislation, to put the equivalent of a BSI Kitemark. Now most bike helmets used to have two standards, BS 2495, which was the higher one and BS 1869 and if you hadn’t got one of those stickers on your helmet, it wasn’t legal for the road. Cycle helmet manufacturers, you could have them made anywhere. Most of them aren’t worth it and the other problem is, even if you try and make everyone wear them, a lot of people won’t and again someone comes off, they’ve not got a helmet, even if they have got a helmet, if it’s not fitted correctly, the insurance company will just go “Okay, we’re not paying”. Oppose please.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Yes, I’m asking you to support this. If these helmets are so useless, I just wonder why all the professional cyclists as in take part in the Tour de France and Olympic cycling events all wear these helmets? Surely they must be some good?

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers? No?

Brother John Fitzpatrick, EC Member, Region 4 (speaking on behalf of the Executive): The Executive would like you to agree with this motion on the grounds, you mentioned the helmet there and it’s got, under the Highway Code recommendations, a cycle helmet which must conform to current regulations. Another reason would be all new cycles be issued with a helmet when you buy it. The Royal Mail issues, there’s 37,000 postal workers that use bikes, they’re issued with helmets and they use them. The Police, when you see the Police riding bicycles, they’ve got them on.
This shouldn’t be a code of practice, this should be law. The kids growing up now do wear them. My grandson wears them and all the other grandkids in the street, you see them with them on. Once they get into that practice of wearing them younger, they’ll grow up wearing them and once they see the adults wearing them, it’ll look fine and they’ll all go on. So we recommend that you vote for this. It is worthwhile and it will save lives and the accident & emergency are overrun with accidents on bicycles. This will be of benefit for everyone. We ask you to support this, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

_Brother Ian Hodson, National President:_ Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s carried. Motion 35.

_Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:_ That this Conference agrees that cyclists should have to carry insurance when using the highways. Why should they be the only road users not to be insured? Right, this is not asking for insurance for your kids that are riding a cycle on the pavements. This is about cyclists who are using the roads. Some of these are extremely bad with road manners and take risks by overtaking the buses and wagons. If I’m indicating to turn left at traffic lights, they do not have the right to cycle up and cause me to brake so as to avoid me killing them and then my insurance is liable because they don’t have any. I’m asking you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

_Brother Ian Hodson, National President:_ Seconder? Formally seconded? Any speakers? No, okay. The Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the motion. We don’t believe that by bringing insurance companies into the life of a cyclist, it’ll actually make the roads any better, any safer. We believe that that can only be done through investments in better roads. We believe cycling lanes is the answer to the issue of cyclists and making our roads safer, so on that basis, I hear what you say about not wanting to put it on children, but unfortunately when you start opening up the opportunity for these insurances to come in, there is no boundaries is there? I mean we’ve seen the insurance companies year on year screwing us more and more and then when people have accidents or incidents at home, they get robbed. They find it very, very difficult to actually make a claim on their insurance anyway. The only winner when insurance companies get involved unfortunately is normally the insurance company. It’s not the victim, it’s not the person who’s got the insurance policy, it’s actually the insurance company that always wins. So on that basis, we’d ask Conference to oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s lost. Motion 36.

### 36 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 452

_That this Conference agrees that people using motorised mobility scooters get some kind of recognised training and a licence._

_Brother Simon Coulston ? – Branch 452 (Park Cakes, Oldham – First Time Speaker):_ I’m here to ask that this Conference agrees that people using motorised mobility scooters get some kind of recognised training and a licence. Don’t get me wrong, I know certain people need these vehicles to get about, but what I have seen lately since they have become more widely available, some users have a total disregard for the public safety when zooming about on pavements, shopping centres, plus many more other public places, so please support this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

_Brother Ian Hodson, National President:_ Seconder? Well done comrade, it’s formally seconded. Speakers? No speakers?

_Brother Roy Tysall – Branch 414 (Tangerine in Blackpool):_ I’d like to oppose this motion. I don’t believe that training will make the roads any safer, or pedestrianised areas any safer, so I’d like to oppose this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

_Brother Chris Lay – Region 2:_ Here to support the motion. It has got to be supported because the amount of people, Janine has just told me now, two of these crashed the other day which must have caused injury of some sort. The amount of people which go down the little high street, on pavements which are supposed to be used for pedestrians and there’s kids, there’s other old people and they’re flying down there at 10, 20 mile an hour. It’s just not safe. If they don’t know how to use it, then they shouldn’t be using it. Thank you, please support.

[APPLAUSE]

_Brother Ian Hodson, National President:_ Any other speakers?

_Sister Jackie Barnwell – Branch 331 (Executive Council Member for Region 3):_ Responding on behalf of the Executive Council. The Executive Council would ask you to oppose this motion and the reasons behind that are that the majority of people that require mobility scooters are either older people or disabled people and while we agree that people should be
trained to use mobility scooters, if you speak to the reputable companies that sell them, they go out to the person with the scooter, they give them training, not just in the home but they take them out on the roads, they go along with them and ensure that they can use these scooters properly and I think if it was just the training, the Executive Council would have supported you 100%. It’s the question of a licence.

The question of the licence is who gives the training? What cost is there for that training? Who sets the test? Who carries out the test? …and what cost is that test? What cost would it be for you to get that licence so that you can remain an independent individual and go about your days instead of being locked in your house seven days, 24 hours a day and on that basis that we believe each individual does have the right to an independent life, we would ask you to oppose the motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s lost.

Okay Conference, you’ll be pleased to know it’s brew time. Everybody back by quarter to, please. And can I remind you as well that if you go over to Watkins & Gunn’s store, they’re selling their tickets for their event tomorrow evening and when you buy very, very reasonably-priced tickets also you get some raffle tickets too to win some great prizes. So don’t forget to go over to Watkins & Gunn and support a great charity as well.

[BREAK]

Okay comrades, I believe Morning Star’s have now been delivered and there’s some great reports in there from our Conference, which are on page four and there’s also another article which I’d like to direct you to, which is on page nine and that’s entitled “Why we need to build towards a General Strike”, an article by our General Secretary, so we’d encourage you to make sure you get the Morning Star, pages four and pages nine. Okay, back to your Agendas. Of course, yes and there’s a full-time Officials meeting tomorrow morning, straight after the roll-call. Do we know what room? But we’ll let you know what room in the morning. Okay. Motion 37.

### 37 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313

*Conference agrees to lobby Government through Health & Safety Commission to ensure that Companies requirements to carry out Risk Assessments every 12 months is made Mandatory. National President to raise this Early Day Motion through our Parliamentary Group.*

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham):** Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move Motion 37.

Conference agrees to lobby government through the Health & Safety Commission to ensure companies requirements to carry out risk assessments every 12 months are made mandatory. National President raises this as an early day motion to our parliamentary group. At our Branch, every time there’s an accident, one of the reps will always, one of the first thing’s they’d always do is request under Regulation 7 the risk assessments and it’s quite shocking and alarming the amount of times that you get the documents and they’re out of date by two years, three years and the only time the employer actually reviews them is after there’s been a serious accident or an accident of some format and I think it’s about time that employers are pushed through law to ensure that they do carry out what their legal obligations are. Plus by asking this motion, is also asking the employers to combat complacency. I urge you to support the motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313:** President, Platform, Delegates, here to second the motion. The risk assessments need to be mandatory to keep the employers at bay, just like the mover has already stated. This way, we will have their health & safety reps, the company health & safety reps, concentrating on risk assessments rather than concentrating on eradicating or coming for the Trade Union or its members, so I urge you all to support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, the Executive Council first off would like to point out that I don’t have the ability to raise an early day motion in parliament, but what we will do, if it’s passed, is we will ask our parliamentary group if there is an MP that will raise it on our behalf, but the Executive Council would like you to support the motion. To the vote, those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 38.

### 38 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313

*Conference agrees that all Branches ensure that Safety Representatives invoke their Legal Rights under the Safety Representative Safety Committee Regulations 1977 to enable effective representation at Branch level.*
Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move Motion 38. Conference agrees that all branches ensure safety reps invoke their legal rights under the representative Safety Committee Regulations 1977 to enable effective representation at branch level. I think it’s absolutely imperative as safety reps the matter of rights that we’ve got in terms of the law, whereas when you’re a shop steward there’s only certain minimal rights that you have. As a safety rep you’ve got legal rights to tie them off, you’ve got legal rights to seek information in relation to accidents and release of information.

If I could just quickly run through a few of the regulations, just so people are clear as to what the functions are and stuff.

Regulation 3 makes reference to the importance of safety reps. (unclear) branches make reference to that, the company is saying that we can’t have this person as a branch health & safety rep because he’s a nuisance. Regulation 3 makes it very clear that it is the Trade Union and the members that will pick who the reps are. Regulation 4 runs through all the functions of a safety rep. Regulations 5, 6 and 7 make reference to inspection of the workplace, as well as after accidents, dangerous occurrences. Regulation 7 makes reference to inspections of documents and provision of information and Regulation 9, which I think is very important, safety committees. Regulation 9 makes reference to how you compose and how many reps there are in safety committees.

Even in our own region, I know of branches where very few of our reps actually get released to attend quarterly health & safety meetings and I think it’s absolutely disgraceful when employers maliciously, just because they can’t be arsed to give people time off and are just not allowing our reps to be able to carry out their functions under the law and I think it’s about time that our branches ensured that this change and you challenge the employers who try and stop these type of things taking place. Every time there’s an accident, straight away without delay the regulations make reference to the word “without delay”, which means on the spot. You can just tell your manager I’m going, you don’t have to ask permission. I urge you to support the motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. Here to second the motion. With all the cutbacks under the present government and even the previous government in Health & Safety Executive and so on and so forth, it is imperative, it is vital that all and each and every one of us, regardless of just the bakers, but every single Union, organisation out there, we need to push the health & safety agenda, ever so more importantly than ever before. Because of all the cutbacks, we need to attack at the grass roots, in the bases. I urge you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Warren Broomhall – Branch 390: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. I’m here to fully support this motion. I’d just like to share with you what we’ve done recently at our branch. I was handed the health & safety team recently as part of the chairperson’s role and one of the things we’ve started recently is, in consultation with the management, we’re trying to come up with a procedure that when an accident happens on site, the first thing that happens, as soon as the manager is brought to the investigation, what we want as a health & safety team is that a health & safety member of our Union is contacted and investigation is done in partnership to find out the truth of how the accident happened. It can only benefit our members and the company if the truth is found. I support this motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to strongly support this motion. Coming from an Hovis site like H and Raj, Hovis or Premier have tried their best to water-down, interrupt and just really want safety reps to pay lip service. I’ve been campaigning, I believe Raj I sent you an email, H sorry, of what I sent about the ROSPA’s. ROSPA’s is a big, I don’t know whether other sites have it, whether it’s just within Hovis, it’s a big back pat in exercise for the management I believe, but yes, support this motion and whilst I’m here, we had two safety reps involved, asked by the company, to do part of the investigation of the Peter Barzac case which I’ve mentioned before. Those safety reps then were asked by the claimants to attend tribunal. The company will not pay them. They’ve suffered losses by going. I have grieved it and the grievance will go ahead, but this is what we’re up against. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, clearly the Executive Council would ask you to support the motion and there are regulations there, there is support there that enables our safety reps to carry out functions. Sometimes our safety reps are unaware of what their rights are. The brown book lays it down clear. Anybody who hasn’t got a copy should contact their regional office to make sure they are provided with a copy, because it tells them exactly what their rights are. We know that when people go on a course that Willie Colquhoun runs for us through the GFTU. Willie Colquhoun make sure people understand how that book is used to ensure people’s rights and protections in the workplace and we’ve got to
ensure that all our branches have those books on hand to make sure any new rep coming in, or any old rep, always make sure they refer to those brown books. Like I say, the Executive would ask you to support this motion wholeheartedly and remember when you go back to your workplaces those rights are there, make sure you use them, don’t allow the company to take your rights away. You’re entitled to them, they’re there, your legal protection. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? It’s carried. 39.

39 Health, Safety and Welfare – Branch 313

*Conference agrees that all Branches forward an accident report in relation to all accidents on site for the Regional Health & Safety Delegate.*

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move Motion 39. Conference agrees that branches forward an accident report in relation to all accidents on site for the Regional Health & Safety Delegate. The sentiments behind this motion are that I personally think we don’t share enough information from branch to regional, so when we go regional and you go around the branches very little seems to come out in relation to health & safety and I think that’s quite worrying, so in an effort to try and increase communications from branches to region and to allow dialogue at national health & safety meetings, I think it’s important that we start sharing the information, especially in relation to accidents. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. Here to second Motion 39. Accident claims need to be forwarded to the regional health & safety delegates so that awareness and information is passed on nationally, so that people have the trends and the tools to tackle scrupulous employers ever so more especially whereby as union reps we are no longer allowed to process accident claim forms due to legislation change, hence the withdrawal earlier on in the week of Motion 27 which was put in by our branch, because at that time we weren’t really sure about how to deal with the accident claim forms because it was going through the motions, but since writing up and having the discussion on that particular motion, it was confirmed to us that we can no longer do it. The individual person that has had the accident is the person that needs to have the form, complete the form and send it off to Thompsons as in our example, the solicitors, for it to be processed, so I strongly urge you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: This is going to sound sort of strange this, because we’re actually going to ask you to oppose it and the reason we’re going to ask you to oppose it is purely based on data protection. Unfortunately you can’t forward on accident reports. What you can do is come to your regional councils and talk about what the incidents are, but you cannot forward accident reports from your workplace because it contains personal details and as much as we understand the sentiment behind it, we cannot do it anymore. We understand the sentiment behind it, but we would ask Conference to oppose it purely on the data protection, we can’t do it. We cannot do it, so ...... Remit? Okay, thanks. Motion 40. It’s been withdrawn? Alright, okay. Motion 41.

39 National Health Service – Branch 582

*That this Conference agrees that pressure must be put on the government to greatly improve the early diagnosis of dementia sufferers. Although no effective cure is yet available early treatment can help many people continue to live healthy lives at home for many years.*

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Manor): Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Motion 41, the early diagnosis of dementia. This present government had promised to boost the identification and increase the support for dementia sufferers during their term in office, but it is clear that their austerity cuts will not only see services and support reduced, but in many cases they will collapse. They will collapse because council budgets are being slashed and as councils tighten their belts, the systems in place will have funding cut, greatly impacting on the poor and the most vulnerable. It is estimated that the number of people suffering with dementia is set to double over the next 30 years. This will place huge demands on the NHS and the network of care facilities, facilities which are already struggling to cope both financially and through inadequate training and a lack of sufficient equipment and facilities.

What this motion is asking for is that this government should honour its own promises at the very least, to increase research into finding a cure, to improve diagnosis throughout the UK, to raise awareness by providing national campaigns and to improve training for support staff and it is essential that wards and care homes need investment to give those
suffering with dementia the best care possible. The last speech I delivered was just over two months ago at my father’s funeral. Thankfully dad spent all of his days at home being cared for by us and we had a care support, we had a system that was working for dad, but we didn’t just lose him two months ago, his character changed the year before as the disease attacked him slowly and took him away from us. It did however take many months for a full assessment and to provide medication at the beginning. Time we lost as our gentle loving father started to deteriorate. Please Delegates, support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded, okay?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: My mum, the last 10 years of her life was in a home, she had dementia. The body that we eventually buried was not my mum. My mum in real life was a pub landlady. She was a very sociable, likeable person. The person that was in that home was not my mum. It’s a disgusting illness and anything that can be done to stop it in its tracks, bring it on. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor, Carlton): Asking you to support from the EC. The care for people with dementia is not only important for the person with dementia but it’s important for the families to have all the support that’s out there. With early diagnosis, the families and the person can live a happier, better full life at home with their families and with all the love and support they need, but without the diagnosis and lack of understanding of the illness, people don’t know what they’re doing, don’t know what it’s all about, don’t know who to ask, don’t know what it’s for and it’s really important that we support this motion as people need to understand that there’s loads and hundreds and thousands of people, it’s not just that one person that’s affected, it’s all the families and their families, the local support, the local government, the carers, so please support. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 42.

42 National Health Service – Branch 505

That this Conference agree and deplore this governments shameful drastic cuts to our once proud National Health Service.

The Royal College of Nursing is warning that elderly people will suffer most if the NHS continues to make further cuts to nurses and other hospital staff. Official figures show more than 6000 nursing posts have been lost since the general election and the RCN fears a similar number could go by 2015.

Patient care will suffer as nurses are forced to treat more patients, and NHS trusts would have to resort to employing more foreign nurses and agency staff if local NHS trusts continue to make such cuts.

We must fight the government to stop further erosion of our NHS and when the Labour Party get back into power we must remind them of their pledge that, they would put patients first and back real reforms needed to improve the NHS and use the money David Cameron is wasting on his damaging NHS reorganisation to protect 6000 nursing jobs.

Locally, Labour will act as the last line of defence to protect the NHS, Labour Mayors and Councillors will be champions for patients, and defenders of NHS values. We are fighting to defend the worst effects of David Cameron’s damaging Health and Social Care act. Please Support.

Sister Vi Carr – Branch 505: Platform, Delegates. Moving Motion 42. The NHS. I think the motion speaks for itself, but I’ll just say a few words. What on earth’s happening to our once great NHS? David Cameron said it would be safe in his hands, but obviously it isn’t, liar. Wards have been closed and front line nurses, who are the backbone of our hospitals, are being made redundant and those who stay are being given no incentive to do so. Tens of thousands of elderly patients are having to stay in hospital longer than necessary because this uncaring government has slashed the number of district nurses. Patients health will deteriorate due to lack of proper nursing care in our understaffed hospitals and this situation will suit Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt down to the ground because the death pathways are a sure way to free beds. I find this absolutely deplorable that the elderly are being treated like this.

The NHS is dying in the hands of the Tories. A & E waiting times are increasing as Tory cuts bite. They won’t be happy until the NHS is privatised. I’m just going to read something I picked up in The Mirror last week. Gran, 89, left to die on a hospital floor. A great grandmother, 89, died after allegedly being left alone on a mattress on the floor of a hospital. The 89 year old was admitted with a water infection, but later contracted pneumonia. Her son said he was appalled to find his sick mum was curled up on a mattress without a pillow for comfort. My wife and I couldn’t believe what we were seeing. She was on a mattress on the floor on her own in a room. He said his mother initially spent 72 hours on a ward before
being transferred to a separate room. His wife added “I wouldn’t treat my dog like that, truthfully I wouldn’t. There was not even a pillow under my mother in law’s head. This is an 89 year old lady. I was horrified to see a mattress on the floor with my lovely mum-in-law curled up on it”. Her son said “As the family, we are absolutely distraught and I am absolutely disgusted by the way Darlington Memorial Hospital treated my mother. She was a very hardworking person. She worked right up to and beyond retirement”.

He claimed there were other major issues under investigation, adding there was deemed to be a lack of staff on duty and that many were agency staff. He also highlighted the closure of an A & E department at another hospital locally in October 2009. The controversial decision to shut down the unit means A & E patients are taking to Darlington. “If the other hospitals had still been open, the A & E, my mum, in my view, would have been treated a lot more quickly and possibly still be alive. My mum was admitted to hospital on December 16th and discovered on the mattress on the 19th December. She was diagnosed with pneumonia between Christmas and New Year and died on January 18th”. His complaint is still being investigated.

Please support. We must, before this NHS, it’ll be no longer the NHS, but this is what the Tories want. They want it to be privatised. They want all of us to pay. They might be able to afford to pay, but we can’t. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded?

Brother ? Speaker ??????????????????: Mr President, Delegates, Conference. I have been up here before about the National Health Service. It’s a disgrace the way it’s been handled and although the Delegates they’ve now spoken about what happened to people with dementia. What happened to the people in Staffordshire, where 2,000 people died at the hands of reckless people, probably some were not properly trained to do the job. What happened to the leader? He was promoted to the head of the whole organisation. It’s corrupt from beginning to end and it needs changing and it needs to be put back in the hands of the people who pay for it, because you people pay 96 billion out of your wages into that, you and your employer, for your health. Conference, we have a say in the National Health Service, tax us after that, so you have a big say in what happens in your health and it’s not being done. These Tories, they opposed it at the day of birth and they still oppose it because they think health only belongs to those who can pay for it. Please support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. I got to say, a well-worded motion and if you look through the whole Agenda it’s probably the one motion that affects more people than any other one that’s on our Agenda, but to do anything we have to understand the size of the attacks that we’re coming under from this government. I said in my opening address that the Tories never ever wanted the NHS. It wasn’t their idea and so they’re not interested in it. If there is a surprise, it’s that the Liberal Democrats have been every bit as destructive as the Tories have been in power. The cuts and privatisation were never part of either parties manifestos, but since then we’ve had seamless passage of the bill through parliament. It’s been betrayal by stealth.

Let’s start with Andrew Lansley’s disastrous 10 year as Secretary of State for Health. His Section 75 of the Health Act, which dealt with procurement of services within the NHS, allowed for outside competition from private companies. That was the worse thing that happened to start off. Despite opposition from the British Medical Association, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Labour Party, because we did stand up and fight against it, we now have legislation that has seen thousands of public service workers thrown on the dole as tenders are lost to private companies. This is cleaning, catering, ancillary and administrative jobs within the National Health Service and the actual cost of administering the National Health Service now has gone from 5% of the budget to 16% of the budget. This is the government who were taking about Labour quangos and what they did. They’ve changed the name of them but it’s still a quango, they’re still taking more money out than they were under Labour. But the worst thing is that he tied the legislation up in such a way that should a future Labour government come back into power and seek to reverse those changes, the NHS would automatically be dragged into a competition rule, which obliges governments to compensate private providers in the event of the services are brought back into public ownership.

That’s what the law says. That’s what MPs have voted on and passed. Of course the private companies don’t have to compensate those who’ve been made redundant due to the undercutting of tendering price, because that’s how they undercut. They cut jobs, they get rid of them. I think Ann made a great point of that before in her speech. Of course you can guess which party these private companies donate to. It is not Labour. These regulations will act as a catalyst to NHS privatisation by giving companies a mechanism to force their way into National Health Service services wherever they see profits. Companies like Care UK, Virgin Care will try to cherry pick easy and profitable services.
So they’re going to take the likes of diagnostics, they’re going to take routine elective surgery and other simple treatments that are going to generate money, money, money and what they’ll leave behind and we’re seeing it now, is they’ll leave behind accident & emergency. They’ll leave behind care for the elderly, like Dave was talking about before. Mental health services and anything that is unpredictable when it comes to finances. They’ll be the things that will be left in the National Health Service for you, as taxpayers, to pick up the bill on.

And remember too what happened to private provider Southern Cross, we debated at this Conference I think last year or the year before. When they got into financial difficulties and they folded, who picked up the bill? It came back into the public sector and we as taxpayers again had to pick up the price for failed administration within a private company. So in essence the provision of healthcare is open to any qualified provider, so long as they are approved by this organisation that’s called The Care Quality Commission. They’re a light touch regulator, rather than a clinical excellence enforcer and that’s what we want in the National Health Service, we want people who enforce quality clinical practice.

This organisation though has been criticised for its, it has a tick box approach to health care, how it ensures quality. You get a piece of paper and you tick the boxes and indeed you have to question their ability to assess when they rely on companies conducting their own self assessments and reporting any difficulties back. Can anyone see the similarities between what they’re doing in the NHS and what they did within the HSE? Took away enforcement and introduced tick box mentality. Remember the Winterview care home and the suffering that patients there had. People who had learning difficulties. Did they report that to The Quality Care Commission? They didn’t, but GPs forced to give the option for private medicine, to tender for healthcare provision in competition with our NHS.

But what will be the reality for the NHS, which is being left desperately strapped for cash, when it can no longer compete with the private healthcare? Costs will go up, corners will be cut and we’ll end up with an American system of healthcare where it’s going to be those who can afford to pay will get it and those who can’t afford to pay will do without. We’re seeing the piecemeal destruction of the National Health Service played out before our very eyes. You know we’ve talked of all different reasons why we could go on a national strike against this government and there’s loads and there’ll be loads in the future, but I’ll tell you what, if there’s one thing that should bring us together and bind us, it is the destruction of the National Health Service because it is a price that we will all in this room have to pay some day, because we all are dependent on the National Health Service for our care. Thousands fewer nurses, hundreds fewer doctors, MRSA cases, waiting lists up, that’s welcome to Tory Britain. A 24% increase in the number of ambulances being turned away at accident & emergency hospitals.

Last week in the press, a Yorkshire paramedic claimed that as many as 50% of all 999 cases in Yorkshire were being delivered by private ambulances. Another bring-it-in private enterprise by stealth. Up to 40 National Health Service walk-in centres are being closed under the coalition, despite the pre-elections of Cameron that the National Health Service was safe in his hands. 1,200 patients lost their lives at Stafford hospital, apparently directly as a result of staff shortages and now Cumberland Infirmary in Carlisle has come under scrutiny for falling standards there and if we’re honest that’s going to be the tip of the iceberg. 24 of 30 direct call centres are being closed, with the loss of 1,500 jobs, including nurses, because of competitive tendering, adding more and more pressure onto an already beleaguered ambulance service, an already decimated accident & emergency department. More than 4,000 nursing jobs lost under Cameron’s watch. Councils cutting healthcare for the elderly and those with dementia.

What I will say and we’ve had some criticism of the Labour Party, but I’ll tell you what, I’m pleased that Andy Burnham, the job he’s doing, I think he’s doing a great job, Andy Burnham, in health and speaking up for working class people. The Shadow Secretary of Health has given a firm commitment that some of this damage will be reversed and I think that’s one of the positives of the Labour Party and they should be applauded for that. It’s about time we had more than policy silence from the Labour front bench. The only thing that the Tories have been good at within the NHS is apportioning blame elsewhere. It’s never, ever, ever their fault. GPs to blame, nurses, Trust leaders, NHS 111 workers, cleaners and the Labour Party, because they blame the Labour Party, they say they didn’t fund it right, but I mean everyone, the world and his wife, know that Labour did properly fund the National Health Service and that the cuts have been under Cameron’s watch.

We have to have an end to policies that put profit before people. Cash before care and austerity before investment. You can be sure that a Tory’s lying, because their lips move. A clear demonstration that sometimes the clowns get to run the circus, with Jeremy Hunt now playing the role of Coco. Seeking the changes that we do and the replacement of these regulations is not scaremongering by the Trade Unions. There’s plenty of evidence that market-driven health services lead to limited choice. They lead to escalating costs and they lead to reduced quality. There’s no evidence whatsoever to support the idea that competition breeds excellence in healthcare. According to Robert Evans, a professor of economics at the University of British Colombia, market innovations in the NHS over the last 40 years have led to greater inequity, increased inefficiency, cost inflation and higher levels of public dissatisfaction.
It is time to reject the market ideology and seek to return to a properly funded NHS, seeking the changes that we do and the replacement of these regulations. As I said before, it’s not scaremongering. There’s plenty of evidence that market-driven health services lead to limited choice. Our campaign has to be huge. We have to make sure the thing grows more than anything. Your campaign has to be massive if we’re to save our NHS from the plundering privateers and their Tory friends. If you want your kids and your grandkids and your parents and siblings, your friends and your colleagues to have healthcare at the point of need, then you and us have to get off our backsides and do something major about it, support and campaign.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 43.

43 National Health Service – Branch 505

That this Conference agrees that we lobby the Government not to shut any Accident and Emergency Departments.

Brother John Fox – Branch 417 (speaking for Region 4 and the Executive Council): Because of these government cuts, the selling off of the ambulances and the unsuccessful 111 unit, our accident & emergency departments have been stretched to breaking point. This hasn’t swayed the government’s decision and over the next five years the closure of accident & emergency wards across the country and the opening of more centralised super units are inevitable. Without increasing the ambulance service, hospitals and GPs, these new super units will be under extra strain, causing a knock-on effect, realising in poor customer care. Studies show that the closure of accident & emergency departments will put the lives of seriously ill patients at risk by making them travel further for the treatment they need. The government is telling us that these moves will benefit patients with better care and attention, but in reality it is a cost-cutting exercise that will target the ill and the most vulnerable. Only the other day I received an email from a friend who’s in the A & E and he’s put “Recently things have started to get hard. I’ve started to notice a real difference right across the NHS. I see it in the faces of my colleagues and I see it in me too. We’ve got fewer resources and more patients to see. I might have 20 people in my waiting room and nearly all of them need to be seen urgently, but we simply don’t have the staff to see them quickly enough. That’s terrible for patients and hard for us, who all work in the NHS to witness”. So on this comrades, I move. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Stuart Kendall – Branch 495 (Manchester): I’d like to second this motion. It’s my first visit to Conference and I’m sure I don’t have to say much more than, it’s again the government putting people’s lives at risk by cutting back and cutting back and we all know what the situation is. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Haroon Rashid (Region 3): Here to support the motion. I think it’s quite evident over the last two years that this government has continued a trail of austerity. The amount of damage that they’ve done over the last few years since in power, I think may well prove irrecoverable. Politically I think what we see with all the damage that the current government has done, we must politically learn a lesson and the lesson should be to resist these attacks on the NHS and A & E and everything else and the harsh reality is if you think we’re going to sit here today and we’re going to vote yes, we agree with the motion, something’s going to change, it’s not. The only way we’re going to get involved and make a real change is to get involved with organisations like Unite the Resistance, to get involved with your Trade Councils, because the only place where these type of things are going actually change it is through those arenas and I urge people, I urge people to consider what I’ve just said and get involved with these type of arenas, absolutely vital. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I think John Fox spoke on behalf of the Executive, didn’t he? So you spoke on behalf of the, yes? Okay, let’s put it to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

44 National Health Service – Branch 505

That this Conference agrees to lobby the Government to stop the privatisation of the Ambulance Service.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Sorry about this. This is probably the longest speech I’ve ever done at Conference. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to stop the privatisation of the ambulance service. Well, it’s just happened in Greater Manchester with what used to be PATS, Patients Assisted Transport Service. Arriva buses, who couldn’t run a reliable bus service are now running the ambulances, so now I presume instead of driving past people at bus stops, they’ll turn up at somebody’s house and if they’re not waiting at the kerbside, they’ll leave them there. This is not
even the tip of the iceberg. First was the cleaning services that went out to tender, then the catering services. If you went to my local hospital, you were given a prescription, you took it to the hospital pharmacy to be dispensed, not any more. Lloyds pharmacists seem to be in every hospital in Greater Manchester. One at a time the various facets of our NHS are being eroded by stealth. Please, please, support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded, yes? Okay.

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: I’ll formally second this. The private sector who are running ambulances, it would be a joke etc., it’s too sick. All they’ll want to do, what’s the cheapest option? Like most of these health motions, I put it to the government how many do you want to kill?, because that what it just seems to me, right, okay, we’ll shut a few casualties and departments, we’ll put private ambulances in and they’ll use diesel ambulances because they’re cheaper to run and it takes longer to get to hospital. No, you’ve got to support this motion. Please, please, support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Here to support this motion. I would like to say though, well firstly can I withdraw 46 in favour of 42, 43 and 44?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Earlier this year though, I had the unfortunate pleasure of being in hospital and I’ve sat here and heard quite horror stories really. My experience was different. Although the staff were very, very stretched, they were very, very professional. These horror stories what I heard, I talked to a lot of the staff there and yes, they are very, very stretched and over-worked, flexibility, everything else, but the NHS is still great and support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Fox (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): What Marilyn has said, I’ve got down in mine as well, but I’ll go through it. Slowly but surely our NHS is being sold off. Our human rights to the best care and attention when we are at our most vulnerable is being sold off to the highest bidder. Already in Manchester the patient transport service has been sold off to Arriva, in Surrey a decision was made to sell on non-emergency ambulance work to Worcester-based company GSL, a firm that specialises in security services. Tell me, what does a bus company, a security firm know about the care and the transportation of the sick and the elderly? There is a fear among the people and a justified fear, who rely on these services that the company won’t have the highly trained staff that we used to with NHS ambulances to cope with the demands of the patients they carry.

When Ambuli, Arriva’s private ambulance enterprise in Leicester was inspected by the Care & Quality Commission in September 2012, it failed to meet the standards required. The failings range from infection control to the care and administrating to the patients. The cuts have already had a serious effect. In the East Midlands there are plans to close 70 ambulance stations, replacing them with just 13 larger stations. Regardless of the petitions and the uproar these moves are causing, this coalition government are still calling for cuts to the ambulance service of 50 million in the next five years and are willing to do anything to save money, selling out to the highest bidder. Surely the human rights of the people in this country should be more important than the cuts this government are forcing on us. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 45.

45 National Health Service – Branch 452

That this Conference agrees that the government needs to bring in tougher regulations and stop health tourism.

Brother Mark Baker – Branch 452 (Park Cakes): That this Conference agrees that the government needs to bring in tougher regulations and stop health tourism. This practice cost the NHS 6.9 million last year and is not recoverable. The authorities have had a responsibility to the British taxpayer to ensure that foreign patients are not taken advantage of, getting treatments worth thousands of pounds which they are not entitled to. Our health service is not a free international health service. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Speakers? Conference, since this coalition’s gained power now we’ve had migrants stealing our jobs, migrants taking housing, scroungers taking benefits, migrants scrounging, taking benefits but I thought they were taking all our jobs, now another malicious and factually dubious piece
of divisive scapegoating, we have to believe David Cameron and the Health Secretary are now accusing foreign nationals of stealing our NHS.

They have a catchy phrase for it, unfortunately it’s called “Health Tourism”, but from the moment it started they couldn’t even agree on the cost of this so-called health tourism. Cameron claimed it was 10 million, Hunt claimed it was 200 million. In April a Conservative MP found through the Freedom of Information request that the figure might be as much as 40 million, but let’s remember, foreign imports into our NHS, because without foreign imports our NHS would probably collapse and the cost of training a doctor, a lot of doctors do come and the cost of that training is a burden of countries outside of Great Britain and the BMA estimates that it costs £269,527 for every doctor that we steal from another country. It costs in training £564,112 for every consultant we steal from another country that trained them. That cost obviously is shared, it’s shared between the trainees and the state and according to a 2008 study by the OECD and the World Health Organisation, it said that the UK had the highest share of foreign-trained doctors in Europe, with 70.5%.

The same research states that the UK had 243,770 doctors and 2008 saw 91,414 were foreign-trained. So much for the claims that people are coming over here and stealing our NHS. If the UK had had to have borne the full cost of that training, those doctors would have been 24.6 billion pounds and that is using the lowest, the lowest end of the foundation training sited by the BMA. Given we import more doctors than we export and that we import more doctors than any other country in Europe and without calculating similar costs for nurses, midwives and according to research by the National Nursing Research Unit, before 2005 between 10,000 and 16,000 nurses were emigrating to the UK each year, but following the change in 2005, that number decreased to two and a half thousand nurses arriving in the UK each year. This is without the costing of UK lives that would have been lost if these foreign nationals hadn’t have come to our country to save our NHS.

How do you think your hospital would cope with losing one third of its doctors? The financial, social and human cost to the UK would be immense. Despite the whipped-up fears by the Conservatives, UKIP, their daily editions of The Mail, The Sun and The Express, the figure for health tourism sited by the government which ranges from ten to two hundred million are relatively trivial in government spending terms. In 2012 NHS spending was a 104 billion. So even at the highest end of the government’s dubious estimate, health tourism accounts for just 0.19% of total NHS expenditure. That gross figure does not take account for the savings made by the NHS by importing already-trained doctors. Conference, the Executive asks you to oppose this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Right of reply? To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s lost. 46 has been withdrawn. 47.

47 National Health Service – Branch 580

That this Conference agree to lobby government to improve our GP systems and make all GPs put best practice in place so patients are not left to suffer unnecessarily, and patients are not left waiting to be referred to specialists, which could potentially save lives.

Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580: That this Conference agree to lobby government to improve our GP systems and make all GPs put best practice in place, so that patients are not left to suffer unnecessarily and patients are not left waiting to be referred for specialist treatment which will potentially save their lives. I have a very special reason for this motion. I had to take my daughter five times to go see a GP, for her to be sent to a specialist and was diagnosed with a brain tumour. She’s still here today, thank God. If I wasn’t, annoying that I am, if I wasn’t a persistent parent, she wouldn’t be here today. GPs need to be, they’re your first port of call. Through your NHS, it’s not an attack on the NHS, but they are first port of call as a patient. If you can’t rely on them, who can you rely on? Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580: President, Platform, fellow Delegates. I’m here to second this motion. A few years ago the doctors had like a salary review, I can remember it quite well, but you thought oh good, somebody’s putting some money into the NHS and they’re all getting maybe a deserved pay rise, but in the area of Leeds where I live what’s actually happened is a lot of the doctors no longer work full-time, they only work part-time and this has had a knock-on effect in trying to get an appointment with the same doctor twice. It’s difficult enough to get an appointment within a fortnight if you ring up and don’t get me on about trying to ring up the doctors surgery, the 0844 numbers, because that’s another matter altogether but there we go.

I’d like to ask you to support this motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]
VERBATIM report of BFAWU Annual Conference 2013

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here clearly to support the motion, but if I may just share with the Conference Delegates here that we’ve got a government that’s actually planning to consider limiting the number of visits you actually make to a GP, yes, that’s what I want to say on that because this is what I was saying earlier in relation to this present government, they will absolutely, absolutely destroy the NHS by the time they’ve finished and even basic things like a GP visit, they want to actually, to even contemplate the thought of limiting something like this is absolutely, it’s an absolute disgrace. These people sitting in government at the moment have no compassion whatsoever about human beings and basic rights. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. Executive Council asks comrades to support. What do you say about a motion like this? Like Motions 42, 43, 44, it’s a question of funding. It’s all about what we put in and what we’re going to get out of it. I suppose there are, like any profession, there’s going to be some GPs who are better than others. It’s the same with everything. It doesn’t matter what walk of life you’re in, there’s always some who are better than others. In general, they’re quite a good bunch of people aren’t they, when you think of the job that they actually do, to promote health within this country. Imagine a world where we had a properly-funded National Health Service. They almost did away with the need for private medicine, funding that allowed a General Practitioner to give the same level of care in Wythenshawe as you could give in Westminster. Enough hospital beds with enough consultants and nurses, there to treat everyone straight away, instead of having to prioritise because of lack of resources. It is utopia and it’s never going to happen.

How do we get a system that allows GPs to put best practice in place when different areas have different social and economic demands on the doctors practice? While we have a system that allows those at the top to jump the queues because of their ability to pay, sometimes using NHS operating theatres and NHS beds, we will always have longer waiting lists for the rest of us. I’m sure GPs, if you talk to them, are equally frustrated by the inequality of service because they’re at the sharp end, they’re the people who have got to deliver this. Yes, your doctor can refer you elsewhere for treatment, it may be because they’re struggling with workload or the balancing the financial books of the practice. It’s almost is a real headache for them. But as the population of the nation grows, average age of people increases and medical treatments improve, more and more pressure is put on the doctors surgery. You’ve seen it. How many of you, if we’re honest, have to have an appointment to be ill? By the time you get to see a doctor you’re better and that’s not because of some perversion to the suffering of patients, it’s down to a lack of resources from this government. The more people they refer, the bigger the backlog. This in turn signposts more people in pain to private medicine or to not have medicine at all.

We’ve seen that with prescription charges, people not taking the medicine that they should to make themselves better. I know people when I lived in Bolton, I know people who pulled their own teeth out because they couldn’t afford to go to a dentist and that’s the reality now, people are dodging healthcare because they believe they’re going to have to pay to get it done straight away. It’s a national scandal that no political party seems prepared to tackle. We accept that early referral could undoubtedly save lives. It would most certainly relieve suffering, but to achieve this we need major investment instead of real time cuts being imposed by the coalition.

I also believe that we need more doctors and nurses and fewer managers, because now all these Trusts have got managers. Yes, we’re going to need practice managers to run the doctors practice. I want my doctor to be dealing with first line care, I don’t want them becoming accountants and doing the books and cutting hours within the surgery because they’ve got to go and do some business need. Primary Healthcare Trusts have become quangos and they sap millions, probably billions out of the health service. Money that could have been promoted for front line care. If you want to move a step closer to the utopian picture that I painted at the beginning of this address, if you want to cut waiting lists and you want to relieve suffering, you want to increase the number of health professionals such as GPs, then ensure that we never return a Tory government again. Support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s carried. All close your Agendas. Make sure you pack all your stuff up. Half past nine in the morning. Thank you very much Conference. Can I remind everybody as well that there’s a function in here tonight. Those people that came along last night will tell you that it was absolutely fantastic, so I’d encourage you to come tonight. Again we’ve got another band on, we’ve got a buffet on so we’re going to feed you and of course if you’re a Warburton’s Delegate, meeting over in the South Cliff at half past six. Yes, I think the meal’s at seven, but I believe people are going to start meeting up at about half past six, yes? Is that too late, Roy, is that too late? [LAUGHTER]. So if you’re a Warburton’s Delegate, Yips Chinese Restaurant is across the road and it’s John Casey and John Atkins that’s coming from the company. John Atkins, yes
Tuesday 11 June 2013

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. Could you start making your way to your seats.

Conference, listen we’re pleased to announce a very, very rare event took place in Bridlington last night and it wasn’t that the sun came out or anything special like that, but apparently they found the first white £5 note that had been missing since the Great Train Robbery since the 1960’s and you’ll probably be able to see it in this man’s wallet [LAUGHTER]. Absolutely, let’s give him a round of applause. Well done.

[APPLAUSE]

I think really what we should have done though Des, is applaud you for getting him to open it [LAUGHTER]. Listen Conference, obviously last night was another fantastic night and I think we should, he’s given his services to us for absolutely nothing, but the DJ that we’ve had this week has been absolutely superb. Let’s give him a round of applause, absolutely superb, what a great couple of evenings you’ve given us.

[APPLAUSE]

The FTOs meeting’s tomorrow. Right, okay. I did have two winners from what stall was it? Westfield. There was two winners, one was definitely Sid and the other one was, there was a piece of paper, I don’t know, it’s Tuesday, come on. Sid was definitely a winner, but when Sid goes and gets his prize, if he can ask him who the other winner was, then I’ll make sure that I announce that as well, so obviously Conference, good morning. It’s Tuesday, it is the 11th June and the General Secretary’s going to do a roll call.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Can’t trust you with nowt. Region 1, going round in circles you mean. Region 2. Region 3, okay, will you make sure, hang on, run that past me ...... two sick and one absent with permission, what happened to the other one because you had 51 yesterday.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That’ll be you and Pauline then.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I was going to say, it must be you and Pauline, mustn’t it? Region 5, so you’ve had one missing all week, because you’ve only been registering 40. Yes and all week you’ve been registering 40, so one’s been missing all week. That’s it then. Alan, go back to sleep. Region 6 and Region 7. There’s 174 Delegates present.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. I’m just trying to remember where we were. I believe we are at motion 48. Just as the person’s coming down to move 48, we have actually received also a message of solidarity from Ian Lavery, MP and also just to advise you that unfortunately Natalie Bennett, the leader of the Green Party, unfortunately emailed us yesterday to tell us she can’t attend today, so the leader of the Green Party won’t be coming. Okay.

48 National Health Service – Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to lobby government to reduce the cost of prescriptions especially for people who rely on medications on a regular basis.

Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580: That this Conference agrees to lobby government to reduce the cost of prescriptions, especially for people who rely on medication on a regular basis. I thought we were the United Kingdom, apparently in England we’re the only ones who charge for prescriptions, why is this? There’s something seriously wrong. People need medication on a regular basis. Lots of people I know need it because if they don’t have it they’ll die, so why are we still charging for medication? Whether you’re working, not working, it should all be the same. United Kingdom, we should all stand together.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding? Okay.

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): Yes. Good morning, is this working? [LAUGHTER]

It was mentioned yesterday evening that people couldn’t see me hiding behind the microphone, so I thought this is the
solution [LAUGHTER]. Mr President, Platform, fellow Delegates, I’m here to [LAUGHTER] second this motion. Almost £8, it’s almost £8 and when you go to the chemists and you get these medications, you can go to somewhere like and there are other supermarkets, but Morrisons and you can get them for less than £1. Pre-payment certificates, they’re an option, but even those cost you like £15 a month, don’t they? I’m sure I’m not alone. I can remember when prescriptions were 20p, I can even remember when they were free, but 20p. I obviously have blamed the pharmaceutical giants, the greedy, greedy, greedy people, making obscene massive profits and all they’re doing is profiteering on the sick. I ask you to support this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You may arise.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Chair, Platform, Conference. I support this motion. In Wales we’ve had free prescriptions for a number of years and I believe all people who rely on medication on a regular basis should have it at a reduced rate and then hopefully in the near future have it free, as we do in Wales. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: We have the right to medication. These pharmaceutical companies should not be making the profits which they are and then we’re paying for that. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers? No?

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons) – on behalf of the Executive Council: We ask Conference to support this, but this is just the first step towards free prescriptions for all. All too often now, people who are prescribed medication are in a predicament of do they actually get the medication or do they buy food and pay for gas. Thank you. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]


49 National Health Service – Branch 580

That this Conference agrees we should lobby to have the age of a woman’s first smear test lowered from 25 years to 18 years.

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Last year I had my first smear, I was 25. It came back abnormal, I had to go to a hospital and the consultant sat me down and she said I can’t believe just how many pre-cancerous cells there are in your body and I asked her why, why is that and she said the harsh reality is, whether we like it or not, youngsters now are becoming sexually active a lot younger, but we’ve still to wait until we’re 25 to have a smear. I had my son at 17 and I am far from a minority now, but I had to wait eight years to have my first smear. In the paper on Saturday there was a young teacher called Gemma Marsh and she died, she went for her first smear at 25 and within six months she was dead. We’ve got to stop this from happening to anybody else. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): I’m going to stand up this time because it hurt the back of my thighs actually. I apologise if you can’t see me hiding behind here, but Mr President, Platform, fellow Delegates, I’m here to second this motion and the message is quite simple. Early prognosis, early prognosis is so, so important, cervical cancer, any other cancer, that’s why I ask you to support this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Chair, Platform, Conference. I’m here to support this motion. I’d like to see the smear test lowered. It could save many young lives, it’s as simple as that. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: Basically, let’s save lives. If we can do it at 18, let’s do it at the age of 18. The more people we have to try and save these young ladies, then let’s do it.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers? No?

Sister Helena England – Branch 568 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): The argument for screening young
women at 20 instead of 25 will be an ongoing argument until someone, I’ll take my glasses off, until someone decides it’s better to do early screening. In 2009 the Department of Health ruled out lowering out the age of screening to 20, after experts reported that screening younger women than 25 can do more harm than good. At the time of this decision, the head of cancer research, head of UK policy, said how evidence shows that screening in women in their teens and below 25 is less effective than in older women. This is because changes in the cells in the cervix is more common in young women than in older women and often return to normal without the need of treatment. But is this good enough, the reason not until the age of 20. We know young girls are now given vaccinations against the risk of the virus, but will this stop it? Only time will tell, but can a young woman’s life be put at risk while we wait for the evidence if the vaccine works. In Scotland screening is at 20 and in England at 25, yet in England the rate of incidence and the mortality rate is very low. Finland and the Netherlands screen at 30, which may sound late, but according to the health council of the Netherlands, 30 is the best age to start screening, yet Finland and the Netherlands have some of the lowest mortality rates. Experts work on these statistics and statistics show it’s better to screen later than sooner, but try telling that to your daughter or granddaughter who may be only 18, 19 or 20 and have been diagnosed with this awful disease. I’ve always been taught it’s thought prevention is better than cure and it’s better to be safe than sorry. These experts maybe should work on that theory as well. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 50.

50 Banking and Finance – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees to lobby Government to ensure that Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs revise the present Tax System by eliminating all the present loopholes to ensure ALL companies including Multinationals PAY the required taxes in this country.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Morning, Conference. Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move motion 50. Conference agrees to lobby government to ensure that Her Majesty’s Revenue & Custom revise the present tax system by eliminating all the present loopholes to ensure that all companies, including multi-nationals, pay the required taxes in this country.

Over the last few years we’ve seen austerity and the excuse that the government has used as a reason to have to undermine a lot of communities across this country. We’ve seen terms and conditions being attacked, we’ve seen disabled people being attacked, we’ve seen vulnerable pensioners being whacked, loads and loads of attacks across the country, yet the big companies, the multi-nationals like Amazon, Starbucks and recently Google being a few of a massive list of companies who seem to be working in this country, making absolute fortunes and being allowed to avoid paying the tax in this country and the sad bit is they’re just using accounting systems which are perfectly legal as a means to get away from it. This cannot continue and should be totally unacceptable. While they’re making all these, others are having to suffer and the social ladder between the rich and poor continues to get larger. Attacks on ordinary people and pensioners, cut that they’re seeing, affecting everybody, totally out of order and then you’ve got idiots like David Cameron saying that we’re all in this together. I would love to know how he’s worked that one out. I move. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother G Tittensor – Branch 392 (Birmingham, West Midlands): Mr Chairman, members of the Platform, Conference. I’m here to support this one. We all look at it and we think are we in it together? No, we’re not in it together. The Europeans are owed £500 billion in tax, the latest one is the Trent Water £2 billion and they haven’t paid a single penny in income tax. I wish I was one. Amazon, Aegon, you can go through the list, but furthermore it’s Starbucks £400 million, but I’ll point one thing out to you Conference, Starbucks said we’ll pay and they wrote a cheque out for £20 million and sent it to the inland revenue. We don’t want it, it’s against the law and they sent it back, so we know where the buck stands, in parliament with the MPs. I support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Carl Thorne – Branch 543: Delegates, Chair. I ask you to support this motion because it’s quite simple, we’re all working class. This loophole seriously needs closing. If we don’t pay our taxes, we go to jail, so should they. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: President, Platform, Delegates. I was reading a little piece in the paper the other day,
there was some chap in a nightclub ordered a round of drinks, well what’s unusual about that, except for this round of drinks came to £330,000. I don’t know where you come from, but where I come from that’d buy a couple of houses and how’s this gentleman been able to do it? Simple, he doesn’t pay taxes like we pay taxes, he’s got clever lawyers and accountants to get him out of it. The way I look at it is probably a little simplistic, but no doubt the government’s looking at it themselves. If we don’t make these people pay taxes, where they going to get the money from and I tell you where I think they’re going to get the money from, us. Oh it’s alright, we’ll put the basic rate of income tax up a little. At the end of the day, these rich fat cats can more than afford to pay their taxes, it’s about time they bloody well did. Please support. [APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. The Executive Council would clearly ask Conference to support the motion. I’ve got to say that lobbying government really does seem to be a waste of time, given they’ve got their grubby hands in the same till, many of the same people who we’re talking about. They have involvement with some of the wealthiest tax dodgers in history. I think one of the good examples that is Lord Ashcroft, his name might not be apparent to you, but Lord Ashcroft was the Tory peer, he’s a peer, he sits in our House of Lords, part of our decision-making process, he was the guy who put £50,000 into the fighting fund of every single constituency which is in the balance. So Dave Crausby yesterday, when he fought against the Tories in Bolton North East, the Tories had a war chest of £50,000 paid for by Lord Ashcroft and he did that right across the country in marginal seats, so that shows you what we’re up against. These people are decision-makers and also non-tax payers, he doesn’t pay now in this country.

It would be easy to say that our tax system was corrupt from top to bottom, except for those at the bottom there’s no opportunity to be corrupt, because if you earn five quid you’ll get a tax demand for that five quid through pay as you earn, but that doesn’t happen, as Colin just said, with the richer people in the country because they can afford the fancy accountants and I actually think, just while we’re talking about that, I think it’s absolutely criminal that somebody can have a job and be well paid for it, that actually advises people how they should dodge and evade taxes, those people actually want bringing down as well. Pay accountants like everybody else, not somebody who advises people how to not pay their dues to this country. A fairly recent court case was taken by UK Uncut, probably many of you here are members of UK Uncut, they do a lot of lobbying and they took a case against Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs and the result of it actually demonstrated how corrupt the taxation system in this country is for those people right at the very top.

The HMRC had reached a sweetheart deal with Goldman Sachs and it was on unpaid interest on the taxes that they owed. I’m not talking about the taxes, it was on the interest what they owed. The court said that there’d been errors on behalf of the HMRC but that the sweetheart compromise was okay, so it stood, so they never had to pay it. Clearly we don’t get the choice of doing that, you don’t get the opportunity of going to court and fighting your corner about whether you can afford to pay your taxes or whether you should. You’ll never ever have to pay interest on your taxes because you don’t earn enough to pay that amount of tax, but what we owe we have to pay and there’s no if’s and no but’s about it. Of course the other thing we never get, is we never get the opportunity to meet the likes of David Harnett. I don’t know whether you’ve ever heard of him, I’ve never heard of him before I was doing research on this. He was the head of corporate taxation at the inland revenue and what he liked to do and he openly said it, he liked to broker consolatory deals with these corporations who were now getting highlighted. Apparently he was the most wined and dined civil servant on record. I think they talked about him one year, 170-odd times he went out for dinner with big clients.

Of course Goldman Sachs is just the tip of the iceberg and we see it, it’s played out on television virtually every day. It’s an iceberg that could actually pay off the national debt. It’s an iceberg that could double the size of our health service. It could remove poverty from this country in one fell swoop and it could remove the total tax burden of the lowest paid in this country, straightaway and we’d still have money over. According to the press, Vodafone over their period of time, had 6 billion in taxes wiped off by this Dave Harnett through his consolatory talks with them, 6 billion. Widely publicised a few weeks ago, Amazon, they paid 2.4 million tax on 4.3 billion in sales, but the irony of it is they then got a grant off our government to build a warehouse which cost 2.5 billion, so they actually got an extra £100,000 over what they’d paid in tax, they nett gained.

My question is if they say that they don’t sell in this country, why do they need a bloody warehouse? If you’re not selling here, you don’t need anywhere to keep anything, but they got it. If they want to use Ireland as a tax haven, I’ve got absolutely no problem with Ireland doing trade, then build the warehouse there, give some jobs over in Ireland, let the people there pay for it, not the burden that we’re paying for sales that are attributed elsewhere, because the taxation
system’s lower. Surely in the UK there’s some wealthy entrepreneur who could do exactly what Amazon do, provide the
same service as Amazon do, except pay their taxes in the UK, because I’ll tell you what, I for one would be supporting
a company like that. Simple slogan, if you sell it here then you pay taxes here. You know Google’s due back in front of
the committee with Margaret Hodge and she’s been a bit of a terrier with the man, she doesn’t let him go, I like her style
and they’ve asked them back to explain why they don’t pay their taxes here, when the vast majority of computer users in
the UK use their search engine. It’s the first thing when you go on, use Safari and all that, most people use Google. Well I
put it, if they don’t want to pay their taxes here and were finding it hard, it’s too hard for the inland revenue to sort it out,
then let’s get computer manufacturers to block Google’s search engine on computers so you can’t go through Google and
you are forced to go through a search engine that pays its taxes in this country. You know, I don’t know about you, I do
take this stance, I know John’d tell you, for years in Liverpool we’d block the Sun, so you don’t get the Sun in Liverpool
anymore, don’t get the Sun in Bridlington except like this morning for half an hour [LAUGHTER], but people can have a
really profound effect on people’s trading and we did it there and so you take these decisions yourself on what you want
to do and I’ve got to say that I boycotted Starbucks, as soon as I knew they weren’t paying taxes. In fact, I boycotted
Starbucks before they didn’t pay tax because I didn’t like the coffee anyway, but I boycotted Boots as well.

How many people go in Boots, get their toothpaste, the toothbrush, whatever, go and buy all your things, they are dodging
their taxes in this country. I’m a bit of a hypocrite because I do use Apple, but they’re going to get sorted out, their chief
executive says they’re going to sort all their tax out and they are going to pay what they made, but how Starbucks and
Boots ever got away with it is absolutely beyond me. They do make sales in this country, they do generate profits in this
country, although it looks like Starbucks consider the UK to be some sort of a cost centre. Latest accounts and this is
going to be a staggering sum, latest accounts worldwide is that in tax havens there’s 12 trillion, £12 trillion in tax havens
across the world and of that 12 trillion, 4 trillion is British money, 4 trillion, think about, we’re talking about national
debt, 4 trillion would wipe the national debt out for the next 100 years. We’ve apparently, we’ve recouped £3 billion from
Liechtenstein but there’s other places, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, still holding vast amounts of British money
that should be in the hands of the revenue and that’s where we know there’s a major job to be done.

Conference, we need to make sure that we close loopholes in taxation, but there has to be a willingness on the government
of the day to do it, not just to protect their friends, they’ve got to make sure they open everybody’s accounts, like they
opened your accounts as PAYE customers and you pay, they’ve got to do exactly the same for their rich friends. Until we
get a Conference policy that denies the power to trade unless the appropriate tax is paid, we’re bound to fail. They’ve got
to also continue the pursuit of individuals, people like Jimmy Carr, okay Jimmy Carr now has paid his taxes, it was just a
mistake, of course it was, but there’s thousands of Jimmy Carr’s here, absolute thousands and if we get them, the burden
will be eased on the British working class people. If we’re to have a conciliatory tax system that allows corporations to
pay less tax, then we need it open to all people, giving you the opportunity to pay what you want, not what is demanded
of the HMRC. Conference, support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion
51.

51 Banking and Finance – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees to the concept of re-nationalising the Banking Industry in an effort to eradicate the
carnage created in the recent scandals created within the industry. Ensure the Labour Government have this as a
priority in there Manifesto when they are back in Government.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here moving motion 51.
Conference agrees to the concept of re-nationalising the banking industry in an effort to eradicate the carnage created in
the recent scandals within this industry, ensure the Labour government has this as a priority in their manifesto when they
return in government, hopefully in two years’ time.

We all saw the easy availability of credit a few years ago, when you walked into a bank for example and had an appointment
with the mortgage people and you wanted for example £75,000 and they wanted to lend you £170,000, because the credit
that they were giving you was nearly six times your annual salary. We heard yesterday from Ann Pettifor, the economist,
absolutely amazing information that she shared, which national debt here at this moment compared to pre-war time is
actually even one third, yet this government, because they don’t understand, because they don’t care, they’re just
chopping away at all the vulnerable things in this country, the NHS, the disabled, the pensions, things that people will
never ever, ever get back and the reality is when you hear the economists, the people who actually understand how this
country works, you actually see how much chaos it is because of lack of understanding.

In the 7th richest country in the world, we have a state of affairs where all you’ve got is a government hell bent on destroying everything for the working individual or the unemployed, where you’re accused of being a scrounger if you’re unfortunate enough to be unemployed or get made redundant and you have to go to the Jobcentre. The reality is, Conference, that the bankers have been allowed to get away with destroying this country, but the reality is the government is always to blame and unfortunately in this instance it was a Labour government at that time, a few years ago, who actually never understood what was going on in the banking industry and instead of trying to get their head around it, they just sat back and let these things continue, instead of trying to regulate the FSA, it’s an absolute scandal and I think the only way you’re going to try and resolve this whole chaos is to try and re-nationalise the banking industry and try and get to grips with the issues and try and resolve them. I urge you to support this motion. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Seconder? Formally seconded?

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Conference, I’m here to support the resolution, but we already own half of the banking, 80% of the banking industry. It proves one thing, that nationalisation is better than privatisation. They weren’t able to handle it, we had to bail them out, the government had to bail them out, Gordon Brown did a good job on that and he brought the world together on that. All we have to do is get the other part together. Nationalisation is best, but there’s one thing I wouldn’t nationalise and that’s The Sun newspaper and its owner. I would send them back to the country they came from, not coming here sticking their noses into our business. Conference, support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Without it, without nationalisation we’re all lost and that proved it there. If the banks had gone bust, there would have been starvation of an enormous kind in this country, enormous across the world, so Conference, support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** General Secretary?

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** President, Delegates, Conference, we support the concept, but I’m not sure how we could achieve it in full given the track record of the government that we’ve got. There’s absolutely no doubt that the situation that we find ourselves in has nothing to do with members of the public and everything to do with the corruption that manifested itself in the British banking system. It was everything to do with subprime lending, toxic loans, debt manipulation, manipulation of interest rates and bankers if you like who were prepared to turn a blind eye rather than do what Ann Pettifor was talking about yesterday, but how many Tory grandees were or are associated with the banking system and I’ll tell you it’s quite a few. You see how many of them sit on the boards of these banks, how many of them take cash as consultants to these banks, we’re talking a lot.

So you ask the question would the Tory turkeys then vote for Christmas? I’ve got to say I doubt it and nationalisation of our banks would be one of the lowest things on their agenda. In October 2008, a package of £500 billion of your money was set aside to rescue the British banking system, 50 billion of it was directly invested at that time, it was taken out of the economy and invested directly in those banks and at the time, Alistair Darling said that these measures were to restore confidence in the British banking system. Well that worked a treat, didn’t it. The amount of money that we piled into the Royal Bank of Scotland gave the taxpayer a controlling share that was supposed to pay dividends back into the public purse once that business returned to profit. Eminent economists like Paul Krugman said it was the best avenue to go down and that Gordon Brown and Alistair Darling were playing a blinder and they’d gone down the right path. You know even George Osborne, when he was in opposition, supported the bank bailout, although now if you listen to him he didn’t and all the woes of the country have got nothing to do with the banking system, they’re all to do with the public sector pensions and Labour policies. I think they call it a blame culture, don’t they?

That’s what it is. Ironically at a time when we need every revenue source, if you listen to the government, we need to cut back, we need to tighten our purses, at a time when we’re doing all those things that we call austerity, George Osborne is talking about selling back our shares that Pat’s just been talking about, selling them back into private ownership. Listen, Marilyn, don’t expect George Osborne to ring you up and say do you want to buy the Royal Bank of Scotland or Lloyds, it is not going to happen. It’s going to go to his friends, they’re going to go into the hands of venture capitalists and people like that and then watch what happens. Like anything else, once you get people back in the private money, prices go up, interest rates will rocket within the banks on loans and I’ll say thank God we’ve got a credit union within our Union, but worse is, he’s intimated that he’s going to see it for a knock-down price, so we’re not even going to get the money that we invested to keep the thing going, we’re not even going to get that money back and I think what that does, that says everything about the fiscal ineptitude of George Osborne and that’s why we should be asking questions and we should be concerned about his
ability to manage the economy. I would question whether he had the ability to run my grandkids Christmas club.

Comrades, we totally agree that we should take the banks and the finance houses back into public ownership, but until we get the return of a truly socialist government, I said on Sunday that now we’re talking about shades of blue, until we get a proper socialist government with proper working class MPs in there who are doing the job on behalf of working class people, then I think we’re really going to struggle with this one. You know, we’ll continue to make all the right noises in parliament. I’m sure if Simeon Andrews was here, he would be taking notes now about what we’d be raising when we go in next Wednesday. We do raise the issues, as I said Dave Suddards, I took him into parliament last week and he actually saw what we do on the parliamentary group and that would be an open invitation to any member who’s in London, if you’re in London and we’ve got a parliamentary group, we’d love to take you along to see exactly how the inner workings of parliament goes, but we’ll continue to make the right noises within our parliamentary group and we’ll also do the right thing as far as supporting organisations who are fighting against this government privatisation, we’ll do that, but don’t expect there’s going to be a positive outcome from this motion, because we don’t own the finances, they do and until we have a system that bring some of that finance back into what we need, giving the money back to working class people, then I think we’ve got extreme difficulties. We’ll speak and I’ll most certainly speak to John Cruddas about Labour’s plans and the possibilities that the two Eds will include in their manifesto priority in the build-up to the next election, but I’ve got to say this is one time when I’m not sure that two Eds will be any better than one. Comrades, support the motion, but don’t hold your breath, accident & emergency’s got enough problems as it is. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 52, this is yours isn’t it?

52 Banking and Finance – Branch 390

That this Conference finds the practise of ‘payday loans’ an abhorrent means of offering credit to financially desperate working class people. This is a badly regulated business that needs legislation to prevent people falling into a cycle of debt from which it is almost impossible to recover. Our Parliamentary group will lobby for legislation to curb this practise and to introduce an interest cap.

Brother Sean Winfield – Branch 390 (first-time speaker): Mr President, Platform, Delegates. This Conference finds the practice of payday loans an abhorrent means of offering credit to the financially desperate working class people. This is a badly regulated business that needs legislation to prevent people falling into a cycle of debt from which it is almost impossible to recover. Our parliamentary group will lobby for legislation to curb this practice and introduce an interest cap. I ask that this Conference passes this motion, so we can help to protect the young, financially challenged and vulnerable people. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well done, mate. Seconder? Are you seconding?

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: Payday loans are absolutely disgusting. My father-in-law got one of these, didn’t really realise the interest rates. He’s got a loan of £4,000, he pays £164 a month, the interest on that is £140, so all he pays off is £24 per month. It’s going to take him an age to pay this off. These payday loan companies are feeding on working class people who, due to the current government’s policies, are struggling to live. It’s a disgusting practice which must be stopped. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: These payday loans, why they’re not illegal, I don’t know. Some of them charge up to 3,750% and then people wonder why it bankrupts people, it drives people to the brink of suicide. In France a while back, there was an organisation called Crazy George’s, which was a shop and you went down and you got washing machines or TVs or what have you, but at interest rates that really made your eyes water and the French government at the time said hang on a minute, this is disgusting, why should a poor person pay four times more for the same washing machine than the rich person that can go in and pay for it cash, so they literally put Crazy George’s out of business and that’s what the government needs to do with these payday loan sharks. They’re on about council doorstep lenders going around, you want some easy money, but none of those ever charge nearly 4,000%. If they want to help people that are short and the banks can’t manage it, right, give the credit unions a boost. I ask you to support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Mr President, Delegates. Delegates, I’m here to support the resolution and there must
be something done to stop these illegal practices of 400% interest. Surely there must be a law somewhere that can stop this and if these illegal traders are not registered, they should be put out of business, but there must be a way where people in that position are able to get money to live, there must be some way that they can get money to live, because if they haven’t equity and they go to the banks and they’ve no credit, they’ll get nothing from the banks, nothing at all at any interest and therefore something has to be done to make available a law that will stop these people from ripping off people in this manner. It’s a national disgrace. I support the resolution. Conference, support it as well.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3:** Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to clearly support the motion. I think Pat just touched on a very important point. One of the big reasons why people are going to these payday loan companies is out of sheer desperation. Where before you could walk into a bank and get credit cards and loans at a click of a finger, that’s all gone. Where you see terms and conditions across the country being eradicated, obviously people are going to be desperate and living on the breadline. The reality is that people go to these payday companies out of sheer desperation, half are too embarrassed to go to family and friends to ask for money, because they’ve got their own issues, which is where our people are ending up in a state of desperation going to these type of places. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450:** A couple of things. Yes, Crazy George is gone, it’s now called Brighthouse. It’s owned by Vision, who happen to own Park Cakes, they’re another one of these companies that don’t pay taxes, so you know, always support them and go and buy your washer from Brighthouse, don’t think so. Credit card, if you get a credit card and only ever pay the minimum amount each month, it will take you about 25 years to pay the credit card off, so just be wary it’s not always straightforward and I’m shocked and stunned, Ronnie, that George Osborne was even thinking about ringing me, but you know he can do if he wants, I’ve give him my number, but I do ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** No other speakers, no?

**Brother Mark McHugh – Speaking on behalf of the Executive Council:** We ask Conference to support this motion. The payday loan companies that prey on the vulnerable working class with extortionate rates of interest must be stopped. These stores and online companies are everywhere from daytime TV adverts to where people are in their house, thinking how they’re going to pay a bill or feed their family to high street shops and most are in deprived areas. Probably the best opportunity we can have here is to promote our own credit union and let people know that your families, if they’re living in the same house as you, can also join and one final point. If only this government took the lead of Bolton Wanderers and kicked the likes of quick quid into touch. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s carried. Listen, Conference, we’ve decided we’re going to suspend Conference until half past one. The Executive Council has two interviews that’s going to take place and so because Natalie Bennett’s not going to be coming this afternoon, we’ve decided that this morning we’ll put those interviews in, so we intend to suspend Conference until half past one, but we are having a fringe meeting which is on health and safety, which will be upstairs in the Harbour Suite I believe and I would encourage as many people to attend as possible, because the lady that’s coming is a lady called Hilda Palmer. Hilda Palmer heads up a group called Hazards and Hazards is an absolute phenomenal organisation on health and safety. Anybody that’s attended the health and safety seminars that we run in the regions has witnessed what FACK is all about, which is Families Against Corporate Killings and the way that those families have been treated should understand the importance of FACK and Hazards to our movement and obviously we’ll also feed you at that meeting as well, so we do encourage you to attend that at half past 12, which will be up in the Harbour Suite, so that’s Conference suspended now and we’ll see you back hopefully at half past 12, but in the conference hall for start of Conference at half past one, thank you.

### Afternoon Session

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Good afternoon, Delegates. Can I ask the General Secretary to do the roll call.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Region 1, 17. Region 2, 22. Region 3. Region 4. Region 5. Region 6, thanks for the sensible answer. Region 7. Exactly the same as this morning, 174 Delegates present. Right, the full-time Officials, if you make your way up to the, what’s it called, the Harbour Suite up there? and we’re going to do this training with you, it’s going to take a couple of hours and Rob Smith from Thompsons is going to be doing the training, so if you can make your way up now and then if you want tea or coffee, at 3 o’clock, come down to the room and grab a cup of coffee or a
cup of tea and then you can take it back up with you, okay?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Just one more announcement. There’s going to be a bucket collection at the end of this session of Conference for Help the Heroes, okay? Motion 52? 53, motion 53.

### 53 Government and Political – Branch 215

*That this Conference deplores the greedy MPs who wanted a £20,000 pay rise in their salaries when people on benefits were capped at 1% for the next three years.*

**Brother Pat Rowley – South-West:** Mr President, Delegates. Conference, I’m here to move this resolution on reading in the paper. It hasn’t happened, but it is a big insult to the public for over 60% of the MPs to ask for a rise in their salaries of £20,000 a year. Most people get £20,000 and an awful lot of people get less than £20,000 a year and they had the audacity to ask for that kind of money. They’re creating what I call a growing disillusion in politics and threatening our system. We must act now to save democracy or we won’t have, because if you don’t have democracy in politics, you have dictatorship and dictatorship is harder to overturn than an elected government. I was going to talk about the expenses, but the expenses comes in on the next resolution, so I’ll leave it for there. I move this resolution, but there’s nothing to get alarmed about in this resolution, but it’s the sheer fact that our politicians show such disrespect for us to ask for such money in such times. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding?

**Brother Chris Lay – Region 2:** MPs are there to represent their constituencies and should not be asking for a ludicrous pay rise, when most people in their constituencies are probably on the breadline and haven’t had a pay rise for years. These MPs must realise that they are voted in, but then again they can easily be voted out at the next general election. They need to prove themselves and represent their constituents in a proper and fit manner. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Jake Dunwoody – Region 7:** I’m here to support the motion. As you know we’re from Northern Ireland here and lately we got a devolved Assembly set up and it took seven years to set up and no matter what was going on in the infrastructure of Northern Ireland, the first thing that our MLAs do, was they gave themselves a £13,000 pay rise, so I say Comrades, support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Kevin Partland – Branch 529 (first-time speaker):** I think £20,000 is a lot, I think they should take £20,000 off their wage, because the last few years they’ve been fiddling their expenses, the shops, going into Currys. When one went to Currys for a hoover, put it on his expenses and one went for a television and put it on his expenses and I couldn’t see us, the companies we work for, going for a television, putting it on Greggs’ expenses and I think it’s a damn disgrace when they’re asking for £20,000, they should be asking for £20,000 less to be taken away from them for what they’ve done in the last few years. I oppose this.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother John Newman – EC Member (No. 2 Region):** Supporting the motion on behalf of the Executive Council. MPs, we need MPs, they represent the interests and concerns of the public in the House of Commons. The problem is, it would seem that some of these have lost touch with the public and most definitely the working class. The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, which is an independent body which oversees MPs allowances and salaries, questioned MPs on pay and 69% of them stated they felt they were underpaid and on average suggested a MPs salary should be £86,250. Currently a back-bencher MP is paid £65,738, which is an increase of over 28%. Since 1st April 2013, new housing benefit rules mean you will not get all of your rent paid if you have a spare bedroom, hence the name the bedroom tax. This affects council and housing association tenants of working age, but below the state pensionable age, who claim benefit to pay some or all of their rent. If you have one spare bedroom, it will be reduced by 14% and if you have two or more, it will be reduced by 25%. This is an attack on some of the poorest people in society and generally the working class, therefore I’ve got a question for you. Is it politically correct and is it morally acceptable for MPs to ask for such an increase, I don’t think so. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 54.
That this Conference agrees to lobby government to regulate all aspects of a Member of Parliament’s expenses to be made open and transparent with view to eradicating the culture of fiddling

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hardings/Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here moving motion 54. Conference agrees to lobby government to regulate all aspects of a member of parliament’s expenses to be made open and transparent with a view to eradicating the culture of fiddling. We’ve seen many examples over the last few years of MPs who are abusing their positions and fiddling the expenses, some very senior people from all parties and have been doing it for many years. There needs to be an appropriate code of conduct that we should expect from our MPs. These people have been elected with a view to representing our best interests through constituencies and are not there to abuse the position that they’re in. I move. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded? Speakers? I mean, quite clearly the Executive...... are you coming down? Right, okay. Is it because I gave you too long a break? [LAUGHTER].

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Conference, I’m here to support this resolution. It is a disgrace the way MPs have fiddled their expenses and what they’ve done, you all know what they’ve done, as has been quoted before and to think that they fiddle their expenses and they have it clearly written that they can spend up to £250 a day without booking it. Now that is ridiculous to think that £250 a day, more than most of you earn in a week and they can spend that a day without even booking this, they don’t have to do it, there’s a register for them, where they register their expenses, but that much they’re allowed, that they can do what they like with and they can do that every day, it’s as simple as that, along with all the other claims they have on their houses and their homes in London and you all know what happened with the flats and you saw a lady in Birmingham that she bought a flat on the £18,000 allowance that they get for their parliamentary duties in London, because they live in London, she sold the flat on for £145,000, she had reneged on paying £13,000 to the inland revenue and she’s still in parliament. What’s the point? Where’s the laws? There’s one law for them and one law for us. When the riots were in London, there was a bloke who stole an ice cream, he got 16 months for an ice cream. Hulme and his ex-misses, they got eight months for fraud and defrauding the country and they fell out and then they spilled the beans on each other and she got eight months in a mansion out in the country, she was out in four weeks and so was he, but the man with the ice cream was still in jail doing his 16 months. Conference, support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, obviously the Executive Council would ask you to support the resolution. I did expect Des to get up and tell us about the experience he had in the run-up to the 2010 general election. I mean if people can remember back to 2010, in 2010 there was a big thing about all the fiddling, all the MPs taking the whole country for a ride and how Cameron was going to come in on his white charger and clean everything up and make it transparent and old Des asked in his workplace, because he had the opportunity to question the Tory leader, because obviously he was invited into Warburtons and obviously he asked him the question about if you’re going to clean up and you’re going to hold people accountable, does that mean you’re actually going to discipline yourself, because he was also involved in fiddling his expenses, but obviously what we have seen since the introduction of the coalition is actually a backward step, because what they’ve actually done is they’ve hid even more from the taxpayer.

Although they claim under the Freedom of Information Act they now provide more and more transparent information available, they’ve actually been undermining the Freedom of Information Act and using restrictions to ensure people can’t actually find out what’s going on and the moment you do, they get their friends in the media to say well actually what we should be doing is taking our aim at the trade unions and blaming the trade unions for them fiddling their expenses, it’s absolutely appalling how this government thinks it can treat taxpayers, that’s our money, that’s the money they keep telling us we can’t afford, but they somehow manage to find when they want to go out and Ian Duncan Smith for example wants to pay £39 for a breakfast, it’s absolutely appalling. There should be a transparent way that we see exactly what they’re claiming. It’s absolutely appalling that this government has done nothing about it, but I can’t say it’s not unexpected, because one thing’s for certain, this government isn’t transparent, this government has always lived on somebody else’s expense account. They come from privilege, they are privilege and they make sure they take their privileges out of us. We expect you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 55.
**Government and Political – Branch 313**

*That this Conference agrees that any Member of Parliament found guilty of fiddling expenses MUST never be allowed to hold a Public Servant post again and face time in a prison cell.*

Brother Harrood Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move motion 55. Conference agrees that any member of parliament found guilty of fiddling expenses must never be allowed to hold a public service post again and actually face time in prison. My view on it, Conference, is as follows. These people are elected through democratic elections to serve their respective constituencies and as such, should be doing that with honour. They get paid a lot of money, they get paid about £50,000 standard wage as it is. Those that are found guilty of fiddling, as far as I’m concerned, it’s what probably should be a horrendous deceit, you know what I mean, in terms of the position that they’re in and as far as I’m concerned, they should be facing a jail sentence. Please support the motion. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: Good afternoon. President, Platform, Delegates. MPs are elected by people, so in one particular way they’re employed by us, so we are their employers, yes? If we however, on the other hand, fiddled our wages back at our branches, there is no doubt, there’s not a shadow of doubt, that we would be instantly sacked, so why the big difference? They should be sacked and imprisoned only if proven, yes? So there should be a full and proper investigation, because we wouldn’t want it no other way. I ask you to support the motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Mr President, Delegates. Conference, there’s not much more to say on this resolution because we said a lot on the one before, but I do support the resolution and I hope you all will do and that these prison sentences, or whatever sentences they get, mean prison sentences, not in luxury hotels or some other place, prisons that are made for people, where our people go if they’ve gone to prison. Conference, I ask you to support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, obviously the Executive would ask you to support the motion. I mean firstly we accept that not all MPs are on the fiddle, but those that are and get caught, they should face the same consequences, as Raj points out, as any other working person should. They should be dismissed for gross misconduct and they should face the full, the full weight of legislation and the law and we should ensure that if they are caught, they should never hold public office again because I’ll tell you what, if it’s a working person and they get done for fraud, they find it very, very difficult to get any employment and especially where there’s finances involved. We ask you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 56.

**Government and Political – Branch 450**

*That this Conference agrees that the dangers of UKIP should be shouted from the rooftops to our members to make it very clear the dangers involved in electing these people and their racist polices, are an attack on the fundamental basic principles of the trade union movement and all working class people whatever the gender, faith, creed or colour.*

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: That this Conference agrees that the danger of UKIP should be shouted from the rooftops to our members to make it very clear the dangers involved in electing these people and their racist policies. They’re an attack on the fundamental basic principles of the trade union movement and all working class people, whatever their gender, faith, creed or colour. Think yourself lucky Geoff McCarthy’s not up on this one today, because we’d be here a fortnight. Well, I could be here talking about the dangers of UKIP all day, but these won’t let me, but they are the posh voice of the BNP or the EDL. Nigel Farage is the modern day Adolf Hitler. His speeches and those of his band of silly people are the very reminiscent of the early Nazi party rhetoric. They are against the European Union membership and our working time regulations will disappear if they get their way. I’m coming at this now from a woman’s point of view. They believe any woman found to be having a baby with a disability should be forced to have an abortion. They believe any disabled baby that is born should be treated as a farmer would treat a newborn lamb born with a deformity, swing it against a wall and crack its head. Nice people? I don’t think so. Scotland gave Nigel Farage the welcome he deserved. Don’t be fooled by these people. Please spread the message. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): General Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion strongly. I was in my workplace during the last local elections and I couldn’t believe that some of my members actually thought about voting for this man. He’s terrible. Marilyn’s said it all. Support the motion. Go back to your workplaces, tell them read up on this man, absolutely terrible.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Conference, I ask you to support this resolution because this bloke is up to no good. He’s spending his time spreading his gospel around the country, yet he never attends his duties in the House of Parliament in Europe, he’s among the worst, the very worst, that’s all he’s doing. He’s not there to represent the people of this country, he’s there to represent himself and his ideology, whatever that is. He is no good, there’s only one good he’s doing, he’s knocking himself and the Tories about and we might pick up the pieces. Please support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Here to clearly support the motion. This UKIP, I mean some of the main fundamental policies of theirs are one, demanding reform on Europe and two, is immigration, saying there’s too many immigrants in this country and there’s no control and we need to look to reducing or controlling it. The reality is they are nothing but a racist party as Sister McCarthy has already mentioned in her little speech, that is exactly what they are. In relation to Europe, let’s be real. Europe has seen, for the working people, a lot of basic benefits, for example some of the working time regulations and stuff, we would never have seen none of them, even having the national minimum wage come through that process as well, so there’s a lot of gains that we’ve gained through being part of Europe and this idiot in charge of the UKIP is just bantering on about things and he doesn’t fully understand it. This country wouldn’t survive just on his sole trade, absolutely impossible. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. Yes, we would ask Conference to support it. I’ve got to say the Executive were a bit concerned because if you’re going to get on a rooftop to shout about UKIP, that’s a really dangerous practice and I’ve got to say me for one, I’m scared of heights, it does me in being up here. What we have got to do, we’re really got to guard against voting complacency, because that’s the thing that he’s feeding on, voter apathy and coming out with those little sound bites that he likes and we’ve got to be very, very careful he doesn’t make more inroads into public life. If you think about what’s happening now within the media, it’s already a right-wing media and it’s going even further to the right. I’ll tell you what, he spends more time on Question Time than David Dimbleby does. The exposure that that man gets from the BBC and on Sky is absolutely phenomenal. Do you know he gets more exposure than Cameron gets, can’t stand him neither, I don’t want to see any more of him, but I most certainly want to see less of Nigel Farage. He says he’s not a racist and that anybody who’s been a member of the BNP or the EDL can’t become a member of UKIP, but didn’t he find in the last elections some of his candidates who were standing had actually been members of those parties and actually talked and preached the sort of xenophobic rubbish that they do and in the end they were forced to withdraw, but if you like it was shutting the stable door after the horse had bolted because that message had got through to those communities.

People there were starting to think about how maybe this party had been ill done by, well they weren’t, they’re racists, they’re bigots and we should never ever forget it and we shouldn’t let our members forget that. They’re absolutely racist to the core. The only policy that they’ve come out publicly with revolves around immigration and the same fear that their brothers in arms in the EDL and the British National Party. The rest of their policies which are down there, Marilyn’s just been hinting about some of them, but they’re anti-union, they’re anti-union class, anti-working class, it is class device of the policies that they have and it’s right-wing tripe. If you hammer home and continue to hammer home a message like they do, that Britain’s borders are open and that anyone who wants to come to our country will be after your jobs and all that fear, then eventually and the other one they say is if they come in and they’re pick-pockets, we’re going to get loads of pick-pockets from Romania and Bulgaria, you know if you keep on hammering that message and the press allows you to hammer that message, eventually people are going to believe it.

If the main parties had anything about them, they’d come out fighting, but they seem to have such a tame response to what Nigel Farage is doing, informing people that immigrant workers are of massive nett benefit to this country, that’s the reality, people who come to work in this country actually benefit this country, because I’ll tell you what, if they didn’t they wouldn’t be here in the first place, government would make sure of that, but there’s nett gains. It was Ian this morning was talking about the nurses, the doctors, the consultants, all trained in their countries and then becoming an internal and
important part of our health service, offering much needed lifesaving skills. To me that is a benefit to our country, that is not a millstone around the neck of the country, but Farage would have you believe that these people are all leeches, sucking the lifeblood out of our economy, not paying their taxes when they should and sending benefits back over. He made a big play a few weeks ago that the UK was going to open its door to Bulgarians and Romanians and that once those borders were open, there’s going to be six million of them all coming to Britain, there’s only six million live there, it’s going to be a pretty empty place isn’t it, Bulgaria, if they all come here and they did a television programme, they sent a reporter from the BBC with him, who went and had a look and they went around and he asked people and they were all saying no, we don’t want to come to your country, you’ve got a Tory government, we not going there, the weather’s crap, it’s absolute rubbish, we’re not coming to England and even then he still didn’t respond in anything other than in a negative way, when the cameras went off, when they moved away from the people he was talking to, he still said they were going there. He played the ignorance card as far as I’m concerned and that epitomises what Nigel Farage is, I think he’s ignorant, I think it went in one ear and out the other. Well, is it ignorance or is it just xenophobic rhetoric because that’s what I say, I think it’s garbage.

Is he really the caring politician that he claims to be? Why does the only other policy that he has, outside of the party, that you can really name in detail is that he wants to re-introduce or relax the anti-smoking legislation in pubs, something that he knows, like everybody else knows and I’m an ex-smoker and I’m sure there’s smokers in this room who’ll tell you, it kills people. Smoking, whether smoking directly or passively, kills people but he wants to re-introduce that, so he’s got a great fondness for the British people hasn’t he, when he wants to introduce something that potentially would take thousands of lives. You know, he reminds me of the wartime spiv, smooth talking, wide awake suit, but absolutely no substance, the man is a wolf in wolf’s clothing. I hate the toothy smile, I hate it with a passion, but he’s always got a ready answer, I’ve got to say he’s quite charismatic, he gets through and he does have the potential to be dangerous, we can’t be complacent about Nigel Farage. I’ll tell you one thing, he jumped on the bandwagon about the murder of Lee Rigby and he made gain from it, but the difference between him and the EDL is that he doesn’t physically attack the police, but he will try to make people believe that this murder was part of a sinister plot rather than a cold blooded murder, this wasn’t done in the name of God, these were murderers, but he made it out that it was something that was happening because we’re allowing too many people into the country.

The one thing though we should never do is underestimate UKIP’s ability to get across a message, irrespective of how false that message is once you dig deeper. They’ll prey on peoples’ fears and they’ll build on false hopes, they’ll use Labour’s indecision on how to address policy to drag people away from the real issues of the day, they feed on an outdated political system that says that we have to elect every five years a MP, they might be all garbage the people we’re faced with a choice and we end up putting somebody in because me mam told me I’ve got to vote Labour or me dad told me I’ve got to vote Conservative and they’re preying on that political system and the corruption that that brings to help them. Whatever commitment’s needed to get them elected, they will try and use it in the future. It’s a system that we need to reform, or we’ll end up with generations of the same old crap that we’re getting now. I’ve got to say I personally don’t believe that they’re going to get a MP in any future election, but I’m worried about the damage they can do within communities, but it shows how deep their principles are when you know that they have a leader who despises Europe but is prepared to accept the role and inflated salary of a MEP.

Comrades, I’m pleased to say that despite their fame and so-called following, they didn’t win one single council seat in the north and long may that continue but what we’ve got to do is make the north the benchmark when it comes to how we deal with UKIP. Let’s start to get the message out with our branches. Dave, yes, you will have people in there who are considering voting UKIP. We’ve got to get the message, we’ve got to point out exactly what these people are, because they’re not only a danger to people whether they came into the country years ago or whether they’re children of immigrants from years ago, or whether they’re people who are brought in to work through agencies, they’re also anti-trade union, they’re anti-workplace, they’re anti-legislation that they find restrictive and if we do start voting for them, don’t be surprised, I’ll tell you where they’ll go, they’ll go with the Tory party and we’ll end up with something stronger, as long as there’s some concessions for Farage. They are Tories, BNP and EDL all wrapped up in one set of clothing. Delegates, support the motion, but keep away from roofs.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. I’d now like to invite Olive back to give an update from Standing Orders.
Sister Olive Molloy – Standing Orders: If you’ll turn to motion 70 on your Agendas, the following stand. No. 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79 and then we take emergency motion 3. No. 80 stands, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85 is withdrawn, 86 and then we take emergency motion 1, the rest stand, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93 is out of order, 94 and 95, that’s the end of this report. Pardon? 94 is withdrawn? Thank you. I’ve said 85, haven’t I?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh 89, 89 withdrawn. Pardon?

Sister Olive Molloy – Standing Orders: 89 is withdrawn, 94 is withdrawn. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Report to Conference. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Thank you very much. Motion 57.

57 Government and Political – Branch 452

That this Conference agrees that Workfare is nothing but cheap exploitation of labour and companies who use it should be taken to court as slave labour was abolished many years ago

Brother Mark Baker – Branch 452 (Park Cakes, Oldham): With glasses now. That this Conference agrees that Workfare is nothing but cheap exploitation of labour and companies who use it should be taken to court, as slave labour was abolished many years ago. Slavery is forced labour, it makes no difference whether the force of fear of death or by violence of death by starvation, calling forced labour Workfare may make it sound better, but it is still slavery. Slavery was abolished in 1833. Under a scheme which the government of a country requires unemployed people to do community work or undergo job training in return for social security payments, exchange is free exchange. This is not the same as forcing someone into work. Slavery strips away their dignity of the person by taking away their freedom. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Are you seconding it? Okay.

Brother Chris Lay – Region 3: In Greggs they use this Workfare system. We had one person who did this in my region, actually worked in my better half’s shop. When another shop phoned them up and said we’re short staffed, the lift’s broken down, have you got anyone to help us out? They said yes, no worries, we’ll send so and so and round. It was a shambles, the poor bloke who’s a genuinely honest bloke tried to get work wherever he possibly could, so this poor bloke was made to fetch and carry pop up and down three flights of stairs, pop, crisps, like a donkey. He didn’t get any sort of work experience, he certainly didn’t get a job afterwards, because we don’t actually at the moment have enough hours in the shops for our already existing staff, so why on earth would we then give the promise that we could possibly give this poor chap a job afterwards? Workfare is disgusting, so please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: Workfare is not only a shambles, it’s a pack of lies. A couple of years back they had my daughter on Workfare, they had her and a load of others at Tesco’s in Leicester and they turned around and said right, we’ll work you up to Christmas but it’s alright, there’s so many of you, I think there was about 20 of you and don’t you worry, we’ll work out which are the best ones and then when we’ve worked that out, what we’ll do, the 10 best of you will get a job. It comes up towards Christmas, says oh well yes, right, we’ve got to work you right up to Christmas Eve. Okay, fair enough, Christmas Eve they came up to them, right, you’re all finished. Oh by the way, those jobs no longer exist, our regional manager’s changed his mind. It’s just pure and simple slave exploitation. She couldn’t even go to an agency and go and get some work, being as coming up to Christmas you’ve always got agencies wanting to take on a few people because of the Christmas rush, because oh no, they insisted she’d got to go to Tesco’s, she’d got to do her Workfare, oh yes, there were jobs promised, the jobs pie in the sky. Work experience zero, didn’t even get a recommend out of it, not worth the ink it takes to write it. Support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Just to explain what Workfare is. Workfare and I’ll tell you what I’m going to do. I’m going to use Gulli’s branch. Gulli’s branch where people have worked 20–30 years, that have been thrown out onto the dole by their employer, not because they don’t want to work, but because that employer has decided he can make bigger profits by rationalising his business and moving it somewhere else, so those people that have worked at his site for all those years are now on the dole. They’ve paid into a fund, that fund’s been taken by the government and it’s been put there to support people at times of need and it’s called unemployment benefit, not welfare, but unemployment benefit, something that was put in place to support people when they find themselves out of work, but I’ll tell you what, you used to get it for a minimum of 12 months and then you went onto social security, now you get it for three months. All that money you pay into it, you’re getting it for three months. At the end of that three month period, the Jobcentre will say to you we want you to volunteer and you’ll say volunteer for what? and they’ll say for a job.
I don’t want to volunteer for a job, I want a job, I want to work, well unfortunately there are no jobs, so how could I volunteer for a job? and they’ll say to you oh we can find you a job where you volunteer, we just can’t find you one where you work and so you’ll go, what do I get paid? and they’ll say your benefit. So you’ll go, so you’re going to find me a job where I can get my benefit? Yes and then we wonder why so many jobs are being lost and using Gulli’s place as an example, let me explain how that works as well, because they can’t find jobs where employers want to pay people, because why should employers want to pay people when they can have them for free, because that fund that you all paid into, that was supposed to be there for when you found yourselves out of work, which is now being used to make a payment to somebody who’s out of work but now in work, working for an employer who moved your job to another factory, to give it to someone that now the taxpayer according to Cameron is funding, because they’re the shirkers, because those people on the Workfare are now shirkers and they have to be forced back into work, despite the fact that they worked 30–40 years for a company that decided to move their job for profit.

That’s Cameron’s Britain, a policy that’s championed by a failed Tory leader that thinks that it’s okay to try and live on £53 a week. That’s the current climate and the belief of this Tory ideology, supported by the Liberal Democrats and what we’ve got to understand is the consequences of it. When you talk to people who have had experience of working on Workfare, they’ll tell you exactly what the experience is, a 25 year old kid being forced to go and work in a charity shop, being told if you don’t you’re going to be out of a home, that is exploitation and that is modern day slavery and that’s why unfortunately I fell into a bit of a row with Andrew Neal earlier in the year because he tweeted out, because people know I do a bit of twittering, people know he said on his Twitter account, I wonder what William Hague will say when he gets to the United Nations and this modern day slavery state who’s now in charge of looking after the issues of slavery and stopping it throughout the whole of the United Nations. So I tweeted back, I said he’ll probably say actually the way we’ve got round it in our country is we’ve called it Workfare, because that’s exactly what it is, it’s modern day slavery ...... [APPLAUSE]

and we in this Union have a clear policy on it and that’s why we expect you to support this motion too. Our clear policy is this, if they bring Workfare in, we get a mandate, we take strike action, we ain’t going to stand by and allow our jobs to be given to people into forced labour. No way on this earth is this trade union ever, ever going to allow slavery. We’re going to stand up, we’re going to fight and I’ll tell you what, I’ll tell you what, it makes me proud every time I’ve seen the people over there that stood up and said not in our name, you ain’t coming in my workplace, absolutely not going to tolerate it. We say no, no to Workfare, no to (unclear) with Workfare, we boycott shops that use it and let’s make that sure that everybody knows where we stand. No to Workfare. Support the motion.

(applause and cheers)

Thank you. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 58.

[APPLAUSE]

Well I got told you’d had a bit of a long break [LAUGHTER]. Say what you mean, I haven’t seen you all week, welcome.

58 Government and Political – Branch 338

That this Conference urges the government through its Parliamentary contacts, to create real permanent jobs instead of Agency jobs, as Agency Jobs gives no security of employment, it exploits workers with low pay and Terms and Conditions.

Sister Stephanie Irish – Branch 339 (Manor): I’m not sure I can follow that [LAUGHTER].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You absolutely can, absolutely can.

Sister Stephanie Irish – Branch 339 (Manor): Moving motion 58. That this Conference urges the government through its parliamentary contacts to create real permanent jobs instead of agency jobs, as agency jobs gives no security of employment, it exploits workers with low pay and terms and conditions. Companies have no real incentive to create permanent properly paid jobs. Agency workers zero hour contracts, temporary contracts are now all becoming the norm, usually all of them on reduced T & Cs to existing workers. Companies are going to need incentives from the government to create these proper jobs, because they will not do it off their own backs. People in permanent properly paid employment have security, that security then gives them the confidence to spend their money. A lot of what I’ve said Ann Pettifor said yesterday, so I totally agree with a lot of things she said that the money we earn through a permanent job needs to be spent and if you’ve got a permanent full-time job, you’ve got the security to spend that money on the high street, buy houses, get the economy moving. Spending money and not cuts to services is the answer to this, not austerity. Please support the motion.
[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconded? Okay.

Brother Arif Hussain – Region 3 (Fine Lady Bakeries, Banbury) - first-time speaker: Agency jobs are demands on slave labour as in most cases the terms and conditions are nowhere near where they need to be. The government enjoys agency workforce due to the fact that it allows them to fiddle employment figures. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Conference, I’m here to support this resolution. Agency labour is no labour, it is not worth having. It can be a useful tool for the agencies and the personnel to make money, because they can employ people for you and the personnel with the right to dismiss them within a couple of weeks because they don’t need them and then back in again with another lot and that can happen. It’s a very uncertain world for the people that’s in it, because then if they have two days they have no work, they get no pay, they get no holiday pay, they get no bank holiday pay, they just get one payment and that’s it. Conference, please support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Imran Hussain – Branch 312 (Region 3) - first-time speaker: Here to support the motion. I’d also like to remind everyone that New Labour were the ones who started this agency through the door, so when we vote them back in we need to remind them, they need to think hard about where they come from, their rules, their values, their principles and their proper working union, so everyone should have proper jobs, not just temporary. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well done, mate.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. First, can I withdraw 59 in favour of 58?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. 59’s withdrawn.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Thank you. It’s time that the exploitation of agency workers stopped. The changes made in 2011/2012 were made supposedly to make things better for the agency workers, but unscrupulous employers have found loopholes. Basically what I’m saying, it’s time we got people into proper jobs where you stop exploiting agencies. People like Colin, I admire down in Wales, the lad’s fighting the fight at Wigan currently on agency labour. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Chair, Platform, Conference. Clearly here to support the motion, but if I may just say a few items. A few years ago in this very room we, as a Union, passed a motion not to allow agency workers in our branches. Unfortunately over the last decade, slowly but surely agencies have crept in in more or less all our branches minus a few. As a consequence of that, our branches have been automatically weakened because we’ve allowed these employers to allow part-time people in through the agency and has had a massive impact on our ability to organise our branches as well. These people should never, ever be allowed to stay on their same low paid terms and conditions. If I can just use a little example of something when I attended Birmingham Trade Union Council last week. There was a gentleman from Jaguar Land Rover who gave an update and it was quite interesting. He said there were 6,000 new jobs, I think the company’s called Tata now who own Land Rover Jaguar and of those 6,000 jobs, everybody was coming in and they were coming in I think it was 60% income compared to the full-time workers rates and after five years they would only be at 80% of the permanent person’s terms and conditions. So I got up and I put my hand up and I said to the individual, I said as a trade union, what’s your trade union? He said Unite the Union and I said can I ask what their stance was in relation to bringing in new people on low terms and conditions, because initially you’re going through the agency for 12 months, then they take you on on lower rates of pay and he said to be honest with you, they’re seeing it as a recruitment tool and they weren’t really interested and the trade union officials basically just gave in and just allowed it because of the way it is and there was another 6,000 members potentially. As far as I’m concerned, we should never, ever have allowed agencies on site.

[APPLAUSE]

Absolutely never.

[APPLAUSE]

Please support the motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Colin Morgan – Branch 238 (Llantarnam): Comrades, we have to support this motion because nothing wrong with people who work for agencies, they can’t get a proper job. We, in our branch, have nothing to do with agencies but we’ve had to do something, we’ve had to get people in on 16 hour contracts, okay, because there’s not enough work for them for the 39 hours, but we make certain that they’re on the same T & Cs as us. If they work a Saturday, they get time and a half, if they work a Sunday, they get double time. Listen, this is why some of the branches are not strong enough, because we’ve got agency workers on site. Sometimes you’ve got to bluff the company. I know sometimes I’ve got a 99.6 membership, I know they won’t go out on strike, but I bluff the company that they’ll go out on strike and the company runs scared, so we’ve got to stand up and we’ve got to stand up for what’s right, fair and honest and just and the system they use with agency workers is not right and fair and just. We want equality. If I’m digging a hole or packing biscuits or making a loaf of bread and somebody is sacked at the side of me doing the same job, it’s their right to be given the same terms and conditions and the same wages as the rest of us, this is immoral and we have the power and you have the power to do something about it and you have to go and tell your company no more, no way José, we’re not having it, it’s about time we did it. I know in Blackpool, our sister factory in Blackpool, Burtons, they’ve done the same, they’ve said no way agency are coming on site, if they come on site we’re going out through the gates and that’s what we’ve got to do. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Colin, Colin, can you just say your name and your branch into the mike?

Brother Colin Morgan – Branch 238 (Llantarnam).

(laughter and applause)

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, mate. No more speakers? No?

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton): Here, what am I here for? To carry this motion for the Executive Council. I was speaking on motion 59, but it’s been withdrawn, so I’ve been on the hop a bit, but basically what I’m going to say is at Manor Bakeries in Carlton we took agency on site after a lot of negotiating. We tried for industrial action, we got a mandate for industrial action on site and we had, the only industrial action the branch were prepared to take was industrial action excluding strike, so we ended up with 20 agency workers eight years ago, now we have 120 agency workers and at the busiest time of the year can go up to 250. Originally the agreement was I would meet the agency workers on their first day of employment, I’d do a briefing and they all joined the union because originally they all got the same pay as we got. Now that’s gone from £6.30 an hour they’re on now and they call it a new starter rate, they don’t call it a BFAWU agreement, it’s a new starter rate and it’s not even in the negotiations for our pay rise. I’m not allowed to negotiate for them and that was all done because members wouldn’t go out, so I feel really heartfelt hurt by the whole system because you do your best and you end up shit on basically and the whole branch is well below par simply because of agency workers, so why give you all 100%, my main thing for the next year or two is to get agency off the site, but it’ll mean strike action, but we’ll take it because I’ll have to.

[APPLAUSE]

I support.

[APPLAUSE]


60 Government and Political – Branch 408

That this Conference agrees that the big companies like Tesco and Asda dictate how you run your company. If you don’t comply they cancel orders, which puts people’s jobs at risk.

Sister Sandra Carr – Branch 408: President, General Secretary, Platform and Delegates. That the Conference agrees that the four main companies, I don’t think I need to mention any names, dictate the rules and regulations to suppliers how the companies no leeway, we don’t get any leeway. It’s their way or nothing and resulting in cancelled orders, job losses, closures, we should all stick together and fight the companies. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: When I worked at Park Cake, that supermarket, we won’t name them, but they have green carrier bags with gold writing on and they make extremely nice cakes and all that, came into Park Cake and
started to dictate what colour overalls we wore, couldn’t wear blue overalls any more, they said we had to have white ones, dictated which laundry they had to be done at. Some of the things that they were demanding was absolutely ridiculous and if they didn’t comply, you stood to have 2,000 people out of work. It’s not right, it’s called bullying and harassment, they get away with it. Please support this.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. We’ve just suffered the similar within Hovis, we’ve lost Co-Op, apparently Allied came with 10 million. I’ve raised this, I had the pleasure of going with Ronnie to the parliamentary group and I raised it there and the MPs seemed astonished that it was happening, that companies can buy shelf space, they come with cheques and they can just drop suppliers and put people out of jobs, just like that. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton): I’m here to support this motion. I just want to cast your minds back only this year when Co-Op withdrew the orders for Hovis and put a shell factory, it’s not done yet but it’s on its way out and that’s simply one customer pulling out, saying that they’re not going to pay the price to pay the workers a decent wage. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Chair, Platform, Conference. Last November, 22nd November, myself and my colleague Raj Hussain were called in 4 o’clock in the morning, 4 o’clock in the morning and told that there’s a big announcement taking place on site. We both went in in the morning, sat down in front of the managers and were told as a consequence of losing a Co-Op order, that there would be 900 redundancies across five different Hovis sites. The power that these companies have got now across our industry is absolutely horrific and as a consequence, our site has now been closed or is going through the process of closure and will cease to exist come 23rd June this year, but it’s just amazing how much power these companies have got and I urge you to support the motion because year on year these same things will continually happen across our industry. Please support the motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the motion. I’ve got to say we’re already, as Dave said, we’re already actively pursuing this and have been for a number of years, although the policy itself has sort of changed because it started off with this below cost selling which Joe Marino started and very, very effectively campaigned in parliament and this revolved around supermarkets, I don’t care who they are, Asda, Tescos, they’re all the same, Sainsburys, all of them were there to do you down, but products such as milk and bread were used as loss leaders. Farmfoods used to sell two Hovis for a quid, you couldn’t produce two Hovis for a quid and they’re right at the back of the store, so you walk past to get your bread and on the way you picked your chops up and a bit of chicken and that, all that, it was used as an enticement to get you into the store and that was replicated right across the supermarkets and that’s, as I say that’s extended everywhere, but now it goes beyond discounting the product, actually in many ways the discount’s in our livelihoods, because one of the things it’s affected badly is health and safety, it’s compromised to curry favour with the supermarkets.

Clearly major problems for us, you remember the heat in the workplace campaign we had and we got the Health & Safety Executive involved and they were saying oh well, wear lighter overalls, we didn’t think you went to work naked but wear lighter clothing, you can do this and Tescos then demanded that people wore overalls that were buttoned and the reason behind it and I’ve made the point before, they said in case hairs fall out. You try pulling a hair out of your arm and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening. Snoods in case all of a sudden we develop alopecia and see how easy they fall out, but Tescos demanded that and so before they looked at peoples’ health and safety, they looked at the demands of the customer and that’s what’s happening.
canteen, so it actually improved workers health and safety and rights, but that’s stopped, not now, every single one of them pee in the same pot, demanding ever cheaper products without using inferior ingredients, or so we say. The President said in his opening address about we’ve had this blight of horsemeat, that’s not because people prefer horse to cow or lamb, it’s because it was a cheaper inferior product that they could get away with and I’d be really worried that when horsemeat becomes too dear, what are we going to be eating next?

That’s the reality of the pressure that supermarkets are putting on. I can remember being on the Executive Council when I was a delegate and listening to a guy who worked for Family Loaf Bakeries and his name was Mike Farrell, he was a HR director and he came in and he gave this great speech about supermarkets and the power of supermarkets, I’m probably going back to about 1981 and he was saying sometimes the supermarkets are at the top and sometimes we’re at the top, at the moment it’s just that the supermarkets are at the top and we’re at the bottom and that’s how he played that out. It’s never changed. He said it was a roller coaster, there was peaks and there was troughs, but I’ll tell you what is business, when bang it went bust because it couldn’t compete and with it many more have followed and this is all because of the demands that are put on our industry by supermarkets. It saw Spillers go out of baking in 1979, not because Spillers were bad, but because Spillers couldn’t compete with the other major bakers on discounts and that saw thousands of people lose their jobs in one fell swoop on a Friday night everybody, bakeries closed down, out.

Look at the recent loss of the Co-Op business by Hovis, they lose that business and what happens, in one fell swoop a thousand of our members lost their jobs, had nothing to do with Allied Bakeries having nice smiley faces, the people who go out and buy, get the business in, they’re no happier, they’re no better, what they did, they did it on price, it’s a dog-eat-dog world in our industry and that’s exactly the way that Allied played it and Hovis lost 1,000 jobs, but it’s a tragedy not just for those people who lose their jobs, it’s a tragedy for their families, it’s a tragedy for the communities where they live when the shops aren’t going to be able to have those people spend their wages in them, but the one thing we have found out from Hovis is, from this action that they’ve taken, is that they’re never going to get the business back and why can’t they get the business back? because they’re getting rid of Greenford, they’re getting rid of Birmingham, they’re not going to mothball them like they did at Bradford and then re-open them if they get business back, they’re going to sell them off and they’re going to take all that capacity out of the industry, it’s never going to come back, capacity they took away, as I say, in one fell swoop, a 1,000 jobs.

You know, these views have been expressed to government. It’s one of the things we have had some success in speaking to ministers on, not just because of the job losses, but likely price hikes for the consumer when Mike Farrell’s prediction finally comes true, because believe me, when you take all that capacity out of the industry, when there’s no over-capacity where we can say well, we’ll pinch your business and we’ll put it in there, when you can’t do it because you’re full to the gunnels because there’s been that many closures, you watch prices go up then. It won’t be a question of directors of these big companies going along to Tesco’s or Asda or Sainsburys or Asda or Lidl or any of them, Waitrose, they won’t be going along and saying please can we have a penny increase? They’ll be saying there’s 10p going on a loaf, because you won’t be able to take that capacity anywhere else and that’s the reality of what’s going to happen, but they don’t only affect our industry, the supermarkets, they affect internationally on the global market.

I remember the first time I ever went to an IUF Conference in Geneva and a guy getting up and speaking from the tea plantations, the union that controlled the tea workers in Sri Lanka and talking about, I don’t know whether it was Typhoo or whatever, it was one of those big companies, how they actually closed a plantation down in a part of Sri Lanka because they’d got a better market for their tea over there and with it they just left a community, it isn’t like being in the UK, you can’t go on the, there’s no redundacy, you don’t go on the dole and hopefully get some benefits and go and look for a job somewhere else, we’re talking about purpose-made villages. Plantations aren’t built round people, people are brought in and they build around the plantation. These people were left devastated, no tea, no jobs, no benefits, no welfare and no opportunity to go anywhere else, because of the power of supermarkets and last year the President, John Vickers and I, we were going to a meeting in London and on the way we met with a general secretary of one of the African trade unions, I think it was Ghana and he was telling us about the destructive power of our supermarkets on his country, when a supermarket moved a pineapple plantation away from one village and moved it somewhere else.

You know, when you mess with peoples’ lives like this to the extent that you do, it isn’t just a question that they lose their jobs, it isn’t just a question that there’s no benefits in place, what you actually do, you increase starvation within that country. They’ve got no chance of getting out of it and that is the devastating power of what these supermarkets are doing. That’s the spectre that’s offered by these over-sized, greedy, money-grabbing organisations. I’ve got to say the upshot of all our campaigning in parliament has been now that the Tories wrote into the last Queen’s speech that there’s going to be a grocery adjudicator, I don’t know what her name is, they’ve picked her, she’s probably, I don’t know, she’ll be a Tory grandee or something, but they’ve got somebody who’s supposedly got some power over supermarkets.
It’s a significant move by a Tory government, because it isn’t that they’re bowing to supermarket pressure, they’re actually bowing to trade union pressure because of what we’ve done, we’ve gone out, we’ve campaigned against the Tories and campaigned against the supermarket and they’ve given in. I don’t know what power this person’s going to have, they might be able to deliver a slap on the wrist and that’s it, but the fact is we’re moved on, but it shouldn’t deter us, we have to keep up the pressure on this and any future governments to ensure that the power to hire and fire without the obligations of employment is removed from supermarkets.

I also believe that by taking our fight to the supermarkets themselves, we can win, boycotting those who damage our industry, hitting their pockets in exactly the same way that they’re hitting yours. Remember the R F Brooks thing, when I think it was Samworth Brothers offered Marks & Spencer’s a penny discount on a pie, one penny, which was never going to be passed onto the customer, it went in to the coffer and the profits of Marks & Spencer’s, but as a consequence in the long-term we’ve lost 700 jobs in R F Brooks and I’ll tell you what, this Union and our members and people like Right to Work, Unite the Resistance, we were ready to go outside the flagship Marks & Spencer’s stores and campaign and tell people what they were doing to damage our communities and we will, we’re prepared to do it, Marble Arch is on our radar, we were going to go to London, which is their flagship store and we were going to blockade it, we were going to leaflet, we were going to tell people exactly the destruction they were doing to the food industry and it was the company who actually bottled it and said no, no, we’ll lose more business, we can’t do that.

Delegates, this is another motion where we can do something positive. Every single person in this room can have a positive impact on this. Write to your MP, complain to them about the powers that you see supermarkets having, write to the supermarkets, write to people like Mark Rowland at Marks & Spencer’s and tell them the destruction they’re causing in your industry, what they’ve done to Hovis in Birmingham and Greenford and the depots. Comrades, apathy and inertia is not a real option for us, we need action. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Just been handed a, unbelievable this one, Region 2, Seacourt Hotel, karaoke night tonight. Pay on the door, £2.50, proceeds going to charity, buffet free shot, bar open until 5 am. Can’t see you lasting. Okay. 61.

And just to remind you, anybody who wants a ticket for Region 7’s do, see Billy or Noel. After you, mate.

61 Government and Political – Branch 582

That this Conference agrees that the government must commit policies to reduce child poverty by creating employment for all and provide benefits that lift children out of their social exclusion. The Child Poverty Act of 2010 is being ignored by this present government.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Manor, Carlton): Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Motion 62, child poverty.

The last Labour government proposed legislation to eradicate child poverty by 2020 and the Child Poverty Act was finally passed in March 2010 by the present government. Strategies were submitted to meet four child poverty targets, all generally related to low income. Measures were supposed to be implemented to promote and facilitate the skills and employments of parents, to provide financial support for children and parents, to provide advice and assistance on parental skills, many, many strategies were proposed, but unfortunately it offered no guarantees and of course has been another victim of the economic circumstances since it was introduced.

Practically all the risk factors associated with severe child poverty have suffered, households with no one working have increased with the rise in unemployment, socially rented accommodation becoming an even greater burden on many with the bedroom tax, benefit cuts biting deeper increasing the debt of those most in need, to name just but a few. So the only target being met from the Child Poverty Act is the percentages of those isolated in poverty, their numbers are swelling and their future is bleak. The Child Poverty Act is an important piece of legislation and the government must remove the barriers and provide a far greater commitment to achieving their targets. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Who’s seconding? Are you seconding it?

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton): Up here to support Dave and formally second him.

[APPLAUSE]
This government seem hell bent on making people on low income even worse off than they already are by cutting working benefits and introducing the bedroom tax, while this group of millionaires keep saying we’re all in it together. I say they would not know it if it jumped up and bit them. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President**: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. That must mean I’m on 62. 62.

### 62 Government and Political – Branch 582

That this Conference condemns the unnecessary culture of Austerity being used by this Government and demands a campaign, spearheaded through the Trade Union Congress to demand the CHANGE.

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham)**: Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move motion 62. Conference condemns this unnecessary culture of austerity being used by this government and demand a campaign, spearheaded through the TUC, to demand change. I’ll start off by just sharing with you some of the cuts that have taken place over the last few years. Cuts in the NHS, driving down vital services and the services that they provide, cuts in health and safety and MPs saying that it’s a burden on businesses. I don’t want to get Ian Hodson wound up again, Workfare, dare I use the word. Attacks on pensions, attacks on disabled people, the vulnerable in society, the disgraceful introduction of bedroom tax where Stephanie Bottrill lost her life committing suicide in Birmingham a few weeks ago. If anyone is in Birmingham, the city centre, I request and urge you to come to a demonstration which is on Saturday in the city centre. Continuous attacks on both public and private sector, including Department of Works & Pensions, Jobcentres, teachers, the National Union of Teachers, I mean if I can just raise a few lines in relation to that.

The teachers, I was at a trade council meeting last week and the NUT are already in the process of having strike days and I believe they’re having something this month, with further threats of strike action later on this year, because even they’ve had enough now. They’re looking at reducing the number of visits to the GP as I stated earlier on in one of my motions, yet all these attacks are happening, you’ve got unemployment increasing, you’ve got people going in to sign on out of sheer desperation because they’ve got no other means and they’re being classified as shirkers and scroungers and the reality is this government needs to be looking at growth, job creation and they have the nerve and audacity to say that we’re all in this together, absolute nonsense. You’ve got, our National President last year used the words if it’s not us, in terms of demanding change, if it’s not us, if it’s not now, when? and I wholeheartedly support that, because the reality is unless we unite, unless we demand change, nothing will change, it’s no good just coming to conferences and sitting here, listening and talking on motions, moving motions, if we’re not prepared to back that up with further organising. Please support this motion wholeheartedly and please resist. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President**: Seconder? Formally seconded? Okay. Speakers? General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary**: President, Delegates. The Executive would ask Conference to support it, but don’t vote for the change and then forget on Thursday morning what you voted for. Change is brought about by action, not words and not votes. We’ve taken our campaign on many occasions to the TUC along with other unions, in fact in 2011 when I attended the mini TUC with Marilyn French and Marilyn McCarthy, we took part in the debate on austerity, to join in with others in the anti-austerity campaign and last year, our delegation to the TUC, we voted in favour of the prison officers’ motion on looking at the feasibility of a general strike. Between Ian and I, we’ve travelled the world I think, working loads of Saturdays, speaking at meetings, making sure that we get the message out that condemn this evil government’s policies. We’ve probably written an Amazonian rainforest on our condemnation, pointing out the shortcomings of austerity and the failings of the government to implement an alternative strategy. We’ve supported wholeheartedly the views of eminent economists like Ann Pettifor, Paul Krugman, David Harvey, who are consistent in their condemnation of the government’s fiscal policy and of course we’ve pursued our claims through the trade union coordination group and through the General Federation of Trade Unions. Indeed, we had a motion on it at this year’s General Federation of Trade Unions, we do it through our parliamentary group.

The National President tweets every day and rants on Facebook really regularly, I’m only glad that there’s no actions on Facebook otherwise I’d be getting beaten to death every day of my life, but everything what we do, it boils down to action, not passive action but direct action. You know, as a Union, we have 20,000 members, most of whom will have families of their own and all with one common factor that bonds us, that they’re under attack from this government, all feeling the effect of this heinous austerity programme, all living with diminished living standards brought about by the coalition’s financial ineptitude.
You know, every time the TUC call a rally, marches in London, marches in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow, how many of our activists can actually say they went on those rallies? How many of the families took to the streets, when we were going to fund coaches for them to go on? Not that many. Actions, comrades, have to speak louder than words. The reality of the government’s austerity programme is that millions of workers are living just one pay packet away from poverty. Poverty’s not something you switch on and off like a light switch, it might take a couple of weeks to fall into poverty for those who are on really low wages who haven’t got savings, just a very, very short time, but it can take a generation to get out of poverty when you’re living under the austerity and the cuts that this government has imposed. Poverty is a cancer of society that grows once it’s got a grip of you.

How is it that governments don’t see what John Maynard Keynes’ vision of investing in times of recession is the way to economic growth, why don’t they see that? Why do they miss the trick that everyone else sees regarding the adoption of affordable housing programmes, one that puts builders back to work paying taxes, unlike Starbucks. A programme that cuts homelessness and overcrowding. Why can’t they realise that by building hospitals, employing doctors, employing nurses, that we not only improve the health of the nation, but we actually start to cut the deficit because those people are also paying taxes and when will the penny drop and I know there’s a motion later on, so I don’t want to steal the thunder of whoever’s doing it, but when will the penny drop on the bedroom tax, that it’s not going to improve housing stock, it can only increase poverty and it’ll increase homelessness and widen the gap between the have’s and the have not’s, building resentment in society and of course subsequently increasing crime levels.

Their policies have seen a proliferation or a scene of proliferation of food banks, hundreds of thousands of people depend on them every single week. This is the measure of poverty that the coalition politicians choose to ignore, as neither they nor their families will ever be in the sad position of depending upon these and of course on top of food banks, the one thing that doesn’t get mentioned too much is there’s 220 breakfast clubs out there and I don’t very often praise a company but I’ll tell you what, I’ll praise Greggs, they run 220 breakfast clubs every single day to ensure that 10,000 children go to school with a full stomach rather than an empty stomach and I think they should be congratulated on that and in fact I’ve wrote to their directors and done that.

[APPLAUSE]

That’s something that this government seems totally ambivalent to. As the President alluded to in his opening address, we will be balloting our members on the feasibility of a general strike. We’re not calling our members out on the cobbles, so there’s absolutely no fear, but it’s about how we send a message not to our employers but back to government and of course not just the Tory government, because I hope in two years’ time we’ll have a Labour government and I hope we can concentrate their minds into doing the right thing, making sure that they understand in this vote that the problems of this country have not been caused by our members or their families, they’ve been caused by the failure of a banking system and corrupt government policies, that’s why we’re in the mess we’re in now, absolutely nothing to do with you, you had no say in it and you could not have changed it. We have to get the message across at every possible opportunity that austerity doesn’t work. Austerity can’t work. If we all need to rally round and take the hit, then let’s start with those at the top, those at the top of the earnings ladder who proportionally can pay more. If there is a debt to be paid by society, then let’s all pay a fair and proportionate share. I ask you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. All those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Just a couple of announcements. Hopefully everybody’s seen these coming round in front of them and it says BFAWU testimonials, asking for your name, your branch number and it just says in joining the BFAWU I have benefitted by. What we’re trying to do is, we’re trying to update our website and we’re looking for testimonials, so if you could please put something on that paper, just say I have benefitted by, to enable us to put on there, so when people are looking at our Trade Union, they can see why they should join our Trade Union, so it would be really helpful if you could, as many people as possible, put and fill in some of those details and if I can ask the FTOs if they can collect them for us as well. I know some people may want to put some unusual comments down, but as long as they’re funny and they don’t insult me, I don’t mind.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: He looks at me every time I say I just want to make an announcement, as though I’m going to say something about him.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well, I know you.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: No, I’m giving you former, plenty of notice that when we come onto motion 81 which is on the bedroom tax, from our parliamentary group last week I was speaking with Tom Jones from Thompsons and we are to go to start a big campaign on this, I think we, because it affects, we know it affects families in this hall. If anyone’s got any anecdotal evidence, right, either now, you can do it beforehand or after the debate, at the close of...
Conference, on tea breaks or whatever, what we’re going to do, we’re going to have a journalist up there, John Millington, who you all know him anyway, he’s big enough, you can’t miss him, we’re going to have John Millington up there and what we’re going to do, we’re actually going to report out where we can those, the anecdotal evidence, families or actual examples of how your families have been affected, but the other thing we’re going to do, we’re going to have a lawyer sat with John as well, so we’re going to make sure somebody who has some expertise in the field of bedroom tax and the effects on welfare within council housing and that sort of stuff, so I don’t spring it on you when we get to it, motion 81 and you have to say oh God, our Jimmy’s got that problem, I’m giving you advance notice now and if you want to see John Millington who’s sat up on the back of the balcony there, give him that anecdotal evidence and it will give us the opportunity then of pursuing that through our parliamentary group and now I’m going to shut up, Marilyn, so you can get your tea by the looks of it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, cheers for that and obviously based on that last motion as well, I just want to make you aware and I’m hoping, because obviously the General Secretary touched on it about the marches that we’ve been on, on 29th September let’s take control of Manchester, let’s absolutely take control of Manchester, let’s see everybody out on the streets in Manchester. I mean obviously we believe and we discussed it at the last Executive, we believe all the full-time Officers should be there, we believe all the Executive Council members should be there, we believe everybody in this hall should be there, to send a clear message to the Tories that we don’t like what they’ve done to our country, so we would encourage you all. If you haven’t already booked the day off, if you haven’t already booked your trip to Manchester, please do so and make sure, make sure that you bring your family and your friends along and let’s really send a clear message and maybe at some point in time this government will understand that they’ve got to start standing up for British people and not just the people that they consider as important, which are the millionaires in this country, so I’m now going to, on that note, say it’s five past three on my watch, so according to my watch [LAUGHTER], you should be back for 25 past.

[BREAK]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Hello, is there anybody out there?

…I quite probably do, but it lengthened your break, didn’t it? Never say I’m not generous. Obviously the coffee had gone cold, hadn’t it? The reason why I was late back, now to buy some good books, is because I have a winner here of 50 quid, until I’ve just realised who it is. It’s Mark Baker (cheers). Payplan, you’ll have to go and see her though now, because she’s got to go unfortunately and obviously we’d like to thank Payplan for all the assistance they’ve given us and hopefully …..

[APPLAUSE]

hopefully our activists, now that they’ve met you, will start using the services that you supply, because what an absolutely fantastic benefit that is for our members and I’ll tell you what, in this time of austerity, it’s going to be a real, real benefit and a real good recruitment tool, so thank you Jane, thanks for coming this week, thank you for your partnership deal with us and we look forward to working with you for a long time to come.

[APPLAUSE]

Okay. Mark Baker, thank you very much for donating to the strike fund.

[APPLAUSE]

It’s motion 63. As he makes his way down, can I remind everybody that tonight over in the Monarch Hotel, we’ve got the “Spirit of ‘45” followed by our fantastic musical event, which is the fabulous Bakers Granddads, which will be setting the tone for the rest of the evening, is it Great Granddads? I thought that was just Marilyn, so Super Granny. Motion 63.

63 Government and Political – Branch 417

That this Conference calls on the Labour Party when it comes to power, to repeal the Anti-Trade Union Laws on the rights of freedom of peaceful assembly as it is now time to bring the United Kingdom back into conformity with Human Rights Law.

Brother John Fox – Branch 417 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): Comrades, this is now well overdue in getting our rights back. The laws that Thatcher’s government made during the 80s and 90s have undermined our movement. This was carried further by the Blairites, who should have repelled them when they came to power, but they kept them for strength against all the unions. Now, we have the ConDems coalition who are striving further into our terms and conditions. We must act now and turn this tide. I file this motion under Article 11 of the European Convention of Human Rights, which says (1) Everyone has a right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with
others, including the right to form trade unions for the protection of his interest (2) No restrictions shall be placed on the exercise of these rights other than such are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the right and freedom of others.

We believe that the right to organise industrial action under UK law is overly restricted and the statutory requirements such as providing minute detail to the employer are complicated. We believe that therefore UK law to be incompatible with our human rights. This argument is being pursued by a number of unions and I will give you three examples. (1) The RMT have complained to the European Court of Human Rights that its ability to organise industrial action is over-restricted by UK law (2) The Prison Officers Association have made an application as they believe that the law prohibiting them from organising and taking part in industrial action is restrictive under their right to freedom of association and (3) Unite the Union have made a claim based on UK law not providing a protection for action short of dismissal for taking part in a strike. The case arose when the members at British Airways were penalised by non-contractual travel benefits being removed following industrial action. Currently the law only protects those taking lawful industrial action from being dismissed for them. We hope that if any of these cases succeed, we will see our right to take industrial action less restricted by unnecessary laws, laws which we believe have been put in place to deny our human rights. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Formally seconded? Speakers?

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Conference, I’m here to support this resolution, but I have to say that during the years of Maggie Thatcher, her laws that she forced upon the trade union movement and everything else, the Labour party did not move one of them, not enough, they would not and I’ve seen it in the press recently that Miliband is thinking about not removing bedroom tax. That is, that’s serious stuff, he hasn’t denied it, now I don’t know if it’s true or not, but he has not denied that he’s going to do it, but we have to force the issue anyway by making it known in parliament what we want, but we have to and it’s a sad day when the Labour party does not do what it should do for the working people and it doesn’t do it, it doesn’t do it and that’s why we have Labour people putting Tories in office, because Tories would not be in office without our votes, make no mistake about that.

From 1900 on, if the working people, all of us, the 40 million of us that’s in it, the Tories would never have been in power, yet they were in power most of that time, so that is the danger with the Labour party. Ronnie said there on the last resolution, on a resolution that I moved there, spoke on there and he said we don’t want Tories in our party or to that effect, well I can tell Ronnie if the UKIP and Tories knock each other about, that is in our interests, not Tories we want back, but our voters that have gone away from us, they are the people we want back and we want a Labour Party that represents us and let’s hope that they carry out what’s in this resolution. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Chris Lay – Region 2:** Totally here to support this motion, however this is only going to work as Dave Crausby, MP, said yesterday if we, us as a Conference, get involved and we can influence what happens within the Labour Party. In my ward I’m now the ward secretary and I’m on my Constituency Executive Council and I have the opportunity to influence the policies of what my constituency and ward discuss. I was present at Welsh Labour with my colleague and full-time Official Councillor Gary Johnston and listened to a speech by Ed Miliband and I’ve got to say that he didn’t really inspire me that he was going to repeal or help the trade union movement that much, however the Shadow Secretary for Wales, Owen Smith, did make a speech about the good of the trade unions and how the Labour Party should work with the trade unions.

Personally I think that the Labour Party and its MPs and all supporters should all be singing from the same hymn sheet and then we’ll get the repeals that we need. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham):** Platform, President, Delegates. Fully support the motion in its totality, but we need to go a bit further and let the Labour Party know that when they get into power, if the leader of the Labour Party does not do enough to repeal the anti-trade union laws, we will be looking to replace the leadership. We need to put constant pressure on, have the pressure on there at all times, because just getting the Labour Party back, we shouldn’t be satisfied at that, they need to go back to grass root levels, they need to realise where they came from and they came out of a trade union movement and they need to be told in no uncertain terms that we will be challenging the leadership, so we need to go a bit further than what this resolution’s saying, we need to have constant pressure at all times. I fully urge you to support.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Chair, Platform, Conference. Clearly here to support the motion. I think it’s important that the trade union, including all of us people in this room, we recognise that we formed this Party and this Party should be acting in the best interests of us. The reality is that, at this moment in time, most of our MPs are from graduate backgrounds, very little have any understanding of the experience on a day-to-day that we people go through and very little, as a consequence they can’t relate to some of the issues that we go through on a day-to-day basis back at our workplaces. We need to somehow get involved with the Labour Party, get involved with the Labour constituencies and try and reclaim our Party and get the Socialist values back in place, including the right to take action. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Can I just make you aware that motion 64 has been withdrawn. Motion 65.

65 Government and Political – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees to lobby Government on the reductions in awards from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority and the decision to reform eligibility entitlements eradicating payments for minor injuries.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. I’m not going to read the motion out because it’s on the slide above. I’ll start off by just explaining what the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority is. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority is a government organisation that pay money to anyone who has been physically or mainly injured as an innocent victim of violent crime. The scheme have rules which determine whether someone is eligible for payment and payment can be awarded. The key changes that this government is proposing are as follows: 50% of victims currently eligible for this compensation would receive nothing in future, even for serious and permanent injuries. 18,600 cases on average in the year 2008 – 2010. Over 40% will see their compensation claims severely reduced, 15½ thousand cases. Only 9% of these victims, 3,200 cases, with the most severe injuries or fatalities will be eligible for the same amount of compensation, these amounts have not increased since 1996.

Payments for loss of earnings for those off for more than 28 weeks are being drastically also reduced. Rather than average pay, only the level of statutory sick pay, which is £85 a week, will be paid to those with long-term and permanent disability injuries, to those who are unable to work and to the dependants of fatally injured victims. Why is the compensation so important? Well, (1) the recognition (2) financial assistance and (3) closure, closure from what the individual’s been through. Victims in most cases cannot receive compensation from (1) The assailant, the person who actually caused the injury, even if the individual’s caught (2) Their employer, virtually impossible to secure compensation from an employer in the civil court. Employers ultimately rely on their own liability insurance to cover any such claim and insurance companies fight very hard against this claim, therefore the CICA remains the only option for most victims of violent crime to seek any recompense. What cuts are being made? Scrapping all compensation for injuries in bands 1 – 5, 50% of all awards will no longer exist. The current payments are £2,000 as a maximum.

Conference, I just wanted to share with you the reason why this motion’s come to Conference, through our branch was one of our members was attacked. He was set on by six people, by the time they finished with him he was put in hospital and his face, because I went to see him in hospital a couple of days later, his face was like and it’s horrific just to say it, was like a tyre had gone over his head, he was absolutely ballooned like this and crushed. He had both jaws broken, he had his eye sockets broken, he had metal plates put in the front of his head, on the side of his head, on the rear of his head, he was assaulted in a horrific manner and when it came to putting a claim in, believe it or not they said your injuries are no longer classified as major injuries and he was actually told he cannot put a claim in. Please support this motion. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconded? Formally seconded?

Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580: I’m here to support this motion based on the motion I put through the other day, with regard to shop attacks. If people, just giving people a free right to walk into a shop and abuse somebody, assault somebody, if there’s nothing in there to stop people doing it, then what protection do we have? So it doesn’t matter whether large injury, small injury, we should be able to claim and stop it from happening, that’s it. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. The Executive would ask you to support the motion. All those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 66.
**That this Conference, through the trade union movement, put pressure on the Labour Party to give workers back their rights and change back the detrimental changes that this Tory/Lib Dem government have made when they next get in government.**

**Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561:** Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. That this Conference through the trade union movement put pressure on the Labour Party to give back workers their rights and change back the detrimental changes that this Tory LibDem government have made when they are next in government. We’ve heard this, it’s been on and on and on all through this Conference, health and safety, Jackson report, right to strike. I was going to withdraw it in favour of the Executive Council one, I did that last time and somebody wanted to talk on the motion. I think we get the message. I think we need to take it back to our Labour constituencies like Ronnie’s said and Ian, write to our MPs, join the Labour Party, get the message back. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconded? Formally seconded?

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Mr President, Delegates. We’ve said enough on the previous resolution and we criticise the Labour Party. Now just a while ago, when Ronnie was speaking, he told you action speaks louder than words. There’s a lot of Delegates here at Conference. How many of you hold Labour cards? How many of you go to the branch meetings? Go to the constituency meetings? To the district meetings? You have to attend all these meetings, you have to make yourself go. Now I can tell you in Bristol, there’s three of us with union cards who go to the constituency and to the wards as Labour Party candidates. We’re Labour Party but we are trade union delegates at these meetings. I go to the district party which is now open to all delegates, you don’t have to be nominated by a constituency or anything and there are five constituencies turns up in Bristol and again, very few Labour people there, about five or six of us, so if we don’t make our representation, it’s no good in having a card and keeping it in your pocket and staying at home looking at tele or some other thing. If there’s meetings on, you have to be at them. Ronnie was right when he said that today, without that action that speaks louder than words, we’re not going to get anywhere. I support the resolution. Please support it and Ronnie was right when he said that, remember that when you go home, that with your card and you’re at the meetings, you’re making yourself known. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons) – on behalf of the Executive Council:** Obviously we’d ask the Conference to support this motion. I don’t need to tell you, people have already told you why we need to keep on putting pressure on any government to repeal the anti-trade union legislation. Please support. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** To the vote. In favour? Against? Carried. Motion 67.

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**That this Conference agrees that the Labour Party MUST reverse the attacks on Employment Law this present Government has implemented and include as a priority in manifesto including the reduction in consultation period from 90 days to 45 days**

**Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference.** Here to move motion 67. Conference agrees that the Labour Party must reverse the attacks on the employment law this current government has implemented, including it as priority in their manifesto, including the reduction in the consultation period for 90 days down to 45 days. Labour must commit to reforms, absolutely vital. We’ve seen very little from them over the 13 years that they were in government and my concerns are even if they are re-elected, my concerns are that they’re going to continue with the austerity that this current government’s doing. We have seen health and safety laws being diluted over the last few months, Labour have done very little to oppose. We have seen agency regulations, meant to come in to give help and protect agency workers, instead you have seen them being diluted and you’ve seen companies implementing them and abusing them, when really they were there, meant to protect vulnerable people.

The main thing I want to discuss is the 90 days reduction in terms of the consultation period from 90 days down to 45. As I said earlier, our site was under a 90 day consultation period for closure and those 90 days, to be honest with you, went really, really fast and there was so much work that had to be done to support our people to try and negotiate effectively, to try and come up with proposals to save the site. Those 90 days disappeared very, very quickly and before you know
it, that time has elapsed. 45 days, I wouldn’t even like to comprehend, any one of our sites going through a closure with only 45 days consultation, I really wouldn’t. I wouldn’t like to be sitting in that branch if and when that time comes and I urge people to understand the implications of a, the massive implications that this is going to have on this reduction. Those 90 days that we had at Hovis, Birmingham, we had the Bakers Union Learning Services and I would like to, while I’m here, thank John Vickers, I’d like to thank all the Bakers Union Learning Services ladies, Karen Plasm, Carol Hillaby and Janet Goodwin for all their assistance and support through a traumatic time, as a closure is for any site, but the moral is that this Labour government, we must hold them accountable and they must help the working people of this country and if they’re not, the only way I can see going forward is unless people from the working class backgrounds actually get up and get involved with the Labour Party, personally I can see very little change happening, irrespective of who’s in the government. I move and I urge you to support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. As you can quite clearly see, there’s a clear trend in the last three, four, five motions. We, this is the time that we need to deliver a strong message back to the Labour government, because we haven’t got enough time before the next general election, it’s only two years away, it’s not enough time, but it’s time to apply the pressure that when they do come back that they repeal all these legislations that have been detrimental, for example as the mover has already put it from 90 to 45, the way they’re going, that’s going to end up to 30 days and if we’re not careful it’ll end up to 15 days the way this Mickey Mouse government’s running at this present moment in time, so we need to be crystal clear, we need to deliver the message back to the Labour government to say when you do, not if, but when you do get back into power, these are the things we want quick results on and if you’re not going to deliver them, this is what the trade union movement’s all about, this is what we will do, because we need to challenge, apply, apply, apply, keep on applying the pressure. I strongly urge you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No other speakers?

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons) – on behalf of the Executive Council: Obviously here to support this motion and would ask the Conference to do so for the same reasons as the previous two speakers have said. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 68. I’ve got to say, Imran Hussain......

68 Government and Political – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to support prisoner wards in the event of a general election only

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. There’s nothing to speak on this motion, it’s quite clear, it does what it says on the tin. Conference agrees to lobby the government to support prisoner wards in the event of a general election only and the reason for putting this in was because there is a low, low, low turnout in whatever election for whatever thing, wherever you have an election for whatever, there’s low turnouts, so we need to increase the turnout. That does what it says on the tin. I move and I urge you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m here to strongly oppose this motion. When we sent, when people step outside the laws of this country, they’re put to prison. If they’ve stepped out sufficiently bad that they land in prison, then their rights to vote are taken away. Once they’ve paid their debt to society, no problem, but until they’ve paid their debts to society they should not be allowed to vote. Oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: I’m here to oppose the motion solely on the fact that the motion is about all prisoners. I just want to make the point of what about prisoners that are on remand, that haven’t been proven guilty of anything but are still in prison but haven’t been sentenced or proven guilty. What about the laws about truancy, because parents can now go to prison if their child does not go to school, but if the parent has tried every way about trying to get the child to go to school and they just won’t have it, what about them, they could be punished for something that their child has done. I mean yes, everybody should take control of their parents, but there’s just some children that, the parent can go and put them, push them in the gates of school and they would still find their way out to playing truant and what about this current government that’s cutting the benefits for people, what about people that have to go out and steal food to feed their families because they physically haven’t got enough money to go out and buy food to feed their children and
yes, there might be a lower turnout in general elections, but we need to get behind the Labour Party, we need to put the message forward and get ordinary people voting, not prisoners. I mean I’m highly against the life of murderers, rapists, paedophiles, absolutely not given the vote, because they shouldn’t have any human rights anyway once they’ve done that, so oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Morgan – Branch 238 (Burtons, Llantarnam): I ask you to oppose this motion and for one simple reason, a lot of people in prison have done bad and terrible things. They’ve taken away peoples’ rights to live, they’ve killed people, they’ve molested young kids, they rape women and yet we want to give them to vote in a fair and democratic society, is that right? You take the attack in Woolwich the other week, in broad daylight there was an attack on a British soldier and we’re saying we want to give these people a vote, the right to vote in our society? Have we gone bonkers? They don’t live by the rules of our society, so why the hell should they say how we live our lives, this is wrong. I implore you to turn this out, to chuck it out, this isn’t right. People who have done wrong in the courts of this country and we’ve got the best legal services in the country and the justice system here, we want to give these people a right to vote who’ve killed people, molested children, raped women, I don’t think so. Please chuck this out.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Janine Cokayne – Region 2: I’m here to oppose this motion for the simple fact the people who go to prison are there for a reason. Prison is supposed to be punitive. If you go to prison, you’ve stepped outside the laws of the country and what normal people class as acceptable behaviour. I don’t think it’s acceptable that paedophiles, rapists, murderers, thieves, they all leave victims. At the end of the day let’s put the victims first and not give them the right to vote. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother James McNiven – Branch 432 (first-time Conference Delegate and first-time speaking): I agree with what Brothers and Sisters have already said, but my major concern would be that these political parties who would receive these votes would aim policies towards these prisoners, have these policies in to reduce maybe sentences for people, lighter sentences for them and I would not want any government to try and get their vote and put policies forward to make their lives better or make their lives easier. They’ve committed a crime, whether it’s small or large, whether it’s murder, whether it’s robbery, no matter what it is, I would not want these people making a decision on how my life is going to be and I would ask all these people in here to strongly oppose that motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. The Executive neither supports or opposes. The decision of the Executive is that we have no opinion on this motion whatsoever, so it’s over to you. Those in favour? Oh sorry, you’re right, Raj, apologies.

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. Wow, did not realise that this would get spoken on in a negative, negative, total negative manner except neither here, neither there, which is an excellent approach may I add, but let me tell you this, by not allowing the prisoners the right, how are we as a union, democratic, how are we following the rights, the human rights, the European rights, this right and that right, how are we abiding by all the rights? Who are we to take away the rights of prisoners, they’re in prison yes because they’ve breached something, they’ve done something nasty, they’re a paedophile, they’re a murderer, whatever they’ve done, they are serving their time for that particular incident that’s taken place and they’re being punished for it, what are you re-punishing them for? How can we sit here and say, or stand here and say, that we should take away their right to vote? We can’t be the judge and the jury. What about the government? What about the government? Look at what the government’s doing, look at what the previous government, the Labour government, done, look at how they’ve gone all against the trade union movement, what did you do about it? Now that’s the people you need to challenge, that’s the organisations you need to challenge, you don’t challenge ordinary folk that have committed a crime and if they’re in prison, they’re there for a reason and they’re being punished for it. Don’t take away all their rights. What happens when they come out? Why are you allowing them to vote when they come out? If they’re a murderer and they’ve only got seven years, because of a crap justice system and they come out after seven years and in the eighth year they’re going to be allowed to vote because they’ll be registered in a household in the UK and they’ll be voting, so how come all of a sudden they’ve got that particular right back? I would think long and hard before you either support or oppose the motion. Think about human rights, think about peoples’ rights, think about what you are asking Conference to do, think about what you’re asking to do, think about fairness, think about democracy, I still urge you to strongly support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Sorry, that was the right to reply, mate. Sorry. Okay, mate. To the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s lost. 69.

**69 Government and Political – Branch 313**

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government about the poor train services, plus the rising cost of train fares

Sister Helena England – Branch 568: Here to move this motion. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government about the poor train services plus the rising cost of fares.

Some people, for whatever reason, have no choice to use trains on a day-to-day basis and pay the cost of that travel. The train system we have in this country is a disgrace and it’s not just the cost of the travel that’s an issue. The whole of the system needs an overhaul, we need to have an up-to-date system that is workable and reliable. One of the other big issues, apart from the expensive fares, is the amount of people that are allowed all on trains. I think this is a danger because if that train crashed, they would have no way of knowing how many people are on that train. This is a health and safety issue, a serious health and safety issue.

There’s been occasions that I’ve reserved seats on trains, but you can’t get to your seat because they’re that packed, there’s aisles full of baggages, bikes, prams, everything, again another health and safety issue. We’ve had a talk on health and safety about companies not looking after your health and safety, well I think if you’re paying a train fare, that company who owns that train has a right to look after your health and safety while you’re travelling on that train and what about the (unclear) manned train stations, what about disabled people that rely on people on these train stations to help them? They’re going to feel isolated, people are going to feel frightened on lonely stations that have got nobody to look after them, again health and safety issues that these companies who run these trains should be looking after you. That’s why I’m asking for support on this motion. We need this government to sit up and take notice and open their eyes to the whole transport system. If this government want to keep cars off the road and encourage people to use public transport, they need to get their act together and give this country a train system that is safe, efficient and not leave the running of the train services to faceless companies in other countries that make big profits and give no benefits back to this country. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Formally seconding, oh, okay.

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: When I go on a course, normally up at the Northern College in Barnsley, I get the train from Cardiff Central up to Barnsley and because of the time in the morning I have to go up, it costs £188 return. Now, to get up there is absolutely ramming because obviously I’m going through Birmingham city centre about 8 – 9 o’clock in the morning. On the way back on a Friday, because I’m not 100% convinced on what time the train, the course is actually finishing, you have to get on whatever train you possibly can. The last time I went up to Barnsley, I stood from Sheffield all the way to Bristol Parkway, for three hours I stood in a little part of a carriage on a bag rack next to the toilet for £188, it’s absolutely disgusting. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other speakers? Obviously Helena was speaking on behalf of the Executive as well and obviously we’re asking you to support the motion. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 70.

**70 Energy – Branch 580**

That this Conference agrees to lobby government to put pressure on energy companies to reduce the cost of all energy prices in line with the cost of living to cap profit margins so they have to pass saving on to the consumers.

Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580: That this Conference agrees to lobby government to put pressure on energy companies to reduce the cost of all energy prices in line with the cost of living, to cap profit margins, so they have to pass their savings on to consumers. I’ve been doing a bit of internet today and profits for British Gas for last year £918 million, up 13% on the year before, Scottish Power £292 million, National Grid 3.6 billion, why are these savings not passed on to us as a consumer? We have no choice but to use these energies, we need them, to run our homes, to run our families, so why should they get all the profits and not pass some back to us? Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): President, Platform, fellow Delegates. I’m here to second this motion. Privatised energy companies, they don’t think about us, all they think about is profits, the bigger the better.
They think about their fat cat salaries that they can cream, they think about the shareholders as well. Earlier in the week we had in one of the speeches, it was mentioned about the way that privatised people took shares, this, that and the other, absolutely dreadful. They don’t think about the consumer and they only tend to pay lip service to the environment. I agree totally with what Angela had to say about the profits and they should be putting those profits back in to help the consumer by lowering the prices, but I also think we’ve got a planet that we need to look after as well, so I’m looking at the green issue too and I think some of the profits that are generated should be used, re-invested by the government into building alternative power sources whether it be tidal wave power, hydroelectric power, you name it, we’ve had the technology for decades and decades and no government, whatever their colour, has had the bottle to grasp the nettle.

Ann Pettifor yesterday spoke to us about money, surely somebody can press a few buttons as she explained to us to magic some money to invest in these new technologies. I was lucky to go to Iceland recently, I’ve been wanting to go there since I was a teenager, they are hoping to become an oil-free country, okay they’re lucky they’ve got lots of geothermal energy, they’re wanting to introduce hydrogen cars, but the technology’s out there, why the heck don’t we use it. If we can get the new technology, get alternative energy sources, then it’d be virtually free energy for all, we wouldn’t have to worry about having all these profits, let’s get it back into state control. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dharmjit Daroch – Branch 302 (West Bromwich) – first-time speaker: I ask you to support this. The cost of living is hitting everybody hard. Why do energy companies continue to reap the benefit of a climate that continues to change? Are we not entitled to stay warm and safe in our own homes? Wages seem to be decreasing, yet the energy companies are achieving record profits. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: Scottish Power phoned me up five days before Christmas. Mr Lay, can we have your meter readings? Yes, yes, no worries. Gives them my meter readings. Due to the fact that obviously it’s been a very cold winter and by the looks of it you’ve used your electric quite a lot and your gas, obviously central heating, we need to look at putting up your standing order. I said oh right, okay, how much? They put it up by £80 a month. It jumped up £80 a month and then when you’ve got profits like Angela was talking about and you see that and I said well, how on earth has nobody mentioned it before to me, how have you not phoned me before and said do you know what, you’re using quite a bit, do us a favour, we think you’re going to overspend, let’s increase it steadily. No, just before Christmas they put my thing up to, as I said, another £80 per month.

It’s absolutely disgusting that they can charge this and then we’ve got the old people who are suffering, who are turning off their heating throughout the winter because they think that they can’t afford to pay it, they’re suffering because these fat cats are taking all the profits. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: I’d totally ask you to support this motion on one reason and one reason only. Every year in this country, come winter time, at least 2,500 die of cold-related diseases. For a lot of the poor, particularly pensioners, the choice is put the heating on or eat, this should never be. These energy companies need bringing into line. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. I fully support this motion. I shouldn’t have to make a decision whether to keep me and my son warm or feed me and my son when these companies are making so much profit. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Cecil John – Branch 130 (Hovis, Mitcham): I’m here, on behalf of the Executive, to support this motion. Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates, Conference. Sorry. The Executive asked me to support this motion, because if you look at all these energy companies coming up and down knocking at your door, saying oh you can switch onto us, leave British Gas, leave London Electricity, they’re just making profit on you. They will say one thing today, the next month they will send a different bill to you, so they’re just using people. I would advise people stay with the old dog you know rather than the new one, so support this motion please.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 71.
**71 Energy – Branch 580**

*That this Conference agrees to lobby government to reduce fuel prices and taxes on fuel, within the UK. We in the UK have the 2nd highest price on diesel and the 7th on petrol within Europe*

**Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580:** That this Conference agrees to lobby government to reduce fuel prices and taxes on fuel within the UK, this is what I Google’d last time. In the UK we had the second highest price in diesel and the seventh highest in petrol. The five biggest oil companies earn a combined profit of $375 million per day, despite reducing their oil prices, so to me we should be taxing the oil companies, not taxing the consumer. They’ve got the money, we haven’t. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds):** President, Platform, fellow Delegates. I apologise for my ramblings at the previous resolution, but it is one of my pet subjects is the environment. I’ll keep this a bit briefer. Next week, all being well, health permitting and everything, I’m going to take my caravan to southern Germany. When I get on the ferry at Dover to go over to Calais, I’ll have practically an empty tank of fuel by choice. Reason is, I’ll just have enough, I’ll be going on fumes only, up the motorway from France into Belgium and as soon as I get over the border in Belgium, pull into this petrol station, nice little small place and I’ll fill up. If it was within the law I’d break my own health and safety rules and I’d put some in plastic cans as well in the boot, but that’s maybe going a bit too far. I would save an absolute fortune. It’s an absolute scandal, is the prices that we pay for our fuel. I ask you to support. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359:** Simple fact is having the second highest tax on diesel, a lot of people will say well, it doesn’t affect me, I ride a bicycle or it doesn’t affect me for one reason or another, it affects every single one of us because every single thing you buy from a shop, no matter where it comes from, has been delivered by a vehicle that uses diesel. Trains use diesel, lorries use diesel, vans use diesel and on top of that, I’ve got a car, I use it for going to work amongst other things and so I’m pretty much an essential user. Now the fat cats, the MPs and the like, they get a very generous fuel allowance, so they won’t be too worried if fuel hits whatever it hits, but at the end of the day it’s hitting ordinary working families through increased costs of goods because all haulage companies are going to pass the diesel on and by increased costs of transport to get to work. I ask you to strongly support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke) – EC member, speaking on behalf of the Executive Council:** Obviously the Executive Council would ask you to support this motion. All the speakers have made some fantastic points, every single one of them is exactly right. Fuel in this country is taxed twice, 47.1 pence fuel duty plus VAT, it’s absolutely extortionate. This can’t really continue, it can’t. It puts enormous pressure on businesses which businesses then use the rise in logistical costs to use to attack our terms and conditions, because that’s the only controllable cost left for them. It also puts massive pressure on working families, just to get from A to B, to get to work, parents to take the children round, it eats away at your disposable income, for those of us who can remember having a disposable income. Obviously we need this to change, but we need to do more than just do the Conference, we need to join the Labour Party, we need to attend the constituency meetings, put pressure on the MPs and ask them to challenge it, get them to do something about it as well as us. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 72.

**72 Education – Branch 582**

*That this Conference agrees that basic first aid should be introduced to the school curriculum at the earliest possible age. Early learning will provide children with basic skills for life, skills that could help save many lives*

**Sister Sheila Hyman – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton):** I’m here to move motion 72. Chair, Platform, Delegates. That this Conference agrees that basic first aid should be introduced into the school curriculum at the earliest possible age, this is a valuable skill for life and will help to save lives. I ask for your support. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother David Lawrence – Branch 582 (Manor, Carlton):** Here to second the motion and offer my support to Sheila. It’s difficult to understand why first aid is still not mandatory in the school curriculum in England and Scotland, because it is
in Wales and Northern Ireland. The British Heart Foundation published figures which also fully support its introduction, when its survey found that 73% of school children wanted to learn first aid and 75% of teachers and parents also supported its introduction. There are also subjects taught in the present curriculum with which first aid could easily be included, subjects like citizenship, science or physical education and it is also estimated that only 7% of the population have the capability to administer first aid effectively. Teaching these skills should be as important as reading and writing, giving our children the skills that could save a life and building a generation of lifesavers. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): I’m here to support this resolution. It makes a lot of sense and it will save many, many lives. Young people, I don’t know if you’ll like this term, but they are like sponges, they absorb information and that is the correct time to try and get the techniques of first aid introduced into society. The more first aiders or people with these skills we have, more lives will be saved. Thank you. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: Platform, Delegates. About five weeks ago I fainted at home in the bathroom, knocked myself unconscious and normally there would have just been me and my son in the house. I was lucky, my partner hadn’t left for work, he was running a bit late, but I’d have still probably been laid there at teatime when he came home because Paul wouldn’t have known what to do and he was distraught about that. He knows to dial 999, but that’s not enough and we need children to learn how to do basic first aid, so please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Mark McHugh – Branch 503 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): We ask Conference to support this motion. This should be an integral part of the school curriculum. This would potentially save lives, but it would also raise awareness amongst school children, many who suffer illness such as epilepsy, asthma and various forms of allergies. More children have now also taken on the role of carer for their parents in some circumstances. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. 73.

73 Education – Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to lobby government to stop discrimination within colleges and schools on grounds of religion pupils should be taken on grades alone not what their beliefs are

Sister Angela Shortreed – Branch 580: That this Conference agrees to lobby government to stop discrimination within colleges and schools on grounds of religion. Pupils should be taken on their grades alone and not what their beliefs are. My daughter wants to be a lawyer, she’s a really smart kid, I don’t know where she gets it from, I’m sure it’s not her dad. She goes to a good college in Leeds, Notre Dame. She had to get a minimum of a B grade to get into that college. Any other Catholic pupil was allowed to go to that college on whatever merit they got. We wouldn’t allow it in work, so why do we allow it in schools and colleges? Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): Hello again. President, Platform, fellow Delegates. I’m here to second this motion. When Angela first asked me to assist her with it, I’ll be honest I didn’t really understand it and when Angela explained it, I did understand it but I couldn’t believe it. I couldn’t believe that there’d be such blatant discrimination existing in Yorkshire in 2012, so I’d ask Conference to please support this motion. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, obviously the Executive would ask you to support this motion. Quite clearly we should never, ever accept any form of inequality or discrimination, we shouldn’t tolerate it and obviously please signal your support by voting through this motion. The Executive would ask you to support the motion. Those in favour? Those against? That’s carried. Motion 74, 75 sorry, 75. I was on the wrong page.

75 Education – Branch 417

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government; that more is needed to support adults who have a prognosis of dyslexia in the workplace.

Brother John Fox – Branch 417 (speaking on my own branch and for the Executive Council): Platform. With the introduction of more documentation in the workplace, be it on computer or paper-based documentation and the
implementation of process management in many factories, more help should be accessible to the employee. Where there’s an issue with poor performance, a well informed employer should be alert to the possibility of underlying specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia and take appropriate steps to address the situation. The employer has a duty of care on the equality act to implement reasonable adjustments for a disability to assist the employee in his or her duties in their everyday working life. Getting help can be very intimidating for some people, as they would have to speak to their HR or manager about this. An equality and diversity representative or the occupational health personnel would be a lot less frightening, as they could arrange the correct support for them with sensitivity and compassion.

The assessment can cost between £300 and £500, which is a pittance compared to the savings that this would bring with correctly filled-in documentation. Adjustments to help the employee are simple to do, as it could just be a different colour of paper and set a computer screen with the coloured background to documents. Savings will also come through not having to go through disciplinary procedures from mistakes that have been made. It has been said by human resource personnel that they think dyslexia is not a workplace problem and it should be dealt with by a company and any training from outside resources that is being provided, then that company does the assessment. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Yes? Formally seconded.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. Not all employers though, my wife works for Leeds Council, very, very understanding of dyslexia. She’s just gone on to get O level English for dyslexia and they make a number of provisions and courses, so not all employers do this, but dyslexia is a disease, it’s very strange, if you don’t know anybody with it or see how they operate with it, it is a disease, but people they are not daft, it’s just a disease. Support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Go on then.

76 Education – Branch??????

*That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to fund more colleges; than private companies, in response to redundancy funding.*

Brother ????????????? Speaker: I was just saying, I feel more like Pat Rowley these days. Motion 76. Comrades, in the past few years the Union has come against redundancies across the country, affecting a large number of our members. Help for members like CV writing, computer skills and workability courses are available once the company is in consultations and this is when the problem arises. Private training providers, who have gained government funding for redundancy training, start using our members that are under threat of redundancy as cash cows. They can offer training that sometimes is not fit for purpose and doesn’t take our members needs into account. These private training providers even go to the company offering their services and totally bypass the union on site and then negotiate time off to deliver this training. This is fit mostly around the private provider’s timetable and not the member who is going to be made redundant.

These providers offer the company packages that look good on paper, but in reality doesn’t address the needs of our members. All our members are to these private training providers are a signature on a form that will pull down funding for the training company’s profits. There are no quality checks on these providers, so all we have is the union reps checking the training being delivered to our members. Once these private training providers are on site, supposedly delivering quality training, you cannot get them off your site if you feel your members are not getting the training they deserve. This is why colleges should get more redundancy funding, because they understand the learners needs a lot more than private training providers does. The colleges could already have worked on the site if there has been courses running on the site through the ULRs. Colleges can have links with unions, especially they have the Trade Union Education Department, so they understand union protocol. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded?

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Here supporting the motion. Chair, Platform, Conference. In November, as I said previously, we were under risk of closure with a proposal to close the site. Mid-January we were 100% closing the site, so we went through the consultation process to close the site. In March, through the consultation process, there was a company called Intraining, who I believe have got the government grant for employability assistance. We had a few meetings with them, the company invited myself to attend a meeting with them. I asked them, I quizzed them about a few
questions and it seemed quite apparent that these people had no intention of providing a service, they were just there to milk the cow and the more people they got to come into these seminars, the more money they made.

If I may just share just a couple more items with you. The first course they offered was something called Employability Skills. Under this umbrella, employees should have received CVs, set up email accounts, learnt computer skills, learnt interview techniques and learnt interview questions. What actually took place in the first week and it was quite shocking, there were people with massive language issues who couldn’t speak English or who couldn’t understand English and there was just one lady and I’m not taking a dig at the lady but I kept pulling her up and I said you know, I’m not being funny, these people sitting here, they can’t understand a word of English and she goes well, why are they employed here? I said that’s really none of your business why are they employed here, I said what I’m asking you is how are you communicating with these people? She said to be honest, with great difficulty. I said have you taught them any computer skills? and the response was I can’t, because I haven’t got the facility to try and explain to them. She goes well, can you lot assist us? I said absolutely no chance. I said can I ask how much you get paid per bum on seat? and the answer was initially £600 per bum on seat and if they get a job and they’ve been on this course, they get another £1500.

Myself and Raj, we complained to the senior management team on our site, but unfortunately they really were not interested, so they just said look, we are obliged under the agreements that we’ve got to provide assistance in terms of training etc., if there is a closure. So then thankfully the Bakers Union Learning Services came in and we did something quite incredible in terms of supporting our people and continue to do so ever now, even though the site’s more or less closed and we’ve set up something in a college, which is why I feel very passionate about this motion and I think the colleges are a different set-up altogether. You’ve got the careers people, you’ve got the Department of Works & Pensions, the Jobcentre people there, helping people to get on courses and making sure they fast track them to ensure that they can try and get another job as quickly as possible. It is very difficult to go through any type of redundancy and I never dreamt it, I never dreamt this time last year that Hovis, Birmingham wouldn’t exist. We believe that we were logistically very strong and as a consequence never dreamt that we would ever be in a closure situation. How that has changed, but the redundancy itself, there’s so much involved in redundancies, it’s astronomical.

I think the Brothers from R F Brooks have gone through a similar process with the closure there and there’s so much involved with redundancies and these type of companies do very little other than rob the government and provide very little for the people that they’re meant to be accountable to and I think it’s more important that colleges assist in any redundancy through Bakers Union Learning Services and through any college to provide the assistance our people need. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 77. You’d have thought they’d have carried you from the back wouldn’t you, you know what I mean? At least, that’s shocking.

77 Welfare and Benefits – Branch 390

That this Conference urges our union through the TUC to raise the issue of ‘Single Working Parents’ and the lack of support given to them with child care and other issues relating to Single Parents.

Sister Wendy Stanley – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke) – first-time speaker: This Conference urges our Union through the TUC to raise the issue of single working parents and the lack of support given to them with child care and other issues relating to single parents. Being a single parent myself, I find it really difficult to be able to go to work while my daughter is off school. If, like me, you don’t have the support of friends, families, it’s so difficult. I work part-time hours and I have to pay a full-time child carer rate, £140 for one week of half-day child care is ludicrous. There’s no need for me to go to work, I might as well stay off and look after her myself, but then I’m in trouble because I’ve had time off without permission. The other thing for single parents that I feel, my daughter’s five now and the parental leave states that after five you’re not able to do that, you’re not able to have parental leave after your child’s five years old, why five? Does that mean I can leave her in on her own now? No, I can’t. If my daughter’s off school because she’s ill, why can’t I have the day off and not get told off for it, why can’t I look after her, without taking the Mick, I don’t take the Mick, I very rarely have time off unless it’s needed. I ask you to support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Who’s seconding? Formally seconded? Formally seconded, thank you.
Sister Sarah Woolley – Branch 580: President, Platform, Delegates. I’m a single mum, I’m lucky enough though that I’ve got a good support system around me, good child care, my mum and my dad, bless him, give me ample amount of help. Not everybody’s got that, not everybody’s as lucky as me and we need to make sure that people have got support. We’re never going to tackle the issue of child poverty if we don’t give parents the support in the first place and that’s what we need to do, we need to start with the parents to then enable the children to get what they need as well. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other speakers? Okay.

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): We need to support this motion, we need to give more support to single parents, if not for the parent then for the child. 26% of households with dependent children are single parent households and there are two million single parents in Britain today. As well as getting the right support for single parents, we also need to get rid of the stigma that is attached to the term “single parent”. I don’t know about you, but whenever you hear the term single parent, an image of a young teenage mother just springs to mind, just because that is what the media has portrayed them as, but only 2% of single parents are teenagers and there are many, many reasons why people are single parents, divorce, a parent may die, there are many, many reasons. On top of the stigma that comes with the term, there’s also the poverty.

As I said before, the Child Poverty Act is being ignored. About 41% of households that are single parents are poor, that’s almost half and yes, you may think that getting a job and working will help get them out of poverty, but you’ll be wrong. The poverty rate for single parents in part-time jobs is 23% and it’s 18% for those with full-time jobs. Also, there is of course the issue of affordable child care as well, 32% of single parents working part-time and paying for child care say it’s difficult to find the money to pay for child care and yes, 32% isn’t a great massive number, yes it’s a third but not massive, that are struggling to pay for child care, but that is because most single parents simply cannot afford to pay for child care, so rely on family, friends and ex-partners to look after children when the main single parent goes out and makes a living.

I dread to think what mine and my mam’s life would have been like if it weren’t for the fantastic support of my nana, she was and still is like a second mam to me. She has been there to support my mam through everything and we really do owe her a lot, but the harsh reality is some single parents just aren’t that lucky and that’s why we need to, through the TUC, put pressure on the government to get off their rich backsides and take note of real life and do something to support single parents before it’s bloody too late.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? Okay, you were going down there. And just to clarify, I’m not sure whether I said 7 o’clock before or half past 7, 7.30 tonight is the Monarch Hotel, it’s the “Spirit of ’45”, followed by the fabulous Bakers, apparently they’ve changed the name to the Fabulous Bakers Great Granddads I’ve been informed, Ronnie, I’m just kidding you know.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I don’t know how I put up with the pressure, he takes the mick out of me or whatever within the workplace. This year the recipient, although not in the Conference Centre, is going to be awarded the youth award for something totally different.

The first one we’re going to do is the youth award, it’s an award that we gave out, we started giving, I don’t know, years all fade into one when you get to my age, 40, about I don’t know, about six or seven years ago, we started doing it and I think on every occasion we’ve given the award to somebody for doing organising or they’ve been a fantastic shop steward or whatever within the workplace. This year the recipient, although not in the Conference Centre, is going to be awarded the youth award for something totally different.

The recipient is Imrin Beeby (?) spelling and she’s from Manor Bakeries in Stoke. She’s a ULR and I’m sure all the learning teams will be made up that at last there’s some real recognition for somebody within the learning services at lay level and Imrin has been responsible in that bakery and it’s not that long ago that they opened this learning centre, but she’s the one who’s done the posters, she’s set up the story boards, she’s even in her own time putting together a promotional video for the workplace and she’s done a fantastic job. Her work has played a major role in the success of that learning centre and I know that it is one of the most successful learning centres we’ve got, so without more ado because it’s going to take a week to get down here, I’m going to ask Wendy Stanley to come down and get the award, I’m going to ask Julie Blackburn to come over and give the award on, come on, you’re milking it ......
Sister Wendy Stanley – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke): Can I say something?

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: If you want to, yes go on, yes fine.

Sister Wendy Stanley – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke): I know for a fact Imrin would love this award. She knows she’s won it, unfortunately she couldn’t be here today or this week. She’s worked really, really hard. She’s only 26 years old, she puts the time and effort in all the time. Our learning centre is one of the best, even though I say so myself as a ULR. I’ve worked in it, we’ve all been a really good team, we’ve had so many successes from our learning centre. People have passed maths, English, IT, loads of people including myself. Imrin, she helped to set up this learning centre with the help of our branch secretary, Richard Wainwright and it’s absolutely fantastic and if you haven’t yet got one, get one. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: And last, but by no means least, one of the awards that’s really dear to my heart and again it’s one that we haven’t been giving so long, but the fact that I used to be the National Health & Safety Officer of the Union, I like, I love it when somebody who’s worked within health and safety’s recognised, somebody who really makes a difference. I met the recipient at the No. 1 Regional Council and I’ve got to say his interventions on health and safety at the Regional Council are superb. Obviously he does his homework before he gets there, understands clearly what he’s talking about, but I think more important is the differences that he makes to his workplace and I know that he can take that a lot further than what he does now. Without more ado, I’m going to ask Sadiq Vohra from what are you called, Walker Smith & Way, they keep changing their name I’ll tell you, they only change their name actually so they can get rid of all their old stuff, you know what I mean and this year’s recipient of the health and safety award from the Executive Council is Peter Berry from Greggs and ......

[APPLAUSE]

Okay, do you want to say a few words?

Brother Peter Berry – Branch 116: For those of you who know me, you know I’m not really happy with public speaking, so I’m going to keep it short and sweet. In recent years, we’ve seen a lot of attacks on health and safety by the coalition government and that, coupled with the 12 or 13 years of apathy from the Labour Party, has given the employers the green light to sacrifice workplace safety. All I would say is you don’t have to be a health and safety rep to improve workplace safety, so please everybody here, I implore you to stand up, when you see something that’s wrong, stand up for your rights and raise it immediately. That’s really all I’ve got to say, so thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. Thanks for your indulgence, see you at half nine in the morning. Don’t forget tonight, half past seven, the Monarch, don’t forget the Welsh, don’t forget all the parties and it’s intended to raise as much money as possible. On your way out tonight, I think there’s a bucket collection, because if there’s not I’ve been conned and I want my quid back and everybody’s got to go out of that door, don’t go out of that door over there, because you know you’re only trying to get out without putting some money in a bucket. It’s that door over there. Say again? Yes, you can leave your stuff in here tonight. Old Vi’s on the door over there, so unfortunately you can’t get out on either side. Donate, donate, donate, it’s going to a good cause.
Wednesday 12 June 2013

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay? Could you stop laughing over in the corner please. Too much joviality is not expected on a Wednesday morning. Absolutely not here to have fun, it’s a serious business of work. Okay? You’re looking bright, Pauline, you’re looking very bright, well your clothes are looking very bright anyway [LAUGHTER]. I hope that wasn’t a bit of backchat. That shirt’s not allowed, that shirt’s not allowed. You’ll have to keep walking. No, I think that deserves a fine, don’t you? No, I think that deserves a fine. I think you should go Standing Orders with that shirt on. Oh, there’s another one there. What’s going on here? Obviously you’ve had a rough night haven’t you, couldn’t find anything else to wear this morning. Come in your pyjamas. Nobody gets seen in public in one of them. Rainbow? I agree Ronnie, because I mean like Liverpool shirts, who wears a Liverpool shirt these days? What’s going on? Because you made an executive decision that I had to wear a shirt and tie, John. I did give you an opportunity this year, but you refused, refused to allow me and Ronnie to dress down casual. I could have worn a tie with it? A tie, just a blue one.

Are you ready to do your roll call? Okay, Delegates, can you take your seats please. Can we make sure the doors are shut. Are we all ready to rock and roll? Can I also remind people about the tickets for No. 7’s party which is tonight, which is at the Brockton Hotel. Also that the Ransdale Hotel, which the tickets are on sale for No. 4 region and do you know, I had the winning names for Westfield Health, but I’ve remembered whose stall it is this morning, it’s Westfield Health. Wendy Stanley’s one of the winners and I think the other one might have been ...... no, no, it’s Dave Murdoch. Well done, Dave [APPLAUSE] and can I just say what a, it just goes to show what a charitable lot everybody in this place is. The bucket collection yesterday for Help the Heroes, give yourself a tremendous round of applause, £247.00 Conference, well done. [APPLAUSE]

Also, if you haven’t already done it, make sure you sign up to the Fight to save the UK Justice Petition. There was information certainly over on the Watkins & Gunn’s stall and obviously it’s got the email address. Can you make sure you sign up to that. General Secretary to do the roll call.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Region 1. Where is he, Steve? I’ll come down and have a look in a minute. Region 2. Frank, come here. [APPLAUSE]

Do you know what?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It’s John Travolta isn’t it.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: No, it’s not John Travolta. That’s Randall & Hopkirk decreased.

(laughter and applause)

The Man from Havana. Region 3. Region 4. Region 5. Region 6 and Region 7. I know. There’s 172 Delegates present and can Regional Officers make sure anyone who is absent, who turns up later on, gets sent to Standing Orders.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And obviously can we congratulate the youngest attendee this week, Amy at the back there. She hasn’t been late once and she hasn’t missed a session, so I think we should give Amy a round of applause. [APPLAUSE]

Okay, Conference. Motion 78. And just to make you aware as well, Motion 95 has been withdrawn. Okay, mate.

78 Welfare and Benefits – Branch 711

That this Conference agrees that Government must provide the same level of financial aid and security to those struggling to pay their mortgage, which would reduce the number of repossessions

Brother John Dunwoody – Branch 711 (Belfast): Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Moving this motion on behalf of Region No. 7, that this Conference agrees that this government must provide the same level of financial aid and security for those struggling to pay their mortgage, which would reduce the number of repossessions.

Thousands of homeowners have been plunged into a negative equity as their house prices have fallen at the height of the property boom (?) (unclear) during economic difficulties. The Housing Right Service Centre is dealing with around 150 new cases of repossession each month. I want the government to come to the aid of the troubled proprietors. The Charity has seen a 35% increase in people coming to them for debt advice in 2011 and 2012, in which they have dealt with almost 40,000 housing issues. Director, Janet Hunter, said increasing numbers of families are losing their homes. “We are
struggling to cope with this and unfortunately we cannot see the situation improving for some considerable time”. Around 75% of people who go to the Housing Rights Services for help on negative equity as the situation in Northern Ireland is worse than the rest of the UK. Last year England and Wales mortgage repossession actually dropped to a five year low, with house price recovery reported in some areas, but in Northern Ireland the fall resulted in the region becoming the worst in the UK for negative equity, with over a third of loans taken out since 2005 affected. “We’ve obviously had years when the house prices were increasing rapidly”, explained Mrs Hunter, “then we have since 2007 where they have decreased, so we have a lot of people here who are negative equity and about three out of every four clients who approach us now are in this position and it is particularly bad in Northern Ireland and we think the situation is probably worse than elsewhere in the UK”.

The Housing Rights Service is calling on our own Executive in Stormont to step in and improve the situation. In other parts of the UK there have been initiatives introduced by the government, for example interest-free loans which are repayable, which can help people through difficult times, so we think it is now right for action. Comrades, please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Noel Mullen – Branch 703 (Region 7, EEC Member): Not a nice place to be first thing in the morning [LAUGHTER]. Here to second the motion. I’m talking on behalf of the EEC. President, EEC, Delegates. We agree with all the mover has said and would ask the government to supply the same amount of financial help to those people whose homes are at risk of repossession, as they provided to the banks when they had financial problems. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, no other speakers? To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

79. Welfare and Benefits – Branch 568

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government on the way they are reducing the services for the sick and elderly of this country. The sick and elderly are some of the most vulnerable people of society and should be treated with dignity and respect.

Sister Helena England – Branch 568 (and Executive Member): Here to move this motion, I think the motion speaks for itself. There’s no argument that the government needed to look at the welfare system and it needed an overall, but I think we can agree that this government has taken it too far. The cuts above and beyond, they were needed. I’m talking about the cuts that will affect the sick and the elderly who may need care and attention above the normal needs of an elderly person. The government may have had to re-vamp the welfare system, but to overtax the pensions, homecare and National Health Service because they don’t want to spend money on the sick and elderly is a step too far. The elderly and the sick are the vulnerable people of our society and who need extra care and attention. They don’t need punishment because they are less able of going out to work. What do you think this is telling us? You know it tells me that this government don’t want a sick or aged society that will cost money to keep them, therefore work them longer, pay them less pension, attack the National Health Service and let them die.

Well, that might sound a bit harsh, but I think that’s what’s happening and you know what I think this is telling me, it’s telling me that they’re taking us backwards to the Dark Ages. There will be no work, no money, no healthcare, no homes, this will lead to more sick and homeless people. Food banks, soup kitchens will be needed to feed the poor and crime will increase and become the norm to survive. Now what do you think the government will do about this? Well, the prisons will get overcrowded, so like I said they’re taking us back to the Dark Ages. So what was in the Dark Ages? Back to the workhouses, back to the workhouses for the sick, the elderly, that will be forced to seek refuge somewhere and this is what the government’s solution will be. But in reality a workhouse will be no more different than a prison, because in the workhouse you’ll become just another number in a system like a prisoner and that system will allow you to be used as a cheap source of labour for the greedy rich to exploit. Poverty is on the increase and become the norm to survive. Now what do you think the government will do about this? Well, the prisons will get overcrowded, so like I said they’re taking us back to the Dark Ages. So what was in the Dark Ages? Back to the workhouses, back to the workhouses for the sick, the elderly, that will be forced to seek refuge somewhere and this is what the government’s solution will be. But in reality a workhouse will be no more different than a prison, because in the workhouse you’ll become just another number in a system like a prisoner and that system will allow you to be used as a cheap source of labour for the greedy rich to exploit. Poverty is on the increase and poverty will be the undoing of this society as we know it, that has taken years to become as civilised as it is today.

We have to keep fighting. We as a Union has to keep fighting. We have to keep fighting – oh sorry, I’ve lost my track a minute. We have to keep fighting to get a better government in place. Whether this is a Labour Party or not, I don’t know. We have to fight to make sure there is a government that will look after the vulnerable people for generations to come and not a society built on greed. We need to keep the National Health Service, so that the sick can be looked after. We need a living wage for everyone, so they don’t have to face a life of poverty. We have to keep moving forward and not backwards. We need a government that will listen to the people of this country. A government that will stop poverty and not create it
and a government that will look after the sick and vulnerable, the people of our society and not just the greedy rich. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded.

Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450 (Manchester): This is a story for old people. We’re all going to be old one day and these people that are being punished now are the people that kept this country going during the War when the men were at war and they worked hard and when you go to the doctors or anywhere oh, it’s your age. Everything’s not down to your age. They just don’t want to be bothered looking after us and we’re the people that were the backbone of this bloody country when they needed it and nobody else did it [APPLAUSE] and furthermore this is the worst country for looking after their old people in the world. You say oh, what do you get? America, Australia, anywhere you go, the pensioners are well looked after, they’re the prime people but over here you’re just thrown by the wayside when you get to a certain age. So beware, you’re all getting old, you’re going to down the same road and they’re going to kick you just to the wayside. Huh, he’s old, she’s old, they’re not worth bothering. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Mr President, Delegates. Delegates, I’m here to support this resolution. I’ve been looking at the papers over the weeks and months past and been reading about heroes and heroes here and heroes there and these people are our heroes and they need, their needs must be met by us. They made this situation for us, that we could live a decent life. It wasn’t there when they were born, but they brought it about for us. Please support this resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Now I know why we used to put you at the front, so you didn’t have as far to walk.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Region 3: Chair, Platform, Conference. Last night we watched the Spirit of ’45, an absolutely inspirational film that showed the history of the Labour Party and how things changed just after the War. One of the basic reasons why the NHS was formed was the Labour MP at the time believed in socialism. Believed in ensuring that we took care of our people. Treated people with respect and dignity through ensuring that we give free treatment in hospitals, free dental care for all, free opticians, being just a few of the benefits he started as a socialist. Today we see us as the seventh richest country in the world, the government pretending that there’s a massive issue in this country in terms of austerity and the only people that need to pay is the weak and the vulnerable in our society. I think it’s an absolute disgrace. There is no excuse for what’s going on here and these continued attacks seem to be constantly on the weak, the old, the disabled, absolutely disgusting. It’s about time they stopped giving tax breaks to the rich and ensured the basic things are met in our society. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Emergency Motion 3.

Emergency Motion 3 – The Independent Living Fund

That this Conference supports the five disabled people who are seeking to appeal to the Court of Appeal following the decision of the High Court which stated this procedure unlawful on 24th April 2013.

Brother Martin Kelly – No. 5 Region: The Independent Living Fund. Just before I start this, I’d like to thank Julie Blackburn for getting me a couple of dates and one or two things about this, so I thank her from Thompsons Solicitors. Just bear with me.

Conference, the Independent Living Fund exists to enable disabled people with high support needs to be in control of when and how they receive assistance with everyday tasks, such as when you get up, go to the toilet, eat a meal, get dressed, go out and other basic human rights, which non-disabled take for granted. 19,000 disabled people received this benefit from a £320 million Fund. On 24th April this year, a group of disabled people applied to the High Court in London to ask for a judicial review of a government’s consultation on abolition of this Fund. Mr Justice Blake, sitting in London, refused to declare the consultation process unlawful. Five disabled people are now challenging that decision and seek to appeal to the Court of Appeal. I am seeking this emergency motion to ask Conference to make it our policy that if this Fund is ultimately withdrawn from this pernicious Tory government, that we will fight for the reinstatement to help all those disabled people who will suffer gross abuse of their everyday rights, which able-bodied people take for granted. The five are among 19,000 people who receive assistance from the ILF.
The money enabled disabled people, sorry I might be repeating myself, to employ assistants to help them with their personal needs. Some of these people get £300, but it costs quite a bit to employ assistants, carers and that. The money, sorry, they will be forced, if this is stopped, they will be forced into residential care or trapped at home as a result of the abolition of the Fund.

Campaigners have warned that the proposed closure of the Fund and its transfer to local authorities will have a catastrophic impact on the independence of life chances of severely disabled people. Richard Hawkes from the, The Chief Executive of the disability charity Scope said 20,000 disabled people will lose the support for the basics in life when the Independent Living Fund closes. The government presume that the shortfall in this care and support will be met by councils, but this just isn’t the case. Local care and support for disabled people is already under-funded to a tune of £1.2 billion and councils are already struggling to cope. Expecting councils to pick up the tab when they are facing the biggest funding cuts in history is an impossible task.

Disabled people will lose out as a result. Not getting the support to wash, dress and leave your home is unacceptable. The government needs to invest more in social care to prevent disabled people being condemned to a life without basic dignity and invisible to society. Some local authorities have even considered forcing people with the highest support needs into residential homes in order to save money. It also does not make financial sense to transfer ILF funding to local authorities. Disabled People Against Cuts, which is an organisation, carried out a survey and found that two councils spend over 20% of the total adult social care budget on overheads. The lowest spending on overheads by a local authority was 10%. In comparison, the overhead costs to the ILF Fund are only 2% of the total budget. The papers released during a judicial review revealed that the government were banking on closure of the ILF receiving very little attention from the public and mainstream media, because it only affects relatively few people. These are calculating on the British public into caring enough about the human rights. I hope they have miscalculated.

Sorry, nearly there. In addition to the insanity of this situation, the judgement was read out in a court room which wasn’t even disabled accessible to the, so the five people who brought the case weren’t able to be in the room for the judge to look them in the face and also for them to look the judge in the face. There were suitable rooms only down the hallway. On top of that, the proceeding forced the government to admit that despite claiming that the 20,000 or so folks who rely on this service would be supported, there wasn’t even going to be any money funded to do so beyond 2015. This was never about providing personalised support by a local council. It was solely about cutting the funding of this in its entirety. In short, they lied.

Last bit, I think. A person called Meredith Blake said “I once made a promise to a frightened young man who had been placed into a care home because his serious medical condition could no longer be managed by the family and friends who were struggling to take care of him, that he would not die there, I would bring him home. It was thanks to the ILF that I was able to fulfill that promise”. How many people will not have that option. I would appreciate it very much if you would support this resolution. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Morning. Here to second this motion. Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. I was very proud when Martin asked me to second this. I read through a lot of the information what he had there and in fairness this summed it up for me. Those who need it. We are told the bedroom tax, council tax cuts, the removal of SDP, the cuts to care packages, this is all to help us focus on money where it is needed. Had an hefty dose of lies, rhetoric, the lies about the rush to claim DLA, the lies about the numbers of people fit for work, the focus on IB claimants, criminal records and the endless news stories about fraud rates, which are peppered with lies. When caught we hardly get an apology. The politicians won’t tell you the blunt truth, which is this. It’s about the money. We live in a country where we spend millions. The Jubilee, the Olympics, Thatcher’s funeral £10 million, £500, 000 a year for a Nudge Unit, MPs get more in food allowance than a disabled person gets to live on, but we cannot afford the sick, disabled. We cannot afford to help people bathe, eat or go to the toilet, leave their homes to go to work or do the things that able-bodied don’t need help with. We cannot afford the disabled, the sick to be human. It tells a great deal when our politicians find it easier to shed tears about the passage of the dead than the plight of the living. Support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): Good morning. I too was approached by Martin and I’ll be honest, I didn’t really know very much about this. Martin has gone into a lot of the details, so I’ll just, I apologise if there’s any repetition, I’ll just try and keep it quite (unclear). President, Platform, fellow Delegates. The Independent Living Fund helps 19,000 people. It’s an average of about £300 a week to have carers to help them with their everyday needs. The government plan to scrap this Independent Living Fund in 2015. Now what would happen to these people?
They’ll almost become prisoners in their own home, they’ll not get assistance with access to go places, doctors surgeries, shopping or whatever it may be, things that we all take for granted and they’ll also have very little help with life’s basic functions, I don’t need to go into any details. The government are hoping to make the local councils, local authorities take up this responsibility, but aren’t these local councils the ones that are having to face all these cuts by the same government? I ask you to support, please.

[SAPPLAUSE]

Sister Helena England – Branch 568 (Executive Member): In supporting this motion, I had the opportunity of attending the Disability Conference with Martin and Duncan Day and wow, what a conference. I’m not joking, it puts ours to shame. There were people there from, with every disability you could think of and I never came across one negative person at all. This money is not just for them to sit at home and get care. The majority of them went out to work, they had jobs, they contributed. Just because they’re disabled does not mean that they’re less educated. They had jobs, a lot of them and this money enabled them to have those jobs, so therefore going out to work, they are still contributing to society, they’re paying their taxes, they’re paying their national insurance, but without this money they’re going end up just like prisoners in their own homes, or like Martin said, they’re going to end up in isolation and loneliness and if they have to go into a home, that’s going to cost far much more than this is and they wouldn’t be contributing anything and that’s just not fair to them.

That’s like the sick and the elderly. They need looking after. They’re the vulnerable people of society as well, but I encourage any of you who can put yourself forward to go to that conference and it really will be an eye-opener for you. I’m telling you, it puts this conference to shame, for these people to go there like they did – blind, deaf, everything you could think of and the passion and the vitality and the unity that they had at that conference, believe me it was fantastic. I ask you to support me.

[SAPPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Yes, just briefly President, Delegates. The Executive Council would ask Conference to support the motion. I think what this demonstrates is how much the government say anybody who is going to draw any type of cash from them as being an absolute burden. The only reason I’ve got up is because I think it’s been a great debate and I think everyone’s put everything that I would have said into it anyway. What I will say is that we’re committed, the Executive Council have already, what we will do is we’ll take this through our parliamentary group, we’ll see if we can get an early day motion moved. I think the more pressure that comes, there’s going to be other unions who are going to be doing this and other pressure groups, but I mean I think the more that do it, the better it is, the more points of attack we can use.

So we will take it to our parliamentary group, I’ll ring Simeon before but we’re also going to parliament on Wednesday, so we’ll raise it there and Martin, I know that you don’t need to be told, you’re on the TUC Disability Executive, you represent the union on that, we have a seat and I’m sure that you know we’ve quite quiety spoken, but I’m sure when it comes to campaigning on these sort of issues, he’ll be a giant amongst the TUC and of course Ian, with his contacts, his new-found contacts within the Labour Party, will be raising that issue there because I think we need opposition to make as much noise as trade unionists and pressure groups. So on that basis comrades, we’d ask Conference to support the motion, but you know let’s, if we can we can get hold of your MP and campaign that way through them to get this injustice resolved because I’ll tell you what if we don’t, it’s just going to continue and continue and that might just be the start of it, that’s only one part of, if they get that through then they’ll start to look where they can make cuts elsewhere.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Motion 80

**Welfare and Benefits – Branch 450**

_That this Conference agrees that we must lobby the Labour Party to promise to repeal the Welfare Reform Act 2012. This is seriously impacting on refuge services for domestic violence. Two thirds of those hit by these freezes are women. The fear is that without access to refuge the domestic homicide figures will rise significantly._

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Any of you that have been before know that this is one of my pet hates. This Conference agrees that we must lobby the Labour Party to promise to repeal the Welfare Reform Act 2012. This is seriously impacting on refuge services for domestic violence. Two thirds of those hit by these freezes are women. The fear
is that without access to refuge, the domestic homicide figures will rise significantly. Domestic violence is rising annually or maybe it’s just that women are now starting to report it more readily. I know that domestic violence can happen to men, but mostly it’s women that are affected and the children. With the cuts that this team of evil, nasty condemns, this is making it even harder for women to get away from these sadistic bullies. For any woman now with more than two children, it will be especially hard, as the refuges in generally are not purpose-built and they could need more than two rooms for the family. Most of these refuges are funded by charities and charitable trusts. We’re all struggling with this austerity crap introduced by this shower of sh-you know what, running this country. It hits charities very hard. This resolution can save lives. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder?

Brother James McNiven – Branch 432: Good morning. This issue is very personal to me. As a child I spent 10 months in a domestic violence unit and these places are not nice places at all. I do understand that these might have changed since 15 years ago when I was last there, but yesterday we mentioned the human rights for prisoners, but what about the rights of the victims? The unit I was in had worse conditions than a prison. We had two sets of bunk beds in a room the same size as a cell. There was four of us in that room and nine families on the same floor shared the same fridge, the same bathroom, the same toilet facilities and the same TV room, we didn’t even have a TV in the room at the time. I am not that old. Whilst this government is using £36,000 a year to keep someone in prison and then supporting them after they come out and enable them to get jobs, in that time I missed out on 10 months of my senior education, because I could not go to school and I did not have a school to go to, because I wasn’t sure where I was going to be living. I do feel that it’s morally wrong that this ConDem government do not support the victims as well as they do the perpetrators. There has been an 11% rise in the last three months in 2012 of reported incidents of violent crimes towards women in domestic violence. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Jackie Barnwell – Branch 331 (Executive Council Member for No. 3 Region, responding on behalf of the EEC): Good morning, Conference. Mr President, Platform and Delegates. Domestic violence has, as been said, is mostly against women, so we’re led to believe. Many of us sit at home in front of our televisions and watch soap operas. Many of us may have watched Coronation Street recently where a young man was being physically beaten by his wife, didn’t know what to do or what to say and I believe that there are many men out there who are being abused by women who, because they feel ashamed or wished to keep their dignity, don’t want to speak up. Some statistics that sort of prove that this is on the way up is last year 139,000 women called a refuge centre for help, 3,050 of those were men. 19,510 women stayed in refuges, along with 19,440 children. Because of the cuts under the Reform Act, 33% of funding will be lost and anybody who needs to go into a refuge from the 100% people who may apply, will be unable to get a place. They will only be able to take in 65%.

I want to use a comment that was made by Sarah Woolley in her speech on single parents on that a lot of people have support from their family unit and can get help, but there are many others who don’t want their families to know, don’t want them to know they’re being beaten, don’t want them to know that they’re being not just physically abused but mentally abused. It’s time in the 21st Century to use the same analogy unfortunately that the NSPCC use, it’s time for it to stop, it’s time for us to all listen and look round your workplace, because it’s so easy for those people to be working alongside you and not breathe a word. With a little bit of encouragement, sometimes they do come out and tell you the truth. It’s time for this abuse to stop. It’s time for us to make sure that any woman, man or child is being abused has a safe place to go. Please support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Motion 81.

81 Welfare and Benefits – Branch 505

That this Conference agrees that the cuts in welfare reform will reduce the amount of benefits people can get if they are deemed to have a spare bedroom in their Council or Housing Association Home. This measure will apply from April 2013. The power to do this is contained in the Welfare reform act 2012 and is commonly referred to as Bedroom Tax this means, children under 16 of the same gender are expected to share. Children under ten are expected to share regardless of gender. Disabled tenant or partner who needs non-resident overnight carer will be allowed an extra bedroom. This act does not take into account children with various disabilities be they mental or physical.
Sister Vi Carr – Branch 505: Platform, Delegates. Moving Motion 81.

Since the bedroom tax came into force in April, many tenants are now in rent arrears because they can’t afford to pay for the extra bedroom. Cuts in benefits have put further strain on people who are already barely scraping a living, many of them forced to go to food banks to feed themselves and their families. Many are made to feel worthless, because they can’t support their families and now they are under further threat of eviction because of the fee they have to pay for a so-called spare room.

Comrades, it is disgusting that the most vulnerable people are being penalised for being on benefits and how many more people will be evicted by councils and private landlords due to the rent arrears caused by the cuts in benefits and the so-called bedroom tax. We must campaign to get the bedroom tax abolished. We just join and support other campaigners. We must take action and now. We must fight this ConDem government to stop further cuts in benefits.

My daughter has two autistic boys, one 15 year old and one three and they are supposed to share a bedroom. She is being charged £14 a week, which is putting a terrible drain on her household budget. She has put an appeal in on the grounds of her childrens’ disabilities, but until now hasn’t heard anything. Her husband is working and is paid a minimum wage. He is often sent home early because they have no work for him, but he only gets paid for the hours that he works. It is the company that has sent him home, so they should be paying and £14 from their already over-stretched finances it putting a strain on her physically and mentally and we must campaign once again to have the bedroom tax abolished and here’s some statistics. Council housing manager at YHN, Your Homes Newcastle, are battling rent arrears averaging over £50,000 a week since the bedroom tax came into effect.

An update report to the YHN board 28th May reveals a 14% leap in overall rent arrears and in the first six weeks to 12th May, debts rose by a massive £311,259 to £2,593,000. A future Labour government needs to take this on board. High levels of non-payment, Glasgow 70% non-payment, Liverpool riverside housing 6,000 tenants are affected, 3,000 have not paid a penny. Leeds, one month after the bedroom tax came in, there was 1,700 new cases of people who are in arrears on Saturday 15th June, which is this Saturday, there is a demonstration in Birmingham on behalf of Stephanie Bottrill who, you might know, committed suicide because she was having to move from the home that she’s lived in for approximately nine years because of this bedroom tax. Leeds and Liverpool and Glasgow have the best organised non-payment campaign going on. There is help, if you want to go out and get it. There are campaigns going on in most areas, but don’t just sit on your backsides and hope that they come to you, they won’t, you must find out where they are and go along and get some information. We must join some of these campaigns. We must kick this bedroom tax up the arse and get it out of the door. I move, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconded? Formally seconded?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Obviously I’m here to support this and to just give you a bit of information. The poll tax brought down Maggie and her government. We believe that the bedroom tax will do the same with this shower of crap that’s running the country at the moment. 29th September in Manchester there is a march against the Tories. It’s organised by Unite The Resistance. Come and join us, give them the welcome they deserve, bring your whistles, bring your football rattles, let them know we’re here and remember this bedroom tax is what can bring down this government. Please come and support us. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Mr President, Delegates. I’m here to support the resolution and the speakers have said it all and I must say to you again and Ronnie said it yesterday, Vi said it now, join the campaigns. Ronnie said words, action speaks louder than words. Join the campaigns. Get out there. Let them know. If you stay at home they will carry on, but when you’re out there and you put it in the public eye, then you’re doing something. Conference, support the resolution.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Murdock – Branch 367: President, General Secretary or Ronnie and Platform. I think we can actually take this to another level you know, because Nottingham County Council have got rules and stuff that when you move into your property, it could cost a lot of families thousands and thousands of pounds, not only do they want to evict, but they will also have to leave their homes in the same condition as they found them and as families have grown up, over the years they’ve obviously made alterations to the house and people that have lived in them 30 years have made them and will have to put them back into the same condition as they moved into in. When I was a kid growing up, council houses, it’s actually diabolical to make people pay for spare bedrooms. I was a kid growing up, council houses, you moved around. As you got older and your children got older, the council houses are meant to be round, you downsized.
You let the people that had got more people come in while you downsized and let other people move into their home. I deplore this and I actually want to support it downheartedly. It was Maggie Thatcher’s fault for selling all these houses off that they no longer could move round and keep going.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay. General Secretary.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Chair, Delegates. It’s been said, a lot of it hasn’t it, right at the beginning, about the need to support, but get out there and do something about it. You know, despite all the garbage that we read in the press and hear on the television, the Osborne and Ian Duncan Smith and Cameron spout about these strivers v the skivers, this is one of the most evil but targeted policies that this government or any government has even had before. Decent people with a modicum of morality about them would never have thought this up, as it’s a means of printing money, not a means to resolve any issues. But of course this evil shower have managed it all on their own.

You know, as much as I hated Thatcher and we’ve had passionate debates about Thatcher from this rostrum before, I can’t see her ever proposing something like this. She was evil to the core, but I do not think that any morality she had would have allowed her to put forward something like this, but Cameron and the Eton boys do it with a smile on their face, they’re just not bothered. It is meant to target the poor and the poor only. In their manifesto they would never have come out and said they were going to put a direct taxation on people of between 14 and 25%, because they would never have got in, they would have lost, but they can and have been imposing new tax that discriminates to the highest possible level because it targets only those people who rely on benefits. As you know, as far as these benefits go, you don’t have to be unemployed. There’s been debate after debate after debate at this Conference about it. You could be a worker who works part-time, either because of family reasons or because maybe the shifts are not available.

We’ve had the devil’s own job within Greggs at the GMC when the working tax credits changed, trying to make sure that people got enough hours and the contracts were changed to try and ease the burden on those people, but a lot of those are still in the catchment area. You could be a worker with a young family, whose pay is so low because they have an employer who doesn’t want to pay a decent living wage, where they need benefits to prop them up, to keep them going, to help them feed their family and whether it’s because of the hours worked, or the exploitative effects of low pay, the reality is that 60% of the benefits go to the people who are working, not the people that they call skivers. But as bad as the bedroom tax is, the reality is that many of those will be forced to pay, or who have been forced to pay, have been actually engineered into a position, not a position of their own making, a position that they’ve been engineered into by past government policy, because the reality is that councils centrally funded like governments in the past didn’t have the vision to build a load of one bedroom and two bedroom properties. They built three bedroom properties, good on them.

We watched the film last night, “Spirit of ‘45” and it talks about how the Labour government after the War gave decent housing, good on them. That’s what people wanted and why shouldn’t a family, even a grandparent, have a spare bedroom so they can have their family come and visit. What’s wrong with that? But the legacy is that these people who are being persecuted for having the temerity to raise their families, who move on, leaving them with spare bedrooms, are now being forced to pay a minimum of 14% in tax. No way of avoiding it, not given any alternative, not that I think that anybody should be given the alternative, I don’t believe they should have to move out of those houses. The government should come clean and tell the country why this has been implemented. Is it to raise revenue or is it to solve a housing crisis? If it’s to raise revenue, then come out and be honest about it, say it.

If they use the same amount of effort in chasing those who dodge or avoid paying tax as they do harassing the poor who have a spare bedroom, we would not only raise more money, we would wipe out the deficit in one fell swoop. If the coalition see it as a quick way to solve a housing problem, then there are better ways to resolve that situation by building both council and affordable housing, which would not only house people but would put builders back to work, paying taxes and in their own turn reducing the deficit. If that failed, there are always thousands of spare rooms in a multitude of palaces around the country. If Charlie boy and Camilla move back in with his mam, then there’s going to be a bedsit somewhere for somebody to go and live in. If they really want to stay in Buckingham Palace, then the state should let the rooms in Balmoral and Blenheim and no other end of Royal residence that you, as taxpayers and those people who are paying the 14%, the 25% are contributing to.

You know, why does the Prime Minister need his own house in Oxfordshire, a big residence and I’ve been, a big residence in Downing Street and then Chequers out in the country. We don’t use Chequers and change it into flats. Beautiful countryside, people will be able to live in dignity in a lovely part of the country. It’s owned by the state. Let’s turn those sort of places into housing and of course then we have the vast estates. I remember when the building plan under Thatcher and Major was going forward, the amount of Tory ministers who were saying no, no, no, you can’t build by me.
They didn’t mind it when they called it, was it NIMBY, Not In My Back Yard. You were allowed to build houses anywhere, as long as it wasn’t by their estates. As long as it didn’t deface what they said the local beauty, the area. Well sod the local beauty. They’ve got lands, if we chase it back through history probably those lands were robbed from people like you, your forefathers. Let’s have it back and let’s build some estates on there. Let them keep their big houses if they want them, but give us some of that land back and let us build homes there. It doesn’t touch their class financially and that’s why they’re not bothered.

For all that we have on the agenda for an incoming Labour government, the need to reverse the bedroom tax has to be one of the first piece of legislation brought by the House. This should be closely followed, I believe and I know that Ian passionately believes this, it should be followed by the imposition of a mansion tax on properties that in themselves could solve our housing problem tomorrow. The people who own these lavish houses are in a much better place to pay the tax on that property than those on benefits are being asked to pay at this moment. You know and I feel in some way personally involved in this, because my son is a housing manager in Liverpool and I’ve talked about the things that are going on in Liverpool. My son is a housing manager and he manages, what do they call them, council debt, he manages, that’s his problem. He has to be in charge of, if there are evictions to take place, he’s in charge of evictions but he says when it’s an eviction, it’s an eviction because somebody’s turned the doors off, they’re smashing the windows, the urinating on the place, they’re causing a nuisance to their neighbours, but now he’s left with the dilemma, a conscience that says socially and morally we shouldn’t be evicting people on the basis of their ability to pay, but on the other hand employers are saying to him if you don’t do this, then we’ll fire you and he himself has got a young family.

This is, we’ve got to think about the pressures they’ll also be putting on public workers, to go out and evict ordinary decent people. Conference, I think the bedroom tax says everything about the financial prowess of the Chancellor. When he can limit the poorest people in this country who have to depend upon benefit to a 1% increase and the other hand threatening them with either a 14% or a 25% tax on their property. This is why the country’s in a mess. He just purely doesn’t understand economics. He needs to be taught a lesson. You know, the bedroom tax makes the poll tax look like a sweet club. It’s discriminatory, it’s ill conceived and it’s downright unfair. It’s demeaning to families and takes away independence between genders. It does not offer exemptions in all cases to the disabled or the elderly, although the government have said it does. It most certainly does not include all disabled people from being fined. All you need is to be poor, on benefit to be in the dignified position of having a spare room, but it needs us all to make a lot of noise to change it, but change it we can. Lobby councillors and MPs, get out on the rallies, write letters and make sure that the subject is debated at your branch meetings. Collectively, as Vi said before, we defeated the poll tax and brought Thatcher down. We can do it again with Cameron and his rag-tag party. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried.

Can I read out some messages? When I opened Conference this morning, I was saying to you about the amazing giving that this Conference does and obviously I’ve just received this from Watkins & Gunn and obviously Region 2 had a big night last night and they do it every year and I’ve got to say that an absolutely another amazing figure that you’ve raised, £263.00 from the raffle and ticket sales for the work of the Wooden Spoon, absolutely well done. Well done Conference, well done.

[APPLAUSE]

Also, I believe these are from the Watkins & Gunn stall, which are raffle tickets. So its eyes down, look in. 26 to 30, 41 to 45, 161 to 165, 146 to 150, 186 to 190, have we got a winner? They’re orange, I assume they’re all orange. 191 to 195, I know Ronnie was a bit disappointed because he had the strip that went 231, but unfortunately it was 226 and finished at 230 and then he started moaning because he had the one that started 291 and it was 286 to 290, so that’s very very unfortunate, obviously you’re not putting the lottery on. 346 to 350, 361 to 365. Okay and I believe if you go and see Vicky, she’s got your prizes. I don’t know what they are, but I’m sure they’ll be very, very, very, very, very good. Okay, Conference. Tea break. Back for quarter to 11.

[BREAK]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I’ve just been asked by one of the Delegates, he’s over there. Justin don’t run away, I want you to come and show who you are. No, just stand there so people can see you. Right, I mentioned it yesterday about anyone who has any evidence of people being affected within their families, or indeed if you are affected by the bedroom tax, that if we can get some sort of story together which we’re going to release, we’re working to put a press release out, so John Millington who was at the back, he’s probably having a cup of tea somewhere, if you either see John Millington or if you want any advice on the bedroom tax, Justin Madders’ over there, he’s a lawyer with Walker,
Smith & Way but he’s also a Labour councillor in Chester, so obviously he has first hand experience and also we’ve got Gary Johnston, who’s one of our officials and he’ll be going into the full time officials meeting, but he also is a councillor, so if you want any advice or you’ve got any evidence, please get it in there and let’s get it, as we develop this campaign, it’ll give us the evidence, actual real life evidence that we can put out in the press release.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Okay, just before we get back to the Agenda, I’ll announce the laptop bag winner from Lighthouse Financial Advice and the winner is Michael Lynch. I believe Lighthouse unfortunately have got to leave us this morning because they’ve got a long trek back to wherever they’re going, but we’d obviously like to thank Lighthouse for coming this week and obviously thank them for the work they’ve already been doing on behalf of our Trade Union. Lighthouse is one of our newest partners. We formed the arrangement and the partnership with them last year and obviously they offer some fantastic benefits and some fantastic services to our members. You should be able to pick up any information if you don’t already have it in your branch from your regional office. I do encourage you to use them because the advice that you get from them is second to none, so I would like to thank Lighthouse and obviously I hope he takes that message back to his colleagues, how we appreciate what they’ve done for us already and what they will do for us in the coming years. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

And just to let Michael Lynch know, you can pick up your winning prize from the BFAWU stand. Okay, Conference. I believe, I believe we’re 82.

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82 Local Government/Local Services – Branch 561

That this Conference should put pressure on this Lib Tory government to stop the cuts in council care both in council run homes and care at home and give back some dignity to our pensioners.

**Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford), Region 5:** Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. That this Conference put pressure on this Lib-Tory government to stop the cuts in council care, both in council run homes and care at home and give back some dignity to our pensioners. I bring this, I’ve brought this motion now I think for the last two, three, maybe four years to what I can remember. My wife works as a care worker, but I think most of us can go see in our cities, the main cities, all we hear on the news is care homes closing. Pensioners at 95, 100 being moved out of where they’ve lived for the last 20 years. It’s a disgrace and it isn’t getting any better. Some of the stories what my wife comes homes and tells me is horrific, but I think the council care workers do care and I think because it’s not linked to time and profit, there’s more care given, but it’s taken out of their hands. Support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Seconder? Formally seconded? Formally seconded? Formally seconded.

**Brother Gary Johnston – Region 2 (speaking on behalf of the Full Time Officials):** Mr President. It’s been that long since I’ve been up here, I think I forget how to talk.

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** I don’t believe that for a minute, absolutely not.

**Brother Gary Johnston – Region 2 (speaking on behalf of the full time Officials):** Asking you to support this motion. Mr President, Platform, Delegates. As a counsellor, I’ve come across quite a lot of cases so far in social care. Very, very difficult subject, especially when it’s all new to you. We have hundreds of different little departments within social services and to find the right people, you know, is very difficult, but when it comes to the cuts, we have seen yet again what’s happening in England is not happening in Wales. This is one of the powers that we have under Devolution and the Welsh government has, as well as education, there’s no cuts allowed. We went one step further this year in Caerphilly for the budget for 2013/2014, we have actually increased our social services by 1.2 million.

Now, we believe that helping those that cannot help themselves is one of the most important things we can do. Just recently one of the cases I was doing was it was basically impossible for us to get a ramp from the lady’s front door right up to the footpath, so what we did we basically took away half the road, we’ve built a lift so she can just wheel out of her door, wheel onto the lift and straight up, so she can get in the car. Now, these are the services for people to take, what we take for granted, go out and have a stroll or whatever, then get out and about. Care in the home is very, very important.

We, as I said it’s a minefield, because we were trying to join forces with Blaenau Gwent, but unfortunately when we get into the nitty-gritty of the details, because they’ve been in special measures, we were finding that what we were charging maybe one or two pounds for they, because of the difficulties they were in, were charging £25 - £30 for the same service and we just thought well, either we take a bit hit when home budgets are cut or we have to stick to what it is, because we cannot ask all residents to pay that sort of increase just so two can merges.
So, Conference, this is down to, I don’t know whether you’ve seen and I don’t really want to touch too much on it Mr President, but within the NHS itself, the Tory government last week having a pop at the Welsh government for saying that, or the NHS is feeling. Not true, not true. We don’t have ER waiting times in A & E, maybe sometimes, but not all the time, not compared to what the Tories are doing, no. Our services are getting better, they’re not brilliant, but they are getting better and considering the cuts they have put on the Tory, the Tories have put on Welsh Labour, it’s getting even harder and harder, but the difference is ours are improving. Under the Lib Dems, it is getting worse and worse and worse. So, Conference, I would ask you to support this. It’s not an easy time for local governments at the minute, their cuts are coming in, they’re hitting us hard, but with education and with social services Wales if protecting theirs. Please support. [APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: Originally I’m from Birmingham, now I live in Wales, so this is going on the basis of what has happened in my home town of Birmingham. Before she passed away, my nan was put in care, in a care home, supposedly for her own safety. She fell over and the care home blamed her, as she supposedly tried to walk on her own. The care home was supposed to support her and help her. They failed miserably. Why? Because there wasn’t enough staff to support the elderly. One day my nan asked if she could get out of bed, it’s just basic isn’t it, you get out of bed every day you’d think, wouldn’t you? They didn’t have enough staff to do this, they didn’t have two members of staff who could get her out of her bed to walk her into the living room, where she could have sat there with friends and socialised all day. Instead, she was left in her bed all day long. Totally, totally wrong. So why isn’t there enough staff? Well, because the government cuts affected our local services. Maggie Thatcher died in the Ritz. Why shouldn’t the elderly, who have been the backbone of this country for years, spend their last time on this planet in the surroundings she did. They deserve, when they do pass, to die in dignity and with respect, because without them we probably wouldn’t be here, standing here today, so please support.

Brother David Byrne – Region 6 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): We ask Conference to support this motion. The elderly deserve to be cared for. Your parents, your grandparents. We have an obligation to them. We must fight for their rights. In Northern Ireland Region 7, a protest was held outside the Rectory Fields Care Home in Derry, one of four to be earmarked for closure. That would leave more than 300 elderly patients being forced to leave. Since then the Health Minister, Edwin Potts, has apologised for his shambolic handling of the elderly care home scandal. Effectively it’s parked for another six months. It’s a public outrage and it’s a war of attrition against the elderly. If they close four in Derry, how many will they close in the UK?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Motion 83.

83 Local Government/Local Services – Branch 123

That this Conference supports this resolution and asks that pressure be put on local authorities to maintain street lighting during the hours of darkness, and other times due to various factors.

Brother Norville Grazette – Branch 123 (Region 1): Here to move this motion. Conference supports the resolution and asks that pressure be put on local authorities to maintain street lighting during the hours of darkness and other times due to various factors. Conference, I don’t know about many areas where you live, but in my area the street lights go out from 12 until six. I think it’s an absolute disgrace that we have no street lighting during these hours. Please support, thank you. [APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Formally seconded, thank you.

Brother Gary Johnston – No. 2 Region (speaking on behalf of the full time Officials): Mr President, Platform, Delegates. Again, Conference we would ask you to support this motion. Quite a few of the local issues we are getting with street lighting at night-time is anti-social behaviour. I’ve had a couple of issues, I’ve had to get the police as well to back me up because they’ve been trying in certain residential areas, especially around the old peoples’ homes and complexes and out there where there is anti-social behaviour, to put in requests to get the street lighting back on. One of the problems though and I would ask you to remember this, councils are faced with very, very big cuts. Mine alone now for 2014/2015, we have to find £5 million savings. Now, out of £300 million it might sound not a lot, but where we have over £100 million for social services and £100 million from education, that means it’s only just over £100 million now we have to save £5 million from.
Now, services are as low really as you can put them, so the next thing we can do, either we look at street lighting and other things, or we have to start looking at jobs and well, to be honest, if I’ve got a choice whether it’s turn out your lights or make people redundant, I know I will be pulling the switch on your lights. So, sorry, but please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Platform, Chair, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion. My mother-in-law is an 85 year old lady and she lives in an old age persons’ bungalow. The council in their wisdom decided to turn off the street lighting in her street to save money. If any of her neighbours or her falls over in the dark, the damage that that could cause to an elderly person is unthinkable. We need to keep our street lighting on. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Fitzpatrick – No. 4 Regional Council Member: Asking for your support for this motion on behalf of the Executive Council. The street lighting that will be cut will become a postcode lottery, make no doubt about it. The poorest areas in the cities and towns will be affected. They will have no trouble maintaining the street lighting around 10 Downing Street, the Houses of Parliament or the rich areas where the big houses are, they’ll want them protected in case of crime and everything, but the poorest areas like you said, old peoples’ homes and that, they don’t care and they’ll switch those lights off in complete darkness. I ask for your support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: To the vote. All those in favour? Against? Carried. Motion 84.

84 Local Government/Local Services – Branch 450

That this Conference agrees in light of the two policewomen murdered in Greater Manchester, our Executive Council should lobby MPs to change the law on convicted murderers. Life must mean life and the convict should serve his or her sentence in solitary confinements

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: I’ve nearly finished. That this Conference agrees in light of the two policewomen murdered in Greater Manchester, our Executive Council lobby MPs to change the law on convicted murderers. Life must mean life and the convict should serve his or her sentence in solitary confinements. This is not because they were police officers or women, but because they were two young people who went to work and never came home. Somebody’s children, murdered on the whim of an unbalanced bully and thug who thought he was Al Capone. We’ve had another murder more recently, again a guy from the Greater Manchester area, Lee Rigby, not because he was a soldier but someone’s son, husband and a daddy. The two extremists who murdered him tried to hide behind religion. Sorry about this, but the word that comes to mind is bollocks.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you. No-one’s God instructs us to murder. One day this could happen to any one of us or our family member. A life sentence should mean a life sentence, not around seven or eight years because they’ve behaved nicely. They should also be punished while inside. That punishment should be solitary confinement, visited three times a day by a prison officer with breakfast, lunch and dinner, because we’re a civilised society. A few years ago we went to San Francisco and went across to Alcatraz. Nobody who was sent to Alcatraz was ever executed. The punishment at Alcatraz was that they were less than a mile from San Francisco. They could see it, they could hear it, sometimes they could even smell it. The punishment was it was within their grasp, but they didn’t have the freedom to ever touch it. Let’s be real here, the death penalty is not coming back. Think what punishment you would expect for a family member or a close friend of yours if they were murdered. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Formally seconded.

Brother Denser (Birmingham and West Midlands): Mr Chair, members of the Platform, Conference. I’m fully here to support it, but the wording at the end astounded me. You’ve just paid £20 million to the Mau Mau for torturing them. If we put them in prison, we put them in prison. Don’t torture them again. Or, we’ll do it one way, we’ll bring the rope back and that’ll solve the problem once and for all. It’s only on the wording that I’m a bit dubious about whether we support it or not. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Platform, Chair, Delegates. I’m here to support this motion, short and sweet. Life means life, as simple as that. Please support.
[APPLAUSE]

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: Here to oppose the motion, just because simply for the end sentence. Solitary confinement, what cost would it be when we haven’t got any money, well that’s what they’re telling us, we don’t really believe them and also there’s been police officers murdered before, why now? Why should we put this motion now, just because two more have been murdered? I completely agree that life should mean life for anybody who murders anybody, but just solitary confinement it would just be a cost issue really and overcrowded.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Phyllis Hession – Branch 450: I support this motion to a certain point. What does solitary confinement mean? In this day and age, in my mind, solitary confinement is a bloody luxury. They go in there, it’s like a three star hotel or a five star hotel. Televisions, you name it, they’ve got it. They’re kept there in luxury. Right, they’re on their own, but they’re not sat looking at four bare walls with nothing to do and what they want to do is give them bloody hard labour along with it, get them out there doing some of the hard work that needs doing, that some of the buggers won’t do. Make them earn it and never let them out until the day they die. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. The Executive Council asks Conference to oppose the motion, not because we don’t agree that life should mean life, I think Rachel said it as well. I’ve got to say, that’s a most novel interpretation of what we should do with solitary confinement is get the buggers out and get them doing the jobs that we should do. Can you imagine, we get Dale Cregan out of prison, let him out and go and paint somebody’s fence, how novel is that? Couldn’t possibly happen. Look, any motion, when we discuss a motion, we have to take it on the wording that we’ve got, not what we’d like to read into it. George hit the nail on the head, he didn’t agree with the last part, but supports the motion. It’s about what that motion says. So let me explain to you, the Executive Council is not against the part of the motion that calls for life sentences to mean life. You know, I’d be passing sentences on employers who kill people at work through their negligence. I’d be pushing for harsh sentences for those people.

But our opposition revolves around two prescriptive parts of the motion. First is the wording that links the motion to two policewomen killed in Manchester. Let me say that the Executive Council agree that this was a heinous crime carried out by Dale Cregan on two young policewomen, Nicola Hughes and Fiona Bone and we’re in no way trying to trivialise what he did, it was monstrous, but is it only the murder of two policewomen that merits a whole life sentence? Three weeks ago, as Marilyn said, there was the equally evil slaying of soldier Lee Rigby. We would argue that this was as cold blooded murder that deserves equal harsh treatment. In 2002 we were all devastated by the killing of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman by Ian Huntley, a horrendous unprovoked murder of two young children and every bit as deserving of a whole life tariff. You know, if we go through, we go and write to all the newspapers and all that, we could be here until Doomsday talking about horrendous murders that there have been and what they merit.

The second reason and probably the most important reason why the Executive are opposing the motion, is this question of solitary confinement. Again, is it only for cop killers or is it across the board punishment. It’s no good, this Conference and other trade union gatherings condemning the horrendous violence, as George said, but the stuff like Guantanamo Bay, what’s going on there and the hellhole prisons of Iran, Iraq and Thailand. Parts of South America where they impose absolutely barbaric treatment on prisoners. We’re asking and the motion asks, us to do exactly the same thing with solitary confinement. You know, what is it going to be next? Is it going to be and we’ll give them rations of bread and water or 50 lashes a day, just to make sure they’re awake.

Clearly we don’t support murderers and we most certainly believe that they should face the full might of the law, but whether we like it or not, there are basic human rights. Whilst accepting that the victim or victims were deprived of their human rights by these people, we would not be allowed to keep someone in solitary confinement for the rest of their lives just because of that. What we need is a consistent approach in our judicial system. At present we can get a multiplicity of different sentences for exactly the same crime and that’s dependent upon who the judge is and of course what the plea is from the perpetrator. A few weeks ago, in the April Jones murder trial, Mark Bridger was sentenced to a whole life tariff by the judge. That demonstrates to me that if the judge has a will, then in British legislation there is clearly a way that we can make life mean life, but because of the two anomalies that we see within a motion, we’d ask Conference to oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right of reply?
Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Exercising my right to reply. Had you bothered to listen to what I said, it was not because they were police officers but at the time this was put in, the newspapers were full of it. Solitary confinement would not be any more expensive than the guy next door that’s been banged up for robbing your house, however I will withdraw the solitary confinement bit if you agree to lobby the MPs.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: The problem is, it’s the wording. Marilyn, we can only go off the wording.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: So, shall I bring it back next year?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Bring it back next year.

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: See you next year.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We may.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. Motion 86.

86 Family – Branch 390

That this Conference calls for our parliamentary group to review the 1985 Housing Act and ascertain if the overcrowding standards are still acceptable for the modern age and lobby the government for improvements to the legislation if needed.

Brother ? speaker: Come on, Wendy. Wendy Stanley everybody, the only lady I know who walks better drunk than she does sober [LAUGHTER].

Sister Wendy Stanley – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke): Sorry, it takes me a while. This Conference calls for our parliamentary group to review the 1985 Housing Act and ascertain if the overcrowding standards are still acceptable for the modern age and lobby the government for improvements to the legislation if needed. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Any other speakers? Oh right, okay.

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: I just want to quickly say I support this motion. A couple of years ago my best friend and her family were classed as quite overcrowded. They had a, it was classed as a three bedroom house, really two bedrooms and a tiny little box room and in the house she had her mam and dad, herself, her brother, a sister, her sister’s boyfriend and a baby on the way and a baby when they came. So support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other speakers? No? Okay.

Brother Richard Wainwright – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke – speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): The Executive Council would ask you to support this motion. I wasn’t particularly aware of this issue until one of my reps came to me with this very same problem. He’s living in a very small apartment and he’s got his partner and a child and he’s having to go through a horrendous situation now to try and get the local housing authority to move them into a more suitable place to live. The MPs are actually now involved in this and what Rachel’s just said really highlights the issue. It’s absolutely insane to let this antiquated living standard affect our children. I mean, studies have shown from the Shelter Association that this seriously impacts our children’s education and health. To use kitchens and bathrooms as acceptable living areas for children to sleep in is just absolutely preposterous. Please support the motion. Please get it reviewed. Let’s get it changed. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That’s carried.

Emergency Motion No. 1.

Emergency Motion 1 – Jim McLelland Award

That this Conference agrees that there should be a Jim McLelland award for outstanding achievement.

This award is for an individual or group of people who do something outstanding, the EC to decide whom to award the award to.

The reason I’m asking for this is that Jim died earlier this year and some heartfelt messages were left on the Union’s website. His funeral was attended by the National Officers and Full Time Officers, friends and family. As the weeks turn to months, the months to years and years to decades, let us award an award in memory of Jim.
Brother Mark Brooks – Branch 347 (Region 3) - moving Emergency Motion No. 1: I was sad to hear of the tragic death of Jimmy McLelland in March of this year, so I wrote this motion which says that Conference agrees that we should introduce a Jimmy McLelland award. The award to be given to either an individual or a group of people who do something outstanding. The reason I’m asking for it is as Jim died earlier this year, heartfelt messages were left on the Union website, the Foodworker this year, with his picture. His funeral was attended by the National Officers, Full Time Officials, friends and family. I heard it was four deep or more at the back. The Union’s lost a trade unionist and a friend, his family have lost a lot more, a father, a husband. As this year goes by, they’ll have to do without a first Father’s Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, what would have been Jim’s birthday, most of all the anniversary of Jim’s death. As weeks go into months and months go into years, years to decades, let’s remember this person with an award, let’s not remember it with just words and heartfelt messages. Please support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you seconding this, Mark? Mark, are you seconding this? No. Formally seconded, okay.

Brother Mark McHugh – Branch 503: I would like to ask the Conference to oppose this motion. Whilst I agree with the sentiment behind the motion, Jim was never one for the overstated or the overdressed. I feel that what would be a more fitting tribute in Jim’s memory would be for every Delegate in the hall to go out and get new members and continue the growth of this Union, the Union that Jim loved so much. Please oppose.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, before we, I mean there might be people that want to get up and say a few words about Jim, but I would ask the movers of the motion whether they would remit it for the Executive Council to look at, rather than have a debate where it looks like we’re opposing something in the memory of Jim McLelland, because that’s not what we want to do at all. No, we recognise Jim and all the contribution he’s made to our Trade Union and we don’t want to fall out with anybody over Jim McLelland and the memory of Jim McLelland. So we would ask if you would remit the motion. I mean, I’m quite happy if you want to make comments about Jim McLelland, but I don’t want to fall out or have a vote on whether we do something or not in memory of Jim McLelland. So I ask the mover of the motion, please would you remit. Yes. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Do you want to still say something, do you want to say any words, did you want to say some words, Chris?

Brother Chris Plunkett – Branch 503 (Warburtons, Scotland): Mr President. Obviously up in Scotland we were very close to Jim. He wasn’t just a Full Time Officer, he was obviously a friend. If he’s looking down here now, one thing Jim will be saying is finally I’ve got all these Delegates to come to this bloody platform. Thanks.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: I mean, I just want to briefly say something and I’m not going to go into all the stuff that I said the other day. Jim, as I say, was a good mate and I knew him very, very well and I got to know about his death while I was actually speaking at a meeting, when Mark phoned me. The one thing I would say about awards, we’ve lots and lots of awards around the Union and if you like, the one, it’s what do you give an award for. We’ve got a Thompsons award for organising, we’ve got ones for outstanding achievements, like we’ve got Julie Summersgill who’s here and is the EC Guest at Conference, we have a health & safety award, we have a recruitment award, we have a youth award, we have used to have a Union learner reps award and then regions have their own awards. It’s what, if you’re going to have an award it has to be something that means something. Not just the fact that its got somebody’s name attached to it. It has to, you know if you’re going to do something, do it because there’s something there that we can, you know, we can live in his memory with.

I one hundred percent agree with what Mark McHugh said before. You know, I knew Jim very, very well. There’s no way in the world that Jim would want anybody putting an award around his name, but he would, he was a great organiser, Jim and what he would have wanted you to do is go out and if you’re going to use his name, use his name in the name of organising when you go out. Use his name in pushing socialist policies, because he was a socialist. Use his name in the promotion of young trade unionists through our organisation. That’s the way that we should be remembering Jim. He had a passion for everything and so to give an award that targeted one thing, I don’t believe would do justice to the memory of Jim McLelland, but we will debate it and thank you for remitting it, Mark and we’ll debate it at the Executive Council in August. Thank you.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Motion 87.

87 Miscellaneous – Branch 215

*That this Conference agrees to support a Free Press.*

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Mr President, Delegates. Conference Delegates, I’ve been coming here now for many years and this is one of the most important resolutions that I have brought here in the years. Conference, don’t be hasty to write-off our press. We’ve had a free press in this country for over 100 years, free press, free speech, freedom of information, freedom to assemble and to protest in public places. We must not give up these rights. Just look at countries that don’t have a free press. Under many of them they’re state controlled. Look at what happened in Russia when the two girls sang the song in the church because they brought the president of Russia into it, they got years in jail for it. These are the people that do a lot for us, they took on the law. There was a lot here yesterday about prisoners and one thing and another, but sometimes the law has to be taken on and broken, because there’s no other way when it comes to that.

David Cameron, a spin doctor, allegedly now, allegedly threatened a newspaper if it revealed a minister’s expenses. This highlights the danger posed to a free press by politicians seeking control and revenge for the press for what they did when they reported their fiddling and thieving in the House of Commons. They still have that there and they want to get at the press. Conference, we must support this resolution. Then we had the stars, Hugh Grant, he backed it. That man was around Hollywood, him and Liz Hurley, he was lapping up the press when all afternoon they were the two dolls of Hollywood, but when he was caught down the backstreet he didn’t like it, what he was up to was his business, you all know exactly what he was at. Then came the footballers. They loved the press too when they were out playing football and meeting, but when they were caught off guard they wanted to have the press shackled because they didn’t want their private lives in it. They didn’t think about their families when they were having this private life on the quiet outside. If they were that family-concerned, they wouldn’t have been caught where they were.

Conference, we have to support the resolution and keep it. Now, I have a little bit here that I found in a paper and it’s one of the joys of the US Constitution is its brevity, with just one sentence in the first amendment. “Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or press”. Now, that is, well I suppose this country and America are two of the countries that has freedom of press and freedom of speech. Conference, I ask you to support the resolution. We must now save democracy. There’s a growing dissolution with politicians threatening our system. Conference, give us a free press, not a register. I move.

[APPLAUSE]


Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: Here to support this motion. I totally agree with the free press, however what I don’t agree with is the fact that when you start phone hacking and stuff like that, that’s when they need to be controlled, however free press is exactly right. Thank you. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Halliday – No. 7 Region: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. I support a free press, simply on the grounds that it is totally democratic. We should not have bridles put on the press. If we had bridles, the government and the multi-nationals and other people would stop anything being rude about them. Trade Unions have had their bad presses, Liverpool football club have had their bad presses, but at the same time it’s freedom of speech. I’m entitled to freedom of speech, so should they. We must not at any stage hinder the right of freedom. We can go on and say, as the previous speaker said, they can go too far, but that should not restrict us from having a free and democratic press. I would also draw attention to the fact that if we pass this motion, maybe we should be considering our outlook on The Sun newspaper. They have apologised and like any other paper, we should be ready to lift any ban we have on them, because it’s undemocratic to buy one paper and not another just because of their view. They have apologised and it should be dead and gone. I ask you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Some of the press in this country is free. If you want to read free press, this is the one. It certainly isn’t The Sun, it certainly isn’t The Mirror or The Mail, don’t even listen to the BBC, that’s controlled by money people. Radio 5 Live have a debate on every morning. People that listen to it know that Geoff from Oldham is on at least once a week. Twice he’s got on about UKIP and twice he’s been left hanging on the end of a phone for an hour. One person was allowed on the phone against UKIP, the rest of them were all for it.
The BBC is not free press, The Sun is nothing better than a comic. When I was a kid, nobody had toilet paper. We used to rip newspaper up and use it in the toilet. That’s what The Sun’s for. So we’ve got free press if you choose to buy the right papers.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother John Owens – Branch 532 (AB, Liverpool): I’m slightly undecided on this and I hope Delegates, my fellow EC colleagues, Ronnie and Ian understand why. If a free press means that it stops papers standing side by side the government and being dictated by government on what they can say and what they can’t say, like we had with the marriage between Thatcher and Murdoch, that’s fine, but if a free press means that a paper can print what they like with no investigation to the facts and tell lies, like The Sun paper did on 17th April 1989 with the headlines in big letters “The Truth”, two days after the Hillsborough disaster and I quote, “That we urinated on the police. Some fans picked the pockets of victims. We beat up police who were doing the kiss of life. We were drunk and also we smashed the gates down”. I was at Hillsborough and they are lies, lies and lies.

[APPLAUSE]

On that very day, the fans did more than the police and the ambulance service in helping the dying and injured and the problem is, the people believe what it says in the paper and it’s taken 23 years for a lot of people and I’m sure there’s people out there now who realise that after the independent report came out last year, the truth, but I’ve known the truth all along, but because it says in the paper and people believe what it says in the paper, a lot of people didn’t. Kelvin MacKenzie, the little shit who was the editor of The Sun at the time, rang Kenny Dalglish up, the manager of Liverpool football club at the time, who I might add, went to all 96 funerals and he rang him up and he said to him Kenny, how can we put this right? Kenny said what do you mean? He said you know, the sales in Liverpool, like no-one buys the paper now, how can we put it right? So Kenny turned around and he said well, it might help if you print in the paper with the same headlines and put we’ve lied. MacKenzie said oh, we can’t do that. So Kenny said I can’t help you then and put the phone down on him.

My first time at Conference, I was surprised at how many people had The Sun newspaper and The News of the World on their tables. During the break, I spoke to John Higgins who was my full time Officer then and I spoke to Ronnie Draper and said is there no motion that, you know, The Sun newspaper’s not allowed in here? Not because of Hillsborough, because of the miners’ strike, because of the printers, who are anti-trade union, linked with Thatcher all the time like. They said oh yes, it is banned, so I came up, point of order, you’ve never seen so many people sliding a newspaper into their bags and that’s why every year I always ask whether it’s Ian or Ronnie, just to let everyone know about the paper. People who know me will know that I never go around without my supply of Don’t Buy The Sun stickers and my little flyers. Ronnie and Ian will tell you, my colleague Jay will tell you, that they know when I’ve been somewhere because I leave my calling card. There’s things in the press affected my city and the people of a proud city, a city that fights for its rights, but a city that Thatcher hated. So if lying in the press is a free press, then no thanks. Justice for the 96.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, very passionate, very devoted, understands freedom of the press, the right of freedom of speech, but understands what happens when the press abuses the power and the authority that they hold and wield, that destroys peoples’ lives, that’s used as an ideological tool and that’s what that was done against those people of Liverpool, it perpetrated a lie that suited a government’s agenda to portray the working class as the enemy within. That’s exactly what The Sun did, it was an absolute abuse of power. I know this is a motion about the freedom of the press and supporting a free press and the Executive does support a free press, we do support a free press, but we’ve got to make sure that we hold them to account. And what this government’s recently done, with its Leveson Report that it’s completely ignored, although it said it would absolutely support it and accept its recommendations, it’s failed to do it and it’s failed to do it because it’s been threatened. It’s been threatened that if it does support the Leveson Report that they won’t get the support at the next General Election. That is not a free press, that is an abuse of power.

That is the establishment, working and colluding to provide the newspapers and the politicians a platform that they don’t deserve. The people of this country do deserve a free press and we as a trade union will welcome a free press, but we haven’t got one. We haven’t got one and what we need to do is make sure, like Marilyn says, we buy the Morning Star. I’d also encourage you to buy the Socialist Worker paper as well, because at least it reports on trade union issues, something that you won’t find in our so-called free press. What we must do is we must go back to our workplaces, raise the issue of the lies that are perpetrated in newspapers like The Sun and The Daily Mail. The Daily Mail tried to link a mass murderer to the welfare state. That was an absolute appalling crime that that newspaper did and instead of supporting it like Cameron and Osborne did and try to say actually The Mail had got it right, they should have condemned it as being
the gutter press, because that is lazy reporting, it’s just putting forward an ideological justification behind cutting people in this country and the devastation of tax on the people who are disabled. That is not a free press. The free press that we want to see are those that carry out investigations and then report on the issues such as how the MPs are ripping us off, how people last week sit in the House of Lords and take into the House of Lords issues that they believe are relevant, but only if they’re getting paid, that’s what you call investigative journalism and that’s the type of press we should have, not those that perpetrate the lies on behalf of political, politicians and the establishment, so as much as we support the motion for a free press, we do want you to bear in mind how important it is that you go back to your workplaces and explain to our comrades in your workplaces that currently we don’t have one, but we need to fight for one and that’s why and the BBC as well. The BBC that we pay for is perpetrating a lie, it’s led by Tory politicians and all it does is benefit those in power. We’ve got to stand up for ourselves, we’ve got to fight back. Make sure that you don’t buy papers that don’t report the truth, like The Sun and we’ll lift the ban when they get rid of Murdoch and all of the people that were involved in perpetrating those lies. Although I’m saying support it, please do what your conscience feels is right.

To the vote. Those in favour? Those against? That was carried. 88.

88 Miscellaneous – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees to lobby government to regulate the gambling industry with a view to reducing outlets on our high streets, online, etc, recognising the devastating impact of the addiction

Brother Robin Henderson – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): General Secretary, President, Platform, Delegates. I’m here to move Motion 88. Conference agrees to lobby government to regulate the gambling industry with a view to reducing outlets on our high streets, online, etc., recognising devastating impact of the addiction. It’s basically just every time, I haven’t been to the high street for a while, I used to work nights, permanent nights and then when you go down the high street, you see so many gambling places now, so many people, so many shops opening up, arcades and things like that. I’ll just ask you to support this motion, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder?

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. Here to second Motion 88. Just give you some information to the background of where we’re coming from. Britain’s high streets are struggling to survive but one business is booming, that’s betting shops. On average one new bookies opens every week. In one high street in London, there are now 10 within yards of each other, that’s bookies. There has been a MP from the present government that has been apologetic and further admitted that they’ve got the gambling laws wrong. The present government that condemns there are now 10 within yards of each other, that’s bookies. There has been a MP from the present government that has been apologetic and further admitted that they’ve got the gambling laws wrong. The present government that condemns conceding have even gone on to allow betting shops within pubs and this is a very dangerous mix.

Does everybody remember Dolly, the sheep?, known as cloning. Well, what this is doing is creating a clone of alcoholics and gamblers or gamblers and alcoholics, but we couldn’t come up with a definitive word what to use, so we haven’t been able to call it Dolly or anything like that, but you will be creating a clone of alcoholics and gamblers, or the government would be, sorry and the reasons why they are condemned is that this prevents high streets from becoming ghost towns.

There won’t be no ghosts, but there’ll be alcoholic gamblers or gamblers alcoholics and finally this is one major issue that the Labour is against, which gives us hope that maybe they will start to change and be a proper Party of the left from the centre. The political divide highway is stark. In the top 50 poorest areas there is only one Tory MP in the form of Stewart Jackson in Peterborough and no Labour MP in 50 constituencies with the lowest employment levels, yes? So is this not the ConDems destroying the movement? I strongly urge you to support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Chris Lay – Region 2: I’m also here to support this motion. The gambling industry is so easy to get addicted in to. My mother-in-law to be comes in from work and plays online bingo and other casino games every single night. She often has four pages up on her screen, flicking between pages. Okay, she has won a bit of money and in fairness that’s great for me because she finally takes me out for some food, but has also lost loads more money. Every month she earns about the same amount of money as me per month, as we are both shop managers. When it comes to the end of the month, she wants to know how on earth I’ve got a bit more money left than her. We look at each other’s bank statements and we have practically the same expenditure, i.e. mortgage, bills, council tax, etc., but then we look a bit deeper on her side and you can see where money has come out to people like Sun Bingo, 888.com and other online facilities such as these. She doesn’t know how to stop. She reckons she does it because she’s bored.
She’s certainly not bored, she’s got loads of stuff to keep her going. She’s got four kids and a grandkid on the way, so she’s got loads of stuff to be getting on with. It’s just that it’s too easy for her to do. We need more regulations to tighten up what people can spend and how they can spend it on these gambling sites. Please support the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Michael Egan – Branch 430: Mr President, Delegates. I support this resolution. Not so long ago if you wanted to have a bet on a horse, you went to the betting shop. If you wanted to have a game of bingo, you went to the bingo hall. If you fancy playing one-armed bandit fruit machines, you went to arcades, pubs, betting shops, but now if you’ve got a Smartphone, if you’re online on a computer, a laptop, you can do it. When the pubs and that used to shut, these online ones don’t shut, they’re always open, 24/7, 365. You can even gamble on roulette on ITV and Channel 5 now. There’s one site called Jackpot Joy but they’ve made it far, far too easy now for this to become addictive. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, Delegates. I’m on the fence with this one, for the simple reason if you go to Motion 90 and the last line of that. I do believe that these online sites maybe should be regulated or should we introduce a tax and maybe direct that tax to help people with addiction, but to close shops down on the high street is exactly what we’re saying there in Motion 90, we’re putting people out of work. People have a choice whether they go into these. If people are struggling, then we should direct money to help those people with addiction. I don’t know.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): President, Platform and fellow Delegates. I’m also here to support. Just to give you an example of how this online gambling can affect people. I’ve got a guy who works in the hygiene team with me at the bakery and unbeknown to any of us, he’d suddenly found himself in a lot of debt. He didn’t tell us straight away, maybe it was pride. I found out quite a few weeks, months afterwards that he was in a real mess. He’d been taken to court by these people because he’d not, his account, his bank account had run out of money and he owed them tens of thousands of pounds with his online gambling carry-ons and we’ve had to really help this lad because he’s had two bouts of sickness this year, had operations and we’ve had to make sure that he’s used his holiday so he’s got pay going in, topping up, because he’s run out of company sick pay and things like that. It can be devastating for individuals and families, can this. I’d like you to support this resolution, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Janine Cokayne – Region 2: I’m here to oppose this motion on the fact that if you close down the betting shops and bingo halls, then it’s going to cost an awful lot of jobs. There are many people out there with other varying forms of addiction, alcohol, drugs, exercise, heaven forbid, so what do we do to regulate these? I agree that I think, the way the culture’s changed now is that the actual gambling comes into your home and it makes it too easy to access. I think that’s a problem, but I think to sort of put a blanket ban on maybe looking at changing gambling laws and all sorts would make it, for the people who don’t have an addiction and enjoy a little bit of a flutter, maybe get the heart going and whatever, it would be too restrictive, so I say oppose.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Joanne Henderson – Branch 529: Mr President, Platform, Delegates. I’m also here to oppose this motion. Again there’s a lot of addiction out there, there’s alcoholism like we’ve already mentioned, there’s also smoking is an addiction, we have people who are addicted to food. Rather than punish these people, I think we should help them. What do we do? Do we close all the pubs down? We have sensible drinkers out there, only you wouldn’t think it last night with some of us [LAUGHTER], but you do have sensible drinkers. You have people who like to gamble and who are sensible with their money and gamble, why should they be punished? So again, I think they should be helped and we really need to think about this, so that’s the reason I oppose this.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Any of you that know Geoff McCarthy know absolutely I’m up here to oppose this. Previous to meeting Geoff I was married to an alcoholic and let me tell you, once they’d donated their money to the brewery, you’d never ever get any of that back. Geoff McCarthy and William Hill, one Saturday afternoon, got their heads together and we ended up in Hawaii, that never happened when I was with the alkie. I ask you to oppose this.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Could you make sure he supplies us in the future with it as well then, Marilyn [LAUGHTER]. Any more speakers?
Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons) – on behalf of Executive Council: We’d ask Conference to support this motion. Not only are the big companies cashing in on this trend, you’ve got William Hill, Paddy Power, Betfred, Ladbrokes, to name but a few. Every day there seems to be another online bingo site opening, Foxy, Wing, Costodream, 888ladies, Jackpotjoy, Tombola, all offering to double, treble or in some cases give you even more for your initial stake. What does that tell you? It’s actually designed to get people addicted. Surely we need to try and stop this practice. Please support, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Pat, Pat, Pat, Pat. He was responding on behalf of the EC mate, sorry pal. I asked were there any more speakers. It’s okay pal, it’s okay mate. I do apologise. Okay. To the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s lost, yes, lost. Okay, Motion 90. Motion 90? Okay, Region 5, Council? Motion 90? No?

90 Miscellaneous – Branch 561

NO WORDING FOR THIS MOTION????????????????????

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Secretary, President, EC, Delegates. I’ve got to, after what I’ve just said, I’ve got to support this motion and I’d go further than that. I used to have an insurance man that came to the door, knocked on the door and the company wanted us to go to direct debit and I said to my wife no, we’re not going to direct debit because the minute we go to direct debit, that man’s put out of work. Same with these self-service checkouts. People should not go near them, not use them, they should go through the checkout. Like it says in the motion, it’s somebody’s job, somebody’s livelihood. Support this motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Any speakers? Okay. You don’t have to ask my permission, Marilyn, it’s not like you anyway is it?

Sister Marilyn McCarthy – Branch 450: Sorry about this, I’m still here. I’m up here to support this motion. It is, you’re taking somebody’s job if you’re daft enough to use these checkouts. I don’t know how many of you have ever met Debbie Potts, who’s one of the tutors with the GFTU, she was in Boots the Chemist when they said do you want to use this checkout? She said, where’s my uniform? They said what uniform? She said if I’m working for Boots, I want the uniform. What sort of holidays do I get? In the end they brought the manager down and he said I’m phoning the police. She said good, I’m calling the Manchester evening news. So they escorted her to a proper checkout where she could pay for her goods and know full well that she hadn’t cost anybody their job. People are so stupid, they can’t see that this is taking jobs. They think it’s there for your benefit to get you through a bit quicker. No, it’s not. I ask you to support this.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: I’m here to oppose the motion. I just want to ask you how many people have, how many of you do online shopping, grocery shopping online, online banking, make appointments online? That’s all putting somebody out of a job, so why should this be any different? Oppose the motion.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Colin Hall – Branch 359: I would strongly urge you to support the motion, because it’s not just jobs that are at risk. I’ve been in one or two of these places where they’ve got these automated checkouts and I’m on about the smaller stores, not the bigger ones and the problem is this, when I’ve been in there I’ve noticed they’ve got sort of one, possibly two staff whereas they’d normally have three or four staff, so right for a start off you’re short of staff. Sometimes there’s just one member of staff in there and if I notice it, the addicts that need money and the shoplifters notice it and the robbers notice it and if having extra people at the tills stops one shop worker getting their head bashed in, then so be it, you have more people at the tills. I ask you to support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Mr President, Delegates. Yes, we have these checkouts, we had checkouts before where they were checking out on the tills which was much slower and it took longer and it took more tills to do it, then they got the scanners and they’d whip, whip, whip across, pay your bill and you were away. Now we have got the automatic checkouts where you go and checkout yourself. Yes, they’ll lose jobs, but let’s think about it too. We’ve got email now, we once used to do it by the post office and we had more jobs in the post offices. Why pick on one more than the other? We use email because it’s faster, we use it and we like it and it costs less. So if you’re criticising one, criticise the other. Loads of jobs are lost in the post office because of emailing. Conference, make your minds up on the resolution. It’s your mind, make your decision.
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: General Secretary.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: President, Delegates. The Executive Council would ask Conference to oppose the motion. We think it’s absolutely great that you’re looking to save somebody’s job and we think it’s laudable that trade unionists would want a personal contact, but before you vote ask yourself a question I think was asked by one of the Delegates before. Do I ever go through a self-scan till at a supermarket? A place where a shop worker used to sit, now replaced by a computerised barcode reader and Marilyn said, do you ever book your holidays online, get all the cheap deals? Well, the reasons you’re getting cheap deals isn’t because it’s cheaper in Barbados now, it’s cheaper that you cut out the middle man, you’re not going through the travel agents and doing that. Do you have a bank online? Or walk into town and instead of queuing for the cashier to get your cash out like we used to do, put your card in a hole in the wall, tap a few numbers into a computer, a little drawer opens and you get cash out, because think of how many bank workers have lost their jobs.

You know, Dave Suddards hit the nail on the head I think about the insurance man and I think it’s great if you’ve got an insurance collector, but I’ll tell you what, there’s thousands of jobs being lost in the insurance industry. People who used to walk the cobbles collecting the money, I think there was always a safety element about them carrying cash, but the fact is they’ve been replaced by a direct debit system, which is hosted by a computer. We’ve become, whether we like it or not, a nation of convenience shoppers. There are many people who are under pressure for their time, that this type of shopping actually helps that experience. The proliferation of online shopping will be the death knell of thousands more jobs, but will we resist the temptation to shop online? Comrades, the very fact that we as individuals are prepared and we know because of the figures we get, prepared to use Pour in Pounds as a site shows that we have a positive question to that. I doubt that that’s one business on the scheme that we operate that has not shed jobs at some time because of technology.

Indeed, I doubt that there’s a business that any of you work for that hasn’t shed jobs because new technology’s come in. I go round, robots doing the jobs that people used to do, a computer programmer pressing buttons instead of somebody mixing stuff by hand, thousands of jobs. This Union used to have 57,000 members, we now have around about 20,000 and that’s not because people have took a choice and are working elsewhere, it’s because of new technology, that’s the very reason why we’ve lost jobs, but we still want people to go out and buy the product that we make. We’d hate it if customers actually turned their backs on us.

Conference, if you support this motion, I’ve got to say I believe that we’d probably have to take down the site, the Pour in Pounds site, because there’s absolutely no way that we could monitor every business that they operate on there, so we’d be taking the whole benefit off there, but I don’t believe the mover is asking for that. I hope they’re not asking for us just to go into supermarkets, because that in itself would be hypocritical. If they don’t just mean supermarkets, then I would put it to you. People like solicitors who’ve now got call centres, instead of somebody answering the phone in their office, they’d have problems with us. UIA and Irvine Insurance, the two schemes that we operate to have the Union, who now do quotes online, they’d be goners, as with most of your car insurance. We might cement, cement, the sentiment of the motion, but not the application, therefore we’d ask Conference to oppose it.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Oh, sorry, sorry. Right of reply?


91 Miscellaneous – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees that flood defences need to be developed and improved in all areas as a matter of urgency. The impact on the affected public is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. Union to initiate campaign through raising this issue through the local MPs across affected areas.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here to move Motion 91. Conference agrees that flood defences need to be developed and improved in all areas as a matter of urgency. The impact on the affected public is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. The Union to initiate a campaign through raising this issue through local MPs across the affected areas. There are currently 3,000 homes at risk of flooding across the UK. The insurance companies have a deal at the moment with the government so that insurances for at risk properties remain viable, but the deal is due to run out at some point at the end of this month, which means that potentially 200,000 high risk properties may not be able to get insurance. Construction to start on 93 new flood defences in England this year to improve protection for more than 64,000 homes. When Labour lost the last Election, they spent £354 million a year in building defences to protect towns and cities in coastal areas from flooding. This current government is to spend £294
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Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Formally seconded. Any speakers? Are you sure, Pat?

Brother John Fox – Branch 417 (speaking on behalf of the Executive Council): We ask Conference to support this motion. Over the last few years, the flooding of certain areas have become nightmares to the residents of these areas concerned. No sooner have they started the cleanups of the flood damage areas, they’re hit by another wave of flooding. The cost of the repairs and the replacements are unimaginable and the fact that some insurance companies will not insure them is totally disastrous. When this government came to power, the budget was £400 million on flood defences, but this year this has been cut to £294 million. The Environment Agency is responsible for the nation’s defences, but private water companies are responsible for the local drainage, but they put their shareholders first and it’s down to us, the taxpayer, to bail them out. The water companies need to be taken back into public ownership, then the money could be ploughed back into defence and repairs instead of the shareholders pockets. We will take this to our parliamentary group and send letters out to MPs in support of this campaign. Please support.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Against? That’s carried. Last motion, 92.

92 Miscellaneous – Branch 313

That this Conference agrees that Insurance Companies continue to provide comprehensive cover for those in society living in high risk areas of flood damage and lobby Government to ensure this is a priority.

Brother Haroon Rashid – Branch 313 (Hovis, Birmingham): Chair, Platform, Conference. Here moving Motion 92. Conference agrees that insurance companies continue to provide comprehensive cover for those in society living in high risk areas of flood damage and lobby the government to ensure this is a priority. Until now, insurers have always agreed to continue to cover the cover for homes in the affected areas, vulnerable areas, sorry, in exchange for government investment in flood defences, however this agreement known as the Statement of Principles is due to expire at the end of July and as we sit here today, the insurance have said that they have no plans of renewing the arrangements, as they feel that this current government is not spending enough on prevention. As things stand, no agreement has been reached between the Association of British Insurers and this government. So far all the reasons I’ve just stated in my speech are absolutely urgent that we support this motion and try to apply pressure on this government. I move.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Seconder? Seconder? Formally seconded.

Brother David Kirk – Branch 580 (Greggs, Leeds): President, Platform, fellow Delegates. I will try and resist the temptation to go on and on at length about the environment. I almost got up for the last resolution, but I was a bit slow off the mark. It’s going to be an increasing problem. Flooding is going to get worse because of what’s happening with the global climate and what’s happening to the ice caps and the glaciers and everything else. I think these insurance companies make vast amounts of profit. They should be the ones that put their hands in their pocket and pay for the flood defences. I ask you to support. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Sister Patricia Senkbeil – Branch 253 (first time speaker): I’m a bit nervous, sorry. Platform, Chair, Delegates. I would ask you to support this. I live in an area which floods quite regularly and the insurance is going up. People can’t even afford, they put the higher rates, so I do ask you, please support this. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Raja Hussain – Branch 313: President, Platform, Delegates. Here in support of Motion 92. I want to go a bit further and say that when Labour gets back into power, they need to make sure people have the basic protection of a
Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any more speakers?

Brother John Fox – Branch 417: The Executive Council asks you to support this motion. A lot of what I’ve got down has already been said, but there’s a bit more. Insurance companies, rip-off merchants, that’s the only name for them. At present, insurance companies are required to provide cover at reasonable rates, providing that the government continues to strengthen the flood defences and as H said earlier, this agreement is due to expire any time now. The government and the insurance companies have failed to come to a new agreement and people whose homes have been devastated by the flooding fear they will not be able to get the insurance cover. Customers have been shopping around for cover and have found that the premiums have risen six fold, from £200 a year to £1200 a year and with an excess of £10,000 a year. Other customers have been told they won’t be able to renew their policies, as they no longer fulfil the insurance company’s criteria. Is it worth having insurance with excesses like these?, as these companies won’t pay out to many of the people.

Again, we’ll take this to our parliamentary group, as these are natural disasters through forces of nature. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, all those who support the motion? Against? That’s carried.

Okay Conference. Obviously, I thank you for your motions this year and I thank you for your contributions, they’ve been overwhelming.

Well, I suppose in many ways it is a joyous moment because at the end of the day I think everybody looks forward to the time when they can put up their yoke and enjoy the end of their working life and I think if you’re lucky enough to get to that age, because many people aren’t, then it’s time I suppose to spend time with family and friends and that’s why in many respects I suppose I’m going a little bit early, not that much, just a little bit. The normal thing is, when you get this opportunity, is to look back and tell some jovial jokes of things that happened to you in the past and what happened in relation to some of the things that has been mentioned about. I suppose in many respects I would rather look forward, because coming from Northern Ireland, that has got us where we are today. We tend to look too far back in the past and if you continue to look too far back in the past, what happens it comes around to bite you, so we’re fortunate enough in many respects that in looking forward, we have seen this week that the number of people who have been living in the past, it makes it so much easier to look to the future.

Billie Gallagher’s address to Conference3

Brother Billy Gallagher – Region 7 (retiring Official): Well, I suppose in many ways it is a joyous moment because at the end of the day I think everybody looks forward to the time when they can put up their yoke and enjoy the end of their working life and I think if you’re lucky enough to get to that age, because many people aren’t, then it’s time I suppose to spend time with family and friends and that’s why in many respects I suppose I’m going a little bit early, not that much, just a little bit. The normal thing is, when you get this opportunity, is to look back and tell some jovial jokes of things that happened to you in the past and what happened in relation to some of the things that has been mentioned about. I suppose in many respects I would rather look forward, because coming from Northern Ireland, that has got us where we are today. We tend to look too far back in the past and if you continue to look too far back in the past, what happens it comes around to bite you, so we’re fortunate enough in many respects that in looking forward, we have seen this week that the number...
of young people coming to the rostrum whether it be for the first time or maybe their second Conference has increased over the years, because at the end of the day you can see the old guard and I suppose in many ways I would class myself as part of that. Each year there’s less and less people here and to be quite honest, there’s a need for more young people to become involved.

There’s a need for more young people to take the responsibility of taking the Union forward, because we can all have a good time and you go out at night, you meet friends, have a few pints, if you’re lucky maybe somebody will buy you an odd one, but if you’re not then you have to put your hand in your pocket yourself, but it’s good in order to do that because it gives the opportunity to talk to people that maybe you haven’t seen before or indeed meet old friends, but in doing that you can see it, as I say, each year that circle of people becomes less and less and that’s why it’s important to have the young people coming through because they’re the people that’s going to drive the thing forward and I suppose in many ways you have to look at what’s needed in relationship to taking this organisation forward and what’s needed is each and every person in this room that’s had a week here, goes back to wherever they work and ensures that they try to increase the membership that they have within their site, because unfortunately it’s becoming more and more difficult out there. The employers are becoming more and more ruthless.

It’s equally as hard, if not near impossible, for the FTOs because you’re reaching, I suppose in many ways, for legislation that’s going to hit you over the head anyway. So that’s important that everybody takes the view back. It’s not only the people that’s given the responsibility of organising, it’s each and every person here, that’s what’s needed. If you don’t do that, then the inevitable will happen and I think nobody wants to talk about that, or talk about what could happen in the future. In order to stay as an independent Union, we need people to be working hard in order to try to move that forward. The other thing is, I’ve been very, very lucky I suppose in many respects because I have had the opportunity to work with some great people. Some great people within the FTO movement itself and indeed I would class everybody as a colleague and a friend. We don’t always agree and we don’t always come to the same opinion as each other, but once the decision is made we move forward as a collective and I think that’s what we all have to do here. Once the decision’s made, we move forward and whether we support it or not at this Conference, the decision’s made so we work towards that decision and I suppose it would be remiss of me not to dip into history, just to try to lighten the humour a bit and I’m remembering two separate occasions. One occasion is that Pauline, not Pauline sorry, Ronnie came over to Belfast and of course Belfast as it always is was grey, miserable and wet, so we had a reasonably good session in the morning and we walked out, because it was one of the first times Ronnie came to Belfast, so he wanted to see some of the sights, you know the barbed wire and all that goes along with that, so we walked on around and I was pointing out some of the sights, saying well that’s the police station, so we go on, so we’re chatting in general and we’re coming nearly back and at that the rain’s falling reasonably heavy, so we’re coming across the road and a lorry’s coming down and the lorry has wooden pallets on it, so I never paid any heed, I walked on, but the rope that was holding the pallets on slipped and you heard bang, bang, bang, bang and the next thing I turned around and Ronnie was lying with his mouth and nose on the road [LAUGHTER]. I’m saying what’s wrong with you? He says I thought I was shot (laughter and applause).

And the other time was Jackie Mander and we lifted her at the airport and of course I said to her Jackie, have you brought Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:

General Secretary’s just making his way downstairs, so he’ll be with you ever so shortly.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Comrades. The Executive Council, at their meeting in May, decided that at this year’s Annual Conference we were going to make a special award to somebody who’s a regular at Conference. I’ve got to say the person I’m talking about is, I would consider to be a great mate, but also a great socialist and an absolutely amazing trade unionist, but somebody who I’ve always considered to be challenging but very, very supportive. Somebody who was questioning but unstinting in his dedication to the cause. This person has been an absolute inspiration to young people. I know that because I talk to them at forums, but also the more experienced Delegates as well, people have been...
coming for a long time. At 84 years of age, he still finds time to dedicate to the organisation. Oh thanks very much, I knew I’d forget them [LAUGHTER]. Do you know, for years I’ve not been able to get shot of him, when I do want him, he’s gone [LAUGHTER]. Right, shall I start again do you think?

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Yes.

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Right, this year the Executive Council have asked me to make a special award to one of our Delegates. It’s somebody who I consider to be a great mate, a great socialist and without doubt a great trade unionist. Somebody who, just by nature, has been challenging in the past, challenging the Executive on everything, but I’ll tell you what, absolutely supportive in every single way. Somebody who has the ability to question, but when they’ve done that, accepted a decision and have unstinting dedication to the cause. A person who’s been absolutely inspirational for young and old alike throughout his years. At 84 years of age, he still finds time to dedicate himself to organising. He does lots and lots of FTOs and in a few minutes I’m going to bring Dave Dash down to say a few words and this is despite the fact that he has suffered some health problems, you know not minor health problems, over the past. I believe that the film that we’ve talked about and many of you came to watch last night, the “Spirit of ‘45”, epitomises this person, absolutely totally, so can I ask well first of all Dave Dash to come down, but I’d also like to invite Pat Rowley to come down.

[APPLAUSE]

I’ve got to say, without doubt, one of the greatest trade unionists I’ve ever known.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Dave Dash – Regional Officer for Region 2:** Everybody knows how active Pat is at Conference and on the dance floor. What you may not know is how very active Pat is outside of Conference. He’s always willing to help organise wherever it’s needed. Inside recognised branches or outside leafleting. He’s leafleted practically outside of all the factories in Region 2, now he’s helping in Region 3. Sometimes when you phone him, he has a doctor’s appointment that day, but always insists on changing the appointment. He never, ever, lets anybody down. No-one knows how he works hard for the Labour Party. Before Christmas he had an operation on his knee, because he wore it out campaigning and knocking on doors. He sells more raffle tickets door to door than anyone else in Bristol CLP. He’s always sat on different Labour Party committees, European and Labour Party democracy committees, just two that comes to mind and it’s just a small part of what he does. He’s been, for many years, a school governor, sometimes in two schools in the past which he takes very seriously indeed. He’s always willing to get involved in demonstrations and marches. When demonstrators set up a camp in Bristol, protesting against corporate greed in 2011, Pat was there offering his support, ended up cooking all the food for months. Whatever he does, he always makes it clear it’s under the umbrella of the BFAWU. No-one deserves this award more than Pat.

[APPLAUSE]

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[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Just to say that John Vickers just reminded me of another incident. I’ve not gone round gathering information because I think if I’d have wanted information on Pat Rowley, of what he’s done over his longish life, he’s still young in the head, but I think I’d have probably filled something that was like War and Peace, but John Vickers has just reminded me about when people at Berryhaven, which is a bakery in Yorkshire, in South Yorkshire, when the employers there, unscrupulous employers, decided one day to take all the money out of the business and close the factory down, they didn’t even give any notice, no redundancy, they just left and the bakery decided, sorry the Union decided that we were going to run it as a workers co-operative and we put John in there as the official to run it, but we also, Pat came over to spend a couple of weeks in Barnsley and helped keep people in work, he had to, because of the skills he has in the baking industry, he gave his time freely to come over to Yorkshire to help the people in Yorkshire to at least keep their jobs and well, what can I say. Right, before you speak, Pat, I’ve got a couple of presentations. So, first of all, I have a gold certificate for you which I know you’ll pride. I know it’s, you know, a couple of quid piece of paper or whatever, I know it’ll mean an awful lot to you, sorry for the mic, for the response. First of all there is your certificate.

[APPLAUSE]

Secondly, we’re going to give you a limited edition pewter baker and I know again, I think it was actually modelled on you [LAUGHTER]. I do honestly, I think you’ve used those shovels on an oven before. Pat, I know it’s going to take pride of place somewhere and you know, I hope you and your family enjoy it.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region:** Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]
Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Again, don’t share these with the Delegation, because I know what that lot are like, you know what I mean, mind it doesn’t fall on me. Tin of biscuits made by trade unionists for you to enjoy, again along with your family, I’m sure there’s plenty of your family who’d love one of them, made by trade union hands, so that’s for you and last but by no means least, I said before about the “Spirit of ‘45”, I was watching it last night in our hotel, Pat’s staying here, unfortunately he didn’t stay for the film, but I knew that him and also Olive Molloy were two people who would have lived through all that, through what was going on then, so they actually know that the thing is, but when I watched it I thought that the “Spirit of ‘45” absolutely epitomises the values that Pat Rowley’s got and so Pat, I want to give you this copy and hope again you enjoy that. Cheers, pal.

[APPLAUSE]

Do you want to say a few words?

Brother Pat Rowley – No. 2 Region: Yes. Conference, Delegates. I’m very pleased to receive these awards, but that was never what I intended to do it for. I did it because of the people before us, they give us something to take forward. I wanted to take it forward again for the young people that’s here today, because it’s you people that matter. I’m growing out of life, you’re growing into it, it’s your world and that’s why we had to work to make it, to make life what it is, for you young people, because without you young people, we’re dead, we’re a finished organisation. Without the young people, we’re finished. It’s just like your farmer or anything else, if you don’t sow in the spring, you’ll have no crop in the harvest and that’s what we have, but I’m very pleased to accept this and I did it all and my prayer at the end of the day is I tried to be good, for I know that I should. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you very much, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, thank you and thank you, thank you President and Secretary for making this available. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Pat, thank you. John, where’s John James?

Brother John James: Conference, can I just indulge a couple of minutes to say a couple of words. My name is John James, I’m the secretary of the FTOs committee and we’ve got two Full Time Officers leaving at this moment in time and we want to pay our respects to the one this year. Martin Hanlon unfortunately is not with us, but he’s leaving in Southern Ireland and from the Full Time Officers we’d like to wish Martin Hanlon all the best on his retirement or finishing with the Union. The other one is for Billie Gallagher. He made a lovely speech earlier on and on behalf of the Full Time Officers, can I ask Roy Streeter (?) to come down and present him with a card and we’ve put a couple of bob in too for him to have a wee drink and I think Billie will like that, so if we could have Billie Gallagher down and Roy Streeter(?), cheers.

[APPLAUSE]

Roy is President of the FTOs committee, so it’s right that Roy should present this to Billie and we’re going to lose a good comrade, but also we’re going to welcome Laura Graham into our fold as well and also No. 3 I think are going to elect someone and I also want to say something about Pat Rowley. I’ve stood on the gate with Pat Rowley at six o’clock in the morning and he always keeps me awake because I’m always falling asleep, so well done to Pat as well.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Billie Gallagher – Region 7 (retiring Official): Could I possibly just say a few words in reference to the wee drink.

We in Northern Ireland don’t do wee drinks (laughter and applause).

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And of course you know where Martin Hanlon’s concerned, we wish Martin well as well. Obviously he wasn’t here, so obviously we couldn’t give him the opportunity to speak, but obviously I’m sure Butch at the back will take our best wishes to Martin, although we have said them before, before Conference as well. Listen, the Executive Council always invites a guest, well it sends out to the regions and asks the regions to propose somebody that they believe should be a guest to Conference and obviously the Executive makes a decision and it really is, I believe, an honour for someone to be put forward by their region in recognition for the work that they’ve done, an honour for that region to be able to say you know, this person is a stand-out person and I’m really pleased, because for many years I worked as a full time Official, sorry Roy, I’ll re-phrase that, for many years I attended Region 4 as a Preston District full time Official, but I did have the privilege of working many times with our guest to Conference, who is absolutely phenomenal, phenomenal on learning, phenomenal for the people at Park Cakes and working on behalf of Region 4, it’s my pleasure to welcome Julie Summersgill to speak to Conference.
Sister Julie Summersgill: Morning, everybody. It’s an honour and a privilege to have been nominated and elected as Executive Council guest. I became a union member back in June 1988 after finding employment with Park Cake Bakeries, so obviously I’ve just achieved 25 years of service with the Union. I finally became a union rep in 1997, some nine years later after realising that the majority of the members were afraid or unable through language barriers to defend themselves against bullying tactics from the management. Through the Bakers Union, I was able to complete several courses to learn how best to represent these members and I soon also got roped into the role of health & safety rep. I was again grateful for all the support the Union gave me.

Sometime further down the line, I also became a Union learner rep and was then elected as a National Union learner rep, representative for Region 4. I managed to attend the second Learner Rep Conference in Standish, Wigan, where Daubney Pomer, the project manager at the time, was a firm believer in developing individuals and those individuals giving something back. He encouraged all the representatives to get involved, to give something back and he gave me a starring role in a DVD along with other National Union learner representatives to encourage others into learning, so myself, Stan Sharp and Debbie Loy of the day, learner reps, were all put into this DVD and it was quite funny driving Irwin Brothers, who was doing the DVD, up and down the motorway while one of them sat in the front passenger seat asking me questions, trying to interview me and film me and there was one sat in the back operating the sound system and obviously it took quite a few attempt because I wasn’t used to being filmed whilst I was driving and lady drivers get baited anyway and obviously keep going up and down, round and round the roundabout, when we finally managed after the takes, it was fair to say it was motion sickness and it was even funnier when I was filmed then re-entering and cracking on that I was checking in in the hotel for the first time, still being filmed and everybody was looking, doing a double-take, thinking I had a twin sister.

Believe me, there is only one of me and my mum always said they broke the mould when they made me, but I’m not sure whether that was a compliment or not. I was encouraged to partake in discussions and obviously had the microphone thrust at me and that’s when I first started public speaking, as it were. Several years later, I then came and attended Bridlington for the annual Conference for the first time. Obviously being a female representative with children, I stayed home and waited until the children had done their exams. I then came to Conference as a Delegate, representing Branch 452 and Roy Streeter, the full time Official, was bullying, sorry encouraging everybody to get up and speak. I was sure that somebody had paid Joe Marino, as each time my turn came up to stand and talk at Conference, we had a break or there was another guest speaker and I was sat there, my legs were absolutely shaking, my colleague at the side of me, the table was vibrating, the water jug was splashing about and it was just building and building and I was beginning to feel even more nervous, but I got up and I did it.

Conference, it’s a pleasure for the Delegates and it’s your place of work for the week. This is where I firmly believe that changes can be made and implemented and you have a chance to shape the Union for the future. It’s all about participation and it would be nice to see more people getting up. The socialising is also a good aspect, but we’re not just here to socialise and I think they rue the day the guys from Park Cake and Region 4, when they actually got me drinking. I used to be a cheap date, two halves of lager and I was gone, I was legless and falling over, now they’ve got me on the hard stuff, I’m on the spirits and I’m proud to say I can now match them, much to Roy’s disarray because obviously drinking spirits is always more expensive and when he asked, he was then sorry that I’d promoted myself onto the spirits.

I’d like to congratulate the new Delegates who’ve got up to Conference. As I said earlier, it is a daunting experience, but well done to the first time speakers. I’d also like to thank and I think Branch 313 are worth a mention, Hovis, Birmingham. Obviously they’re going to be closing and the amount of resolutions you’ve put in and real changes is absolutely fantastic and we were talking to Raja Hussain yesterday, himself and Haroon Rashid are actually delaying their job hunting for a period of nine weeks while they help their colleagues to gain work and I think that is absolutely fantastic [APPLAUSE], so well done guys and it’s their way of giving something back.

Branch 580 as well, Greggs of Yorkshire, well done for the amount of resolutions you’ve put in, I think it’s absolutely fantastic and without you guys and Branch 313, I’m sure Conference would have been over a lot sooner. I commend Ian on the mishap with the Greggs and the shop mistake, for the shop Delegates and I think it was great of Ian to actually take responsibility and hold his hands up and say I’ve made a mistake. We’ve all made mistakes and I think people should lead by example and I think Ian did that in putting his hands up and saying I made a mistake and I should commend Ian on that [APPLAUSE].

I also think that the EC have done a fantastic job this year and I do believe they’re also leading by example. I’ve never known, in the years that I’ve been coming to Conference, so many EC Delegates get up and actually speak from the
rostrum, so well done, another case of leading by example.

[APPLAUSE].

I think I should also mention Dave Suddards from Hovis, Bradford, the work with the defibrillator, absolutely fantastic. If companies can’t get this in and they’re not prepared to pay, then what a better way than somebody like Dave to come forward and actually do the groundwork and the sponsorship to actually purchase one on behalf of the members, that’s fantastic and I think everybody should take that back and if you haven’t got one, that’s definitely an opening and the way to go, so well done, Dave.

[APPLAUSE].

I also want to mention, obviously Sandra Carr mentioned about the power of the supermarkets and obviously there’s no greater example of that than Hovis 313, actually closing with the loss of all those jobs. I’ve seen it myself at Park Cakes and it’s unbelievable what’s going on. Martin Kelly spoke on the Living Fund. I have a sister who has learning disabilities and also had a stroke several years ago and I was recently called into a meeting because her funding is going to be changed. She has no longer got the capabilities to perform any task, so the fact she can’t do the job anymore is stopping her for social inclusion, she can no longer go, she’s having to fund that herself, so I commend Martin for speaking on that. I’d also like to point out to Ian there was a resolution actually put in about the health tourism and I think Ian approached it from a completely different angle than the way the wording was put in and it was all about people coming over for treatment on the NHS when they shouldn’t have been, promising to pay for that treatment and then disappear back and so, Ian you did make another mistake, so I’d just like to [LAUGHTER], but I’m sure we can bring that resolution back to Conference. I’d also like to thank obviously the solicitors that we use, Thompsons and Malloy Whittle Robinson which is now Walker Smith Way, they’re always only a phone call away, so anybody needs any advice and guidance, you can either email them, pick up the phone, they’re always ready, willing and able. I’d just like to thank Branch 450 for nominating me as a Delegate guest to Conference and also all the Delegates who go to Region 4 Regional Council for putting me forward and for the Executive Council for actually selecting me, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Julie, I mean obviously I’ve worked fairly closely with you over the years and still do work on the National Union Learner Reps Committee. I know when we had some difficulties within your Branch and I’m glad to see that, you know, Roy resolved them. The fact is that, you know, the people there think you’re a real asset and I’ve got to say, I believe you’re a real asset as well. So Julie, I’m going to give you a tin of biscuits from Fox’s.

Sister Julie Summersgill: Cheers.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Definitely, don’t put them near Streeter or I’ll tell you (laughter and applause)...... Cheers.

Sister Julie Summersgill: Thank you, cheers.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. Where were we? Obviously it’s, what time is it? Is it? Do you want to work through? Might as well, hadn’t we eh? Absolutely. That’s the first time I think this week I’ve mentioned that isn’t it? Absolutely. Listen, first off, I want to thank Standing Orders and the Chair and the Committee for the way that they’ve controlled Conference, they’ve run Conference and they’ve made sure that Conference, despite one mishap by me, has run ever so efficiently, so I’d like to thank the Chair of Standing Orders and their Committee, because they obviously do work full time before you get to Conference and after you leave Conference, making sure any errors are picked up and obviously that those who made them are held accountable, so I’d like to thank Standing Orders, thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

Obviously I’d like to thank the scrutineers and obviously you will have seen that I only function when someone does all the work and anybody who knows me will say that when it comes to delegation there’s, apart from Roy Streeter probably, there’s very, very few that delegate more than I do and I want to thank my Vice President, because I tell you what, my Vice President is absolutely superb, I think he’s done the role of moving up and down, he’s even managed to apparently appear like he’s crapping biscuits, I believe is what I was told last night, because obviously he keeps pulling them from these boxes under here and it’s the faces he pulls as he bends down, but I’ll tell you what, not only has he performed his duties admirably as the Vice President, making sure that everybody knew what the messages were from the Executive, but I think the contribution he’s made on the floor at Conference has been absolutely superb. I want to pay my respects entirely to my Vice President, superb, absolutely superb.

[APPLAUSE]
I want to thank the FTOs of course, obviously for the door keeping and quite clearly we know they get up very early in a morning to make sure all the Delegates are up, I believe they come and give you all a personal knock on the door [LAUGHTER], so I’m advised, obviously sit at the end of the rows and obviously are there to make sure that you have all the information you require, when you require it, that’s right isn’t it, John? Yes, that’s right. So I’d like to thank the FTOs, obviously not just for the work that they do at Conference, but again for the work they do throughout the year. They are always accessible, sometimes it might be difficult to get hold of them, but one thing you can always guarantee with our FTOs, at some point in time they will return your call, you know, so I want to thank the FTOs because they do a fantastic job, not just at Conference but throughout the year on behalf of all our members, thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

And obviously I want to single one particular person out, because as he told me it wasn’t 40 years, it was 44 but we get there eventually. Obviously Steve, congratulations mate, 44 years, absolutely fantastic, what an outstanding person you actually are, thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

Obviously throughout the year, every year, obviously we rely, even the FTOs will tell you, they rely on the office staff. Our office staff are second to none. Our office staff are fantastic, they way that they work and the way that they do their job and the way they make, well certainly, make us look professional whether you’re a FTO, whether you’re a National Official. I want to pay my greatest respects to the office staff throughout the country, because they make sure, they make sure we do look professional, so as good as your FTOs are, without those office staff, they wouldn’t be as professional as they are, so I want to send a message of thanks to all our office staff right across the country.

[APPLAUSE]

…and I want to single out a particular individual because I’ll tell you what, it doesn’t matter how much they drink, it doesn’t matter how much running about they do, they look perfect every day and Conference wouldn’t be here without a particular individual named Jan. Jan is absolutely superb…

[APPLAUSE]

…and absolutely fantastic and my greatest respect goes to Jan because I don’t know how she drinks so much and looks so fantastic. I only drink half as much and I look as rough as, well, we won’t go there. I do start at a disadvantage yes, you’re quite right and obviously I want to also pay a great respect because I’m supposed to give him information, but sometimes I forget where I am, but regardless of the fact that I forget to pass the information on, he does an absolutely superb job when it comes to Conference, it’s like he knows what to do, because he probably does.

I’d like to thank John Vickers for all the work that he does in putting all our PowerPoint presentations, without all the information that he needs, but I’d like to thank you very much for everything you do, John

[APPLAUSE]

…and for co-ordinating all the other stuff and making sure we have our presentations, thank you very much and of course all the staff that work on the learning services, who also assist during Conference to make sure that you have the papers on your desks that you require, to ensure we have a good Conference. Obviously despite we’ve had one or two issues with a couple of issues around Conference, I would like to thank Paul Roggerman and Keiran Lowry, plus obviously all the Bridlington bars who’ve had to tolerate us. Obviously the staff who have made sure that we’ve been fed when we’ve had the fringe meetings and the coffee when we’ve had our coffee breaks, because obviously John reminds me to give you a break, but I’d like to thank all of the staff and obviously all of the people in the Spa who have helped this Conference run and have made sure that we’ve received everything we require during this week, so thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

Obviously, you know, despite the issues about maybe one or two issues around hotels, I do believe that the hoteliers in Bridlington do try and support us the best that they can, so I would like to thank the hoteliers of Bridlington for putting up with us, for obviously having to understand that when we come to Bridlington we’re here to work, but we’re here to socialise and we’re here to make sure we carry out acts of solidarity with one another, so I’d like to thank them for tolerating the way that we conduct our business and thank them for their understanding, so I’d like to thank the hoteliers too.

[APPLAUSE]

I’d also like to thank our sponsors. I mean, I’m sure John Casey won’t mind me mentioning it from Warburtons, how the raffle that he ran the other night has obviously meant that we’ve collected a few quid which he is quite happy to support going into our Strike Fund, so I’d like to thank one of our sponsors, Warburtons and of course our other sponsors, Fox’s
Biscuits and our solicitors Walker Smith Way which were formally MWR Thompsons and Watkins & Gunn, who without, you know, we probably wouldn’t have the Conference that we do, so I’d like to thank those people, thank you very much. [APPLAUSE]

Obviously we’ve had a number of stallholders, you know, for the Credit Union, the Union Learn, Westfield, Lighthouse, Payplan, Unite the Resistance, I think it was Right to Work at the beginning of the week, Unite the Resistance at the end of the week. There was a Northern College GFTU with Willie Colquhoun that was manning that one up and I’d like to thank all of those stallholders for coming along, making sure they had plenty of freebies and making sure that you go home and in a lot of cases have now got a full cup set. I don’t think you got any saucers, but I believe you got plenty of mugs. So I’d like to thank all of our stallholders for coming over and making sure that your kitchens look better than what you did when you left, so thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

I’d also like to thank all of the speakers that came down, you know, the TUC speakers and especially Hilda Palmer from Hazards, I believe she went down a storm and obviously I thank the people that attended those fringe meetings as well and obviously the sponsors of those fringe meetings and of course last night it wasn’t a fringe meeting but it was a great film and a great opportunity for us to understand exactly what socialism is supposed to be about, so I’d like to thank the sponsors of the fringe meetings that we’ve held, which again has been down to our solicitors, so thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

And of course Conference, you know, I want to thank you because obviously you’ve been very tolerant, you know, because obviously I sit up here and sometimes, because I’m human, but I thank you very much for being tolerant of me and so and I’m looking round and she was here before, ah ha, so it’s my absolute pleasure, but I’ve got to say before I do you know, she did make me suffer in a bit of pain on Sunday, I mean because I had a bit of a cold sore on Sunday and I had this thing on it and she said you’ve got a piece of paper hanging from your lip and ripped it off and ripped all the [LAUGHTER] and it really hurt, it was sore, it was very ….. Listen, it’s my absolute pleasure, I mean and when this lady speaks as someone pointed out to us last night, she commands the room and she absolutely does. It’s my pleasure to invite Olive Molloy to speak and address Conference on behalf of the Standing Orders.

[APPLAUSE]

**Sister Olive Molloy:** Thank you, Ian. Mr President, Platform and Delegates. Once again the Standing Orders Committee offers sincere thanks to Ronnie and to Ian for their leadership through this Conference and indeed they are both available to us all at any time through the year with help and advice and that’s more than can be said for some leaders of much larger unions. Our thanks to Jan and Carol in the office. We as a Committee see more of these girls than you do and we do appreciate all the behind the scenes work that they do so willingly and so well. Thanks to the scrutineers, the quiet and efficient way they carried out the count for the elected Delegates to TUC and Labour Party Conferences and thank you to all the Spa staff who have looked after us in the Eagles Nest so well. Thanks to my Committee, who have been so supportive, helpful and constructive. Fines this year totalled £35 and this has been boosted by Jan, the office Jan, who won £32 and has generously donated it to our Fines bag, making a total of £67, added to this is a collection from the Delegates in the Monarch Hotel of £44, giving a grand total of £111 to be donated to the Bridlington Lifeboat Station.

[APPLAUSE]

You know, as I look across this hall, I see many different skin colours and many different faiths and cultures, but we have shown the world this week that once again we can all work together, socialise together and respect each other. We don’t have to be of a certain colour or creed to believe in and work for what we consider to be fair and just. Would the nations of the world follow our example and do the same, what a different world we would live in.

[APPLAUSE]

As the working class, the only thing we have to sell is our labour. A fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work is what we ask and yet with some employers, it would be easier to get part of the hydrogen bomb than to get a fair pay increase or an improvement in terms and conditions. We as a trade union have a hard road to travel and it’s getting uphill all the way and the hill is getting steeper year by year. We must make every effort to increase our membership, because membership means strength and a voice to be reckoned with. You’ve all proved by your presence in this hall, how dedicated you all are to the trade union movement and we must channel that energy and enthusiasm into recruiting new members whenever and wherever we can. Growth is essential, growth is vital. Don’t let us wither and die, I beg you, because of lack of membership and be yet another feather in the cap of the Tories, who would like nothing better than to destroy the union movement forever. As always, thank you for listening. I wish you all a safe journey home and may God by whatever name you know him, bless you all.
[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Thank you very much, Olive. Just before we get to the next bit, that was my Tommy Cooper impression, do you like that? Obviously, John.

**Brother John Vickers:** Comrades, this is just to thank each and every one of you in the room. One of the things close to my heart is the Wooden Spoon charity, which is for disadvantaged kids and we’ve got a gentleman here who works for our solicitors, one of our solicitors and he puts a lot of effort, he’s on the committee of Wooden Spoon in Wales and he run the London Marathon despite his size, despite his injury [LAUGHTER], sorry mate and on the Friday before the London Marathon this guy actually had a cortisone injection, because £4,000 was riding on him doing the London Marathon and he didn’t want to let anybody down. So I’m going to ask Clive Thomas to come up, to receive from you people £263 he raised at this Conference for the Wooden Spoon charity and I thank you from the bottom of my heart to each and every one of you who gave, thank you very much. Clive.

[APPLAUSE]

Can I just say on the Tuesday before the London Marathon on the Sunday he was out with Ronnie training for it and him and Ronnie drank four bottles of wine between them [LAUGHTER].

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** I only had half.

[LAUGHTER]

**Brother Clive Thomas:** Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

**Brother Ian Hodson, National President:** Conference, we’ve come to that point, obviously where I get the opportunity to invite someone who obviously is very supportive of me, but obviously I have an additional job besides the role I perform as the National President. I’ve been very supportive to him, to make sure he gets home in one piece because he can’t handle his alcohol and I thought seeing as though he’s going to speak and I’ve seen some of the content in it and it was quite an abusive attack, so I’d like you to ignore some of the comments about me that he’s likely to make, because none of them will be true, because one thing I’ve learnt over the years is that if you can embellish a story, nobody can do it better than Ronnie Draper. It’s my absolute pleasure to introduce our General Secretary, my mate, Ronnie Draper.

[APPLAUSE]

**General Secretary’s Closing Address to Conference**

**Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary:** Talking about being supportive you know, he’s the only person I’ve ever put on a tax form. I claim him now as a dependent relative, although we’re not actually related [LAUGHTER]. That programme when it says have you got a half, he says have you got a pound, all the time. Anyway, I agree with what Julie was saying before, I think it’s really refreshing to see so many new faces at Conference this year. I thought yesterday when we had the Workfare debate and the National President was waving his arms around like a good ‘un, I was going to have to grab myself one from somewhere. I’ve got to say I think Delegates should stop sending contentious motions in like that, otherwise I’m going to start claiming danger money, it’s really, really bad. You’ll notice I sat two chairs away from him this year.

I just want to start off with one, is it a funny story or is it a tragic story, but it’s been a funny year and one of the things that we did have to deal with, both of us had to deal with, during the year was the aftermath, I went to New York with the General Federation of Trade Unions on their conference and while I was over there, I met with our sister union which is the BCTGM, Baking, Confectionery, Tobacco & General Workers Union and we built up some rapport, we spoke to each other and I was only back a week and down London, speaking at a Unite the Resistance meeting, John Fox was with us and Tony Sedgewick was with us, we were in the pub surprisingly one night and emails started coming through to me from America and they were really bad emails, both of us we were sat there getting these emails in, calling us for everything because of what we were doing to peoples’ Twinkies and I thought hang on, I’ve never touched anybody’s twinkie [LAUGHTER], what they on about and I think oh no, no, it’s something to do with a kid’s programme and he said no, that’s the Tweenies.

The Twinkies are apparently some sort of biscuit or cake bar in America and there was a problem with, you know I’m not going to bore you with all the details because it was quite a long and savage story. It appeared in our magazine and on our website, we put stuff in there, but we were getting all these really, really bad emails from I suppose rednecks and people who didn’t like the trade union movement, people who are real right-wing republicans and union haters in America. We
were getting them all and we were sort of playing table tennis with them, we were batting them back like saying, you know, do you not do geography in America? Do you not read our address, where it is? UK? Does it not give you a hint, or are you really upset about the fact that we sent Simon Cowell over to do America’s Got Talent. Don’t blame us for that, it’s not our fault if you never got a republican elected in America, we didn’t get a vote on it at all and it started off as a little bit of banter backwards and forwards, until one day I got a wanted poster, which was saying that I should be sent to Guantanamo Bay.

Now come on, I love Cuba, but Guantanamo Bay, so I stopped writing back to them, but to give you a demonstration how pernicious these people can be and these are people who were attacking our Union because they believed, because if you Google, I don’t know whether it was him who set it up, John or whether it was Tim Smith, I don’t know, when you Google “Bakers Union” on the internet, you get us, you don’t get the Bakers Union of America which has got like, I don’t know, half a million members, you get us because we bought the domain and so we got the blame for the Twinkies, 30,000 being on strike in America against a really savage employer and on the Friday after we’d been to London, our website it crashed. We normally get 800 hits on a Friday, or thereabouts on average, on that day we got 25,000. I thought it was great, I wish I’ve got to say I would like many more people to speak from this rostrum and I do agree with what Julie said before, it’s cheaper to produce them there and all the blame that he put on the unions over there was just lies, because their union had actually allowed their pension funds, they run their pension funds over there, they actually lent the company millions upon millions of dollars to bail the company out, just to keep those workers in work and when they did it, the company wanted to move them across to Mexico. So, it just shows how strong the anti-trade union movement is in America.

I want to turn to Conference and I think Julie you know, I’d actually got it down here to say as well, I think this year of 164

I don’t know how many Saturdays I’ve spoken, he’s spoken a damn sight more than me and we go round and we speak, giving the message of the Bakers Union. I think at the end of the day we’ve got a great street cred out there, but I’d like to thank the other people who are involved because I suppose it’s almost expected of two National Officers to go out and promote the Union, but people like Marilyn McCarthy, Norville, Haroon Rashid, John Fox, Sam Vickers and Mark McHugh, who give their own time up to go on steering groups, Geoff McCarthy as well, time to give up their own time in the cause of a socialist agenda. They do it because these meetings happen Saturday of a night-time, these people also working during the day and I think they’re a credit to what this Union’s all about.

You know, we spend lots of time during the year at Unite the Resistance. We’re getting more and more involved, I mean I don’t know how many Saturdays I’ve spoken, he’s spoken a damn sight more than me and we go round and we speak, giving the message of the Bakers Union. I think at the end of the day we’ve got a great street cred out there, but I’d like to thank the other people who are involved because I suppose it’s almost expected of two National Officers to go out and promote the Union, but people like Marilyn McCarthy, Norville, Haroon Rashid, John Fox, Sam Vickers and Mark McHugh, who give their own time up to go on steering groups, Geoff McCarthy as well, time to give up their own time in the cause of a socialist agenda. They do it because these meetings happen Saturday of a night-time, these people also working during the day and I think they’re a credit to what this Union’s all about.

I want to turn to Conference and I think Julie you know, I’d actually got it down here to say as well, I think this year the Executive having been press-ganged into, asked to speak on some of the motions, I think’s been absolutely fabulous and I don’t joke about that, because what it does, it takes an awful lot of pressure off us to go out and do the research on the things that we’ve got to respond on, it gives us the opportunity then of going out to the wider world and doing some other things on behalf of the Trade Union. I think it’s been, you know, invigorated by the experience as always of Pat Rowley, as I say I love the guy, but I’ve also loved the exuberance of youth, the people who are coming through and I don’t just mean at this Conference. I’m talking about outside with the development of the youth forums and now the development of a youth section Facebook page I suppose you’d call it, I don’t know, I don’t understand Facebook anyway, but you know I sort of expect Pat Rowley and the likes of Janine Cokayne, who’s been coming for a number of years, she’s still young but you know now to me she’s one of the experienced stalwarts, she get’s, you know she’s going to do it. To get young people down doing what they do, I think is absolutely fantastic and so the likes of Sarah Woolley, Rachel Mullen, Chris Lay, Mark McIntyre from Solway who I met at the youth forum a few weeks back, Imran Hussain, they’ve done a great job and incidentally I’ll tell you a little story about Imran Hussain.

When you filled in those things yesterday, not called testimonials are they, they’re called something else and spelt, somebody spelled it wrong, everyone was asked about why they joined the Trade Union, the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union and I was reading through them up here yesterday and Imran Hussain gave all his normal list, you know I get protection and I’ve gone through the education programme and right at the end he says ‘cause Ronnie Draper’s a Liverpool supporter. Well done, Imran, what a fantastic guy.

[APPLAUSE]

I’ve got to say I would like many more people to speak from this rostrum and I do agree with what Julie said before, it’s an absolutely daunting task, but you know the best way to combat it is spontaneity. You know there’s enough controversial motions and passionate motions at this Conference that have come from branches not just covering our industry but covering society in general for people to latch on to and I always believe that the easiest way of getting up is when you
just get up off the hoof, not when you’ve got something prepared when you can just get up and deliver that speech. Don’t be kidded, up here on Sunday, when we start, I will be surprised if Ian wasn’t very apprehensive about what was going to happen in the Conference. It happens to everybody, there’s nobody in here who’s going to tell me they’re not, when they first come down, worried about speaking, but I’ll tell you what, once you’ve done it once, you’ll get the bug and you’ll want to do it more often, because as I say there’s lots and lots of things that affect your families and friends as well as yourselves, but one thing we are going to do is we’re through Willie Colquohon to introduce a public speaking section into our courses, into our shop stewards courses, because we think that’s the right thing to do and one of the next steps that we could do from there.

I want to see more motions from branches as well. Now that seems a strange thing to say when we’ve had 95 this year give or take a few that were withdrawn, but they come from Regional Councils in the main. I bang on at loads and loads of meetings and when I go talking to shop stewards or health & safety reps, saying about how important the branches, it doesn’t matter what the structure is, all these people behind here might be elected by you as a national leadership and we were elected as part of that national leadership, but I’ll tell you what, the most important part of the Trade Union is its members and its branches, because if we don’t have them, we don’t have any of this. We don’t have this, we don’t have a Conference, we don’t have anything and so I think the drive and I know Willie’s going to promote this on courses, the drive to promote more branches to put motions in, rather than going through Regional Councils because I think at times you get confusion. If the person who put it in doesn’t turn up, then who’s going to speak on that and particularly agree with it. Get them through your branches and get them to me, that’s the avenue from branches, send them to me, not through to your Regional Office or your Regional Officer, you send them to me and next year let’s make sure that we’ve got branches all over the country, you know, making sure that they get the passionate opposition that they believe we’ve got in government and against pernicious employers onto this Conference floor.

I want to congratulate the Delegates on the level of debate, it’s been absolutely fantastic. You know, as always the passion that we’ve had and we’ve had some really controversial debates and we responded in, sometimes in opposition but don’t feel downhearted because we’ve gone against what you say, that’s what happens in life, that’s democracy. Sometimes, you know, not everybody agrees with what you say and very often a lot of people don’t agree with what I say, but you know we’ve talked about bedroom tax and welfare benefits and all that, I just want to make one point and there’s a danger and I believe it’s a real danger that when a government stands up and says what we’re going to do, we’re going to remove this band of pensioner from this benefit, I think that’s dangerous. I think once you start means-testing welfare benefits, taking away this because this person’s rich, I think what you’re on, you’re on a slippery slide.

You know, don’t get me wrong and I’ve said it in speeches I’ve made this week, that I want the rich to be taxed till the pips squeak. I want them to pay a bigger proportion towards the national debt, but when it comes down to welfare benefits if you cut people off there, the next thing is they’ll be cutting people off here and they’ll lower that then they’ll cut people off here and eventually what we’ll see is a total erosion of the welfare state and we’ll have Tories clapping everywhere. That’s the danger of supporting the government when they make cuts to welfare.

Billie Gallagher, what can I say eh? retiring. We’ve been, I’m sure he’ll say the same, besides being Full Time Officials, we were shop stewards together when we met in 1981. I knew he was going to tell that story about me and as Ian says how things get embellished, it did slightly get embellished. I don’t think I had my nose on the pavement but I did go, he’s right, but we’ve been, since 1981, Billie and I have been great friends and I’m sure he’d say the same as I’m saying that it’s, forget the fact that we’re full time Officials and we’re trade unionists, I think above all I think we’ve been great friends over that time and I was thinking, you know, I always used to get knocked by Roy Streeter about I was always on holiday. Do you know I thought about the establishments where I’ve been all over the world on different delegations, I’ve been on holiday. In all the establishments I’ve spent more time away on holiday has been with Billie and Faye in their house and they’ve spent quite a lot of time in my house as well on holiday, so you know I’m going to miss him as a Full Time Official, but I’m not going to miss him as a friend. I would like to think that’s going to give us more time together and we can discuss over a glass of wine the greying hair, the expanding waistline, but I do hope Billie that you have an absolutely fantastic retirement and that it won’t be too long until we see each other again.

[APPLAUSE]

Organising is the lifeblood of this Union. Last year I made a plea to the Conference floor and I’m going to make a very similar plea because there’s lots and lots of new Delegates here. You know, there’s lots of ability in here as well. Some people don’t know they’ve got that ability but I’ll tell you what, once again you get the bug for organising and you make those first few members, it’ll grip you. I’ve got to say that in No. 3 region, the way that they’ve got the organising team with Lay members is absolutely fantastic. I’m not going to name them all, I think I probably did most of it the other day, you know when I was giving the awards out, but what I will say is they’re an example that other people should look at.
They’ve got a fantastic system where people go out and yes, they give all their time, I don’t expect people maybe to go out the house that some of those people do, but to give some help if you like to our full time Officials on organising would go amiss, because the best organisers they’ve got isn’t necessarily the person who’s paid, because you have more access to the people who aren’t organising to the Union, you’ve got family, you’ve got friends, you’ll have colleagues, you’ll know people who aren’t in, there might be a workplace that’s near to where you live and because of the hectic programme that our organisers have got, you might want to take that on and I know Richard took on looking after a branch in Stoke which freed up full time Officials to do other stuff. You know, we’re challenging full time Officials to succeed.

There used to be a saying and Steve will remember it when we were, well he’s been an Official longer than me, but there used to be this saying that there was no contracted hours for full time Officials, but it’s swings and roundabouts. What I’ve got to say, like the Tory government, like the councils, we’ve took the swings away. We can’t afford to have that. We’re not slave drivers but we do expect, you know, that everyone is working and I’ve got to say the full time Officials are embracing that. They know that we need it to survive, but there’s a lot more that we can do collectively, together as a team, united we can make, you know, many members that’ll keep this Union going. I would say that we can grow, I think we, I hope we’ve reached the plateau in our membership and then we start turning the corner, but it’s going to mean a lot of innovations through the Union and I know that when I interviewed four people who stood for the job in No. 3 they’re under no illusion that what they’re coming out of, they might be coming out of a bakery that’s challenging the branch secretaries but they’re coming into an environment which is going to be even more challenging.

People are going to expect a lot more and if you don’t do it for me, then as I said before, do it for Jim Mclelland, he’d have loved it if people got involved in organising. I want to finish Chair just saying that there’s always lots of rumours about me. No, let me tell you. My personal life has changed, but my commitment to the socialist movement is unwilting and my commitment to an independent Union remains unmoved. My desire is to retire as General Secretary of BFAWU when the time’s right.

[APPLAUSE]

You can make my wishes become a reality (unclear).

[APPLAUSE]

Brother ??????????????????????: Conference, it’s my great pleasure to ask our National President to give his closing address to Conference. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

National President’s Closing Address to Conference

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, I’ll learn from my mistakes, I’ve not written anything down, so I do apologise for the rant in advance, but I’ll try not to break any glasses or destroy any tables in front of me. First off, every word that Ronnie said about Conference, about the people that participate, absolutely 100% true. You’ve been absolutely outstanding, as you always are. You know, it’s an absolute privilege and a honour to sit in this chair to listen to you come down, may not always agree with you and sometimes if I’m opposing the motion, my job is to make sure that people agree with me, because that’s my job, that’s the role that I play and sometimes I make a mistake too, because when I want to support something and am enthusiastic about it, I do let enthusiasm get in the way, it’s just a poor trait of mine, but I’ll tell you what, there’s nothing that I’m more proud of than being the President of this Trade Union and having the opportunity to do what you ask me to do. There’s nothing more in life that I find a privilege than serving our great independent Trade Union, it’s an absolute phenomenal honour ……

[APPLAUSE]

…and I’d like to endorse what Ronnie Draper just said about maintaining an independent Trade Union, because I’ll tell you what Ronnie, we will do everything in our power to make sure that your dreams come true, because those are our dreams too. We are the Bakers Food & Allied Workers Union and forever independent we will be and Unite can go off and talk to who they like, but we haven’t got enough office space unfortunately, but if people want to join a trade union that stands up and fights, this is the one. This is the one that will stand up and fight for you. If you’re in the food industry and you’re being exploited, we will stand up and fight for you. We’re not afraid. We’re not afraid to say what we believe in, we’re not afraid to make a stand, we’re not afraid to say when people are being exploited and we ain’t going to give up on our principles.

Our principles are our beliefs, that’s what guides us through life and I’ll tell you now, when we talk about Workfare and we say what we’ll do, we do it and that’s what we will do. We won’t say we’re against Workfare and then do a deal with an employer so we can shut down a factory believing we can transfer jobs. When we say no, we mean no. We ain’t going
to accept Workfare and yes, we’re going to campaign against Agency because we don’t believe they should be in our industry, not because we don’t believe that those workers are entitled to employment, but we believe they have rights, they have a right to employment with a contract of employment that pays them properly. That’s what we believe in, that’s what we stand for, that’s what we fight for. That’s what the Bakers Union is all about and we ain’t going to sell out on our principles ......

[APPLAUSE]

…and that’s why, that’s why Conference at the beginning of this Conference week when you’ve got your Foodworkers, inside of those Foodworkers was a commitment that we believe this Union should honour. We went to the TUC last year and we took a position that we will not sit back and allow a government to remove working peoples’ rights and we decided as a trade union that when that motion went forward from the Prison Officers Association, we would endorse it and we would support it, because I’ll tell you what, come year in year out and you say we’re going to fight for the NHS and I’ll tell you what, that’s why we wanted to support that motion. You come in year in and year out and say we’re going to defend the Welfare State and that’s why we supported that motion and when you go back to your workplaces, you tell the members the reason why we are making sure that people have an opportunity is because we believe in democracy and that’s why we’re going to engage our members on a call for a general strike and we want you to endorse it, we want you to support it because this is a fighting Trade Union ......

[APPLAUSE]

… and I’ll tell you what, we ain’t going to allow them to take any more of our rights away and on the 29th September, like Marilyn said, get out on those streets, stand up and fight, because that’s what we do. We ain’t going to give in and like I said last year, we never surrender. Never, ever, give up your rights. They’ve taken enough, let them take no more and let’s make sure that we’re always there in support of our membership. When they need leadership, we give it. When they need support, we support them and when obviously we’re ever together, we show solidarity. Conference, thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: Mark McHugh. Come on, Elvis [LAUGHTER]. We’re lucky this year, we’ve got a real star to lead the singing. I’ve nominated him [LAUGHTER]. Right, so we all stand up. We’re going to sing The Red Flag and then we’re going to sing Auld Lang Syne after it. So we’re going to follow Mark.

[THE RED FLAG SUNG]

[APPLAUSE]

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: You must get out on New Year’s Eve more often, you know. I can’t sing Auld Lang Syne, I don’t know the words.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I’m sober.

Brother Ronnie Draper, General Secretary: You’re sober, whoo hoo [LAUGHTER]. The first time this week. Right, ready?

[AULD LANG SYNE SUNG]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you, Conference. Safe journey home.

[APPLAUSE]

Hopefully see you next year. Enjoy the evening. Enjoy solidarity. Oh sorry, yes, absolutely right, Marilyn, 29th September, be on the streets of Manchester.

[END OF CONFERENCE]