



2015-16
Annual
Parliamentary
Report

Researched and compiled by
Union Services
Parliamentary Consultancy

BFAWU ANNUAL PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an overview of developments in Parliament and the work carried out by Union Services Parliamentary Consultancy for the Bakers' Union during the period from the last Annual Conference in June 2015 to the close of the 2015-2016 parliamentary session on 12 May 2016.

PARLIAMENTARY OVERVIEW

Last year's Annual Conference fell shortly after Labour's disappointing General Election defeat under Ed Miliband with the Tories gaining a small overall majority. Shortly after Conference, Jeremy Corbyn threw his hat in the ring for the resulting Labour leadership contest. The BFAWU was one of the first unions to announce their support for Corbyn, and then Chair of the BFAWU Parliamentary Group John McDonnell managed the successful campaign. Initially this meant getting the nominations of 37 MPs needed to get his name on the ballot paper, before leading a campaign to win new members and supporters to the Labour Party to vote in the election and persuade existing members to back a left-wing anti-austerity candidate.

With other leadership contenders Andy Burnham, Yvette Cooper and Liz Kendall giving repeatedly lacklustre arguments and abstaining on a key welfare reform vote, Corbyn built a commanding and unstoppable lead. His election was delivered on an overwhelming democratic mandate, with a clear majority amongst party members as well as among affiliated trade unionists and new registered supporters. The fact that the Blairite Liz Kendall polled just 4.5% of the vote shows the clear appetite for change within the party.

After Corbyn's election as Leader, he swiftly moved to appoint John McDonnell as his Shadow Chancellor. Several other members of the BFAWU Parliamentary Group were also been given frontbench roles including Lisa Nandy (Shadow Energy Secretary), Ian Lavery (Shadow Minister for Civil Society and Trade Unions), Cat Smith (Shadow Women and Equalities Minister), Justin Madders (Shadow Health Minister), Richard Burgon (Shadow City Minister), Rebecca Long-Bailey (Shadow Treasury Minister), Clive Lewis (Shadow Energy Minister), Theresa Pearce (Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning), Grahame Morris and Dave Anderson (Whips). Having allies in key leadership posts clearly means that the union has greater capacity to influence party policy.

It is no secret that the Corbyn leadership has a number of vocal opponents in the Parliamentary Labour Party, especially among those linked to Progress or the traditional Labour right-wing. Nevertheless, in the period covered by this report Labour campaigns in Parliament have forced the Tories into significant policy U-turns, on planned cuts to working tax credits, cuts to Personal Independence Payments for disabled people, refusing to take in abandoned child migrants, and forcing all schools to become Academies. The results in the May elections confounded the expectations of many pundits and Labour rebels who predicted Labour would lose well over a hundred council seats and control of many councils

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across the South. In fact Labour retained control of the likes of Crawley, Southampton, Exeter, Redditch, and Harlow, alongside winning mayoral contests in London, Liverpool, Salford and Bristol. This appears to have made it much more unlikely that there will be an immediate coup to oust Corbyn.

Parliament prorogued (ending the 2015-16 Parliamentary Session) on May 12 and returned with the State Opening of Parliament Queen's Speech on May 18, where the Government set out its legislative programme for the period ahead. Parliament will have a further recess from 15 June to 27 June to allow MPs to campaign in the forthcoming referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union.

LEGISLATION

TRADE UNION ACT

Perhaps the single most important Act passed during the 2015-16 session was the Trade Union Act, which represents a dramatic assault on the human rights and civil liberties of people at work, in order to overcome a critical line of defence to the imposition of austerity. Despite some welcome amendments to the Bill won in the Lords, the Act still represents the most ambitious piece of anti-union legislation since Thatcher, and the Tories were able to use their majority to force the legislation through the Commons with little difficulty.

Though the Bill received Royal Assent in May and is now enacted, although its measures will only come into force when secondary legislation is brought forward from the Secretary of State. This is expected over the next two months.

As the Bill went through the House of Lords some changes were forced from the government, including a review into electronic balloting, the retention of ability to claim membership fees via check-off, on introducing an "opt in" to political funds just for new members, and to some (but not all) of the requirements on picket supervisors.

Nevertheless, it still introduces new thresholds for strike ballots (requiring turnouts of least 50%, and for public service workers, at least 40% of all those eligible to vote), extensions of the required notice period for taking industrial action, and put new burdens on certification officers.

It is clear that the government has no real interest in widening participation, since they refuse to allow workplace balloting. The main motivation is to make it harder for unions to take lawful industrial action, in order to weaken the frontline of resistance against austerity and privatisation. Consequently the TUCG, of which the BFAWU is a founder member, will be focusing their public meetings during the rest of the year on "*Keeping the Right to Strike*".

BFAWU Group members John McDonnell, Ian Lavery, Dawn Butler, and Jo Stevens all spoke alongside General Secretary Ronnie Draper and National President Ian Hodson and

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at Trade Union Coordinating Group's after-work protest to mark all the Bill's major stages (see below).

HOUSING AND PLANNING ACT

The dreadful Housing and Planning Bill originally contained proposals which would basically have meant an end to the whole concept of secure tenancies in council and social housing. The Bills also sought to subsidise "starter homes" still unaffordable to most income earners, to introduce "Right to Buy" for Housing Association properties, and to force Councils to sell off their most valuable council homes. The Tories even used their Parliamentary majority to block an amendment which would have required landlords by law to ensure that their properties are "fit for human habitation" before offering them for private rent!

Intense campaigning and determined opposition from the Labour benches helped to force a number of significant concessions from the Government, and along with Liberal and crossbench Peers, the House of Lords overturned the government on a number of amendments. For example families on in-work benefits would now be exempted from the "pay to stay" in their own council home, whilst longer tenancies could be considered for families with children of school age.

However, the Act which has now received Royal Assent will do nothing to alleviate the Housing Crisis, expand the stock of social or genuinely affordable properties for private rent, whilst it will force local authorities to sell council housing in areas deemed to be of "high value", to be cherry-picked by private buyers. These policies will further add to the social cleansing of low-income families from parts of inner London, and force many out of the City altogether.

INVESTIGATORY POWERS BILL

This Bill which will carry over into the next Parliamentary sessions, resurrects some elements of what was dubbed the proposals for a "Snoopers Charter", basically allowing the security and intelligence services the ability to hold mass quantities of personal data (including contents of emails and social media communications) on every citizen in the country, regardless of whether they are suspected of anything. Given the evidence of state collusion with blacklisting of trade union activists and surveillance on trade unions and other political and community campaigns (such as the Stephen Lawrence family) this further attempt to allow large quantities of private information to be held for unlimited periods of time raises fundamental questions about whether these powers might be used to monitor and disrupt legitimate political and industrial protest.

The Bill is currently awaiting its final stages in the House of Commons before it progresses to the Lords. Royal Assent is required before the end of the year owing to a sunset clause in the previous Data Retention and Investigatory Powers Act (DRIPA) which provides the legal basis for the security and intelligence services to keep data on UK citizens.

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NEW LEGISLATION:

Whilst the Queen's Speech contained the usual promises to "deliver security for working people" and "to increase life chances for the most disadvantaged", nothing in the proposed legislation gives any reason for optimism in this regard. The devil is often in the detail of the Bills once published, so there will be a need for ongoing vigilance with respect to further attacks on the rights and living standards of working people.

EXTREMISM BILL

This Bill is claimed to target radical Islamist organisations who, whilst not directly involved in terrorist activities, are giving ideological and political support to terrorists. However, the definition of "extremism" appears to not to be limited to such organisations, but could instead be broad enough to target those deemed guilty of encouraging direct action or civil disobedience – including anti-austerity and environmental activists. The new powers could see the police given powers to ban meetings, disrupt activities, and prevent media coverage. We will be monitoring this Bill closely, and seeking to ensure that it does not curb freedom of political expression or association.

BFAWU PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The Bakers' Union Parliamentary Group was launched in October 2008 to bring together supportive MPs to work with the union in a concerted and effective way on issues of concern. The Group works to an agenda set by the union and its members, and meets with supportive MPs on a regular basis approximately every 2 months, in addition to specific Ministerial, individual or strategy meetings. Group meetings provide an opportunity for the union to keep MPs fully informed of concerns as well as discussing parliamentary strategy for taking those campaigns forward. The Group is professionally supported by Union Services (**please see Annex 3 for detail of the parliamentary consultancy**) who take forward the programme of work thus authorised, in liaison with BFAWU Head Office.

Since the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour Party Leader, numerous active Group members have been given frontbench responsibilities and parliamentary protocol means that they are now unable to serve in a formal capacity as Group Officers, make Parliamentary Interventions (unless constituency based issues), or sign Early Day Motions (EDM). These members are still fully supportive of the Group and continue to receive Group briefings on a regular basis. The Group are already noticing the positive impact of having former Group Officers within the frontbench team with regular dialogue now taking place.

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However John McDonnell has had to step down as Chair of the Group. He was succeeded in this position in October by Ian Mearns, Labour MP for Gateshead and also Chair of the Parliamentary Backbench Business Committee. David Crausby continues as Vice-Chair.

During this period covered by this report, formal meetings of the Parliamentary Group took place on the following dates:

- 17 June 2015
- 9 September 2015
- 19 October 2015 (with Prof Sir Anthony Newman-Taylor and Prof Paul Cullinan)
- 28 October 2015 (with Shadow DEFRA Secretary Kerry McCarthy)
- 20 January 2016
- 16 March 2016 (with Shadow BIS minister Bill Esterson MP)

The Agenda for the last meeting was as follows:

BFAWU Parliamentary Group Meeting

Wednesday 16 March, 4.30pm, Room R, Portcullis House – Chair: Ian Mearns MP

AGENDA

- 1 Introductions and apologies
- 2 Power of the Supermarkets / Groceries Code
(With Shadow BIS Minister Bill Esterson MP)
- 3 Fast Food Rights/ Low Pay/ Young Workers
- 4 Trade Union Bill
- 5 Greggs
- 6 Cool it campaign
- 7 Bakers Asthma
- 8 Other political and industrial issues
- 9 AOB

The next meeting of the Group is due to take place on 5 July 2016.

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In addition Union Services arrange Shadow Ministerial meetings and regularly circulate briefing material to ensure that BFAWU's concerns are understood by MPs and can influence parliamentary developments and strategy in key policy areas of concern to the union. A number of other Parliamentary meetings during this period which Union Services has helped to initiate, or was represented at, include:

- Fast Food Rights campaign strategy meetings (18 June, 21 October, 18 November, 4 January, 4 December, 8 March)
- Fast Food Rights organising day (16 September)
- Fast Food Rights Protest with US workers in Whitehall and rally in Parliament (13 January)
- Meeting Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell with SEIU on Fast Food Campaign, (March 14)
- Union strategy meeting (Manchester, April 27)
- Fast Food Rights meeting with Unite Union of New Zealand (May 14)

Early Day Motions

EDM 1381 – INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL LIVING WAGE AND EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS

Dawn Butler MP (20 signatures)

EDM 1293– TRADE UNION RECOGNITION AT McDONALD'S

Ian Mearns MP (15 signatures)

EDM 947 – INVESTIGATION INTO MCDONALD'S TAX AFFAIRS

Kelvin Hopkins MP (12 signatures)

EDM 786 – SHORT-NOTICE SHIFT CANCELLATION IN THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY

Dawn Butler MP (31 signatures)

EDM 451 - FAST FOOD WORKERS ORGANISING DAY

Dawn Butler MP (24 signatures)

EDM 308 – LOW PAY AND YOUNG WORKERS

Ian Lavery (61 signatures)

EDM 263 – SURVEILLANCE OF TRADE UNIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS

John McDonnell (44 signatures)

EDM 234 – MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE IN THE WORKPLACE

Jeremy Corbyn (36 signatures)

EDM 191 – INDUSTRIAL ACTION AT GUNSTONE'S BAKERY

John McDonnell (19 signatures)

Please see Annex 1 for the full text and signatures of all EDMs

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KEY CAMPAIGNS

FAST FOOD RIGHTS

As part of the Fast Food Rights campaign, the Bakers' Union has been to the fore with a prominent demand for a £10 an hour national minimum wage for all workers and for an end to zero hours contracts. This was inspired in part by the strikes of McDonalds and other fast food workers in the United States organised with the support of the SEIU union – around the demands “\$15 now” and “15 and a union” – which have now spread into a global campaign against low pay and for trade union rights for all workers, including those in highly casualised industries like fast food catering.

Last Summer Dawn Butler MP represented the Parliamentary Group as part of a Fast Food Rights delegation to the Global conference of the campaign in Sao Paulo, Brazil and got to speak to the Brazilian Senate about the issue. Dawn also tabled EDM 451 to welcome the organising day held by BFAWU at the Thompson's office in TUC Congress House on 16 September, where fast food workers and activists from across the country came together for a practical discussion around strategies for recruitment and organising.

Nick Allen of the American SEIU union and a delegation from BFAWU met with Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell on 18 November, to seek the support of the Labour frontbench in lobbying for the European Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager to initiate an inquiry into the allegedly unlawful collusion of the Luxemburg Government with McDonalds in terms of preferential state aid on the company's tax arrangements. This is thought to have deprived the UK exchequer alone of £75.7 million in taxes owed. Just days later, it was announced that such an investigation was indeed to take place. Kelvin Hopkins MP tabled EDM 947 on behalf of the Group to welcome the decision and calling on companies like McDonalds to pay their full share of tax.

BFAWU was also represented in Brussels for the lodging of a legal case against McDonalds in January 2016 by Italian consumer rights groups which could potentially cost the company over \$17bn if its franchise model is deemed to contravene EU anti-trust laws. The union lodged a petition against the corporation's use of zero hours contracts in Britain. US Fast Food workers and SEIU officials joined the lively UK Fast Food Rights protest outside McDonalds near Trafalgar Square held to coincide with the latest global day of action, and which led to a spontaneous march to Parliament holding up the traffic along Whitehall. This was then followed by a well-attended rally in Committee Room 11 addressed by John McDonnell and Dawn Butler, along with fast food workers from the US and the UK, and senior union speakers including from the TUC.

The union has also been working with Justin Madders MP to promote his research on “shift-shafting” in fast food restaurants, ie. the practice where workers are expected to turn up to work – at their own expense – without any guarantee of sufficient paid hours to cover the cost. In a survey of chains which collectively run over 9,000 restaurant branches, it was revealed that the practice is widespread across the sector. While some of the chains insist that they only ever require ‘volunteers’ to leave, it emerged that some employees have been told by managers that their shift will be ended early if the outlet is less busy than expected.

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Since Justin Madders holds a frontbench position as a Shadow Health Minister, Dawn Butler agreed to table an EDM 786 on “Short Notice Shift-Cancellation” to highlight these findings (see Annex). The issue also connects with the issue of fast food restaurants taking deductions from staff tips. The Fast Food Rights campaign has linked up with UNITE hotel and hospitality workers branch, which won a significant victory on this issue at Pizza Express.

A very successful meeting on organising young workers in the fast food industry was held at the Labour Party Youth Conference in Scarborough in February 2016, attended by the Leader Jeremy Corbyn and Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell. This was followed by a strategy meeting in Parliament between the party leadership and Scott Courtney head strategist of Fast Food Global campaign. This emphasised the importance of getting active (rather than just verbal) support from the TUC, and a campaign to get the Labour party to formally adopt the £10 an hour demand as party policy.

The campaign scored a significant, if limited, breakthrough in April 2016, when the company announced it was planning to give workers the chance to get off zero hours contracts and have the option of guaranteed regular hours. Whilst not applying to new starters for the first three months, and not involving a recognition of trade unions in a collective bargaining process over shift patterns, the company has clearly begun to respond to the pressure being applied by the campaign in order to head-off damage to its brand.

The profile of the fast food campaign hit the national headlines again when it came to the light that the Labour Party’s National Executive Committee (NEC) had decided to refuse McDonald’s the chance to exhibit at Annual Conference in Liverpool, for which they were offering to pay £35,000. Clearly, this is itself a reflection that the company has started to recognise that the campaign is beginning to get traction with Labour MPs, and they want to push back with a public relations offensive. However, the NEC clearly took the view that a company which has led the way on zero hours contracts, continues to base its business model on the exploitation of young workers on low pay conference, and refuses to recognise trade unions should have no place at the Labour party. Ian Mearns tabled EDM 1393 on Trade Union Recognition at McDonald’s to support the position taken by the party leadership.

NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

As part of the Fast Food Rights campaign, the Bakers’ Union has been to the fore with a prominent demand for an immediate introduction of a £10 an hour national minimum wage for all workers.

Budget Statement on 8 July, Chancellor George Osborne announced that a policy he called a “National Living Wage” of £9 an hour by 2020 (as a means of politically embarrassing Labour by going beyond the £8 pledged by Ed Miliband). However, beneath the headline figure the reality is very different. Firstly, the attack on working tax credits mean that very many households will be worse off as a consequence of the budget, notwithstanding this move. As Group Member City Minister Richard Burgon MP commented in the Budget debate (13 July 2015):

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Richard Burgon (Leeds East) (Lab): [...]The Chancellor's so-called living wage is a con. He claims to be giving Britain a pay rise but his living wage premium is actually a new minimum wage undercutting the rate proposed by the Living Wage Foundation.

Quote after quote that I now do not have time to go into sets out the reality of the Government's Budget. Many measures, as other Members have mentioned, are an attack on the hopes of young people. They include excluding under-25s from the so-called living wage, preventing young people from living independent lives by cutting their access to housing support, and abolishing student maintenance grants for the poorest and raising university fees. What we needed to hear in the Government's Budget was a call for investment to publicly deliver affordable social housing, access to well-funded further and higher education, and new jobs and apprenticeships with better pay that would allow people to live decent and stable lives.

People in my constituency and areas like it across the country are not a priority for this ultra-Thatcherite Government. They talk about a northern powerhouse, but we need only look at what is happening with trans-Pennine electrification. They are cutting funding for infrastructure in Leeds and in the north. They talk about devolution, but I and many others fear that the real aim is to devolve the blame for the national Government's austerity economics. We must not give up fighting against what is being done to my constituency and areas like it by this Government, who are all about siding with the rich and the powerful. I look forward to carrying on fighting, alongside Labour colleagues, campaign groups and trade unions, against this Government's cruel plans and for a better society.

And as fellow recruit Rebecca Long-Bailey rightly added (8 July),

Rebecca Long Bailey (Salford and Eccles) (Lab): ... the labour market is weighted in favour of the employer, rather than the worker. The only way to restore wage growth across the board, especially in the private sector, is through the expansion of collective bargaining. We simply cannot have wage growth in a country where the erosion of trade union rights is right at the top of the Tory agenda. The Government are doing the exact opposite of what they intend, which is to get people back to work and on decent pay—

Further, the "NLW" policy applies only to workers over 25 years of age, leaving young workers on the existing exploitative youth rates with 16-17 year olds currently guaranteed just £3.87 per hour and apprentices paid a shocking £2.80 per hour. In addition, despite the branding the new minimum wage level is still not projected to reach the level of the Living Wage by 2020 – so for instance the Living Wage in London is already £9.15 and will only continue to rise over the next five years. This failure to protect young workers from exploitative was part and parcel of a wider attack on young people, denying them rights to housing benefit whilst taking maintenance grants off the poorest students. Ian Lavery MP tabled EDM 308 on Low Pay and Young Workers, which criticises Osborne's deceit, and calls for an immediate introduction of a £10 an hour national minimum wage with no exemptions for age.

BFAWU organised a protest outside 10 Downing Street during the Easter recess to coincide with the April 1 implementation date, using the slogan/hashtag "Fool's Gold" to indicate that the "offer" of a pay increase for the low-paid was a gimmick designed to hide the reality of ongoing exploitation. As predicted, a range of trade unions soon reported that companies were seeking to undermine conditions to offset the cost of the introduction, leading to attacks on overtime payments, premium and weekend payments, and other entitlements.

BFAWU Group members including Jo Stevens and Justin Madders spoke in the backbench business debate (18 April) on the issue to raise these points:

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Justin Madders (Ellesmere Port and Neston) (Lab): Given that most of our constituents will at one time or another find themselves working for somebody else, we give far too little attention in this place to the reality of the world of work. To many, that reality involves insecurity, uncertainty and exploitation. This debate has exposed the level of exploitation that still pervades many workplaces in this country. Members have listed many examples of employers abusing their bargaining power to take away with one hand what the new minimum wage gives with the other.

I agree with Ian Hodson, president of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union, whose members have seen this at first hand, that the way in which the new minimum wage has been introduced has allowed employers to force through changes to contractual entitlements. If it is the Government's intention for the increase in the minimum wage to end the underwriting by the state of poverty wages, they surely cannot want that increase to be paid for out of the pockets of the very people the policy is intended to help.

...We have a very dishonest settlement whereby the Government are saying, "You're going to get more money in your pocket," but again and again we are seeing employers use unscrupulous methods to take that money back. We want the Government to come up with a much more clear and transparent way of dealing with this, so that employers end up paying what the Government have decreed is the minimum that people can live on.

Labour MP Joan Ryan also raised the specific case of the Bradgate Bakery, owned by Samworth Brothers:

Joan Ryan (Enfield North) (Lab): Bradgate Bakery is part of the group that owns famous brands that we all enjoy, such as Ginsters pies and Soreen loaf, but the pay that it is offering staff is a lot less tasty than its food. Bradgate has written to all its Leicestershire staff, detailing changes to their wages. Most shop-floor employees at Bradgate were earning just over £6.70 an hour before 1 April, so the introduction of the national living wage should have made quite a difference for them, but Bradgate, like B&Q, has found an opportunity to save money. That is because of the universal truth that companies will usually pay their workers a lot less than they can afford, if they can get away with it.

Jo Stevens (Cardiff Central) (Lab):

Does my right hon. Friend agree that part of the problem is that employers see the national living wage or minimum wage as a ceiling for payments, rather than a floor, and will always try to pay the least that they can get away with?

Joan Ryan

Certainly, the national living wage does not mean that that is all that employers can pay. Bradgate Bakery, like B&Q, found an opportunity to save money, so it has changed staff terms and conditions to phase out double pay for Sundays by 2019. That means that while employees on the national minimum wage earned £13.78 per hour on a Sunday last month, by 2019 they will earn just £9 per hour. That is the national living wage according to Bradgate Bakery. Extra pay for night shifts, Saturdays and overtime are also being scaled back. In sum, Bradgate workers are being sold a lie: they are told that their pay is increasing, but what the Government are giving with one hand, Bradgate is taking with another. According to one very worried worker who approached my hon. Friend the Member for Mitcham and Morden, these cuts will affect the whole range of shifts that run in the factories. That means that by 2018 a production operative on night shift will be paid £2,778 less a year, while a night shift team leader will be paid £344 less.

Dawn Butler has also tabled EDM 13781 on behalf of the Group to table concerns over the way the National Living Wage is being used to drive through attacks on conditions of employment. Any information on how this is impacting BFAWU members received by Union Services can be collated into briefings for further such debates.

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POWER OF THE SUPERMARKETS

Much of the pressure on jobs, pay and conditions in the industry is a consequence of pressure on suppliers as a result of intense price competition between supermarkets. There is particular concern that supermarkets are marketing goods on promotion for less than the price of production, which is clearly unsustainable in the long term. A typical large loaf fell in price by an average of around 13% in 2015. Clearly this squeeze on prices increases pressure on profit margins, and leads to a squeeze on jobs, pay and conditions of workers employed in its manufacture.

These issues were raised at a meeting facilitated by Union Services between the union and Kerry McCarthy MP, Shadow DEFRA Secretary, who was broadly supportive of the idea of extending the power of the Groceries Code Adjudicator, a position which the BFAWU Parliamentary Group, together with a range of other NGOs, charities and campaigns, lobbied the Coalition government to create. The adjudicator has the power to fine Supermarkets for failing to abide by the Groceries Supply Code of Practice, which is intended to ensure “fair dealing” and avoid the situation where contractual terms are changed unexpectedly.

This coalition – which brings together unions, NGOs campaigning on food issues and development charities – has been re-launched ahead of the forthcoming review of the GCA’s performance and powers due in March 2016, as the Groceries Code Action Group.

A joint position paper has been drawn up for campaigning work going forward:

- In 2008, a report by the Competition Commission *‘found that the transfer of excessive risk and unexpected costs by grocery retailers to their suppliers through various supply chain practices if unchecked will have an adverse effect on investment and innovation in the supply chain, and ultimately on consumers.’*¹ We believe that this continues to be the case and that the Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) fulfils an important function in that it aims to support the development of fair trading relationships between the UK’s largest supermarkets and their direct suppliers.
- An attempt to shrink the remit of the GCA would be a regressive move that would result in a poorer deal for producers, suppliers and consumers.
- The GCA should ensure that it exercises its full remit to support fair trading relationships in the groceries supply chain. In particular, the GCA should prioritise its obligations, as described in the Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP), to support the principle of fair dealing.²
- Regulation should be extended to ensure that fair trading relationships are supported at all levels of the groceries’ supply chain. Such regulation would ensure that the farmers and suppliers not currently covered by the GSCOP would be protected from abusive trading practices.

¹ http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140402141250/http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/assets/competitioncommission/docs/pdf/non-inquiry/rep_pub/reports/2008/fulltext/538.pdf

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groceries-supply-code-of-practice/groceries-supply-code-of-practice#principle-of-fair-dealing>

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The NGOs and charities are keen to work with the grain of thinking in the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, and have approached Conservative MP Julian Sturdy to head up the campaign, but on a specifically cross-party basis. Julian Sturdy succeeded in applying for an Adjournment Debate on 17 November 2015 on the issue:

Julian Sturdy (Con): As many hon. Members know, the adjudicator was established back in June 2013 to ensure that the largest supermarkets treat their direct suppliers lawfully and fairly. The adjudicator's primary role is to ensure compliance with the groceries supply code of practice. It is worth mentioning that before the code was introduced in 2010, many farmers reported widespread unfair practices such as last-minute price cuts, being asked to guarantee the supermarket a minimum profit margin, and growers being expected to pay as a condition of being a supplier.

[...] Although the introduction of the GCA is to be welcomed, two years on it is clear that there is potential for the adjudicator to do so much more. The Government review will take place in only four months' time. Can the Minister assure me and other Members here that details of the review will be published as early as possible? As I am sure she will agree, it is essential that the entire food sector has the opportunity to feed into the review, and the trade associations need time to present a strong submission. Can she assure me that submissions will be accepted from indirect suppliers, not just from direct suppliers who are currently under the GCA's remit? Can she assure me, as the Prime Minister indicated to the House at the start of the year, that she will look at extending the adjudicator's remit to help those right across the supply chain, including dairy farmers and fruit and vegetable producers?

A properly resourced GCA that has the right powers and acts proactively in the market has the potential to be a powerful source of fairness in a cut-throat industry. Anything less would be a missed opportunity, and British food producers and, ultimately, the end consumer would be all the poorer for it.

Extending the remit to extend across the full supply chain is something supported by BFAWU since, at present, only those supplying supermarkets directly are covered. So, for instance, manufacturers of pizza bases who supply other food manufacturers which then add toppings and package the final product would not be covered under the terms of the current Code of Practice.

Another key issue is the ability to make confidential complaints to the Adjudicator's office. A recent GCA survey showed that "68% of suppliers fear retribution by the retailer should they be identified, and 45% are not confident that the GCA will maintain their confidentiality, despite being bound to do so." With the large Bakery chains so dependent on crucial supermarket contracts, it is unlikely they will lodge complaints about potential breaches of the code if there is a risk of being identified.

However, the crucial issue of pricing cannot be dealt with directly under the terms of the Code, as Government Minister Anna Soubry was quick to point out:

Anna Soubry (Con): I am reliably informed that the problem for the adjudicator is that, as has been identified, she has no power to address matters falling outside the code, for the following reasons. First, the Government cannot change the code. As hon. Members have made clear in their speeches about the history of the formation of the Groceries Code Adjudicator, the code came about from the work of the Competition and Markets Authority, arising from an investigation that it conducted into competition. Forgive me for saying so, but once again the clue is in the name and the history: it was all about unfair competition. I must say to the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine (Stuart Blair Donaldson) that it was never about pricing. If there are to be changes to the code, they can only be made by the CMA.

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Also, with great respect to everybody, the 2013 Act was passed by a previous Parliament; it was what Parliament decided. The Government could give the adjudicator additional statutory duties outside the code, but that would involve amending primary legislation and it would have to be debated in Parliament. There is nothing wrong with that, but just so everybody understands: new legislation would be needed.

Competition law, including EU regulations in this area, restricts the ability of government to intervene directly on pricing. Nevertheless, the Adjudicator does have the power and responsibility to ensure “fair dealing” between supermarkets and suppliers, and restrict the use of promotions with adverse effects on the terms of suppliers’ contracts.

Labour’s Shadow BIS minister Bill Esterson attended a meeting of the BFAWU Parliamentary Group to discuss the issue on 16 March, and the Group is continuing to look to work with MPs from all parties to raise the need for an extension of the Adjudicator’s remit, and to highlight industry abuses in the run up to the opening of a consultation which is now expected in the wake of June’s EU referendum.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

BAKERS’ ASTHMA

With the baking industry second only to van spraying in terms of the incidence of occupational respiratory diseases like asthma, the Group continues to press the case for urgent government action. However, against the backdrop of cuts to the Health and Safety Executive, and a Coalition government which appeared to believe that health and safety at work represents an unnecessary burden of “red tape” for business, progress has been limited. The election of a majority Tory government has hardly helped.

Partly as a result of the BFAWU Parliamentary Group’s submission, the issue of Bakers Asthma, along with heat stress, have been taken up as items on the agenda of the new HSE Workplace Health Expert Committee. This is chaired by Sir Anthony Newman-Taylor, and includes respiratory health expert Prof Sir Paul Cullinan, both of whom have attended BFAWU Parliamentary Group meetings to discuss these issues and are keen to help. The Group’s Autumn Digest (see Annex) reads:

WHEC has also been asked by the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union to investigate the current evidence on the risk of occupational asthma and the adverse effects of working in high temperature in bakers. Bakers remain one of the two occupational groups at high risk of occupational asthma. WHEC has therefore identified this for future investigation and invited a small group of its members to undertake an initial review and report back to a future meeting in 2016.

Their preliminary conclusions, yet to be formally published suggest:

What information is available suggests that exposures to flour are, and remain, frequently higher than the level at which occupational asthma would develop; and that the incidence of the disease is similarly high and unremitting.

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WHEC acknowledges that there are significant barriers to the control of exposure to flour dust and the incidence of occupational asthma in UK bakeries; they include the fact that the baking sector in the UK is complex and fragmented. We recommend that in close collaboration with the key stakeholders in the sector an evidence-based sector-wide intervention study is developed, implemented and evaluated.

This is an encouraging development, and might lead to pressure for Supermarkets to comply with new best-practice guidelines.

COOL IT!

On the issue of heat stress and thermal discomfort, since its formation in 2008 the BFAWU Parliamentary Group has recognised that this is not only a matter of concern to workers in the baking industry itself but also to large sections of the UK workforce. It will be recalled that – on the initiative of the Bakers Union – the Cool It! Joint-union campaign gathered support from a wide range of unions including Unite, CWU, Musicians Union, National Union of Teachers, RMT, and PCS successfully moved a motion (in 2012) to get the policy of a maximum working temperature adopted as TUC policy.

However, with the policy clearly going against the grain of the Government's deregulation agenda, most of the subsequent efforts has gone into persuading Labour that it should address this agenda. After extensive lobbying – including meetings with the then Leader of the Opposition Ed Miliband, 3 Shadow ministers and the Labour frontbench in the Lords, (together with work to influence the National Policy Forum), the party finally contested the election in 2015 on a policy platform which included a full review of the existing legislation and guidance on temperature in the workplace. Whilst this fell short of a commitment in principle to introduce a statutory maximum temperature, it would have provided the basis for a compelling case to have been made.

The election of a majority Tory government was clearly a significant blow to the prospects of getting any action from government. However, last Summer, whilst he was still a candidate for the Labour leadership Jeremy Corbyn was persuaded to table an Early Day Motion on the issue using the introduction of drinks breaks in the womens' tennis at Wimbledon as hook for arguing that such heat controlling measures should be provided to all workers not just highly paid sports stars. The press release was picked up and Jeremy was quoted in both the Daily Mirror and the London Evening Standard:

Labour Leadership Hopeful calls for action on heat in the workplace as temperatures soar:

As millions across Britain swelter in the heatwave, Labour leadership contender Jeremy Corbyn MP has tabled a motion on the House Of Commons Order Paper calling for the government to protect workers from having to work in uncomfortably hot conditions.

Corbyn champions the call of the TUC and joint-union "Cool It!" campaign for a maximum working temperature of 30 degrees c (or 27 degrees where work involves strenuous activity to be introduced into law), placing a legal duty on employers to act to protect their staff from heat stress and thermal discomfort.

Corbyn commented:

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"In this weather, high temperatures aren't just a problem in heavy industry but for millions of workers who have been struggling with the heat in offices, schools, shops, call-centres - you name it...

Good employers will have been taking steps to help out their workers in the heatwave. But putting a maximum temperature into law will give everyone a legal right to basic protections from working in unbearable conditions."

The issue always attracts greater prominence in the Summer months and the aim is now to re-convene the coalition of unions involved and brief the new Shadow Business, Innovations and Skills Minister responsible for the HSE (Angela Eagle) to ensure that the existing policy is not watered down. It is to be hoped that under the Corbyn leadership Labour will adopt a more robust position and the frontbench will start to campaign for action on this much overdue reform.

GUNSTONES/ 2 SISTERS FOOD GROUP

BFAWU Parliamentary Group members were kept fully abreast of developments at the Gunstones Bakery site, part of the 2 Sisters Food Group with whom the Group has been concerned now for some time. It will be recalled that earlier last year Chief Exec Ranjit Singh Boparan and Chairman Lord Charles Allen were invited account for their business practices at a meeting of the Group in Westminster. Nevertheless, despite the assurances given, the attacks on jobs, pay and conditions show no sign of abating. It is time they were invited back to Parliament account for the subsequent developments.

Natascha Engel MP, whose Derbyshire North East constituency contains the Dronfield plant, attended the Group meeting in June 2015, and reported that there appeared to be a difference between the constructive attitude of local Gunstones' management and the hostility coming from 2 Sisters.

John McDonnell tabled EDM 191 on "Industrial Action at Gunstones Bakers" on behalf of the Group, attacking the "exploitative business model" at 2 Sisters, pointing out that the Asian Rich List estimate that apparently Boparan and his wife have an estimated personal fortune of £1.35 billion, and calling for them to resume meaningful negotiations rather than insisting on any pay rises being "self-financing".

At the time of writing, the Group is preparing to table an EDM in the new session about industrial action at Pennine Foods Sheffield, part of the 2 Sisters Group. The imposition of new contract terms already rejected in ballots of BFAWU members alongside a threat of dismissal for those who don't sign, is another example of Ranjit Singh Boparan's method of operating, and is no doubt an attempt to offset the costs of implementing the National Living Wage (see above). The Group will be kept fully informed of developments regarding the dispute.

At its next meeting the Group will consider when to recall the CEO and Chair of 2 Sisters to question them again about the direction of the company and its business model.

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TRIBUNAL FEES

BFAWU Group member Justin Madders MP, a former employment lawyer, successfully applied for a Westminster Hall debate on “Employment Tribunal Fees” (1 December), and several members of the Group participated in the debate (see Annex), which took place against the backdrop of a dramatic fall in the number of Tribunal claims drawn as workers are increasingly being denied justice because they are unable to risk the possibility that costs would be awarded against them:

Justin Madders MP (Lab): ...do not the participants contribute to the system through their taxes anyway? Is it not simply part of the cost of a civilised society? In the long run, we all benefit from stable and balanced employment relations. If the Government are so determined to recoup costs and if they are genuinely interested in ensuring access to justice, surely the obvious way to deal with the matter is to levy a fee or apportion a percentage of compensation at the end of the process, not at the beginning.

At the moment, if a claimant is successful, they can recover their fee from the respondent, but what is the respondent’s contribution to the costs of the tribunal? It is nothing. I suppose it could be argued that they indirectly contribute by recovering the fee and repaying it to the employee, but as we have seen, that outcome is not certain, and the burden disproportionately falls on those who seek to enforce their rights.

Employment tribunals play a vital role in ensuring the effectiveness of basic rights, such as the rights to the minimum wage, paid holiday, time off and maternity leave, and the right not to be unfairly dismissed or discriminated against. If we value those rights and think that they are important, we should also value the ease with which people are able to exercise them.

Those rights are not just about individual dignity and respect in the workplace; they bring with them important social and economic benefits for the country. They ensure that most people can participate in the labour market without facing unfair discrimination. They give vulnerable workers more job security and stability of income than they would have. They encourage a committed and engaged workforce and the retention of skilled workers. They allow people to plan their lives and plan for the future, knowing that if they do a good job and their employer runs its business well, they are likely to remain in work. Employment rights are, ultimately, of benefit to everyone. The fee regime not only undermines those rights but actively encourages rogue employers to flout the law, and I say that the regime should be scrapped.

Several Group members including Jo Stevens and Ian Lavery repeatedly intervened to ask the Minister whether the promised Review of the “changes to the structure and level of fees” would also include the possibility of abolishing these unfair fees altogether. However, the Minister avoided giving such an assurance. The BFAWU Parliamentary Group will continue to work with other union groups and the Trade Union Coordinating Group in order to highlight these injustices.

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TRADE UNION COORDINATING GROUP (TUCG)

The BFAWU is a founder member of the TUCG which was set up in 2008 to coordinate the campaigning work of member unions in Parliament and within the wider movement. The TUCG currently comprises 9 national unions (BFAWU, FBU, NAPO, NUJ, NUT, PCS, POA, RMT, URTU) representing nearly one million trade unionists. The TUCG meets every 2 months at General Secretary level. The Chair is rotated in alphabetical order and passed from the POA to the RMT at the AGM in February 2016.

Over the past year the TUCG has continued its active campaign against the Trade Union Bill. Some form of public protest has been organised to mark each stage of its passage through Parliament – 2nd Reading in the Commons, Committee Stage, 3rd Reading in the Commons. On 11th January an after work street protest was held outside the Lords where TUCG General Secretaries were joined by parliamentarians from all parties (Labour, SNP, Plaid Cymru and Green) to address a crowd of about 100. An after work demo was also held on 16th March opposite the House of Lords to mark yet another stage of the legislation within the Lords. This demo was attended by almost 100 union activists and parliamentarians from most parties as well as a variety of union general secretaries address the crowds. This event took place on a day in which the Government suffered three significant defeats, which are mentioned in the above report.

In the coming months the TUCG will focus on the new legislation which will be announced in the Queens Speech. The TUCG will also work with supportive unions and activists to continue to fight against the Trade Union Bill, which is expected to become law in May. TUCG unions will be lobbying the TUC to call a Summit for the whole movement on how to confront the Act. Planning is also underway for the annual Tolpuddle seminar in Parliament on 12th July, which will be entitled “Keeping the Right to Strike”, with invitations being sent to the Leader of the Opposition and his team. The TUCG fringe on the Monday lunchtime at this year’s Trade Union Congress in Brighton may well be along the same lines.

Details of the TUCG and its campaigning work can be found at www.tucg.org.uk / @tucginfo / <https://www.facebook.com/Trade-Union-Co-ordinating-Group-249236168466872/>

A detailed report on the work of the TUCG is distributed bi-annually to member unions in February and July. A parliamentary e-bulletin is also distributed to MPs and Peers on a weekly basis to inform them of the concerns of TUCG Unions and opportunities for parliamentary intervention

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ANNEX ONE:

EARLY DAY MOTIONS

EDM 1393 - TRADE UNION RECOGNITION FOR WORKERS IN McDONALD'S Ian Mearns MP

That this House welcomes the campaign by the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union and other trade unions to improve the pay and conditions of workers in McDonald's and other fast food outlets; welcomes McDonald's moves so far towards removing zero hours contracts from its UK business; condemns McDonald's for its refusal to recognise trade unions in its UK operations; calls on the Government to ensure that McDonald's and other global corporations pay their fair share of tax in the UK; welcomes the Labour Party's decision not to permit McDonald's to have a stand at the Labour Party conference; and urges the Labour Party to maintain its decision to refuse to allow McDonald's a stand at its conference until that company chooses to recognise trade unions.

Total number of signatures: **15**

Allen, Graham	Campbell, Ronnie	Crausby, David	Cunningham, Jim
Edwards, Jonathan	Godsiff, Roger	Goodman, Helen	Harris, Carolyn
Hopkins, Kelvin	McLaughlin, Anne	Mearns, Ian	Rimmer, Marie
Shannon, Jim	Skinner, Dennis	Stephens, Christopher	

That this House welcomes the campaign by the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union and other trade unions to improve the pay and conditions of workers in McDonald's and other fast food outlets; welcomes McDonald's moves so far towards removing zero hours contracts from its UK business; condemns McDonald's for its refusal to recognise trade unions in its UK operations; calls on the Government to ensure that McDonald's and other global corporations pay their fair share of tax in the UK; welcomes the Labour Party's decision not to permit McDonald's to have a stand at the Labour Party conference; and urges the Labour Party to maintain its decision to refuse to allow McDonald's a stand at its conference until that company chooses to recognise trade unions.

EDM 1381 - INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIONAL LIVING WAGE AND EMPLOYEE CONTRACTS Dawn Butler MP

Total number of signatures: **20**

Brown, Alan	Butler, Dawn	Campbell, Ronnie	Crausby, David
Cunningham, Jim	Flello, Robert	Glindon, Mary	Godsiff, Roger
Hopkins, Kelvin	Lucas, Caroline	Mahmood, Khalid	Matheson, Chris
Meale, Alan	Mearns, Ian	Saville Roberts, Liz	Shannon, Jim
Sharma, Virendra	Smeeth, Ruth	Thewliss, Alison	Vaz, Valerie

That this House is aware that employers are currently seeking to offset the increased costs of implementation of the national living wage (NLW) policy by reducing long-standing terms and conditions by removing shift premium payments, overtime rates, sick pay and bank holiday pay; notes

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that the level of the NLW will fail even to coincide with the rate presently recommended by the Living Wage Foundation until 2020; further notes, therefore, that throughout the term of the current Parliament workers paid the NLW will not receive a level of pay on which they can afford to live; is deeply concerned that this measure will do nothing whatsoever to end the exploitation of workers under 25 years of age; is further concerned that employees turning 25 may find their hours significantly reduced; believes that this is designed to distract people from the Government's real agenda to cut in-work benefits; and calls for immediate introduction of a universal £10 per hour national minimum wage without age restriction, an end to the culture of zero hours contracts, and for increased protections to contractual terms and conditions.

EDM 947 – INVESTIGATION IN MCDONALDS TAX AFFAIRS

Kelvin Hopkins MP

Total number of signatures: **12**

Anderson, David	Brake, Tom	Campbell, Ronnie	Edwards, Jonathan
Godsiff, Roger	Hopkins, Kelvin	Law, Chris	Lucas, Caroline
McDonnell, Alasdair	Meale, Alan	Mearns, Ian	Skinner, Dennis

That this House welcomes the announcement made by Margrethe Vestager, European Commissioner for Competition, of the launch of a formal investigation into tax rulings made by authorities in Luxembourg in respect of the global fast food giant McDonalds; notes that the authorities in Luxembourg are accused of offering unfairly favourable tax arrangements to McDonalds, effectively constituting unlawful state aid; further notes that, had royalty fees paid to Luxembourg from the UK been subject to taxation in the UK, the UK exchequer would have received an additional £75.7 million over the last five years; asks that the investigation to examine the role played by Luxembourg's then Finance Minister, Jean Claude-Juncker in facilitating these arrangements; and commends the campaigning coalition involving War on Want and the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union on their efforts to highlight this apparent abuse, and calls on the Government to do everything in its power to ensure that all corporations pay their fair share of tax.

EDM 786 – SHORT NOTICE SHIFT-CANCELLATION

Justin Madders MP

Total number of signatures: **32**

Anderson, David	Blackford, Ian	Bottomley, Peter	Butler, Dawn
Campbell, Ronnie	Cowan, Ronnie	Crausby, David	Cunningham, Jim
Day, Martyn	Durkan, Mark	Flynn, Paul	Glindon, Mary
Hopkins, Kelvin	Howarth, George	Kerevan, George	Kinnock, Stephen
Law, Chris	Marsden, Gordon	Matheson, Chris	McNally, John
Meale, Alan	Mearns, Ian	Monaghan, Paul	Qureshi, Yasmin
Ritchie, Margaret	Shannon, Jim	Skinner, Dennis	Stephens, Christopher

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Stevens, Jo Thewliss, Alison Thomas-Symonds, Nick Vaz, Keith

That this House is deeply concerned that a recent survey of popular restaurant chains who collectively operate over 9,000 outlets nationwide found that only a quarter of such employers ruled out cancelling shifts without notice; notes that this practice, known as shift-shafting, can lead to employees arriving at work only to be told they are not needed, or being sent home before even earning enough to cover their travel expenses; commends the good practice of employers such as Eat which offers to redeploy staff onto alternative duties during quiet periods; believes that nobody should leave for work and come home out-of-pocket, but this is happening across the country and yet this is currently completely legal; regrets that some of the chains also use zero hours contracts, or offer very low weekly contracted hours, making the situation even worse; and therefore, in the absence of a voluntary industry-wide agreement, calls on the Government to legislate to end this exploitation of low paid workers.

EDM 451 – FAST FOOD WORKERS ORGANISING DAY

Dawn Butler MP

Total number of signatures: **24**

Butler, Dawn	Campbell, Ronnie	Docherty, Martin	Glendon, Mary
Godsiff, Roger	Haigh, Louise	Hermon, Lady	Hopkins, Kelvin
Kerevan, George	Lavery, Ian	Lucas, Caroline	Madders, Justin
Marsden, Gordon	McInnes, Liz	Morris, Grahame M	Osamor, Kate
Saville Roberts, Liz	Shannon, Jim	Skinner, Dennis	Stephens, Christopher
Stevens, Jo	Thompson, Owen	Vaz, Valerie	Weir, Mike

That this House expresses its solidarity with the global campaign against low pay and poor working conditions faced by employees of the fast food giant McDonalds; notes that the majority of the company's workforce in the UK is employed on zero hours contracts, many on the minimum wage of £6.50 per hour or the shocking apprentice rate of £2.73 per hour; further notes that since around 75 per cent of McDonalds workers are under 25 they will receive no benefit from the Government's misnamed living wage commitments; celebrates the victory of trade unions in New Zealand who have secured from the company a commitment to ending zero hours contracts; welcomes the fast food workers' organising day being held at the TUC's Congress House on 16 September 2015; and calls on this highly profitable global multinational corporation to reduce the royalties and other payments it demands of its franchisees so that they can afford to give workers a significant increase in pay and end exploitative employment practices.

EDM 308 – LOW PAY AND YOUNG WORKERS

Ian Lavery MP

Total number of signatures: **61**

That this House notes that the National Living Wage policy announced in the 2015 Budget will not improve the incomes of many low paid workers, owing to the simultaneous reductions in working

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benefits, tax credits and local housing allowance; further notes that the respected Institute of Fiscal Studies calculates that these measures will affect 13 million families who will each lose around £260 per year; observes that with the London Living Wage, as determined by the independent Living Wage Commission, currently standing at £9.15, the new policy will still fail to guarantee a basic minimum standard of living for workers in some parts of the country beyond 2020; regrets that workers under 25 are not even offered this inadequate protection; condemns the exploitative rates of pay which young workers will continue to receive, with 16-17 year olds currently guaranteed just £3.87 per hour and apprentices paid a shocking £2.80 per hour; and therefore calls on the National Living Wage to be introduced at the rate of £10 an hour immediately with no exemptions for age.

Ahmed-Sheikh, Tasmina	Anderson, David	Black, Mhairi	Blackford, Ian
Brown, Alan	Burgon, Richard	Cameron, Lisa	Campbell, Ronnie
Cherry, Joanna	Corbyn, Jeremy	Crausby, David	Crawley, Angela
Cryer, John	Cunningham, Jim	Donaldson, Stuart	Durkan, Mark
Fellows, Marion	Flynn, Paul	Gibson, Patricia	Glendon, Mary
Godsiff, Roger	Grant, Peter	Gray, Neil	Haigh, Louise
Hendry, Drew	Hopkins, Kelvin	Howarth, George	Hussain, Imran
Lavery, Ian	Law, Chris	Lucas, Caroline	Maskell, Rachael
McDonnell, Alasdair	McDonnell, John	McGarry, Natalie	McInnes, Liz
McNally, John	Meale, Alan	Mearns, Ian	Monaghan, Carol
Monaghan, Paul	Morris, Grahame M	Mullin, Roger	Newlands, Gavin
O'Hara, Brendan	Oswald, Kirsten	Qureshi, Yasmin	Ritchie, Margaret
Rotheram, Steve	Saville Roberts, Liz	Shannon, Jim	Sharma, Virendra
Skinner, Dennis	Stephens, Christopher	Stevens, Jo	Thewliss, Alison
Thompson, Owen	Thomson, Michelle	Vaz, Valerie	Wilson, Corri
Zeichner, Daniel			

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EDM 263 – SURVEILLANCE OF TRADE UNIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS

John McDonnell MP

Total number of signatures: **26**

That this House remains deeply concerned about the extent and conduct of undercover police surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources; deeply regrets the distress caused to women by undercover officers forming intimate relationships and even fathering children with them; is concerned that police surveillance extended to covert monitoring of anti-racist and family justice campaigns, together with other civil society and political groups; is shocked by the revelations of Peter Francis, former member of the Metropolitan Police Force's Special Demonstration Squad, in relation to the unit's covert state surveillance of trade unions and their members, including Unison, the Fire Brigades Union, the Communication Workers Union, the National Union of Teachers and the construction workers union UCATT; commends the ongoing campaign of the National Union of Journalists over the surveillance of union members; welcomes the inquiry to be conducted by Lord Justice Pitchford into covert police surveillance; and calls on the terms of reference of the inquiry to include an investigation into the practice of covert surveillance of lawful trade union activities.

Anderson, David	Black, Mhairi	Brown, Alan	Burgon, Richard
Cameron, Lisa	Campbell, Ronnie	Corbyn, Jeremy	Docherty, Martin
Donaldson, Stuart	Edwards, Jonathan	Ferrier, Margaret	Field, Frank
Flynn, Paul	Foxcroft, Vicky	Godsiff, Roger	Hendry, Drew
Hopkins, Kelvin	Lavery, Ian	Law, Chris	Lewis, Clive
Long Bailey, Rebecca	Lucas, Caroline	Maskell, Rachael	McDonald, Andy
McDonnell, John	McGarry, Natalie	McInnes, Liz	McLaughlin, Anne
Meale, Alan	Mearns, Ian	Monaghan, Carol	Mullin, Roger
Rayner, Angela	Rimmer, Marie	Rotheram, Steve	Salmond, Alex
Sharma, Virendra	Skinner, Dennis	Stephens, Christopher	Stevens, Jo
Thompson, Owen	Weir, Mike	Williams, Hywel	Zeichner, Daniel

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EDM 234 – MAXIMUM WORKING TEMPERATURE

That this House commends the Women's Tennis Association for introducing regular heat breaks for competitors at Wimbledon once the temperature exceeds 30 degrees Celsius; is surprised that similar provisions are not also in place for male competitors; regrets that workers in the UK have no guaranteed legal safeguards from working in uncomfortably high temperatures, owing to the lack of a statutory maximum temperature at which employers would have to introduce control measures, such as breaks, access to water or air conditioning; appreciates that excessive heat in the workplace is responsible for heat stress and thermal discomfort, and can impact seriously on health, well-being and productivity; recognises that this is not just the case for highly paid tennis stars, but is a matter of concern for workers in a wide range of workplaces including offices, schools, shops, bakeries, vehicles, trains, call-centres, theatres and construction sites; and calls on the Government to adopt the recommendations of the TUC and joint union Cool It! campaign to introduce into law a maximum working temperature of 30 degrees Celsius (or 27 degrees Celsius for those doing strenuous work), beyond which employers would have a statutory duty to introduce effective control measures.

Total number of signatures: **36**

Ahmed-Sheikh, Tasmina	Blackman, Kirsty	Bottomley, Peter	Brown, Alan
Corbyn, Jeremy	Cowan, Ronnie	Day, Martyn	Docherty, Martin
Donaldson, Stuart	Fleello, Robert	Godsiff, Roger	Gray, Neil
Hermon, Lady	Hopkins, Kelvin	Kerevan, George	Lavery, Ian
Lewis, Clive	MacNeil, Angus	Madders, Justin	Marsden, Gordon
Maskell, Rachael	McDonnell, John	McInnes, Liz	Meale, Alan
Mearns, Ian	Oswald, Kirsten	Saville Roberts, Liz	Shannon, Jim
Sharma, Virendra	Simpson, David	Skinner, Dennis	Stephens, Christopher
Thewliss, Alison	Thompson, Owen	Wilson, Corri	Zeichner, Daniel

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EDM 191 – INDUSTRIAL ACTION AT GUNSTONES BAKERS

That this House notes that management at Gunstones Bakery, near Sheffield, having recently made over 400 redundancies, is now trying to impose a pay freeze on the remaining workforce; further notes that the Chief Executive of the parent company, 2 Sisters Food Group, Ranjit Singh Boparan, and his wife, are estimated by the Asian Rich List to enjoy a personal fortune totalling £1.35 billion; deplores the exploitative business model that has seen attacks on jobs, pay and conditions across the 2 Sisters Group; highlights the goodwill previously shown by Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) officials and members in offering to suspend pay negotiations whilst the redundancy process was conducted; believes that the company management is now being unreasonable in insisting that any increase in pay would need to be financed via reductions in existing terms and conditions of BFAWU members; recognises that BFAWU members have been obliged to take industrial action to protect their pay and conditions; and calls on their employers to enter into meaningful negotiations to resolve the dispute.

Total number of signatures: **19**

Anderson, David	Burgon, Richard	Corbyn, Jeremy	Crausby, David
Flynn, Paul	Glendon, Mary	Godsiff, Roger	Haigh, Louise
Hopkins, Kelvin	Lavery, Ian	Madders, Justin	Maskell, Rachael
Matheson, Chris	McDonnell, John	McInnes, Liz	Mearns, Ian
		Stephens, Christopher	
Morris, Grahame M	Skinner, Dennis		

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ANNEX TWO:

BFAWU PARLIAMENTARY GROUP MEMBERS

Name	Constituency	Party
Dave Anderson MP	Blaydon	Labour
Dawn Butler MP	Brent Central	Labour
Richard Burgon MP	Leeds East	Labour
Jeremy Corbyn MP	Islington North	Labour
David Crasby MP	Bolton North East	Labour
Mary Creagh MP	Wakefield	Labour
John Cryer MP	Leyton and Wanstead	Labour
Jonathan Edwards MP	Carmarthen East and Dinefwr	Plaid Cymru
Natascha Engel MP	Derbyshire North East	Labour
Louise Haigh MP	Sheffield Heeley	Labour
John Healey MP	Wentworth and Dearne	Labour
Kate Hoey MP	Vauxhall	Labour
Kelvin Hopkins MP	Luton North	Labour
Ian Lavery MP	Wansbeck	Labour
Clive Lewis MP	Norwich South	Labour
Rebecca Long-Bailey MP	Salford	Labour
Justin Madders MP	Ellesmere Port	Labour
Gordon Marsden MP	Blackpool South	Labour
Kerry McCarthy	Bristol East	Labour
John McDonnell MP	Hayes and Harlington	Labour
Catherine McKinnell MP	Newcastle Upon Tyne North	Labour
Ian Mearns MP	Gateshead	Labour
Grahame Morris MP	Easington	Labour
Lisa Nandy MP	Wigan	Labour
Theresa Pearce MP	Erith and Thamesmead	Labour
Cat Smith MP	Lancaster and Fleetwood	Labour
Jo Stevens	Cardiff Central	Labour
Valerie Vaz MP	Walsall South	Labour
Lord McKenzie of Luton		Labour

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ANNEX THREE:

UNION SERVICES

This report was written and compiled by
UNION SERVICES PARLIAMENTARY CONSULTANCY

Who we are

Union Services is a parliamentary consultancy engaged by the BFAWU and is registered on the Parliamentary Register for Lobbyists, advising and assisting unions with their parliamentary campaigns, and working on a non-party basis of “**securing for trade unions an effective voice in Parliament.**”

Union Services has a non-profit making motive, only seeking to cover costs, and is the ‘trading name’ of its Director and Founder Simeon Andrews who has developed the consultancy over the past 15 years: “As a life-long socialist I am proud to deliver a service that gives trade unions a voice. Trade Unions are the bedrock of our democracy and internationalism.”

The Union Services team, who work under Simeon’s personal direction, comprises:

Michael Calderbank, whose current responsibilities include BFAWU, RMT, NUJ, and the TUCG web-site.

Lori Malone, whose current responsibilities include PCS, Prison Officers Association and the Justice Sector, and the TUCG.

Richard Hanford, whose current responsibilities include the FBU, PCS, and the Drugs and Alcohol treatment sector.

What we do

- Provide detailed information on forthcoming parliamentary business and the legislative timetable
- Advise on the detail of parliamentary procedures and mechanisms for possible intervention
- Assist on all parliamentary campaigns, including the development of a base of active support in Parliament and where appropriate the coordination and administration of a Parliamentary Group, such as:

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- Bakers Union Parliamentary Group
- Fire Brigades Union Parliamentary Group
- Justice Unions and Family Courts Parliamentary Group
- National Union of Journalists Parliamentary Group
- PCS Parliamentary Group
- RMT Parliamentary Group

Union Services also organise:

- the Trade Union Coordinating Group, of which the BFAWU is a founder member, which is not a parliamentary group but brings together like-minded unions to further coordinate their campaigning work
- the Drugs, Alcohol and Justice Parliamentary Group on behalf of Drugs and Alcohol treatment service providers, and involves POA and NAPO

How we fit in

Although independent, Union Services seeks to work as an integrated part of each union's parliamentary operation. Directly answerable to the General Secretary, we work in daily liaison with the Political or Campaigns office at the Union HQ.

Union Services provides the interface between the union and MPs and we are present in Parliament on a daily basis, meeting with MPs and organising briefings, lobbies and interventions, and speaking to MPs on the union's behalf. We ensure that the union has an on-the-spot presence in Westminster and that our campaigns are consistently progressed.

Bringing the Unions into Parliament & Parliament to the Unions