black balloons representing individual workers’ lives released over a statue of the Unknown Worker

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY
APRIL 28TH
June 2018 will be a landmark in the history of the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union as we gather in Southport for our 100th Annual Conference.

Despite our history going back to 1847, originally there was no national gathering, hence the disparity between our 171 years of existence and our Century of Conferences. From the outlawing of cellar baking to the setting of a maximum exposure limit to flour, the union has a proud tradition of campaigning for life-changing improvements to our industry.

Now as we approach our double centenary we are still campaigning for changes that will benefit our members, the trade union movement and society in general.

Punching above our weight

We may not be one of the biggest unions but we are renowned for our ambitions and our tenacity to achieve them. From the call for £10 per hour to the abolition of zero hour contracts, we have been at the forefront of having them not only recognised by the TUC and GFTU as laudable requests, but have campaigned with the Labour Party to have them included in their manifesto for change.

...still work to do!

That is only possible with the assistance and support of our members and so when delegates congregate in Southport this June we will be both celebrating a rich past whilst looking forward to a future full of optimism. Much of this will depend on us getting a Labour government, but the longer Theresa May is at the helm of the rudderless Tories, the nearer we get to a Corbyn-led one.

Tories devoid of ideas, and of humanity

Whether it is Brexit, housing, the NHS, homelessness, mental health, education or the economy, this government is devoid of ideas and even more devoid of coherent answers. The electorate are finding out (unfortunately the hard way) that they have been betrayed by Cameron and May over the past 8 years, with increased prices, wage stagnation and ever-increasing levels of precarious working practices. This won’t change whether May stays or goes as the Tory government is rotten to the core and replacing her with serial liar Boris Johnson or the eccentric Charles Hawtrey, Jacob Rees Mogg, will only prolong and deepen the misery for millions of low-paid and poverty stricken members of our society.

If we are to prosper we need an end to austerity, an end to privatisation of our health service, the return of rail, water and energy into national ownership. We must have...
This year’s Conference agenda, although not as large as last year’s, is at least as radical as many that have gone before – showing that branches are still viewing the world through compassionate eyes, passionate hearts tinged with steely determination.

There is always room at Conference for a little controversy as long as it has reason and can improve. I look forward to some great debate, some fantastic speeches and great camaraderie amongst delegates and friends.

At the time of writing this article I do not know who delegates are, but look forward to meeting with you all – from stalwarts such as Pat Rowley to the newest, first time delegate – everyone has an important role in changing the future. If we can replicate the high standard of input from our young members along the lines of last year, we not only look forward to a great few days, but a long future in very good hands.

Some goodbyes
Conference will give us an opportunity to wish Alan Milne, No5 Regional Officer a long and happy retirement. Alan has played a significant role in bringing about positive change and major improvements within Gregg’s after years as their joint secretary and will be a hard act to follow.

Sadly we also heard of the tragic death of Simeon Andrews, the co-ordinator of our Parliamentary Group and founder of the Trade Union Coordinating Group, which brought together 9 unions (including our own) and formed them into a major, campaigning, action group, fighting collectively for all our members through a mixture of direct action and lobbying.

Simeon, a knowledgeable and well-respected trade union campaigner, attended many executive meetings and every Conference, giving advice and guidance when asked. A true friend of the BFAWU, he will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Our condolences go out to his partner, Cathy, and his family.

Ronnie Draper
General Secretary

ACROSS THE WORLD, workers’ rights are being attacked through legislation or in some cases, through imprisonment, beatings and murder. In Turkey, the government has taken the opportunity to introduce a State of Emergency, which has been used as nothing other than cover to close down opposition parties, outlaw Trade Unions and undermine both women’s and LGBT rights in the country.

The US and UK governments should be questioning the morals of an administration that has introduced changes in law that allow child brides in Turkey. Recent decisions by the Erdogan Government have even gone as far as to remove the necessity for young girls to attend school, offering them online learning instead. The Turkish state has witnessed an increase of 25% in the deaths of women, which should set alarm bells ringing across Europe and around the world. However, Donald Trump can’t seem to tear himself away from Twitter for long enough to offer any meaningful response to this and in Theresa May, we have quite possibly the weakest and most incompetent Prime Minister in UK political history.

The Conservative government seems to have absolutely zero concern about the rise in deaths, or the human rights abuses taking place in Turkey. Incredibly, the UK Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson said that we should stop looking at the human rights abuses there, as they will be an important trading partner, post-Brexit. The situation in Turkey is at a critical stage; rather than ignoring human rights abuses, we should be exposing them, and any Foreign Secretary that is happy to turn a blind eye to murder and torture in the hope of a possible trade deal should be removed from office. A more detailed article can be found on page 8.

Our NHS is in the middle of a crisis created by the Conservative government. Speak to any junior doctor, nurse or consultant and they will tell you that the agenda is to starve the NHS of funds whilst directing more and more services to private companies in order to soften it up for full privatisation, with the ruthless, greedy, tax-avoiding Richard Branson waiting in the wings to take charge. The government already bends over backwards to subsidise Branson’s Virgin Rail to the tune of millions of pounds worth of taxpayers money, only for it to be funnelled away in tax havens. Branson was even allowed to sue the NHS recently, because they had the audacity to refuse him a contract. This is a health service that is already on its knees. Just imagine what a country full of Virgin hospitals would look like. Branson can’t even do broadband properly.

The NHS is ours – it’s not for profit and we don’t want it in the hands of privateers. Let’s fight for it, or face a US-style insurance system that will be to the detriment of us all.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT
IAN HODSON

The NHS is ours – it’s not for profit and we don’t want it in the hands of privateers. Let’s fight for it, or face a US-style insurance system that will be to the detriment of us all.
God help you, if you end up wired up to a Virgin life support machine. The NHS is ours – it’s not for profit and we don’t want it in the hands of privateers. For the sake of our and future generations, let’s fight for it, or face a US-style insurance system that will be to the detriment of us all.

At a recent Farming Conference in Oxford, the Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Affairs, Michael Gove told both an audience and a journalist from Food.Manufacture.co.uk that the food industry needed to embrace automation, rather than import ‘cheap, migrant labour’ in order to remain competitive. In other words, he was making the case for workers in the food industry to be dumped in the name of even more profit for bosses and shareholders. Gove has officially put UK food workers on notice.

His rush for automation threatens the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of workers in the UK. In his speech to the Oxford Farming Conference, he displayed a complete lack of knowledge in terms of the food industry and utter contempt for those who work in it. What we need from his government, is proper investment in manufacturing. The food industry is vital to the UK economy and deserves a well-trained, properly remunerated workforce; not cheap quality products, knocked out by robots in a de-regulated system.

Our Media is now acting like an anti-democratic hate fuelled mob. Fearing a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour party it has chosen to resort to scurrilous reporting of a fantasist who alleges that all left wing Labour MPs took bribes and gave information to a foreign power. This type of journalism is about spreading a poison to hold back the change that would mean so much to so many in our country, there not interested in the deaths of disabled caused through austerity, they are not ashamed of the homelessness catastrophe we see on our streets they are only concerned with their wealth and power over us We cannot fall for this dodgy reporting – these media barons are aware that under Labour they will (like the rest of us) have to pay their fair share of tax Why should we shoulder all of the burden and take the hit on our income while they avoid their responsibilities?

Let’s remember what Labour are offering us if they win the General Election,

- A minimum wage of at least £10ph
- Union rights and Repeal of Anti-TU laws
- An end to zero hour’s contracts and fair employment rights for all
- Council housing and ending homelessness
- An end of tuition fees and financial support for students.
- An end to PFI
- Re-nationalising Rail and our utilities once again back in the hands of the people instead of the wealthy few.
- A fully funded and resourced NHS

These are a few of policies of what a Labour Government has promised to deliver and these are polices that will improve the lives of all that work in our industry. The BFAWU stands with Labour – a party for the many not the few.

Finally, I’d like to say ‘hats off’ to our fantastic members working for McDonalds, who have secured the largest pay-rise that fast food workers have ever seen in the UK. Those brave workers at Crayford and Cambridge decided to draw a line in the sand and face down one of the biggest corporations in the world. They proved that when people stand together, nothing is impossible. Just imagine what could be achieved if fast food workers all over the country did the same. They actually have the ability to end casualisation in the UK food industry, if they put their hearts and minds to it – a point that we will certainly be making to them on a regular basis in 2018.

Thanks to our members, activists, clerical staff and full-time officials for all their work support and solidarity.

Solidarity!

Ian Hodson
National President
On January 4 Prime Minister Theresa May joined Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt in issuing a hollow apology for the state of the NHS.

Even as she spoke news was emerging of an 81 year old Essex woman who died waiting for an ambulance which took 4 hours to arrive, and two deaths of older patients waiting to be seen in an overcrowded A&E in the West Midlands.

Nonetheless on January 7 May told Andrew Marr and viewers how ‘proud’ she was of the government’s record on the NHS.

In other words the apology was meaningless. There’s no point in apoloising when you won’t end the real terms freeze on NHS funding, which – despite repeated warnings from NHS Providers, the NHS Confederation, the health unions and almost every NHS professional body – has been in place since George Osborne took office in 2010.

November’s belated Budget announcement of £350m extra came too late to put proper plans in place, and still leaves the NHS well short of the increased costs it faces.

On December 31 more than half England’s hospitals had at least 95% of their beds full. Ambulances queue for hours to hand over seriously ill patients – corridors are frequently used as a desperate, often dangerous last resort areas for sometimes hundreds of patients to wait for treatment.

NHS England has ordered a halt to elective surgery until at least the end of January. Even cancer treatment is feeling the strain, with missed targets and possible reductions in care.

Meanwhile cuts and privatisation have reduced social care to chaos, and billions are being wasted on a costly competitive ‘market’ which hands NHS contracts to profit-hungry companies like Virgin. We don’t want apologies, we want change.

That’s why Health Campaigns Together, with People’s Assembly, called a day of action on February 3rd, with a demonstration in London and events all over UK demanding:

- End the winter crisis with a cash injection to restore the NHS budget
- Commit to increased funding each year, at least 3% above inflation.
- End the cap on NHS pay
- No cuts, closures, or privatisation

The state of our health service affects us all – and Health Campaigns Together is proud to have won the support last year of over a dozen TUC unions for our massive March 4 demonstration in London.

We are again inviting all trade unionists and their families and friends to work with us in 2018. Unions and local branches are welcome to affiliate to Health Campaigns Together, distribute our quarterly newspaper, and work with us to build the biggest, broadest possible alliance to force the government to change course, or make way for a government that will.

Since May’s apology, almost 70 medical directors from struggling NHS trusts across England signed a joint letter to her expressing their concern that the NHS is now ‘severely and chronically underfunded’, with ‘insufficient hospital beds and staff of all disciplines’ to cope with the rising caseload.

Almost eight brutal years of virtually frozen NHS funding and cuts in social care have reduced spending on health and the numbers of hospital beds to the lowest of any equivalent country – reducing front line health services in many areas to third world conditions.

Meanwhile, cost pressures on the NHS have increased by up to 4% each year, and in addition the population has grown by 4 million – leaving our NHS with inadequate investment in staff and resources. 8,000 front line beds and 20% of mental health beds have closed. Eight years of below inflation pay settlements have left 100,000 vacant posts across the NHS.

Health Campaigns Together is committed to organising a major demonstration and event on July 7, the Saturday closest to the NHS Birthday. We hope BFAWU members and their families and friends will join us.

For more details follow our website: www.healthcampaignstogether.com and Twitter @nhscampaigns.

John Lister
JENGbA – FIGHTING 'JOINT ENTERPRISE'

I was, and still am, just an ordinary mum who loves her children, a mum who only ever wants the best for them. So you can imagine how terrifying it was for me when my 15 year old son was arrested and charged with murder along with his younger brother and three other teenagers. It took three months from arrest to trial, all in a blaze of media lies and no time to find a legal team of our choice.

They say a lie is half way round the world before the truth has even put its boots on. I agree because long before I even found my boots I was forced to get my head around losing one of my children to a life sentence for a murder he didn’t commit, whilst dealing with the damage inflicted to the life of the one that was acquitted.

Losing means failure, and the devastation that comes with failing your children is impossible to explain. The insanity that comes with the knowledge that a child can be given a life sentence for murder even when they haven’t murdered anyone, believe it or not, eventually outweighs the grief of losing them.

The victim in our case tragically died due to a single unique injury. A blow to the neck delivered by a kick or a punch. The incident occurred spontaneously, lasting a matter of seconds, there were no weapons, no plan and the victim was unknown to all those charged with his death. On oath the police forensic pathologist insisted that the victim’s injuries were not consistent with a blow to the neck delivered by a kick or a punch. The victim’s injuries were not consistent with a single unique injury to the neck, he would have walked home, unaided and in no need of medical attention. My son was not a member of a gang, he was a kid out with his friends, he wasn’t wearing any shoes which means he couldn’t have been the one that delivered that fatal blow and to top it all, he was blind.

For those of us caught up in the injustice it’s simple to recognise that something very sinister is going on. It is called Joint Enterprise and it’s a filthy stain on our justice system.

You may have heard of it, and if you have that will be because of the JENGbA (Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association) campaigners.

I have in my possession the judges summing up of the entire trial. The police forensic pathology report and a medical report that explains in full my son’s serious eye condition and his need for transplant surgery to both eyes. This means I can prove what I say is the truth and not just my version of events. I have no reason to lie and to do so would gain me nothing.

My name is Jan Cunliffe – I am the mother of a convicted murderer.

I helped co-found JENGbA after my son's appalling conviction. We have worked very hard in the face of adversity and for me personally our greatest achievement was gaining the love and support from screenwriter Jimmy McGovern. His award-winning drama 'COMMON' tackles the issue of joint enterprise head on and it’s more relevant today than when it was first screened in 2014. You can watch it on NETFLIX.

I’m proud to say that JENGbA were instrumental in a recent historic Supreme Court victory, one where five of our most senior judges acknowledged that the law had indeed taken a wrong turn as far back as 1984. That’s over three decades of injustice. I am, however, ashamed to say that, two years on, not a single person from those three decades of injustice has been acquitted. Convictions have continued with prosecutors using the same low level evidence and immoral tactics as before.

If my son’s case is a template of how massive the injustice of joint enterprise is then the continued refusal to correct it by our criminal justice system is sending out a very strong and clear message to both the police and prosecutors. The message is this: ‘...continue with impunity to destroy the lives of the vulnerable and the innocent, and do so in the full knowledge that even if a rag tag bunch of campaigning women do manage to get the issue as far up as the Supreme Court, we will shut them down immediately.’

My son is called Jordan Cunliffe. He didn’t lay a finger on the victim, he didn’t encourage others to do so because he couldn’t see the violence unfold and he certainly didn’t foresee it. He was found guilty by association. He has been in prison for over ten years and by continuing to maintain his innocence he risks spending the rest of his life in prison. He is a working class hero with more courage than any human being I have ever met. He is not alone, he stands with hundreds, if not thousands, all convicted using a discredited and immoral legal principle.

There are many ways you can support the JENGbA family – start today by checking out our website: www.jointenterprise.co.uk

...and join us on our Facebook page and Twitter.
FOODWORKER

ZERO HOURS CONTRACTS – FLEXIBILITY FOR EMPLOYERS, UNCERTAINTY FOR WORKERS

A TUC poll has found that the reason that 43% of workers remain on these contracts is because it is the only type of contract available to them. Many workers feel compelled to work whenever their bosses request because they know that if they turn it down, they may get no work at all.

Sometimes employers put banned ‘exclusivity clauses’ in the ZHC meaning that the worker could not take a job anywhere else and if the hours are not available, the worker doesn’t work and won’t get any money to pay their bills. These clauses have been outlawed since 26th May, 2015.

Weaker Rights

ZHCs also mean weaker rights and protections. The majority of workers on these contracts don’t receive sick pay, holiday pay, maternity, paternity pay or redundancy pay. McDonald’s are one of the worst culprits. Despite being one of the UK’s most well-known employers, many McDonald’s workers are on low wages and ZHCs. McDonald’s want you to believe that their workers want ZHCs because they offer ‘flexibility’. The truth is usually the complete opposite.

In her first major speech after her disastrous general election in May, the Prime Minister, Theresa May, ruled out banning zero hours contracts, claiming it would “harm more people than it would help.” Tell that to the 82,000 McDonald’s workers on zero hours contracts. It might harm the back pockets of some of the Tories’ friends in big business but would the fast food chain really sell fewer burgers if it had the decency to give its staff some commitment on the hours they will be working from one week to the next? Are sales so unpredictable?

An opportunity missed

The government had a golden opportunity when responding to the Taylor review to make real change.

Instead – in its Good Work plan, and despite accepting that ‘not everyone is enjoying the benefits’ of what the government calls a ‘vibrant’ labour market and that some people in work have little or no income security while others are trapped in a cycle of low-paid work – they have actually done… nothing.

What is needed, for the sake of millions in insecure employment, is hard action. Instead, the government has embraced delay, saying that it will ‘look to consult’ on several measures in relation to ZHCs, including:

- Extending the right to a payslip for all workers, including zero hour workers.
- Introducing a right for all workers to request a more ‘predictable’ contract.
- Introducing a right to request a contract that guarantees hours for zero-hour contract workers.

We need more than ‘promises’

On these big issues, more is needed than just the promise of more consultation. The government wants to leave it to bosses to deliver improvements in corporate culture and employment rights when experience shows that other than in the best of companies this will not happen – after all, hundreds of thousands of UK workers are in employment relationships that are fundamentally unfair precisely because bosses have used existing legislation to avoid any obligations to their workers.

What workers want and deserve is a reliable and fair income with fair employment rights. With the Taylor review the government has a golden opportunity to make real changes and fast. I suspect that instead they will talk big and take a long time to deliver little.

Ian Birrell at Thompsons Solicitors

Zero hours contracts (ZHCs) with all the uncertainty that they bring for those forced to work on them, are far too common in the food industry. Workers need proper rights and the answer is to ban ZHCs, have one category of worker and extend all employment rights to all workers. Yet the government in its Brexit-fixated, boss-obsessed world isn’t really interested in changes that will help workers.

Modern Working Practice?

The government commissioned a review of modern working practices – the Taylor review – but then, in responding to the review, all it offered was a series of vague promises and four new consultations. For them it’s all about kicking the can further down the road rather than making real change.

According to figures published by the Office for National Statistics, there were approximately 1.4 million zero hours contracts in the UK in 2017, representing 5% of all employment contracts.

Ian Birrell
What more do you want, we ban the strikes for you?“ said some employers for the state of emergency to be lifted by asking physically attacked and arrested. Erdogan responded to calls by police. On many occasions, workers and trade union members were opened against them and they were only removed from their posts. Committed by some AKP council leaders, no court proceedings were blackmails. Despite evidence showing millions worth of fraud are likely to lose at the next election to resign with threats and scrutinised to find fraud, with ‘witness statements’ as evidence. Administrator. CHP run councils were also targeted. They were Republican People’s Party (CHP). Elected municipality leaders its co-leaders, as well as another MP of the main opposition, the MPs of the pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democracy Party (HDP), including its title and lost their jobs. Tens of thousands of people were taken into custody.

The AKP government have also imprisoned and stripped elected MPs of the pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democracy Party (HDP), including its co-leaders, as well as another MP of the main opposition, the Republican People’s Party (CHP). Elected municipality leaders in mainly Kurdish regions have been arrested and replaced by an administrator. CHP run councils were also targeted. They were scrutinised to find fraud, with ‘witness statements’ as evidence.

Erdogan has also forced some AKP municipality leaders who are likely to lose at the next election to resign with threats and blackmalls. Despite evidence showing millions worth of fraud committed by some AKP council leaders, no court proceedings were opened against them and they were only removed from their posts.

In total five major workers’ strikes were banned by the government and those who resisted the ban were attacked by police. On many occasions, workers and trade union members were physically attacked and arrested. Erdogan responded to calls by some employers for the state of emergency to be lifted by asking “What more do you want, we ban the strikes for you?”

President Erdogan has been branding anyone who doesn’t stand with him a coup-supporter, terrorist, a traitor, or even a member of FETO (Fethullah Gulen Terrorist Organisation) – said to be behind the failed coup.

On 5 January 2018 at a joint press conference with President Macron during Erdogan’s official visit to France, a French journalist asked him whether weapons had been sent to terrorist organisations in Syria by the Turkish state, Erdogan told him off and accused him of being the mouthpiece for FETO – you can imagine how journalists are being treated back in Turkey.

These developments show clearly that under the pretext of the state of emergency, Turkey is becoming more and more authoritarian, heading towards a dictatorship. The state of emergency in Turkey must come to an end and statutory decrees must be annulled.

According to the report prepared by the Human Rights Association (IHD), between 21 July 2016, when the State of Emergency was first declared, and 31 August 2017, breaches of human rights can be listed as follows:

- In July 2016, the pre-charge detention period was increased to 30 days, and suspects were denied access to a lawyer for the first five days of their detention. These emergency laws applied for six months, and in January 2017 the pre-charge detention period was reduced to 15 days and no access to a lawyer to 1 day. The Ministry of Justice announced that during the ongoing state of emergency 169,013 people were detained by the police, of these 50,510 were arrested, and 43,489 were released on bail. Others were released without charge and 8,087 people have absconded.
- 11 MPs have been imprisoned, including the co-leaders of the HDP (Peoples’ Democratic Party) Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag. 5 MPs have lost their MP status, including Figen Yuksekdag.
- Government has taken over 94 municipalities, 89 of which run by the pro-Kurdish Democratic Regions Party. 74 elected municipality leaders were arrested. 28 regional co-leaders and 89 local co-leaders of the HDP were also arrested. 780 regional and local organisers of the HDP were also arrested.
- Using statutory decrees in clear violation of the constitution and by completely side-lining the constitutional court, 113,440 public sector workers have been purged. Of these only 1,852 could return to their jobs.
- 4,240 judges and prosecutors have been discharged from their roles on the Supreme Council of Judges and Prosecutors (one third of the total number), of these only 166 could return to their jobs.
- There has been a large amount of oppression on freedom of speech and the press. 185 media outlets were shut down. Only 23 were permitted to re-open.
- During the state of emergency, a high number of journalists were arrested. 174 journalists remain in prison and in 2016, and 889 journalists had their press cards cancelled.
- During the state of emergency 1,412 community centres and 139 foundations were shut down.
- Breaches of freedom of expression have peaked during the state of emergency. According to the Ministry of Justice statistics in 2016: 4,187 people were charged with insulting the president (Turkish Criminal Code 299). 482 cases were brought for insulting Turkishness under Turkish Criminal Code 301. And in 2016 there were 17,322 people charged with propagating illegal organisations (Turkish Criminal code 7/2).
- 48 private medical centres were shut down (2 reopened).
- 2,325 private schools/institutions (schools, courses, student accommodation) were shut down. 19 trade unions and confederations were prohibited from continuing their activities.
- 669 companies were taken over. The number of people employed by the effected companies is estimated to be approximately 47,000.
Next week sees the third anniversary of McDonald’s global boss Steve Easterbrook getting a super-size 368% pay rise. Last year, his salary only went up a measly 94%. Easterbrook received almost £11 million in pay – or around £5,500 an hour.

Outside the blacked-out windows of his London offices this week stood two of his young workers, lucky to earn £5,500 in six months of hard graft.

Kayleigh O’Neill, 18, does long nights cleaning a McDonald’s in a London retail park for just £6.76 an hour. Lauren McCourt, 23, also does gruelling overnights in a busy 24-hour Manchester store. As a ‘crew trainer’ she earns £7.25 an hour.

Proudly wearing McStrike T-shirts, the two women had come to hand in a letter to Paul Pomroy, boss of McDonald’s UK division. They weren’t asking to use either of the company’s two private jets. They just wanted a living wage, safe working conditions and union recognition.

Inflation holds steady as food prices fall and days out rise – but wages are still lagging behind.

“Our branch regularly posts its latest ‘record-breaking’ takings on our Facebook page,” Lauren says. “but apparently McDonald’s can’t pay us the real living wage.”

McDonald’s says Mr Pomroy is “in the process of responding”. Last July, President Donald Trump’s favourite restaurant unveiled its new dining concept, ‘Experience of the Future’, but Kayleigh and Lauren are struggling to build a future at all at McDonald’s.

Kayleigh is trying to study for a qualification in health and social care, but says the night shifts are shattering. “I just work, sleep, work, sleep,” she says. She is employed as a ‘customer care assistant’, but spends all night cleaning the closed store.

Lauren, an accounting graduate, also says she is too exhausted to do anything but work.

Standing shoulder to shoulder with Kayleigh and Lauren outside McDonald’s HQ were TUC General Secretary, Frances O’Grady (pictured above) and Ronnie Draper, the General Secretary of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU).

In September, young workers from the BFAWU in Cambridge and Crayford, South East London, led the very first strike in McDonald’s history over low pay and zero-hour contracts. This week was Heart Unions week, and for O’Grady the two women represent a reminder of old struggles from history.

(article reproduced from The Mirror)
12th – 18th February

Extract from Frances O’Grady’s TUC blog 12.2.2018

HeartUnions week, which kicks off today, is a chance to celebrate the great work of unions and reps and to show how unions offer everyone a voice at work.

This week, we’ll be showing our solidarity with brave young McDonald’s workers who last year went out on ‘McStrike’ for the first time ever in the UK. They’ve already scored some impressive wins – including the biggest pay rise in a decade – but there’s much more to do.

McDonald’s staff too often experience harassment, abuse and even violence from customers. So they’re calling for the company to implement a clear, zero-tolerance policy on customer abuse. You can sign their petition here:

[link]

And we’ll be calling for McDonald’s to recognise the Baker’s Union (BFAWU), which represents fast food workers. While this year’s pay rise is welcome, collective bargaining is always the best way to ensure that all workers make a decent living wage.

That’s why right around the country, union activists will be setting up stalls at McDonald’s branches, and having conversations with workers and customers about the difference unions can make.

McDonald’s claims to be a responsible employer, committed to investing in its people. This is their opportunity to prove it.

Join a union

This year, the TUC marks its 150th birthday. And while we’re celebrating our proud history, we also need to set out our stall as a modern, confident movement with a more important role than ever.

But achieving that will take work from all of us. Trade unions have never been run from the top down and never should be. Our power comes from communities of working people, coming together to make working life better for everyone.

So this week, tell your friends, neighbours, family and, most importantly, your co-workers to join a union. As 150 years of experience tell us, it’s the very best way to change the world of work for good.
HeartUnions Event at Berwick McDonald’s on Sunday 18th March

We held a TUC union awareness and recruitment event with BFAWU leaflets for McDonald’s workers on the 18th.

We appeared to be well received by local managers and there was no problem being on McDonald’s car park with placards, the TC banner, leaflets and so on – however, we’ve had some disturbing reports about workers effectively being bullied against joining the union. I discussed this with Gareth Lane and he’s given us some good advice.

The week of celebration focused on the good work that unions do. Unions help workers get together, stop people being treated unfairly and get a better deal from their employers.

Berwick Trades Union Council along with local activists staged a successful event at Berwick McDonald’s on Sunday. The focus is on McDonald’s as the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) is on a recruitment drive – through unity of action workers can achieve an end to low pay and insecure hours. TUC Heart Union leaflets were handed out to customers, who were also asked to sign a petition asking Paul Pomroy, CEO, McDonald’s, UK to ‘Pay Staff the Living Wage, End Zero Hours Contracts, Recognise the Trade Union’.

We received a friendly reception at McDonald’s and the BFAWU union assures staff that it is their legal right to join a union and “There is no issue from McDonald’s if that is what they want to do”.

Berwick Trades Union Council is the collective voice of unions in Berwick and East Berwickshire. If you are a trade union member or support the aims of trade unions, please come along to our meetings and events.

Philip Thompson
Berwick & District Trades Union Council
Dear Mr Pomroy...

To: Paul Pomroy, 
CEO, 
McDonald’s UK

Ref: McDonald’s: Keep your staff safe from abusive customers

Mr Pomroy

Work with your staff’s union to implement an abusive customers policy that protects McDonald’s workers and ensures they are treated with the respect they deserve.

Why is this important?

You don’t expect to face verbal or physical abuse, just for doing your job and serving customers. But too many staff working at McDonald’s encounter just that. They often don’t know what they can do to report abuse by customers, or what rights they have to refuse to serve them.

As a volunteer union rep working at McDonald’s, I’ve talked to colleagues who felt they have to suffer in silence. Local McDonald’s managers don’t always support them as they should.

McDonald’s needs to act to ensure their workers, who are low paid and often on insecure contracts, don’t have to face the difficult situations they currently have to. Our union has heard from one McDonald’s worker who often works nights in the restaurant lobby. She told us how often she’s groped and touched by drunk men.

Another was surprised when she moved onto a different shift that she no longer got called a stupid c*** by customers every time she worked.

Workers at my store have been threatened with physical violence. Persistent bullying by customers can lead workers into depression and breakdowns.

Only by workers coming together and forming our union have we been able to change things so far.

It’s not too late for McDonald’s to become a good employer. They need to talk to BFAWU (the union for fast food workers) and implement a policy of zero tolerance for harassment at work. This means believing a worker when they say they have witnessed or suffered any form of abuse – violent, sexual, homophobic or racist. And it means acting to ban customers who behave in an abusive way to workers.

We know McDonald’s value what their customers think about them.

Please add your support to the growing voice of McDonald’s workers as they stand up for dignity in work. A right that everyone deserves.

Campaign created by Georgina Taplin

Note: If you’re a McDonald’s staff member who has experienced abuse from customers, contact your nearest BFAWU office for advice on your rights: www.bfawu.org

TUC General Secretary, Frances O’Grady delivers a copy of the Open Letter to Paul Pomroy at MacDonald’s UK Headquarters, ...with a little help!
The Workplace Health Advisory Committee produced a report last year on ‘Risks of Bakery Work: the adverse effects of working in high temperatures and of occupational asthma’.

A focus on working temperature alone is unlikely to generate the answers being sought, although robust data on current thermal (and other environmental) parameters and exposures is needed. Accident analysis of historical data may be a suitable starting place, coupled with data collection from bakeries on the recognised consequences of high heat exposure.

- Does the HSE have any places to conduct such ‘accident analysis of historical data’, including where heat exposure might be a contributory factor in recorded incidents?
- How can the HSE help to generate robust data on thermal parameters and exposures?

On Bakers Asthma, the report found:

- Exposures to flour in UK bakers are frequently higher than the level at which occupational asthma could develop.
- The incidence of Bakers Asthma ‘is high and unremitting’.
- Progress on prevention of occupational asthma in the industry has been disappointing.
- Knowledge of health risks of dust exposure is ‘very variable’, with ‘limited emphasis on control of exposure to flour dusts’ in training.
- Bakers are reluctant to report symptoms [when the likely outcome is removal from the bakery].

- Some employers tend to view the process of health surveillance as a barrier to production. Occupational Health experts have been discouraged by their managers from confirming potential cases of occupational asthma.
- The Big Four supermarkets have, individually, been reluctant to embark on preventative programmes.
- Surveillance is ‘far less common’ in medium-sized bakers and ‘generally not practised at all’ in small bakers.
- Regulatory oversight falls to Local Authority environmental health services which are under-resourced and concentrate on food hygiene. Traditionally there has been ‘only limited collaboration’ with the HSE.

The report recommended… that in close collaboration with the key stakeholders in the sector, one or more evidenced-based intervention studies are developed, implemented and evaluated. (p13)

Questions for the Chair

- How can the HSE help to develop, implement and evaluate ‘evidence-based intervention studies’?
- Is funding/resourcing an issue? What else would be needed?
- How can the Big Four supermarkets be encouraged or obliged to participate?
TUC-SPONSORED WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS

Unless another date is given, all events are on 28th April.

Midlands
- Birmingham – 12:30 in the grounds of St Philips Cathedral, Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 2QB
- Northampton – Starts 11.00am next to the steelworker statue in Corby town centre or in the Corby Cube if the weather is bad. There will be speakers and the presentation of a cheque to the Mesothelioma Research Fund.
- Solihull – Friday 27 April at 12.30 in Bruneon Gardens (opp Barley Mow Pub)

Northern
- Hartlepool – Hartlepool Trades Union Council are holding a Service 12.30pm, Refectory Area, Cleveland College of Art & Design, 1 Church Street, Hartlepool, TS24 7DS (free car parking accessed from Lynn Street). A range of speakers followed by wreath/flower laying.

Northwest
- Chorley – There will be a memorial service on Friday 27th April at the Unite WMD tree planted in Astley Park. Meet at the Park Gates, Park Road.
- Manchester – 12:00 to 13.00 in Albert Square, Manchester. The theme is ‘Unions make work safer’. There will be music, a play, trade union and family speakers. In addition there will be an exhibition at the People’s History Museum and more events during the week. [see opposite for more details on this event]
- Salford – Wreath-laying at the Workers Memorial stone and plaque situated on the lawn area between the Civic Centre main entrance and Unity House at 12.15 on Friday 27th April. Staff and Councillors wishing to remember those who have lost their lives through their work are welcome to attend the event.

Yorkshire and Humberside
- Doncaster – meet at 11:30 at Sir Nigel Gresley Square, Civic offices.
- Cleethorpes – starts at 15:00 at the Workers Memorial tree in the Pier Gardens Alexandra Road Cleethorpes.
- Grimsby – Starts at 13:00 at The Workers Memorial and Tree in the Grounds of the War Memorial Nunn’s Corner Grimsby.
- Immingham – Starts at 10:00 at the Workers Memorial and Tree in the Grounds of the War Memorial Pelham Road Immingham.
- Sheffield – The annual workers memorial day event will take place outside Sheffield Town Hall 1230 to 1.15. All welcome.
- Rotherham – Meet at 12 noon outside Rotherham Minster in town centre, with speeches and wreath laying.
- Barnsley – Assemble at town hall steps by cenotaph at 12.15 for 12.30 memorial. Speakers include local MPs. Wreaths will be laid at WMD plaque in flower bed.

This summary was commissioned and produced by Simeon Andrews, who worked diligently as the coordinator of the BFAWU Parliamentary Group. Sadly, Simeon is no longer with us, having passed away earlier this year.

R.I.P. Simeon
Remember the Dead Fight for the Living!

International Workers Memorial Day
Saturday 28th April 2018
Albert Square Manchester
12.00 - 13.00

Join us to remember those people who have been killed by work accidents
Join us to remember those people who have been killed by work accidents

Programme
Song by Claire Mooney
Introduction and welcome
Angela Rayner MP
Asbestos Victims support speaker
Unison North West Regional Secretary - Kevan Nelson
Short street theatre sketch - Safety reps @ 40
Les Skarratts - FBU EC North West
FACK speaker

Reading of names of those killed at work and the laying of wreaths
One minute silence
Closing remarks
Song by Claire Mooney

Adjourn to People’s History Museum to lay wreaths, view the exhibition and have a cup of tea

Remember the Dead Fight for the Living!

The theme of this year’s International Workers Memorial Day is ‘Union Workplaces are Safer Workplaces’

Hazards Campaign has produced a number of resources to support IWMD:
- Purple Hi-vis waistcoats
- Car stickers
- Posters
- Purple ribbons

For more information [including how to order] contact Janet Newsham:
0161 636 7558
janet@gmhazards.org.uk

Remember the Dead Fight for the Living!

International Workers Memorial Day
On 28th April across the world, millions of workers, unions and families stand together under the united banner of ‘remember the dead and fight for the living’. We remember the 51,000 deaths and over 621,000 injuries and illnesses made ill by work every year in GB.

It is a time when we remember the millions who are made ill by work every year in GB.

Almost all workplace deaths are caused by employers’ negligence and the most vulnerable workers are more at risk of being made ill, injured or killed.

Events throughout the world will remember those who have died as a result of work activity, and will campaign to increase our safety at work.

www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/resources for information about resources including hi-vis vests, posters, car stickers, ribbons and labels which are available to purchase or email janet@gmhazards.org.uk or telephone 0161 636 7558

Exhibition, laying of wreaths and tea at:
Manchester Peoples History Museum:
Left Bank, Spinningfields, Manchester
M3 3ER

For more information: janet@gmhazards.org.uk or telephone 0161 636 7558

#Union workplaces are safer workplaces
#IWMD18

The End
FAST FOOD WORKERS AT DRIVE-THRUS

What do you need to know?

What are the health, safety and welfare issues that fast food workers at drive-thrus face?
What can we do to support these workers in challenging their unsafe and unhealthy working conditions?

The fast food industry includes food giants like McDonalds, KFC and Burger King. McDonalds is one of the biggest companies in the world and it has huge profits.

You would imagine that organisations which make large profits would employ workers on good pay and conditions. However, this is not the case. Many young, vulnerable workers work in the fast food industry. It is a sector which employs workers on zero hours contracts and often disregards their health, safety and welfare. They can do this because savage cuts to Local Authority Environmental Health resources and officers; have resulted in a lack of enforcement of the health and safety laws. This means that those workers are potentially facing a future of ill health as well as a risk of injury on a daily basis, because of working conditions.

All workers have the right to be safe and healthy at work!

There are thousands of people who work in the fast food sector. They will be your friends, or friends of family members or someone in your family. Talk to them about their rights at work and about why it is important that they join a trade union.

Employers have a general duty under section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the safety, health and welfare of their employees and under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks and to put control measures in place to either eliminate or manage the risks down to a level that avoids harm.

All the risks identified by fast food workers are preventable or easily controlled. No-one should be at risk of injury or ill health in this sector.

The drive-thrus are an additional risk to workers. They are at risk from air pollution, freezing cold, violence, musculo skeletal problems and other issues.

‘Workers should not be treated as disposable and work should not be spirit-sapping, body-breaking grind.’

www.hazards.org/insecure/makeorbreak.htm

What we can do

The fast food industry in notoriously unorganised. Staff on zero hours contracts feel vulnerable, they are often on low wages and do not know when they will get work or when they will be paid next. This makes it difficult to organise to organise them, however, the BFAWU has started organising in McDonalds and has already held a successful selective strike to challenge the unfair and unsafe working practices of the employer. It is important to advise any fast food workers you come into contact with, to join a trade union. www.bfawu.org/join

- If you are an elected politician or a trade union representative working with fast food workers, you could build up a dossier of unsafe and unhealthy conditions, injuries and issues that the workers raise. This should be forwarded to the local authority environmental health department for action. Always follow this up and find out what action has been taken by the environmental health department.

- If you visit a fast food restaurant then raise any health and safety concerns you identify with staff/managers etc. If you are an elected politician, make it known that you are and that if you have any concerns you will be raising them at the council, etc. Ensure that you include in any discussion, that you expect there will be no victimisation of workers.

- Organise a formal visit to the local fast food outlet from the council.

- Organise a formal visit to your local fast food restaurants if you are a Member of Parliament and make sure you talk to the staff about any concerns and make it known to them that they can contact you confidentially with their concerns.

- Trades Councils could also join the campaign to organise workers and ensure they know about trade unions and what they can do to support them and also make workers aware of health, safety and welfare laws.
## Hazards identified by Fast Food Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Potential Hazard</th>
<th>Suggested Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lack of personal safety | Incidents of violence, robberies, sexual harassment, and bullying. This can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicides from behaviours initiated by customers, other employees, and employers | ● Zero Tolerance on violence  
● Security procedure including alarms and CCTV used to secure film of any customer violence  
● Clear policy on acceptable behaviour displayed for customers and issued to all staff in training and enforced by managers and supervisors |
| Thermal discomfort | Having windows open for long periods with wet, windy, cold, conditions or hot, stuffy working conditions | ● Heaters and adequate ventilation in work space which are maintained and can be used as necessary throughout the year  
● PPE available free if necessary  
● Windows closed whenever possible |
| Air Pollution | Exposure to automobile exhaust including diesel fumes and dust. Carbon monoxide poisoning can result in headache, fatigue, flu-like symptoms and potential heart problems. Diesel exhaust is a carcinogen and exposure to fine dust can lead to cancers etc | ● Windows closed whenever possible and exhaust extraction units installed to protect workers  
● Air quality monitoring inside and outside windows |
| Noise | Exposure to traffic noise while working in the drive-thru area. Uncomfortable and hot headsets, acoustic shock. | ● Suitable headsets, regularly maintained that fit comfortably to head and ideally a set for each individual. Rotation of workers in drive-thru |
| Musculo-skeletal problems | Taking payments, cash and cards and serving food and drink to customers in cars can result in awkward postures, excessive reaching and lifting and twisting. Also a lack of work space | ● Professionally designed work space which is of adequate size to accommodate seats and designed to reduce excessive stretching and twisting  
● Rotation of workers in drive-thru  
● Training for workers on potential injuries that can occur and how to avoid them |
| Prolonged Standing | Workers being expected to stand without a break for long periods. Standing for long periods of time can cause stress and strain to workers’ backs and legs and circulatory problems. | ● Seats available with foot rests if necessary and anti-fatigue mats |
| Working at height | Ladders used to clean and steps used to fill drinks machine: Ladders not maintained and ladders and steps being used on wet floors | ● All equipment maintained with a schedule of checks. All floors clean and dry and ladders/steps not used on wet floors |
| Disease/Injury | Injury, illnesses and near misses not recorded | ● All incidents recorded, reviewed to discover any underlying causes, so that health and safety risks are reduced |
| Greasy, slippery floors | Slips on floor and injuries from falls or contact with hot oils or sharp equipment | ● All floors kept dry and regularly cleaned |
| Chemicals | Many cleaning substances are corrosive and can cause skin and eye burns. Some may cause dermatitis (dry, sore, flaky skin) or other skin irritations, asthma and breathing problems. | ● Carry out a COSHH Risk Assessment. Hazardous substances should be removed and replaced with safe products |
| Burns | Burns on arms from operating equipment | ● Ensure equipment fit for purpose, replaced if necessary and/or includes guards to protect workers, workers provided with safety garments and trained to ensure free from injury  
● All injuries recorded in accident book and investigated to prevent future injuries |
| Taking rubbish to bins | Rubbish bins are outside and have an insect/rodent hazard, also open to elements | ● Rubbish bins are cited near to premises. All ground surrounding bins is clean and free from ice, water etc. Staff provided with PPE to protect them from contact |
| Breaks, holidays, sickness | Working more than 6 hours without a break. Not being given holidays or unable to take sickness absence | ● All workers are entitled to take a 20 minute break after 6 hours; many employers provide a longer break.  
● All workers are entitled to paid holiday leave. [www.gov.uk/calculate-your-holiday-entitlement](http://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-holiday-entitlement)  
● Paid sickness absence is at the discretion of your employer but many employers have procedures in place to support workers when they are ill and ensure they do not return to work until they are better, very important for food safety. [www.hazards.org/sickness](http://www.hazards.org/sickness) |

Please note this list is not exhaustive. Other hazards may exist which should also be risk assessed.

**Create a Hazards List from your contacts with workers, observations inside Fast Food premises or when visiting a Drive-Thru. If necessary, copy the form below and send it to your local authority Environmental health Office.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Fast Food Premises?</th>
<th>Hazard description</th>
<th>Who could be harmed and how?</th>
<th>What is the likelihood of being harmed? High, Medium or Low?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SPRING 2018
Region 5’s annual health and safety conference marked the end of an era for one of our longest standing Branch secretaries.

Keith Hutchinson has been Branch 580 Greggs of Yorkshire’s branch secretary for over 25 years and for many of those years has also represented the region on the National Health and Safety Committee. Throughout the years he has been at the forefront of raising issues and challenging practices that have put our members at risk.

Keith has dedicated the last 25 years to organising Greggs, spending many hours of his own time visiting the shops, talking to members and recruiting non-members and generally being the voice of challenge!

He stepped down as the regional H&S committee rep towards the end of last year and April will be the start of a new era of branch 580 when he relinquishes his role over to the next branch secretary – though in typical Keith style he has timed the change so that he will have a good 6 months left with the company to help and support. A branch that covers a bakery and over 200 shops his experience will be an invaluable tool and support to whoever takes the position.

At the regional conference Keith was presented with an engraved tankard from the region and Ian Hodson presented him with a pewter baker on behalf of the Executive Council as a thank you for all of his hard work, activism and dedication over the years.

From all of us, Keith, thank you for everything you have done, and when the time comes enjoy a long, happy and healthy retirement down in Cornwall, though I’m sure we will see plenty of you before then!

Sarah Woolley
Organising Regional Secretary

When it comes to organising, the main factor is a local network of active members who are prepared to help with campaigns, ready to give their own time to fight for justice and tackle issues, both, local and global. Willingness to actively support campaigns must come from heart, otherwise it would be ineffective. A great example of good activist in Region 3 is Duggy Johnstone. Duggy is currently unemployed and relies on disability benefits. He is a member of Leicester Stand Up to Racism, Leicester Trades Union Council EC and often a voice of the unheard.

Duggy, regardless of his past (or maybe due to his past), is very passionate around issues of homelessness, drug addiction and general exploitation of vulnerable – young, disabled people and migrants. He is very well read and aware when it comes to welfare and healthcare. He plays a pivotal role locally in Leicester as an active member of Leicester Stand Up To Racism, also as a member of Leicester Activist Radio and, of course, BFAWU. Local councillors are often being left speechless after questions and statements from him, which are always supported by facts and researched data. He is very influential and can convince others to see a bigger picture.

Since 2016 Duggy has actively supported BFAWU campaigns. Regardless of weather or distance he is always only one phone call away. He is currently supporting our Amazon campaign. With microphone in his hands he can gather many peoples around him to listen and realise that the time to take action is now, not in the future.

Region 3 would like to thank bro. Johnstone for his effort and dedication. With more active members like him BFAWU would be the strongest union out there!

Solidarity!

Lukasz Bemka
Organising Regional Secretary
Shaun Duffy

It gave me great pleasure to present a 40 year badge to Bro. Shaun Duffy. Shaun worked for Hovis and Plymouth (Uglow’s) for over 30 years before he was made redundant.

Dave Dash
Regional Officer Region 2

George Tittensor

Ronnie Draper presents the 40 Year Award Certificate, cheque and Free Card membership to George Tittensor at the last regional council meeting.

Lukasz Bemka
Region 3 Organising Secretary

Ron Todd Awards celebrate the people in our communities who support and further social justice.

Shen Batmaz, Steve Day and Tom Holliday (BFAWU Community Organisers) are pictured receiving their Ron Todd Award for Inspiring Young People. Many congratulations – richly deserved!

John Fox

... and finally

Ronnie’s editorial mentioned that Region 5 stalwart and soon-to-be retired Regional Officer, Alan Milne was off to pastures new. It doesn't look like the pension has come through yet – but Alan is obviously enjoying his new role as area supervisor for ‘Maisie’s Maids’, for your every cleaning need! The print workshop cannot say how much we wanted this photo on the front cover!
JOIN THE BAKERS, FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION

Application forms from any Shop Steward or, to find out more, complete the form below

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

I would like to know more about the benefits of belonging to the Union:

Name (Block letters) .................................................................
Address ........................................................................................
Postcode ...............................................................................
Contact Phone .......................................................... Email address ..............................................................
Where employed at present ..........................................................
Occupation ..........................................................................................

Signature ........................................................ Date ............................................................

Please complete details above and hand to your local representative, Branch Official, Regional Office (for addresses see above) or send to Head Office at the FREEPOST address shown.

BFAWU OFFICERS AND REGIONAL ADDRESSES

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